

00394



# Folsom Chamber of Commerce

200 Wool Street  
Folsom, California 95630  
(916) 985-2698

MAY 27 1998

May 21, 1998

CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Attn: Rick Breitenbach

RE: Comments on the Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

The Folsom Chamber of Commerce has reviewed the CALFED Bay-Delta Program Programmatic EIS/EIR dated March 1998. The efforts you have undertaken to resolve the long-standing issues concerning the use of California's water resources in general and those issues which specifically affect California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta should be appreciated by every Californian. Resolution of water issues in California is important to the state and every citizen.

The specific interests of the Folsom Chamber of Commerce in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and any actions which may be taken or not taken as a result of the Program are:

- To preserve all existing City of Folsom rights to high-quality water from the American River;
- To assure rights to adequate quantities of high-quality water to accommodate future growth in the City of Folsom; and
- To assure that the level of Folsom Lake is maintained at levels which will satisfy the demands for recreation throughout the summer.

The introduction of increased competition for water resulting from the creation of water markets and the increased ability to move water through or around the Delta may threaten all of these specific interests. The construction of additional water storage capacity upstream of Folsom Lake would, however, enhance the likelihood that the specific interests listed above would be satisfied. While there is no lack of controversy concerning the construction of a high dam at Auburn, there are also, in the opinion of the Folsom Chamber of Commerce, many excellent reasons for the construction of Auburn Dam. The sum of these excellent reasons overwhelms any objections to construction of a high dam at Auburn.

In addition to the concerns specific to the Folsom community stated above, the Chamber has concerns that affect the region and state which follow.

The Draft identifies twelve alternative methods to restore ecosystem health and to improve water management in the Bay-Delta system. However, the cost to others, primarily the small towns in northern California and Sacramento Valley agriculture is enormous. This is contained in the section on Land Use, Social and Economic Issues (8.1 to 44). The significant impact of these solutions is acknowledged. However, what is offered as a mitigation strategy falls far short of what will be required or needed, and will, in most instances create an intolerable financial burden. Since no funding mechanisms are proposed, this is a serious fault in the plan.

For example, the strategies for minimizing the social/employment impacts resulting from conversion of agricultural land to habitat include:

1. Continuing the flow of property tax revenues to local counties and providing economic incentives, such as relocating facilities and shifting agriculture to new areas;
2. Compensate local governments for increased demand for services resulting from labor displacement and compensate workers displaced by augmenting unemployment insurance benefits (funded through a tax on employers);
3. Provide training and educational opportunities for unemployed individuals to re-enter the workforce, job referral and placement services;
4. Pay fair market value for any crops destroyed and taken out of production on private or leased land.

**Where is the money coming from to pay for these mitigation strategies? The State can't even fund public schools adequately.**

The CALFED solution places great emphasis on water transfers. However the plan doesn't address how California's future water needs will be met. The population of the state is growing, increasing demands on existing resources. The CALFED plan will add greatly to that demand, but by how much is unclear because it is unstated as to how much water will be needed. How can you, or we assess the impact of this plan without knowing the amount of water needed to implement it?

Water transfers, such as transfer from ground water, can lead to problems. Unless experts have determined the safe yield from the aquifer there could be overdrawn, resulting in the aquifer being constantly drawn down leading to water quality problems.

Water transfers made possible by land fallowing can have substantial economic impacts, mainly in two areas. Some of the farmland lost will be prime and unique land. In addition, removing 45,000 acres of productive farm land from the tax rolls will have a devastating impact. Currently existing bonds will be harder to pay and revenue for schools and public infrastructure will decline.

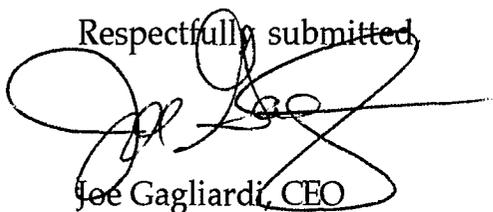
That leaves water transfers from existing reservoirs. This is an unrealistic answer because there is just not enough water to go around. With a current population approaching 35 million, growing to 50 million in the near future and at the same time a huge ecosystem restoration program is proposed. More water storage is essential for this plan to work, in the form of additional off-stream storage and the building of Auburn Dam. Storage projects add value to the area where they are built along with providing the water for ecosystem restoration.

Until water needs are quantified and planned for, the creation of new habitat is inappropriate. Adding new habitat without adding new storage is incredibly short-sighted.

Conservation is not a complete answer. Conservation doesn't produce much water, and there is little that agriculture can do since plants are very inefficient water users. In addition, there's no incentive to conserve by piping or lining a canal because the Department of Water Resources and the Bureau of Reclamation won't allow the farmer to benefit from the water he saves. They want the benefit for downstream use to fulfill their own obligations.

There would be no problem in the Delta if the two existing large water projects had not been built. Folsom had rights on the American River long before Folsom Dam, the Central Valley Project or the State Water Project. Yet, now all of northern California, including Folsom, is being asked to bail out the Delta so these two projects can continue to export water to the South. If you take something away, leave us something of value: **Build more storage...build Auburn Dam and other reservoirs and we will have the additional water that is needed for cities, agriculture and the environment.**

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Gagliardi, CEO

Folsom Chamber of Commerce  
200 Wool Street  
Folsom, California 95630



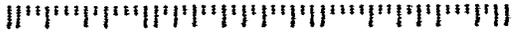
**MAY 26 1998**

CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
Rick Breitenbach  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

172  
3080 \$00.320  
MAY 22 98  
PB9020535  
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 95630  
2671  
\* \* \*



95814/5309



C-010819

C-010819