

California Striped Bass Association

P.O. Box 591  Bethel Island, CA 94511

State Board

01398

JUN 30 1998

June 25, 1998

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

Re: Comments on Phase II Interim Report

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

The California Striped Bass Association is dedicated to the preservation, conservation and enhancement of the striped bass. The following will serve as the comments of the State Board of the California Striped Bass Association to the CalFed Bay-Delta's Interim Report.

From the outset of the CalFed Bay-Delta project, CalFed has expressed a bias against the striped bass by classifying it as a secondary species. While the striped bass is not native to the Bay and Delta, most Californians are not native either, but the striped bass have been in the Bay and Delta for over 100 years, having been successfully introduced from the East Coast in 1879. This discrimination against the striped bass does not appear in the Central Valley Project Improvement Act which mandates the doubling of anadromous fish, including salmon, steelhead and striped bass. CalFed fails to incorporate the essential goal of the CVPIA of doubling the populations of these species.

In addition, CalFed does not incorporate the mandate of the CVPIA of making 800,000 acre feet of water available for fish and wildlife restoration purposes. Since this is required by federal law, this should be one of the basic goals of CalFed.

The most important factor in the decline of the striped bass, salmon, and Delta smelt populations is the state and federal pumping projects. The entrainment of striped bass young and the export of water required by the striped bass to spawn are

"Dedicated to the Preservation, Conservation and Enhancement of Striped Bass"

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the two principal detrimental effects of the water projects on the striped bass. The CalFed Interim Report makes no provision for pumping management, particularly curtailment during the limited spring spawning periods of the striped bass.

Prior to the depletion of the striped bass population by the state and federal water projects, the striped bass was recognized as the preeminent game fish in the State of California. This translates into significant sales tax revenues, licensing fees and related business revenues generated by sport fishing. In 1996 this represented over \$3 billion in sport fishing expenditures, \$199 million in sales taxes, and 74,000 jobs. The impact upon sport fishing related businesses, including equipment manufacturers, guides, charter boats, marinas, and hotels, from the demise of the striped bass, is considerable. The health of these sport fishing related businesses has received no attention from CalFed, which is in sharp contrast to the substantial attention given to the agricultural interests who complain about loss of revenues from the loss of subsidized water.

The CalFed process should strongly emphasize not only agricultural water conservation, since approximately 80% of the state's water is consumed by agricultural users, but also should focus upon an open market system for water transfers and charging all water users the true cost of water, as advocated by Congressman George Miller.

The Interim Report concludes that the screening of diversions is ineffective to address the entrainment problem and provides that, at best, the proposal to screen the Alternative 3 diversion presents considerable "risks". Although the CalFed program has emphasized the adaptive management approach, the Interim Report provides little assurance that the essential actions necessary to restore the striped bass fishery will be undertaken. They are not even proposed.

We do not believe that a multi-billion dollar through Delta conveyance facility is the appropriate means to address California's water problems. We doubt that the detrimental

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effects of such a significant project can even be anticipated, just as the existing state and federal pumping operations were not anticipated to cause salt water intrusion into the Delta. It is no secret that the peripheral canal option is unpopular with California voters and taxpayers.

Finally, we find it troubling that the information generated so far in the CalFed process provides little assurance as to the benefits the striped bass will enjoy from the various ecosystem restoration proposals. Nowhere in the documents is there any assurance that the key factors of adequate flows and reduction of entrainment will be addressed, which we can only assume is a result of CalFed's underlying bias against the striped bass.

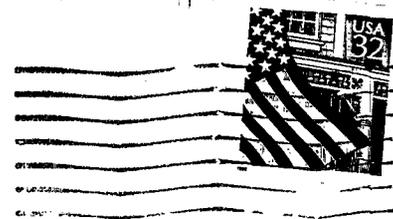
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Red Bartley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Red Bartley
CSBA State Board President

cc: Congressman George Miller
Lew Pengilly
John H. Banks
United Anglers

CALIFORNIA STRIPED BASS ASSOCIATION
STATE BOARD
29 AMADOR CIRCLE RIO VISTA, CA 94571

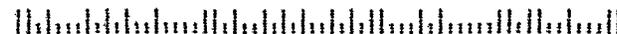


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