



# Media Release

## **State Water Board readopts emergency drought regulation for Mill and Deer Creeks**

### ***Curtailments needed to preserve flows for fish, human health***

Aug. 17, 2022

Contact: [Ailene Voisin](#), Information Officer

**SACRAMENTO** – As sustained drought conditions reduce water in streams and rivers to critical levels, the State Water Resources Control Board yesterday readopted an emergency curtailment regulation for Mill and Deer Creeks in Tehama County to preserve minimum flows for the survival of multiple fish species and protect threatened drinking water supplies. The existing one-year regulation would have expired on Oct. 4.

The creeks, which are tributaries to the Sacramento River, also provide water for agriculture, livestock and fire protection.

“Climate change has brought about hotter and drier weather that requires decisive action if we are to preserve flows and habitat for threatened and endangered fish,” said Joaquin Esquivel, chair of the State Water Board. “Today the board acted to extend curtailment authority in Mill and Deer Creeks, which are critical watersheds for the state’s iconic salmon and steelhead trout species. Maintaining sufficient flows in these creeks can prevent potentially catastrophic impacts. We strongly encourage collaborative efforts among area residents to combat increasingly challenging circumstances.”

The updated regulation, which must be approved by the Office of Administrative Law before becoming effective, includes minor changes to address stockwatering needs and authorizes the State Water Board to do the following:

- Establish minimum passage flow requirements to protect threatened Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon and steelhead.
- Ensure continued access to water supplies for minimum health and safety needs.
- Provide a path for local cooperative solutions to support flow and fishery needs.
- Prohibit inefficient domestic lawn watering practices.
- Require curtailment order reporting.

The board’s action is part of a statewide drought response that began in April 2021, when Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency for Sonoma and Mendocino





Counties. The proclamation was expanded to include all 58 California counties in October 2021.

Today's decision is the State Water Board's fourth and final readoption of an emergency curtailment regulation this year, following those for the Russian River, Scott-Shasta and Delta watersheds, which were approved over the past three months.

*The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.*