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DUNNIGAN WATER DISTRICT

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September 22, 1999

SEP 23 1999

Mr. Lester Snow
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Dear Mr. Snow:

Those of us in the Sacramento Valley are very concerned that select elements of CALFED's proposed program are currently being implemented well in advance of EIS/EIR public input and a Record of Decision and that many of the issues conveyed to CALFED by this group over two years ago still remain unaddressed.

Specifically, what benefits does the CALFED proposed solution bring to the Sacramento Valley? In its current form, there appears to be limited benefits in this plan for Northern California water users. The preferred alternative provides no new water for our region, and advocates that water and land will be removed from agriculture to compensate for Bay-Delta problems that were not caused by our actions. CALFED has advocated that "we all got better together with no redirected impacts". Not only are we not getting better, but our region will bear the brunt of redirected impacts. We feel that the proposed solution emphasizes the interests of the Bay-Delta and the exporters that rely upon it. We are alarmed by several premises interwoven through the draft preferred alternative.

It is critical that CALFED re-direct its focus and return to the programs initial objective to provide reliable, high quality water to all Californians, while maintaining a healthy environment. The current CALFED proposal does not address the critical water supply/quality needs of a growing California.

Protect Water Rights: The CALFED program must adhere to California's water rights priority system. The CALFED program must also adhere strictly to the commitments and policies articulated in state and federal law regarding the areas and watersheds of origin. This includes adherence to these commitments and policies as they have been incorporated into various water supply and water diversion contracts. To protect water rights, there needs to be new storage and conveyance facilities and policies that facilitate in-basin transfers.

Need for New Storage: CALFED must make a serious commitment to develop new water storage in the state to meet a growing population. The Integrated Storage Investigation (ISI) which will assess different storage options for CALFED, is a good start, but it is time that CALFED start developing new storage rather than study storage.

Limit Land Acquisition: CALFED's restoration efforts should re-focus its efforts away from acquiring agricultural land and instead focus on maintaining existing habitat and fully utilizing public lands for this purpose. Taking farmland out of production will devastate Northern California's economy and it will jeopardize the ability to use water in Northern California.

Water Acuisitions are Limited: CALFED's Environmental Water Account (EWA) cannot rely upon Northern California water supplies or facilities, which are already used for farms, cities and habitat in this region, and to meet environmental demands in the delta. Land fallowing cannot be a source of EWA water.

Fund New Fish Screens: The Sacramento Valley's initiative and effort to protect salmon and other aquatic species is unprecedented and is now recognized as one of the most exciting and progressive voluntary salmon restoration efforts in the United States. Nearly 75 percent of all agricultural water use from the Sacramento River will soon flow through new, state-of-the-art fish screens. CALFED must continue to prioritize necessary fish screen projects that prove beneficial for water reliability and the environment.

We want and need detailed answers that will address our conserns with CALFED.

Sincerely,

Cynthia C. Peterson

Cynthia C. Peterson
Manager