

Subject: redistricting by watershed**Date:** Sunday, May 22, 2011 6:54 PM**From:** Peter Moyle <[REDACTED]>**To:** <[REDACTED]>**Conversation:** redistricting by watershed

To: California Citizens Redistricting Commission

I would like to suggest that the Commission consider setting the boundaries of new political districts based on watersheds rather than arbitrary political boundaries. This opinion is based on a a career working with fish conservation and water issues. Watersheds make sense because they naturally link people over diverse areas because of concern over water and conservation issues. Actions taken by upstream users affect people living downstream while demand for water by downstream users affects how water is managed upstream. As a natural, easily defined unit on the landscape, a watershed can unite people with a pride of place. This idea is not new, of course, and the concept was developed by the poet Gary Snyder, who thought everyone should identify their place by the name of the watershed they lived in.

Because I live in northern California, I feel especially drawn to the idea of watershed as a political as well as a natural entity. Here (Yolo County) watershed boundaries would create natural links along a east-west axis, through the Putah and Cache creek watersheds. This would link us, for example, with Solano County which is politically much more similar to Yolo County than we are to counties to the north (e.g. Colusa). More importantly, it would create possibilities for improving the management of water (a critical issue everywhere) because users throughout the watershed would be obliged to work together to solve problems, through their common political representatives. I could see similar useful alliances formed along the American and Yuba rivers as well.

Using the watershed as at least part of the basis for redistricting has the advantage that it could reduce debate on where to draw lines. If there is a choice, go with the watershed boundary.

I appreciate your openness to public input on this process.

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<http://wfc.ucdavis.edu/www/Faculty/Peter/petermoyle/Introduction.html>