

# JACKSON VALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT



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June 26, 1998

CAL FED - Bay Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
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Attention: Mr. Rick Breitenbach

Thank you for this opportunity to offer comments, suggestions and findings regarding a most important subject, water - and the relationship of the San Francisco Bay and the Delta.

So lets first understand, the Delta is not broken, it is changed. The change has been in progress for more than one hundred years. In fact, evolutionists tell us it has been undergoing change for a billion or more years. But, we are learning from the CAL-FED Draft EIR and your plans for our future, that the Delta must be fixed and vast quantities of fresh water is the suggested (demanded) "fix". The plan, in conjunction with the California Department of Water Resources, is designed to steal water from water right holders and those citizen/agencies who had the foresight to build water storage projects. The "biological opinion" seems to promote the concept that more fresh water flowing into and through the Delta will somehow cause the Delta to be restored to some imagined past pristine state. The fresh water is also going to make great quantities of salmon magically appear.

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At page 7 in the April 1996, The California Water Journal, stated: "...according to a new report by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Francisco Bay/Delta can now be recognized as the most invaded aquatic ecosystem in North America. Ships ballast water and other means are bringing new non-native shrimp, crabs, clams, fish and whatever to the Delta on the average of one every 12 weeks." The report goes on "exotic and foreign species, including striped bass have been flooding the Bay/Delta ecosystem since the Gold Rush." And again, one year later in The California Water Journal, April 1997 (Vol 7 No. 4 at page 4) in an article, "STORM OUTFLOWS DAMAGE DELTA ECOSYSTEM". "Biologists at the U.S. Geological Survey said they were astonished at how quickly and far the fresh water spread, noting salinity in the Bay dropped to its lowest level in thirty years (no tests made before that time)." The article went on "...the drastic changes are expected to kill vast amounts of shrimp, worms, mussels and clams that live in the Bay. Some may not recover for several years. The phenomena could also affect the direction of plans being developed for purposes of improving the Bay/Delta ecosystem." Currently CAL-FED, the State/Federal team charged with developing a Bay/Delta ecosystem restoration plan, is proposing to dramatically increase the amount of fresh water flowing to the Bay. Another Federal proposal, the Andromous Fish Restoration Program (AFRP), under the Central Valley Improvement Act, includes plans for even more fresh water outflows than the CAL-FED plan."

At a recent meeting, a CAL-FED representative stated that about 43 million dollars has already been spent to produce a monstrous amount of printed matter. The theme throughout the voluminous stacks of paper is water rationing and more water rationing to produce more fresh water for the Delta. This water rationing program, along with some retribution for failure to comply, begins on page 2-13 of the 1998 Draft Programatic Environmental Impact Statement: "Assurance will play a critical role in the water efficiency program. The assurance mechanisms are structured to insure that urban and agriculture water users implement the appropriate efficiency measures as a prerequisite to obtaining CAL-FED program benefits (meaning receiving "new" water, participating as a buyer or seller in a water transfer, or receiving water from a drought water bank). Water suppliers will have to show that they are in compliance with the applicable urban or agricultural council agreements and applicable State Law."

The CAL-FED program initiators will probably select Alternative 3A as there preferred water plan. But, this whole Draft EIR does not portray any real enthusiasm or commitment to pursue any serious water storage projects, except maybe some underground storage. So all the CAL-FED Program does to meet our ever increasing water demands is to steal water from water right holders and agriculture. This will guarantee more future flood damage, more severe water rationing and more propaganda for the public's benefit that more fresh water passing through the Delta will flush out the non-native species, return the biota to a natural state of 100 years ago and grow great quantities of salmon. To add confidence and assurance for all of us that this will come to pass, at page 2-34 are 19 "tools and methods of assurance available to meet the assurance needs and stake holder's concerns developed by the BDAC Assurance work group". The

first one listed is, "Federal and State Constitutional Amendments". Another important assurance is "President's and Governor's executive order".

I think it is time to go back to sanity. Charles M. Weber, grandson of the founder of the City of Stockton, spent 16 years, beginning in 1935 as a member of the California Assembly. During this period, he served as a chairman of the Committee on Conservation, Planning and Public Works. After leaving the Assembly, he went back to Sacramento, strictly on his own, to continue a project he hadn't finished while on the Committee. With Legislative permission, he worked in 2 small rooms on the top floor of the Capital Building to produce "a Comprehensive California Public Works Plan for the full development of the water resources of the North Costal and Central Valley areas, thereby meeting the water needs of all of the Central Valley and foothill areas, and making available sufficient export water supply to meet the foreseeable needs of all of Californians beyond the Tehachapis, including South Costal areas."

The Weber Study and Report was authorized by the California Assembly by House Resolution No. 200, June 15, 1951 and Senate Resolution No. 115 dated May 25, 1955. Both Resolutions were extended to the Regular Sessions of 1961. The total Study and Report cost the State a little over \$250,000 and untold hours contributed by Mr. Weber to complete the comprehensive plan along with necessary supporting data and maps.

During his studies, he found that one of the most urgent successions of events is the reoccurring floods and droughts that shape and continue to shape California History. He was also aware of and offered a plan to deal with the serious drainage problem that occurs where agriculture water is used too efficiently (page 121). "The water may become so contaminated by salts as to make it a liability." "We will be wise to develop all of our available reservoir capacity, including underground recharge storage, to obtain the maximum year to year storage of water (drought protection)." "There is no alternative means by which we can protect ourselves from drought (page 122)." "One of the amazing things about floods is the haste with which we who are not directly victims, forget about them. We are prone to call each disaster the worst possible and then assume that nothing like it can ever happen again and again and again."

Excerpts of "Finding 12" (pare 144) in the Weber Report... "that the control of the maximum historic floods which occurred during December 1861 and January 1862 in the Great Central Valley... that research of news and engineering reports of 1861-62 established the following significant facts... that the tremendous volume of flood water stored in the combined Deltas of the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers reached a height above mean sea level around the perimeter of the Delta of 23 feet at Sacramento, 14 feet at Molelumne City, 14.4 feet at Stockton, 35 feet at the junction of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers, 13.5 feet north west of Tracy, 10 feet at Marsh Landing and 6.3 feet at Pittsburg, and an average of 13 feet in the central area of the Delta... that volume of all this great mass of slowly moving flood water temporarily stored in transit on the floor of the Great Central Valley amounted to more than six times the proposed and existing volumes of reservoir space allotted to flood control." "...that a similar flood discharging

through the Delta under present reclaimed conditions with the beds of rivers and bays silted would cause a rise in the lower delta at the junction of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers at Collinsville to a level of approximately 10.5 feet above mean sea level, which is four feet above the presently considered maximum flood level for design."

Since this was written about 1955-60, how much worse are the levees and silted river bottoms today due to a forced lack of repair and rebuilding to protect some endangered species?

J.D. Mason, in his history of Amador County, published about 1880, remarks that in the City of Sacramento, telegraph poles were still under water in March 1862 and a boat was needed for travel. The water had not drained yet out through the Delta.

The Weber Report/Plan provided that forest and watershed protection was necessary to keep our reservoirs from filling with silt and to keep our lumber industry amply supplied. Good roads, along with good statewide zoning laws were included in the plan to protect our farm lands from serious encroachment; to provide safe locations for urban development above the flood plane. Drought was a serious concern in the Weber Plan. "Conservation of water and flood control cannot be separated. The runoff occurring in flood years is the water which must be stored and held over (conserved) for dry years"... "It would seem wise to reserve, at the earliest possible time, all known reservoir sites which can be developed within economic limits; this would include most of the reservoir sites examined in these studies." "We do not have, and we will never have, an excess of hydroelectric power in California...". The Weber Plan included many maps to show locations of the important storage facilities that should be built.

The State Water Resources Bay/Delta Water Rights Draft EIR-1995 referred several times to the salvation of the Delta during the last 6 year drought by infusions of fresh water sent to the Delta from the New Melones Reservoir on the Stanislaus River. (Remember the great effort to try and keep that Reservoir from filling?)

The State Water Resources Bulletin 160-93 recommended that some 700,000 acres of farm land be taken out of production and the water given to urban and environmental uses. CAL-FED seems to be satisfied with only 500,000 acres removed from agriculture production for the water.

So after all the studies and great quantities of money expended, we have regressed to a much greater state of confusion than any other time in California's short history. This condition can only be attributed to a serious lack of water leadership along with a public that has failed to take the necessary steps at the voting booth to restrict the amount of money available to conduct ever greater and more costly studies. None of these expensive studies have eliminated one imported species from the Delta or provided any noticeable increase in the salmon population.

In the mean time, during an average rain year, we allow some 24 million acre feet of fresh water to freely flow to the ocean in the "wild and scenic rivers". If the environmentalists were correct in their dreams, these "natural" streams should show a marked improved growth of the "natural" fish and wild life. But the fact is, this has not happened and during the recent 6 years of drought, it was the streams and rivers with man made "flow restrictors" that maintained a reasonable environment, not the "wild and scenic" streams. We also allow about 30 million acre feet of water to flow to the ocean in an average rain year and do everything administratively possible to make sure that none of this water is captured for beneficial use. Then, with a little extra rainfall, we helplessly watch the flood waters do untold damage to our citizens and wash away our prime farm land. How serious does our drought and flood events need to be before our water leadership begins to act.

Part of California's problem stems from the Federal Environmental Protection Agency setting standards for water quality in the estuary in 1993 and during that same year, the National Marine Fisheries Service issued its "biological opinion" for the threatened winter run Chinook Salmon and subsequently designated it as endangered. "Biological opinions", compared with over-fishing, predators and lack of hatchery facilities do not convince most of us that the Federal agencies are correct in their conclusions.

There is no doubt that the quality of the Delta and Bay water must be improved, that is, we must make the continued effort to stop using the Delta and Bay as a sewage system. Some progress has been made toward that end, however, to expect us to accept the idea that cleaning up the water will eliminate any imported species or give us more salmon misses the mark entirely. The demand for fish far exceeds any natural production; there must be intervention by man; our fish raising facilities must be greatly expanded.

It is hard to believe anyone would embrace the idea that as the population increases that "natural" fish raising would produce an increased fish food supply. Most of us engaged, even remotely, with farming learned at a very early age there was not enough "wild" food to sustain the population. History confirms the fact that man has always expended a substantial amount of his time growing a food supply. Isn't it time we quit spending so much money on studies and use it to grow some fish?

The CAL-FED Plan of a waterway around the Delta is certainly the right way to irritate the agriculture/water community. If you expect any support, try some serious water storage projects such as the Auburn Dam on the American River, the Nashville on the Consumes, along with off stream and underground storage.

More fresh water through the Delta to the pumps is the right way; sending more water to Southern California is not the problem, the problem is trying to ration and steal the water developed and earmarked for Northern California use and sending that water south through a Peripheral Canal. There is ample water in Northern California for the South. It is time to start building some real storage projects. Lets get serious about

raising fish. If the Government agencies aren't up to the task, there is always private and semi-private enterprise.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR Plan.

Very truly yours,

JACKSON VALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT

  
Henry Willy  
Secretary/Manager

HW/jw

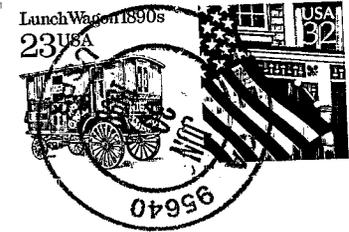
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