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July 30, 1999

Lester Snow
CalFed Executive Director
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95815

Dear Mr. Snow,

I am writing concerning the CalFed plan that is currently being considered. I understand that you are promising not to pursue storage at new on-stream reservoir sites, but instead will focus on raising and enlarging existing dams and reservoirs, and building so called offstream storage reservoirs. Even though offstream storage is considered environmentally superior to standard dams, I urge that you do not build new offstream storage reservoirs because of the impact it will have on the Sacramento River and the Delta. It will take huge amounts of water to fill one or more of these reservoirs and dreadfully impact the fish and riparian ecosystems.

I also understand that you are pursuing a multi-million fish and wildlife habitat restoration program in the Central Valley, which includes purchasing water and habitat, removing some dams, installing fish screens, replanting degraded riparian and wetland habitat, and conducting further studies to better determine ecosystem restoration needs. I urge you to do so however, it does not need to go hand in hand with building new dams. Spend the money on restoration rather than on building / enlarging reservoirs and dams.

Lastly, I ask you to consider water conservation and maximizing water efficiency. Who is going to do something about the cities in the valley who do not use water meters, especially Sacramento. Why should meters be mandatory in Southern California and small towns such as Calistoga, when they aren't in the Central Valley? Why do we continue to waste water irrigating thousands of acres of toxic selenium-laced soils in the San Joaquin Valley? Wouldn't switching to higher value and less water intensive crops be a more efficient use of water throughout the Central Valley. And let's stop subsidizing low value / high water use crops with tax payers money!!!

Please heed this message in your decision making.

Sincerely,

Nora Burnham

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