

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

FOR THE

HEADWATER MERCURY SOURCE REDUCTION (HMSR) STRATEGY



Whereas gold and mercury mining activities have left California with a legacy of contamination that has persisted for over 170 years after the 19th century Gold Rush. Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listings for impairment for mercury as well as the issuance of site-specific fish consumption advisories by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) indicate that mercury is present in watersheds from the Sierra to the sea; and

Whereas research has shown that mercury is incorporated into the local food web at mine sites and continues to be transported off mine-impacted lands downstream into receiving water bodies including reservoirs and wetlands where conditions are conducive for elemental mercury to methylate, enter the food web, and biomagnify and bioaccumulate in fish; and

Whereas the consumption of contaminated fish is the primary pathway of human exposure to mercury and the high levels of mercury found in upper-trophic level Sierra Nevada species including black bass represents a potential threat to public health and the wildlife that eat fish, including birds; and

Whereas The Sierra Fund's (TSF) Headwater Mercury Source Reduction Technical Advisory Committee (HMSR TAC), composed of some of the leading experts on these issues from academic, governmental, regulatory, land management and non-profit organizations, has been meeting quarterly for several years to identify, assess, prioritize and address sources of mercury in the Gold Country; and

Whereas the HMSR TAC has developed the HMSR Strategy, a living document intended to guide the protection and restoration of ecosystem and community resiliency that builds on over a decade of research, actions, and methods, providing a cohesive platform for technical experts to collaborate with a focus on four key mercury targets: (1) hydraulic mines and mine features, (2) mercury in forest and land management, (3) mercury-contaminated sediment in reservoirs, and (4) mercury exposure via fish consumption; and

Whereas working in coordination at a watershed scale to adopt this strategy, the goal of mercury source reduction in the headwaters and downstream in the Bay-Delta will be attained more rapidly, effectively, and efficiently.

Be it therefore resolved that the following signatories supports the implementation of the HMSR Strategy as presented on October 17, 2019 at TSF's Reclaiming the Sierra conference, and in doing so agrees to the following activities:

- A. Work collaboratively with other stakeholders to make the best use of resources and efforts to implement scalable and replicable projects that address sources of mercury in the context of the four identified mercury targets.
- B. Participate in and facilitate inclusive and flexible dialogue, shared science-based learning, and collective action in projects that aim to reduce sources of mercury in the headwaters.

- C. Collaborate with land managers, irrigation districts, scientific experts, partners, tribal leaders and stakeholders in the ongoing development of the HMSR Strategy, a living document that will be adapted as new information emerges, including:
 - 1. Hydraulic mine and mine feature and reservoir inventory and mapping,
 - 2. Hydraulic mine and mine feature, reservoir, and human exposure potential assessment with regard to mercury,
 - 3. Prioritization of hydraulic mines and mine features, reservoirs, and forested areas for assessment at the regional level,
 - 4. Securing funding, and
 - 5. Implementation of remediation.

- D. Use a watershed scale approach to work together with other stakeholders to secure funding for and implement priority remediation projects on a watershed-wide basis under separate procurement instruments, contracts, and/or agreements.

- E. Endeavor to make the best use of the region's, each land manager, and partner's resources and efforts in a collaborative spirit in order to further efforts to reduce headwater sources of mercury.

- F. Encourage the participation of non-member individuals, universities, industry, organizations, and government entities in pursuit of the goal of reducing sources of mercury in the headwaters. These collaborations may be the subject of separate agreements, procurement instruments and/or contracts.

Signed by:

Name	Printed Name, Organization	Date