SEP 16 1999 904

CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, #1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear CALFED,

I attended the CALFED meeting in San Jose on September 7th. I intended to speak, but I had to leave by 9:00 and my name had not been called. I am a birder, and my main concern with overall water policy in California is that the environment be protected. I am concerned that runaway development and the resulting pressures to supply more water will cause additional environmental degradation.

The environment has been severely damaged by water and development policies of previous years. While I applaud your emphasis on ecosystem restoration, I do not understand how that can be reconciled with plans for additional storage facilities and your version of the Peripheral Canal. In California, we need to figure out how to make better use of the water we have through conservation measures and recycling water. The environment needs the natural peak flows that would be reduced by new storage facilities.

To talk of building new dams is ridiculous, given what we know about the environmental devastation they have caused. We should be looking at eliminating specific dams, if that can be done without too great an impact on the water supply. The arguments about saving dams to support recreation don't make sense to me. This is California, the land of few lakes and much desert. California has much to offer in the way of natural recreational opportunities. We should not be in the business of maintaining "unnatural" recreation opportunities such as golf courses in the desert, or reservoirs whose primary constituents are recreational users.

Your "Commonly Asked Questions" states that the so-called "Isolated Facility" differs significantly from the Peripheral Canal, because it is smaller and part of an integrated plan. I am not convinced. This falls in the category of "if it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck". You will not convince anyone in Northern California that can read a map, that you are not reproposing the Peripheral Canal. Routing water around the delta marshes means less water for the environment. Being a birder, I am extremely interested in the health of both San Francisco Bay and the Delta/Central Valley marshes. Further diversions away from the Bay will not protect the health of the Bay and marshes. We have done enough damage already.

In summary, please concentrate on conservation and recycling water. De-emphasize dams and other new storage facilities. Do not build a peripheral canal under any guise.

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