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JUN 29 1998

June 26, 1998

TO: CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: The Holman Family  
1761 Garden Road  
Durham, CA 95938

RE: CALFED Bay-Delta Program comments

To Whom It May Concern:

As residents of Butte County since 1972, we depend on groundwater both for our home and our small almond orchard. Like 14,000 other residents and many other farmers or ranchers in the county, any drop in the water table could have drastic consequences for us, especially if current practices are maintained or increased in the coming years.

**It is our hope that any plan for the future of northern California water will 1) maintain our water rights over the groundwater upon which we have been historically dependent, and 2) benefit all those with rights to the groundwater since all of us on groundwater wells are put at risk every time the water table is drawn upon and lowered.**

Any plan for water usage must provide us with water rights which are clearly defined and enforceable. Living in a state where most of the population is in the south, it is a legitimate concern that once water is sent there we will be unable to stop its transfer if the water table drops drastically or if we experience years of drought. Water transferred will be interpreted as unnecessary and surplus. It will continue to be transferred whether it is needed or not, and we will lose it permanently.

A plan for water usage must also benefit everyone who depends on it for his home and livelihood. One particularly disturbing practice by some landowners has been to sell surface water south and then replace it with groundwater. This is harmful in two ways. First, the surface water is drawn away before it can help replenish the water table. Second, this "double dipping" for a profit by some individual landowners at the expense of everyone else is unacceptable. It is not logical for individual owners to benefit while all must deal with the drop in the water table. Any program where groundwater is sold must be for the benefit of all who depend on it for their homes, farms, or ranches.

Our groundwater is our lifeblood. If it is sent south for the benefit of a few, and if we lose control over our ability to maintain historic water table levels, it could mean the end of our agricultural livelihood and our rural way of life. **The answer is in "creating" water through the use of dams, not the environmental and economic destruction which would occur with a lowered water table.** Please don't let this happen.

Sincerely,

The Holman Family

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