

**American Rivers \* California Coastkeeper Alliance \* Center for Biological Diversity \*  
Center for Food Safety \* Clean Water Action \* Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation  
\* Defenders of Wildlife \* Earthjustice \* Endangered Species Coalition \*  
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin \* Environmental Defense Fund \*  
Epic-Environmental Protection Information Center \* Friends of the Earth \*  
Klamath Forest Alliance \* League of Conservation Voters \* Los Padres ForestWatch \*  
National Audubon Society \* National Parks Conservation Association \*  
Natural Resources Defense Council \* Northcoast Environmental Center \*  
The Wilderness Society \***

July 17, 2015

The Honorable Jared Huffman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1630 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support for H.R. 2983's innovative drought solutions that will benefit communities, farmers, and the environment.**

Dear Representative Huffman:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express our support for H.R. 2983, your recently introduced legislation that provides real drought solutions that will benefit California's communities, farmers, and the environment. Instead of blaming the environment and pitting certain water users against others like H.R. 2898, H.R. 2983 would provide new investments in lasting water solutions, growing the economy while also protecting our rivers, wildlife, and the thousands of jobs that depend on them.

H.R. 2983 authorizes and helps fund innovative water supply measures like water recycling and stormwater capture and focuses on improving outdated, inefficient water-related infrastructure. Investments in these modern water supply solutions could create millions of acre feet of new water supply for cities and farms in California and across the west, taking pressure off of imperiled rivers and streams and providing a more drought resistant water supply. The bill also authorizes improved management of existing surface water reservoirs, watershed restoration, and projects to reduce evaporative losses from existing infrastructure.

H.R. 2983 recognizes that real drought solutions don't involve gutting environmental protections. California's drought – not environmental laws – has dramatically reduced water supplies for farms, cities, and rural communities, and drought and diversions are drastically reducing water flowing in the State's rivers and streams. Our fish and wildlife – and the thousands of fishing and tourism jobs across the West that depend on healthy fisheries and wildlife – are also struggling through the drought. Instead of overriding and waiving critical state and federal environmental laws that protect fish, wildlife, and water quality, H.R. 2983 focuses on sustainable solutions that benefit all water users and the environment. This includes

assistance for national wildlife refuges and state wildlife management areas that provide essential habitat for birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway, as well as plans to protect endangered fisheries during dry periods. These measures will help to ensure California's economy can thrive during drought by protecting cities and agriculture, as well as fish and wildlife and the jobs that depend upon having abundant salmon and other natural resources.

Finally, H.R. 2983 was developed through a transparent process that solicited input from all interested parties and the public at large. Stakeholders and the public were able to participate before the bill was introduced, helping to create legislation that is protective of fish and wildlife, forward-looking, innovative, and filled with win-win solutions.

For these reasons, we support H.R. 2983.

Sincerely,

American Rivers  
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