

**Milan Franeta**

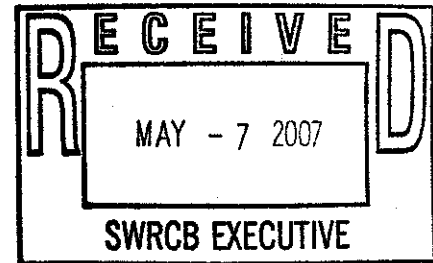
5727 Ravenspur Drive 201 , Rancho Palos Verdes, California 90275

May 07, 2007 09:58 PM

Song Her, Clerk of the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 100  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Subject: Wetland & Riparian Area Protection Policy

Dear Song Her, Clerk of the Board,



I urge the board to develop a policy that will provide the greatest protection for California's remaining native wetlands and riparian areas and promote the restoration of degraded wetlands and riparian areas throughout the state. To that end, the board should develop a broad-based policy to regulate all discharges and activities that impact wetlands and riparian areas as described in Alternative 4. I ask the board to take into account both present and future threats to wetlands and riparian areas, including global warming and climate change, when considering how to best protect California's few remaining native wetlands and riparian areas.

Wetlands and riparian habitats are truly among the rarest and most sensitive ecosystem types in California and should have the greatest protection. These essential areas support a disproportionate share of the state's biodiversity and preservation of these areas is critical to the survival of rare, sensitive, threatened and endangered plants and wildlife. I ask the board to prioritize the preservation and restoration of all remaining native wetlands and riparian areas in the California, which is believed to represent far less than ten percent of the historic riparian habitat statewide. In the California deserts, the percentage of remaining native wetlands and riparian areas is estimated to be as low as two to five percent of the historic habitat. Wetlands and riparian areas are not only critical for biodiversity and aquatic dependent species, but also to provide clean water for all Californians.

Some of the many issues that I would ask the board to thoroughly explore in the CEQA process for the development of this policy include the cumulative impacts of climate change on wetlands and riparian areas; the impacts of off-road vehicle use in and near wetlands and riparian areas; the impacts of grazing on wetlands and riparian areas; the impacts of logging, mining, groundwater extraction, and other extractive industries on wetlands and riparian areas; impacts from landscape level projects such as utility lines and pipelines; and impacts to coastal wetlands.

I hope and expect that the Board will thoroughly examine all these critical issues and act to preserve these critical wetlands and riparian resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California.

Sincerely,  
Milan Franeta  
5727 Ravenspur Drive 201  
Rancho Palos Verdes, California 90275