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File 7.10.2

May 5, 1998

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

MAY 12 1998

Subject: Comments on CALFED EIR/EIS

Dear Gentlemen/Ladies:

The purpose of this letter is to reiterate oral comments provided by Staff Engineer Robert Kunde at the April 29 public comment hearing in Bakersfield, California.

The water supply for Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District (hereafter "District") comes from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta via the State Water Project ("SWP"). With this water supply, farmers in the District farm 175 square miles in southern Kern County to produce fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, and cotton for California citizens and the world.

CALFED's preferred alternative, when selected, will have a significant impact on the District. The significant measuring stick for evaluating whether the District will support the preferred alternative is:

"Are we getting better together?"

Let's consider three recent historical factors to make this evaluation.

1. In the fall of 1994, the Monterey Accord led to the creation of CALFED. As a measure of good faith, the SWP and Central Valley Project ("CVP") offered and accepted an interim water supply reduction of 1,100,000 acre-feet (1.1 MAF) per year of dry year yield. Therefore, the District started off the process of "getting better together" by getting worse. In order for the District to "get better together", restoration of this interim reduction of 1.1 MAF per year to the SWP and CVP is required.
2. In 1996, California voters approved Proposition 204 with the active support of the District and other agricultural, urban, and environmental interests. The vast majority of the funding has been for environmental improvements with virtually nothing for agricultural water supply improvement. "Are we getting better together?" Not the District. Not yet.
3. In 1998, the CALFED EIR and its Phase II Interim Report evaluates the effects of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 on various resource areas. In the water supply analysis for the SWP

and CVP in dry years, the no storage alternatives result in an increase of 100,000 to 200,000 acre-feet per dry year over existing conditions. With 4.75 to 4.95 MAF of storage, the alternatives yield an increase of 700,000 to 800,000 acre-feet per dry year over existing conditions. Note that existing conditions reflect the 1994 interim water supply reduction of 1.1 MAF per year. Depending on the level of storage in the CALFED preferred alternative, the SWP and CVP are 300,000 to 1,000,000 acre-feet per year worse off than we were in 1994 prior to CALFED. Therefore, under every alternative developed by CALFED, the District is worse off than it was prior to CALFED. CALFED turns the 1.1 MAF per year interim water supply reduction into a permanent water supply reduction. Is a permanent water supply reduction "getting better together"? Not for the District.

The conclusion to be drawn from the above is that the CALFED alternatives result in the District getting worse while environmental and other water users "get better together". Needless to say, this hardly meets the CALFED solution criteria. It is also clear that the only way for the District to "get better together" is for substantial water storage facilities to be a part of the CALFED preferred alternative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the CALFED EIR.

Sincerely,



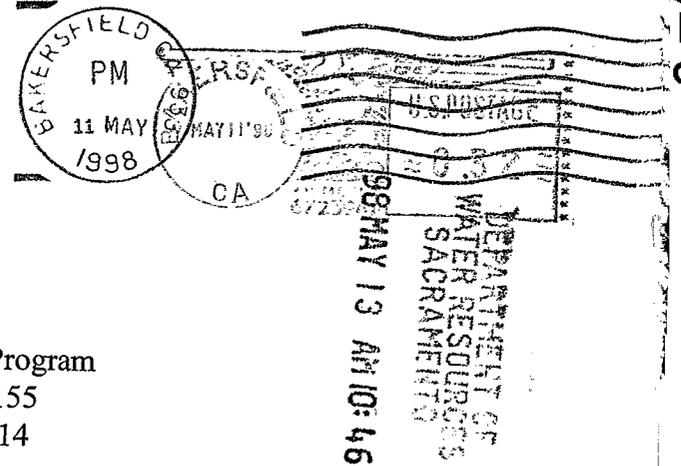
Robert J. Kunde, P.E.
Staff Engineer

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