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"FLOOD CONTROL THAT INCREASES WATER CONSERVATION"

MAY 1998

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Dear Congressman Robert Matsui & Press Secretary Jim Bonham:

Copies of this letter & the enclosed have been mailed to Vice President Al Gore, Congressman John Doolittle & Aide Richard Robinson, CALFED, Mr. Tom Philp (editorial writer for the BEE), and others.

No matter how late, I am writing on the premise our flood control leaders have the ability to compromise in excepting a more superior flood control system over and above the methods now under consideration. The important question is; Is it wise to attempt flood control once the flood water is already down to the valley floor, or is it wiser to take charge of potential flood waters between say the 500ft. throughout & up to the 4,000ft. elevations??

No question about it, the Sacramento valley river levees need ongoing maintenance. However, the problem of increasing flows out of Folsom down the American River is that the Sacramento River would normally be cresting at the same time. We would then have the Sacramento blocking the American flow creating a sharp rise in both rivers. Remember, even with the Yolo by-pass wide open, we have been within inches of breaching the Sacramento area levees twice within the last twelve years. Every cubic foot per second over and above the existing historical high water flows will be equal to the same measure of lost fresh water for our summer use. We desperately need this water for future agriculture, cities, etc..

The Auburn Dam: Not disregarding its failure would kill hundreds and destroy major highway bridges, it will control only 1,250 square miles of the American river basin. The 1,250 square miles is only 4% of the total Sacramento water basin which collects flood flows from 17 counties.

HYPOTHETICALLY; If no water flowed down the American, Sacramento City would flood with a very small precipitation increase in the northern basin over and above the flood years of 1955, 1983, etc.. The heavy American river flows of February 1986 and January 1997 is a real panic, because no one seems to acknowledge the huge sustaining flood flows that comes from over 90% of the Sacramento basin down the Sacramento river from the north. Mother Nature's storm flukes of 1986 & 1997 has all eyes on the American which is a huge mistake. Historically, the heavier storm systems are north of State Highway 20. There are those who will say the American

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delivers 15,000cfs more than the Sacramento river. "This is true, but for less than 10% of the time!" What they are not saying is, "The sustained flows of the Sacramento river will deliver 90% of the flood water and the American less than 10%!" (Based on square mile precipitation points and the heavier storms up north).

During the storms of 1986, we lost over 700 acre feet of storage space in the Folsom reservoir. A large hunk of that storage loss was due to the loss of the Auburn Cofferdam. Again in 1997 due to warm rains & rapid snow melt we lost another 600 acre feet of storage space in the Folsom reservoir. The average yearly storage loss at Folsom is more than 400 acre feet. Most of this rock, sand & soil washes out of non-controlled dry creeks. The bottom line is; Over the years Folsom has lost over 20,000 acre feet of storage space. This is not in our best flood control interest when we add in the lost storage space of Shasta, Oroville and other flood controlling dams that protect Sacramento.

Adoption of the dry creek(s) water control system throughout California (not just the American river basin) will result in automatic flood control and as much as 25% increase in our average summer river flows. No work on our all season streams or rivers would be required. Everyone profits!

TRADE OFF SUGESTIONS: Open the door for any California Water District to install small earthen dams in any county on dry creeks. The water district would take charge in having the dams constructed under County, State & Federal guide lines. Lets say a Coast Range water district installs "slow-flow dams" in El Dorado county to control a specific square mile area equalling control of say 500 acre feet. From my point of view, the coast range water district should receive at least 250 acre feet (½) of the water they applied flood control to in El Dorado county. The water district would draw this 250 acre feet from their closest source - say the Sacramento river, etc.. The planning & construction fees will be paid by the coast range water district. The dams would become the property of El Dorado county. El Dorado would run 5 year maintenance programs with interested groups such as the C.C.C., or others by contract.

"NO DRY CREEK EARTHEN DAMS SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED WITHOUT IRON-CLAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS IN EFFECT PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION!"

With all do respect; Higher & higher levees upon the valley floor is creating a maintenance monster for generations to come. Along with other factors, the failure percentage of levees increases with the .4335 per foot pressure rise. We need to lower the winter-spring river flows, not elevate levees. Question: How many small dry creek earthen dams can we construct with the same amount of

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soil it takes to construct a 10 foot high, one mile long levee? The answer is several! Are the extra water release ports through Folsom dam needed if we take charge of dry creeks at elevations above the Folsom reservoir?

Question: How much lower would the American river have been on February 26, 1986 & January 2, 1997 if dry creek dams had been in place in the American river basin? My guess; Between 3 to 5 feet lower and we would still have saved the excess water for summer use.

In closing my hope is you folks will see the need to delay potential flood water in the higher elevations for flood control and additional water for summer use. Higher running summer rivers are colder, a plus for fish and a more sustained flushing for the Delta - San Francisco Bay. For the most part, dry creek earthen dams can be installed in counties by remote water districts free of charge.

Sincerely,

Ellsworth Rose

Ellsworth Rose
(530) 333-0369

P.S. Perhaps a faster way to get flood control earthen dams under construction, would be ½ Federal funding to Water Districts wanting to construct dry creek earthen dams!?

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