

Sample Letters to the Editor to Stop the Tunnel

200 words or less

Delta Landowners

The Delta Tunnel isn't just a bad idea — it's a direct threat to our homes and livelihoods. As a Delta landowner, I'm outraged that the state is pushing forward with a project that will devastate our communities while providing no real water solutions. The tunnel's 15-20 years of construction will bring noise, pollution, and destruction to the region, making our land unlivable. Worse, the state has no plan to protect us from the inevitable damage to our water quality, fisheries, and way of life. Governor Newsom and Secretary Crowfoot ignore us while catering to powerful agricultural interests in the San Joaquin Valley. Instead of wasting \$20 billion on a tunnel that won't create new water, the state should invest in levee upgrades that would cost billions less and actually protect our communities. Southern California ratepayers shouldn't be forced to bankroll a project that will ruin the Delta while failing to secure a resilient water future. If the state truly cares about climate resilience, it must abandon this disastrous project before it's too late.

As a Delta landowner, I don't just live here — I carry generations of history on this land. My family has built a life along these waterways, and now, Governor Newsom's tunnel threatens to erase everything we've worked for. The Delta Tunnel is more than a misguided infrastructure project — it's an existential threat to our communities. Construction will bring years of upheaval, tearing through farms, homes, and small towns, while permanently degrading our water supply. Worse, state officials haven't even consulted us — they pretend we don't exist. This isn't just bad policy, it's a betrayal. The Delta is the heart of California's water system, and the best way to protect it is to invest in levees and habitat restoration — not siphon its water away for corporate profits. If the state moves forward with this project, it won't just be stealing water — it will be erasing a way of life.

Delta Farmers

The Delta Tunnel is a death sentence for Delta farming. This project will siphon off the fresh water we depend on, increasing salinity and making our farmland unusable. California's leaders claim this is a climate-resilient project, but they refuse to acknowledge that climate change means we need to keep water in the Delta—not ship it away for industrial agriculture. Farmers in the Delta have been stewards of this land for generations, yet we are being sacrificed for agribusiness interests in the San Joaquin Valley. The state has no plan to mitigate the tunnel's impacts on water quality, nor have they accounted for skyrocketing costs that will ultimately fall on ratepayers. Instead of forcing a \$20 billion tunnel on us, California should invest in levee upgrades that would provide real climate resilience while protecting our farms and communities. The Delta is already in an ecological crisis — diverting more water is the last thing we need. This project is an assault on Delta agriculture, and we will not stand by as our water, land, and livelihoods are stolen.

Fisheries Advocates

The Delta Tunnel is a death warrant for California's already collapsing fisheries. Seven native fish species are already on the brink of extinction, and this project would make things worse by further reducing freshwater flows. The Department of Water Resources' own environmental review admits the tunnel won't improve fish populations — but that hasn't stopped Governor Newsom from pushing it forward. The state's so-called "voluntary agreements" fail to protect fisheries, and the tunnel's water diversions will accelerate the destruction of salmon runs that thousands of fishing families rely on. For decades, water exports have devastated the Delta's ecosystem, and now the state wants to double down on the same failed policies. Fishermen and Tribes who depend on a healthy Bay-Delta have been shut out of the process, while agribusiness gets priority access to our water. Instead of spending \$20 billion on a project that will destroy fisheries, California should invest in real solutions like habitat restoration and sustainable water management. The Delta Tunnel is nothing more than a water grab that will kill off our fisheries and the communities that rely on them.

If the Delta Tunnel moves forward, we may be the last generation to see wild salmon in California. For decades, state officials have overpromised and underdelivered when it comes to protecting fisheries. Now, they're doubling down on destruction with a project that will siphon off even more of the freshwater flows that fish need to survive. This isn't just an environmental issue — it's an economic disaster. Salmon runs support thousands of fishing jobs, and without them, an entire industry will collapse. Meanwhile, state leaders pretend they're balancing all water users' needs while catering to corporate agriculture. The science is clear: if we want fish in our rivers, we need more water, not less. We're standing at a crossroads — either we fight to keep California's fisheries alive, or we allow this tunnel to push them to extinction.

Southern California Ratepayers – 182 words

Southern Californians should be outraged that we're being forced to foot the bill for the \$20 billion Delta Tunnel boondoggle. At a time when we desperately need funding for fire recovery and investments in local water projects, the state wants us to pay for a tunnel that won't create any new water. Governor Newsom claims this is about water resilience, but in reality, it's about subsidizing Big Ag in the San Joaquin Valley at our expense. The tunnel's costs will continue to skyrocket with annual overruns, interest, litigation, and permitting delays — costs that will be dumped onto ratepayers like us. Meanwhile, our local water agencies are struggling to fund real climate solutions, like recycled water and stormwater capture, that actually improve supply reliability. Why should we

be forced to pay for a tunnel that does nothing for us while our own communities struggle with rising utility bills and disaster recovery? The Metropolitan Water District's vote to approve tunnel planning funds is a betrayal of Southern Californians. We need real water solutions — not a blank check for a failing project that only benefits corporate agriculture.