



April 8, 1997

David Kennedy, Director  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1115-1  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mr. Lester Snow  
CALFED Bay/Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Natural Resources  
Defense Council

71 Stevenson Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
415 777-0220  
Fax 415 495-5996

Dear Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Snow:

The Natural Resources Defense Council, Friends of the River, League of Women Voters of California, Save San Francisco Bay Association, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, Surfrider Foundation, Clean Water Action, Golden Gate Audubon, The Bay Institute, The Environmental Defense Fund, United Anglers, and the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermens' Associations decline to sign the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Efficient Water Management Practices by Agricultural Water Suppliers in California (MOU) developed pursuant to AB3616. We strongly believe that agricultural water demand management is critical to creating sustainable patterns of water use and to improving water quality in California, and thus, to any long term solution to the problems of the Bay/Delta. Unfortunately, the MOU in its present form is not likely to achieve these improvements. An analysis of the MOU's shortcomings is enclosed with this letter. We urge the CALFED program to renew its efforts to develop a meaningful water use efficiency common program to be included in all CALFED alternatives.

The CALFED process offers a unique opportunity to achieve significant efficiency improvements in California water use. CALFED staff has acknowledged that at scoping sessions throughout the state, the public repeatedly expressed the need for existing supplies to be used efficiently before CALFED developed additional supplies. Approximately 54% of California's agricultural water supply is currently used to grow alfalfa, irrigated pasture, rice, and cotton.<sup>1</sup> Shifting a portion of that water to other uses could generate significant environmental and economic benefits, and would represent a more efficient use of a scarce resource.

The environmental community had hoped that the AB3616 process would result in a meaningful agricultural demand management program, and we were initially involved in the process to try to achieve that goal. We are disappointed that the final product is not something that we can support. This does not mean that the work of the AB3616 Council should be abandoned, but rather that it must be incorporated into a larger effort to reduce agricultural water use. We have made specific suggestions to CALFED about how to remedy the shortcomings of AB3616, including the adoption of more meaningful requirements on water measurement and pricing.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Gleick, et al., *California Water 2020: A Sustainable Vision* (Oakland: Pacific Institute, 1996) p. 4.

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If CALFED settles for AB3616 as an acceptable water use efficiency program, it will have fallen far short of its responsibility to assure the public that existing supplies are being used efficiently, and this will undermine public support for other elements of the CALFED program. We hope that CALFED will continue to explore more comprehensive approaches to improving agricultural water demand management, and we will continue to provide our recommendations for the necessary changes.

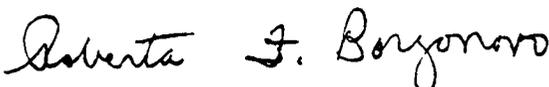
Sincerely,



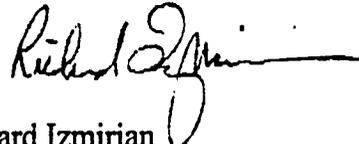
Ronnie Cohen  
Natural Resources Defense Council



Betsy Reifsnider  
Friends of the River



Roberta Borgonovo  
League of Women Voters of California



Richard Izmirian  
California Sportfishing Protection Alliance



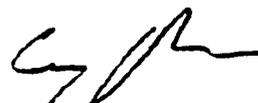
Polly Smith  
Save San Francisco Bay Association



Marguerite Young  
Clean Water Action



Peter Candy  
Surfrider Foundation



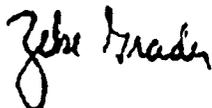
Gary Bobker  
The Bay Institute



Katrina Schneider  
Environmental Defense Fund



John Beuttler  
United Anglers



Zeke Grader  
Pacific Coast Federation of  
Fishermens' Associations



Arthur Feinstein  
Golden Gate Audubon

cc: Ed Craddock