

# connections

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## SJ General merger marches on

Ron Bernasconi

On May 26, 1998, Supervisors Barber, Simas and Cabral allocated up to a half a million dollars to pay the two law firms who will facilitate the merger of County Health Care Services. The decision comes only two weeks after these same three Supervisors ignored the anti-merger pleas of every speaker at a standing room only Public Hearing. At that meeting, the Board advanced the merger of our County Health Care Services by approving the issuance of Requests for Proposals.

As to this latest decision, there were no prior public hearings regarding the background of these two law firms nor the need to approve such a large expenditure on a possibly unattractive merger. In essence, once so much money is spent on this process, it will become politically difficult to not merge, even if the proposals from the various Hospital Chains are less than ideal.

### Fixing the game

Last year the Steering Committee issued a list of the so called "Public Private Partnership Consultants," which they were considering. The composition of the list was quite telling, since most of these consultants were actually law and accounting firms that

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## Interview with Bill Jennings

# CalFed process will destroy Delta water forever

[Editor's note: Bill Jennings of DeltaKeeper knows and understands much of what is happening out on the legacy that is our Delta. In the following discussion with John Morearty, he details how the processes that have brought our waters to their current polluted state are determined to finish the job through a process called CalFed. More talking points are included on pages 10 & 11. The public comment period ends on July 1; read and act!]

**Bill Jennings:** The San Joaquin Delta is one of the most marvelous estuaries on the continent; there's an incredible diversity of wildlife and aquatic life—a cornucopia.

It's severely degraded—an identified "impaired water body" because of mercury, selenium, pesticides. All the major rivers tributary to the Delta are impaired—the Sacramento, San Joaquin, Mokelumne; and most of the tributaries to the tributaries, whether the American, the Yuba, the Merced, the Stanislaus, the Tuolumne, the Kings; and most of the tributaries to them, where we have data; which is why the U.S. Geological Survey, in the National Water Quality Assessment, which is being conducted nationwide, over a decade, concluded that this

is one of the most degraded, polluted basins in the nation.

Native species of fish and invertebrates are holding their own in the upstream areas, but downstream, the estuary and the lower rivers have become dominated by exotics, by introduced species.

The river systems in California have been used as a convenient sewer by agriculture, by municipalities and by industry.

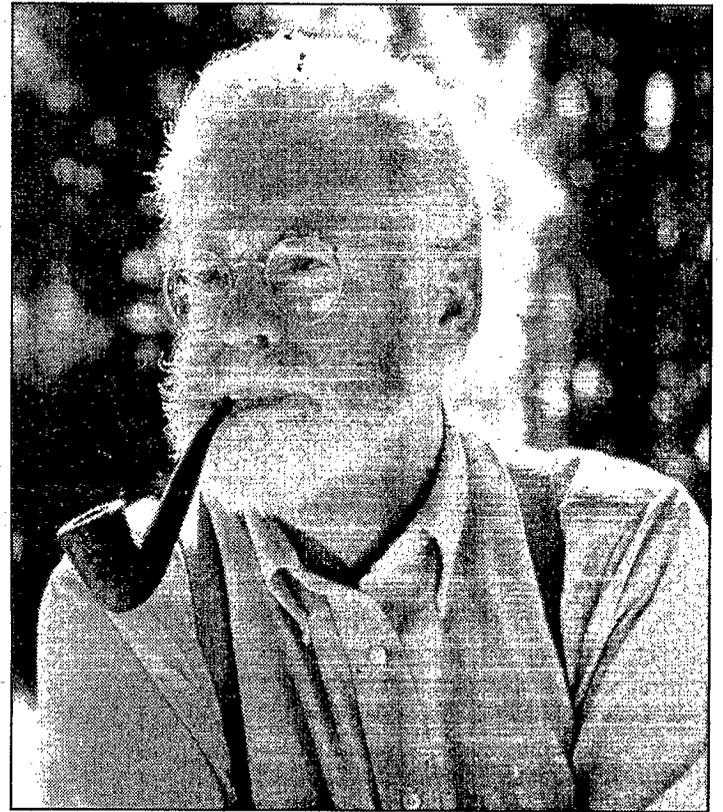
**John Morearty:** Where did CalFed come from?

**BJ:** They had a long series of hearings before the State Water Board in the last three or four years, and nobody was happy with the results, but we could probably have all lived with it. But agricultural interests downstate screamed at the governor, and he ordered the state water board to pull it back and kill it.

**JM:** Who are these downstate water interests?

**BJ:** The corporate water barons of Kern County and Tulare County, Fresno, Kings County, Westlands, Tenneco, Chevron, J.G. Boswell....

The decision was withdrawn, but the Delta was clearly out of compliance with the Clean Water Act, and the environmental organizations clearly indicated to the EPA that they were prepared to take legal action, and so EPA leaned on the state, and so out of this process, this turmoil came CalFed—ostensibly to fix the Delta.



Bill Jennings

CalFed is made up of federal agencies—the Bureau of Reclamation, National Marine Fisheries, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey, US Environmental Protection Agency; and then on the California side you've got California Environmental Protection Agency and the agencies under that like the State Water Board and the Regional Water Board, and you've got the Dept. of Fish and Game, and the Dept. of Water Resources, so it's all the agencies make up CalFed.

And so they started a process,

and frankly it's an avalanche rolling downstream; the governor wants this to be the crown feather in his administration, and in fact, he and U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt reached an agreement to have a preferred alternative by the end of the year. And that's what driving this rush to justice, so to speak, this haste that has some enormous implications.

There are three primary alternatives with variations, a total of about 12; from essentially no action with minor improvements to

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## Editor's note

# Water, water everywhere

Bruce Giudici

Water is the focus of this issue because, right now, long term water planning decisions are being made that will affect our valley forever.

At this point of civilized discussion, one would expect that the environment would be at the forefront of these decisions. Sadly, up to this point, it hasn't been so. In a world where market values are becoming the only values, basic commodities such as water (health care being another) are bid upon by those with the ability to pay. And so, at this water bargaining table, we now find the farmer and the urban user discussing a process called CALFED. As Bill Jennings points out, many of the tough choices that would hurt either of these two groups have been taken

off the table. We find that water conservation and taking marginal lands out of production are not feasible, yet a new Peripheral Canal is.

Informed public opinion is vital: the public comment period on the CALFED process ends on July 1, 1998. So, please read some articles NOW and write a letter to:

CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Attn: Mt. Rick Breitenbach

Issues of the Test Ban Treaty, arms sales to Indonesia and the international ban on landmines also need your input. Contact your Congressperson (bought and paid for, I know—see pages 10 & 11) and make them represent you! In a democracy, you use it or lose it.

# Cecil Bonzo 1930-1998

Cecil Bonzo, farmer, organizer and humanitarian, passed away at home on May 31. Cecil's work on behalf of the dispossessed was tireless, an inspiration to any who were lucky enough to have worked with him. His work with foster children and refugees of all nationalities betrayed a humanity not found in many individuals these days. And yet, most people knew



Cecil Bonzo

him as a farmer.

Cecil started farming by growing onions, carrots and tomatoes on 10 acres of land purchased in Lathrop in 1953. In 1979, he met with Mack Warner of the American Friends Service Committee and became involved in founding the Stockton Certified Farmers' Market and the San Francisco Heart of the City Farmers Market. As a very active member of the Rural Economic Alternatives Project, Land Utilization Alliance, CA Alliance of Family Farmers and the California and National Direct Marketing Conference, the Emergency Food Bank's Jubilee Farm and the SJ County Juvenile Delinquent Farm Project, Cecil was at the center of progressive activity standing in defense of small farmers.

This listing of organization names, while impressive, pales in significance to the impact Cecil had on the lives he touched. His place at the table will be sorely missed.

# Tall tales beyond belief: media-babble

Norman Solomon/  
Creators Syndicate

When I was a child, tall tales seemed wonderful. I liked to read about Paul Bunyan and his huge ox, tromping around in the wilds and creating natural wonders like the Great Lakes. But these days, there's nothing fun or charming about tall tales written for adults under the guise of journalism.

Consider a couple of big news stories — nuclear testing in India and upheaval in Indonesia. Evidently, judging from the recent coverage, the media establishment finds it very easy to report that the CIA was incompetent but very difficult to mention that the agency was involved in evil deeds.

As soon as news broke about the Indian nuclear tests, the Central Intelligence Agency proclaimed that it had been taken by surprise. Media outlets quickly treated the claim as a statement of fact. From there, politicians and pundits went on and on, skewering the CIA for failure to anticipate the test explosions.

The only trouble with the CIA's mea culpa was its absurdity. India's ruling Hindu nationalist party gained power this year after

campaigning on a platform that called for the country to reassess its nuclear arms options. Many independent observers were expecting atomic tests.

But we're supposed to believe that the CIA — an agency with a multibillion-dollar budget, access to the world's most precise spy satellites and agents in every corner of the globe — was in the dark until the New Delhi government made the announcement.

All in all, it's about as plausible as tracing the origins of Lake Superior to the activities of Paul Bunyan and his ox Babe.

Three days before the ground shook at the Indian test site, a small newsletter published May 7 by Sikh separatists in Canada explained that "preparations for an Indian nuclear test has been further confirmed by our sources in India." The periodical, *Chārhdī Kala International*, said that its sources, "who so far have never been wrong having millions of pairs of eyes and ears fixed to the ground," were reporting "all kinds of feverish nighttime activities" at India's test site in Rajasthan state.

The most powerful political factions in Washington have no desire to challenge the yarn that

India's nuclear testing caught the CIA flat-footed. The tall tale has been helpful for an array of agendas.

The CIA and its boosters can claim that the agency needs more funds to do a better job. Opponents of a comprehensive test ban treaty can claim that adherence to such a pact is not verifiable. And the Clinton administration can claim that it failed to take action to discourage the Indian tests because it didn't know they were in the offing.

Meanwhile, coverage of the crisis in Indonesia has often been Orwellian. For instance, dozens of New York Times articles detoured around inconvenient history. On May 16, the newspaper's front page referred to "mass killings of 32 years ago, when Mr. Suharto took power from the country's founding president, Sukarno. At that time, as many as half a million people died in an anti-Communist purge."

The next day, another prominent Times story recalled that "hundreds of thousands were killed in the turmoil of the last political transition, as Mr. Suharto presided over a hunt for leftists around the country and consolidated his power."

Actually, the CIA and other

accessories of American foreign policy played key roles in the carnage that took the lives of a half-million Indonesians during the "turmoil" of the mid-1960s. Along the way, the U.S. government supplied a list of 5,000 leftists to Indonesia's military, fingering them for assassination. Washington also supported Suharto throughout his subsequent brutalities, including the slaughter of 200,000 people in East Timor by Indonesian army occupiers.

Now, after Suharto's resignation, we still cannot understand what's happening without truthful accounts of the past.

Some tall tales are told with a flourish, some with careful silences. But whatever the style, they should not be confused with journalism.

Norman Solomon writes for the *Creators Syndicate*; [mediabeat@igc.apc.org](mailto:mediabeat@igc.apc.org)

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## SJ General *(continued from front page)*

specialized in mergers and acquisitions.

More importantly, many of the proposed consultants had worked for the potential merger partners in the recent past. Perhaps this is why the Steering Committee did not disclose the names of the law firms being considered prior to their approval at a public meeting. Unfortunately this type of maneuvering has not been limited to the stacking of the consultants / attorneys deck.

### Real concerns unaddressed

All the while, the Steering Committee has failed to address any of the concerns regarding mergers and restructuring at other Hospitals, which were raised at numerous Public Hearings dating back to February of 1997.

These concerns included excessive executive pay financed by cutting hospital staffing levels

(negatively impacting the quality of patient care) and two recent bad mergers—that of Marin General with Sutter/CHS and of Sequoia Hospital with Catholic HealthCare West in Redwood City.

In an effort to justify the unjustifiable, duplicity has become the norm. In one case, County Health Care Services Director, Michael Smith, initially championed the merger because of County Hospital's poor financial condition. When confronted with the reality that San Joaquin General's financial outlook has improved, Mr. Smith simply changes his tune and says that, "we need to merge now while our strong financial condition is attractive to potential merger partners." In another instance, Steering Committee Member and County Counsel, Terry Dermody, dismissed antitrust concerns raised by merger opponents back in 1997. Now, antitrust issues are being advanced by Mr. Dermody to

justify the need to pay law firms a half a million dollars.

### Our future

Tired of being misled and ignored for more than a year, the Community Health Care Coalition issued a Request to Copy and inspect Public Records under the California Public Records Act on June 16, 1998, and the San Joaquin Public Employees Association has re-instituted its Initiative to require a vote of San Joaquin County residents to approve any closure, sale, lease or merger.

As we zero in on a specific merger partner, you can count on Connections to provide expansive exposés. In the interim, please see the letter to the right entitled "Hospital Workers' Burden," which was given to our Supervisors shortly after it appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in January of 1997.

If you would like to help protect the quality and affordability of our County health care services please call the SJPEA at 209-466-0985 or the Community Health Care Coalition at 209-467-7311.

## Hospital worker's burden

To the editor (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

It was ironic for hospital workers at Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City to read in your story, "Hospital Labor Deal With Twiist," (*Chronicle*, November 28) that Catholic Healthcare West is launching a "new era of labor peace," that they don't want an "adversarial relationship with their unions" and that this "friendlier philosophy" is expected to prevail "throughout the CHW system."

At Sequoia Hospital, which was recently joined in a partnership with CHW, more than 650 hospital workers represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), are facing CHW proposals for outrageous wage cuts as high as 11 percent and serious reductions in retirement benefits.

In recent years, AFSCME's workers at Sequoia have taken on expanded job functions and increased responsibilities without corresponding raises in salary. But in recognition of recent financial difficulties faced by the community hospital, AFSCME was fully prepared to sign a contract without wage increases the first year and an

increase of only 2 percent for the second year.

CHW knew of the hospital's financial problems when it began its bid to become an operating partner and pledged to honor existing wage agreements. Believing the nonprofit CHW's stated intent to repay the community for its support, our union worked hard to help Sequoia win its bidding competition with the notorious for-profit Columbia/HCA Corporation. It repaid our support with outrageous demands for unprecedented wage cuts and benefit reductions.

CHW says in its mission statement that it wishes to "contribute to a caring environment, to promote justice and to affirm the dignity of each person." But none of that is evident in the heartless treatment CHW is showing the longtime health care workers at Sequoia Hospital. If *The Chronicle* is going to repeat CHW's marketing propaganda about how they want a positive relationship with their unions, your reporters should also report on how our union workers are being treated at Sequoia.

Sharon Macleavy, AFSCME  
Business Agent

## Listen Up Congress

### Patient protections under managed care

Increasing numbers of people in the U.S. are now receiving their health care through a managed care plan (HMO or PPO). These plans achieve cost savings, in part, by regulating patient access to specialists and specialty services. Patients and families enrolled in such plans are, with increasing frequency, reporting unreasonable barriers to getting necessary health care approved from their plans. In response to these reports, President Clinton last year appointed an Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry. Six months ago, the commission recommended the adoption of a Patients' Bill of Rights.

Two bills which address protections for patients in managed care plans: the Patients' Bill of Rights Act (HR 3605/S 1890) and the Patients' Access to Responsible

Care Act (HR 1415/S 644) have been introduced in Congress. The large number of cosponsors on these bills demonstrates that there is true bipartisan support in Congress for patient protection legislation. Numerous surveys have repeatedly documented the overwhelming support of voters for such legislation. Nonetheless, congressional leaders in both houses have stalled action on these bills.

Action: Please contact your representative and senators. Express your support for genuine managed care patient protection legislation. Ask them to urge the House and Senate leadership to schedule quickly a full and fair debate on such legislation. Urge your members not to accept watered-down legislation.

Source: FCNL 6/4/98 action alert, 245 2nd Street NE, Washington D.C. 20002  
<http://www.fcnl.org/pub/fcnl>

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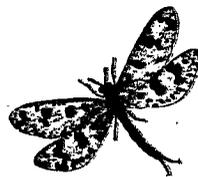
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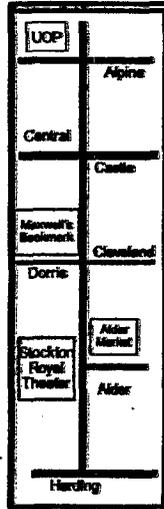
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# CalFed (continued from front page)

a major action with broadening the channels, like the Mokelumne, facilitating the water south, barriers to Old River. There are common elements to all the plans, like the water quality component, the restoration component, but the most controversial alternative is Alternative 3, which included a peripheral canal. All of them include increased storage, up to 23 new dams. What started out as an effort to fix the Delta has metamorphosed into an effort to ensure the security of Southern California water supplies and actually to increase the export of water south.

**JM:** What would be the proportion of water that goes to LA as compared to the farms in the southern San Joaquin Valley?

**BJ:** It's not appreciable. Only 14-15% of the water shipped south actually goes over the Tehachapis, and so I've never felt that LA was the problem, and in any case the Southern California urban areas have the wherewithal to introduce conservation efforts. The real problem is the millions of acre feet that are irrigating 1) lands in the desert to grow cotton and corn and rice and alfalfa, and 2) the selenium-laced soils of Westlands on the west side of the valley.

**JM:** When you say the desert you mean the west side of the southern SJ valley?

**BJ:** Well, when you get into Kern county, you're getting into desert. Tulare County, that's very low rainfall there. That area exists as an agricultural community by grace of subsidized water. And of course the selenium-laced soils of Westlands end up poisoning the Delta because the return waters are so high in selenium and salts.

**JM:** All three of the plans would not alter that?

**BJ:** Absolutely not. That's off the table. When things started out... this was set up as a three-part process, Calfed. You had environmental interests represented, you had agricultural interests represented, and you had urban interests represented. And what essentially happened, what initially the environmentalists set forth, is that we needed to look not only on the supply side but on the demand side, we needed to look at conservation. That's mandatory agricultural conservation, that's mandatory water-efficient appliances, that's mandatory water meters, things like that, and also mandatory retirement of these marginal lands that are literally poisoning the Delta. And, also, that it needed to look at flows from Friant Dam, which diverts about 98% of the average upper-basin runoff of the San Joaquin River to agriculture, and so you've got a dry riverbed for much below that, until the agricultural return waters give some life to the river.

So anyway, conservation and retirement were originally on the table, but because of the pressure of agricultural interests, that's for all intents and purposes not on the table any more. And the tragedy is that if this state could become 10-15% —

**JM:** Who made that decision? to take that off the table?

**BJ:** It just wasn't there all of a sudden. Calfed is not a democracy, Calfed is not a formal process which people vote for—it's not a board, it's a group that gets together and talks. No one knows how the decision-making process occurs in Calfed. It's just an amorphous—Lester Snow is the head of it, and how decisions are made is something of a mystery. So there's no clear accountability there.

The problem is that if California can become perhaps 15% more water efficient, then we don't have a water problem in California. There's enough water for the aquatic ecosystems, there's enough water for reasonable growth. But agriculture, which uses 80-85% of the water, has said, and the Calfed documents reiterate this, that they can only become 1% more efficient. And where cities have shown enormous efficiency increases, agriculture has just said, "NO."

That's the problem. and that goes back to the concept of water rights...

**JM:** Didn't we have a ballot measure a few years ago that would have rewarded farmers for installing more water-efficient irrigation systems. It was defeated. Why? the farmers would have been rewarded for doing that.

**BJ:** Because that's the way it's always been, and there's a resistance and an inertia against change.

**JM:** Were the farms groups against it?

**BJ:** I don't know that they actually supported it.

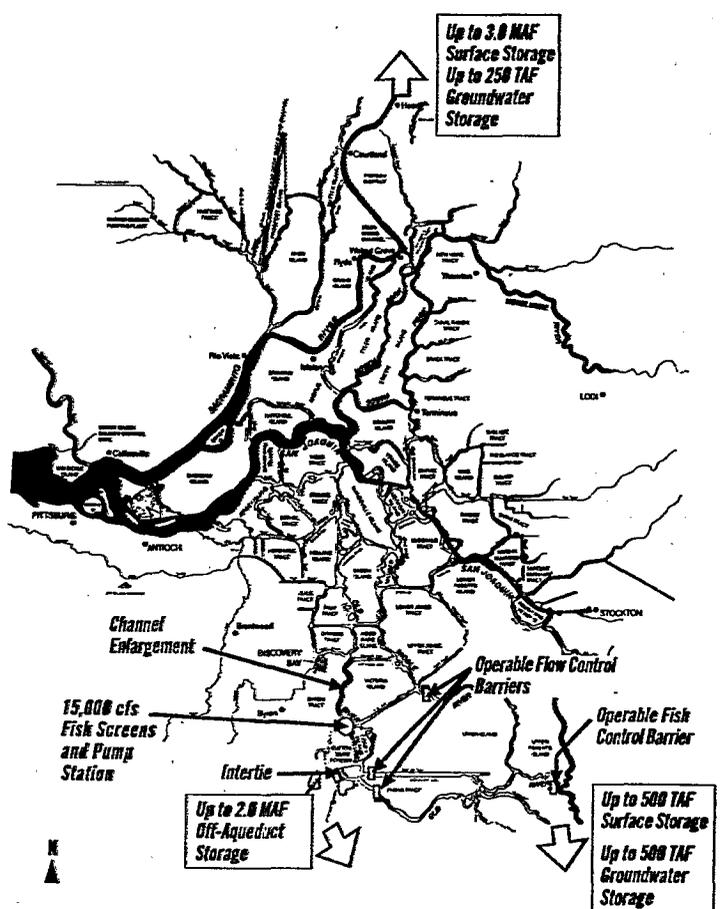
**BJ:** Every major re-plumbing project in the Delta over the last five decades has made things worse, despite assurances to the contrary. All of the EIRs, and they would fill rooms, point up to benign impacts, or to fully mitigated impacts, and that's not been the case. They've all made it worse. The Delta is an incredibly intricate, complicated mechanism. Nature—in our hubris, we think we understand it, and we don't.

**JM:** What re-plumbing projects?

### Alternative 1

Storage and Conveyance Features

Variable Program Elements



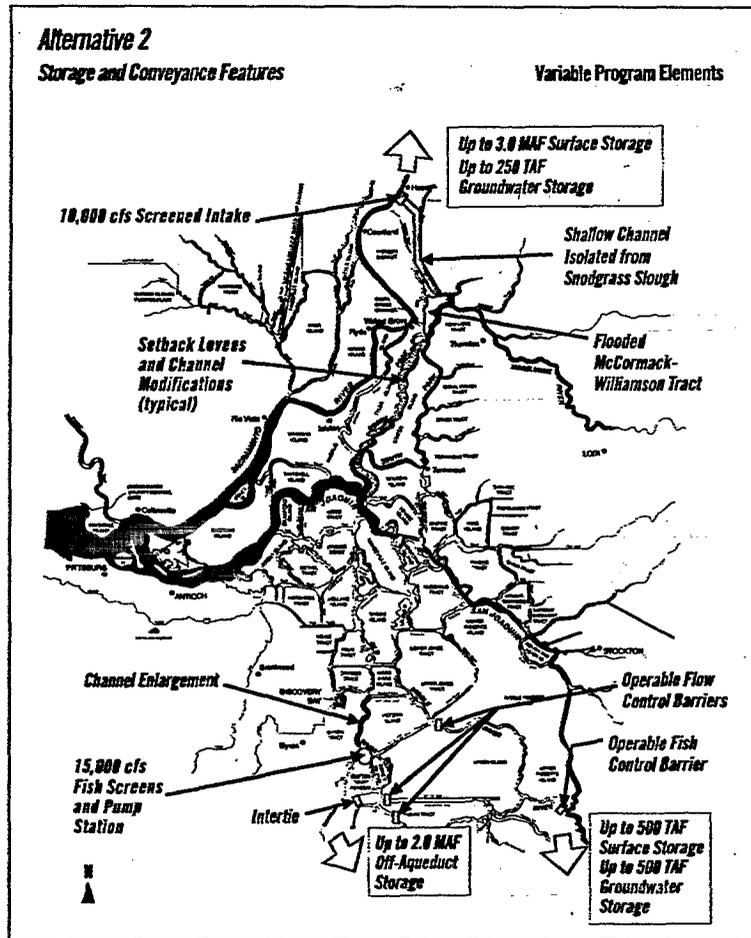
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**BJ:** The State Water Project. The Central Valley project, exporting water south. The proposed Delta Wetlands Project, a big plumbing project; a lot of the redesign of islands, a lot of the dredging. All of these things have had a cumulative effect, that have brought the Delta to its knees.

There exists in the Delta no comprehensive monitoring or research project, comparable to what San Francisco Estuary Institute is doing in SF Bay, where at a large number of sites they're analyzing annually, semi-annually, quarterly in some cases the sediments, the water columns, the toxicity of the water, the constituents. There are beginnings of this on the Sacramento River, but on the San Joaquin side, you don't have that. It's like a black hole. In fact I was over at EPA the day before yesterday, and their fisheries folks were talking about the black hole, because there's so much we don't know.

And so this lends the potential for doing great harm, by not knowing what we're doing, rushing into a project. For example, the barriers at Old River, that are proposed, which would reduce the reverse flows in the San Joaquin River, because the water wouldn't get sucked out of the San Joaquin River and then into Old River and then into Clifton Court Forebay and sent south. And this would send the SJ River out into the Central Delta. The problem with that is that this water is all heavily polluted with selenium, contaminated with

selenium.

What's happening now is that it's coming down, it's getting channeled off at Old River and it's getting pumped south. If you send that out to the Central Delta, the eutrophic areas, the super-enriched nutrient areas, with a lot of algae, then the algae chemically transform the selenium to a more bio-available form of selenium, which is exactly what happened at Kesterson, when the selenium waters went into the nutrient-rich waters of the wildlife refuge. You could create a nightmare out here. And so we need to look at that, but we haven't looked at that.

Another example would be the widening of some of the Delta channels like the Mokelumne river, they're talking about, to facilitate the transfer of water. The problem there is that there's a lot of mercury in the sediment. The USGS found in San Pablo Bay that the deep sediment had three to five times more mercury than the top sediments. A major dredging project like that could have horrendous implications in the release and the increased bio-availability of mercury. You might not even be able to catch a fish in the Delta. They want to pile all that on the levees, they want to use this fill material to enhance the levees. That has enormous implications. The mercury runs off back into the water in a bio-available form for uptake by fish, and fish bio-accumulate this, and then people eat this, and die.

**JM:** Minamata (the 1953

Japanese mercury poisoning of fish which killed 17, disabled 23).

**BJ:** Another water quality problem is the peripheral canal. If you've already got a contaminated estuary, and you divert much of the fresh water that's currently flowing into it, how are you going to meet water quality standards, certainly in the South Delta? And I don't know how you're ever going to meet them if you don't turn the spigot on at Friant, and get some more flushing flows down the San Joaquin.

Where Calfed has run aground is under heavy pressure from agricultural and urban interests, that many of their options have been foreclosed. And this is an extremely important issue. To solve California's water problems, to fix the Delta, is going to require sacrifice on the part of virtually everyone. And the only feasible way to do that is to spread the pain, so that it's not unreasonably harsh on any one area of the state, or any one group.

**JM:** What is it going to mean for me as a householder in urban Stockton, Manteca, Lodi?

**BJ:** Well, San Joaquin County and Stockton are scapegoats. Because of this failure to spread the blame. And that was essentially what was talked about at the Calfed public hearing here in Stockton. Because where they had the ability to look at mandatory agricultural conservation and mandatory retirement of marginal lands, and increased flows in the San Joaquin, if those were enacted, we might not have to export any more water south. We might even be able to reduce exports. And that is a viable option. We won't need 23 new dams for increased storage. And that has not been looked at in the Calfed process.

**JM:** Dams in which counties?

**BJ:** One of them would be to raise Shasta. That's a \$3.8 billion project, the most expensive water project in history, and you know reservoirs in droughts dry up; in the last drought most of the reservoirs were close to being empty. Auburn Dam is another one, and south of Delta dams like San Luis reservoir, where they can pump the water like hell and fill those dams, and use the water when they choose.

Basically, you're talking about a ten billion dollar pork barrel.

**JM:** 85% of the benefit of which goes to big ag in the south valley.

**BJ:** Right. What we've got is South Valley agriculture using subsidized water to grow subsidized crops that in many instances

require subsidized drainage of contaminated waste-waters. And it would institutionalize the degradation of the Delta.

**JM:** And there'd be pork in it for ten billion dollars worth of construction workers. I'm talking about who benefits here.

**BJ:** But the dollars are incidental compared to the water.

**JM:** Not to the voters. If the construction workers get all these jobs to pour concrete, then that's a benefit. So we can expect a lot of lobbying in support of this increased storage by all kinds of construction interests, right? There's jobs in it.

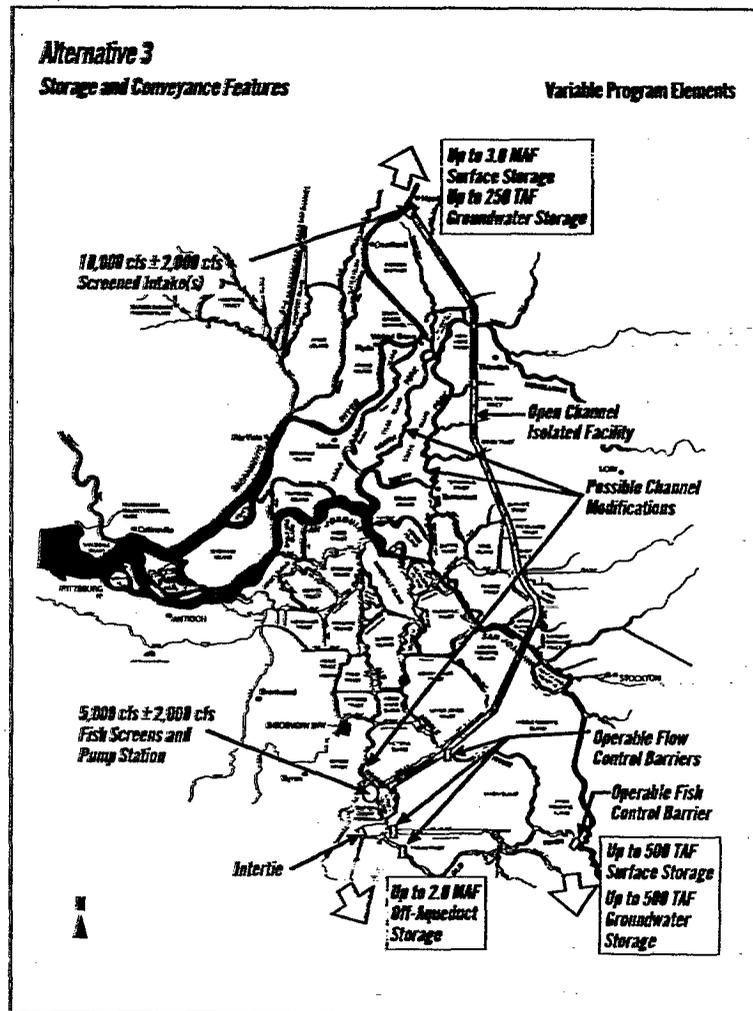
**BJ:** Uh-huh. But what's driving it is water. Believe me, the concern over jobs is incidental, irrelevant to the Calfed process. What's driving it is that would perpetuate a system of inefficient use of subsidized water to grow marginal crops on marginal soils. They've got the water, they don't want to give it up. That's the bottom line. And they don't want to be told that they've got to improve.

**BJ:** And who pays for this? that's another one of the fights in Calfed. We're saying that those who directly benefit should pay for it, and they're trying to make the general public, including the national taxpayer, pick up a big chunk of this tab. So that certainly will be an issue. This could be the biggest public works project in a concentrated location in the history

of the nation. Twelve billion dollars, that's a lot of money. And given expected cost overruns, I'm sure it's going to be much larger than that.

And it's not addressing the real problem of the decline of the Delta. The water quality component of the Calfed proposal is grievously inadequate, because it doesn't contain the necessary research and monitoring efforts. I mean, they're making an effort to develop a monitoring plan, but we need to understand the mass loading, the spatial distribution, the transport and synergistic effects of contaminants in the estuary, and their effect on biological life and their effect on human health.

Human health is a major concern. We just had a health advisory put on the deep water channel for dioxin and PCBs, and studies will shortly get under way on some tissue samples in south delta that we funded, we sent \$75,000 to the SF Estuary Institute, working with the Office of Environmental Health Assessment in Sacramento and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to get some tissue studies on catfish and bluegill and carp and clams and these fish that the fishing community commonly consumes in extremely high quantity. There's a real human health risk there, I think. It's scandalous to me, almost criminal that more hasn't been done in this area.





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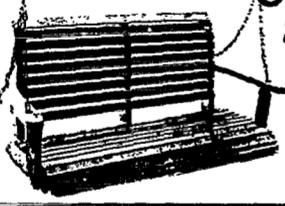
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# A farmer's perspective

## CALFED wants your water

Rogene Reynolds

After three years of planning by 15 different State and Federal Agencies, a plan has been developed to "fix" the Delta and secure more "reliable" water for Central Valley Project and State Water Project providers (i.e. Southern California), and "restore" the Delta "ecosystem." The Plan suggests three "alternatives", all of which are detrimental to California's agricultural industry, and all of which will destroy the Delta as a viable farming region.

Some points:

1. All plans have an "Ecosystem Restoration Plan" which will "retire" up to 200,000 acres of Delta farmland and up to 600,000 acres of other California farmland. "Retired" means take out of production. In the case of the Delta, retirement means return to wetlands, shallow habitat, and flooded water storage. It will reverse 100 years of reclamation in the Delta.

2. All plans call for extreme water conservation and water quality controls which will place huge financial burdens on the State's agriculture industry. Retaining ponds for tail water, screened pump intakes, "cooperative management" of farms and cropping patterns, restrictions on chemical applications, etc., all add up to high costs and lower yields from our farms.

3. Alternative Plan number Three has the worst component of all—the Peripheral Canal. Resurrected (this is an old idea we thought we had killed in 1982) as an "isolated facility." It is death to the Delta because it will separate us from our water, sucking the best water out of the Sacramento River and transporting it around the Delta to the pumps near Tracy.

4. You will not get to vote on this Plan. CALFED has the mandate to plan this fax and our Governor Wilson and Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior, with the recommendations of the CALFED group, will ultimately decide which alternative will be chosen. You may wonder, how could this come to be? How could our representative government create such a harmful plan? As they say, "follow the money," or better, "follow the

water"!! There is huge political pressure to create a "reliable" water supply for the South. They are running out. All regions and

**Alternative Plan number Three has the worst component of all—the Peripheral Canal.**

"stakeholders" (don't you just love that word!) were permitted input through three years of meetings and "workshops." Our area was represented through BDAC (Bay-Delta Advisory Council) and our advocates were Alex Hildebrand of Manteca and Pat McCarty of Stockton. Alex is probably the premier water "expert" in Northern California. Pat is chairing the Delta Protection Commission. We sent the best we had! And all and any ideas to make the Plan truly beneficial to the Delta were disregarded. In this, and in the manner in which the Plan was presented to the public, CALFED has pretty much made a mockery of the whole CEQA process. The Draft Environmental Impact Report came out April 1. Public hearings were scheduled; originally NONE were planned in our area. Assemblyman Mike Machado pressed for a local hearing, and we had that on May 27, in Stockton. Over 300 people attended, including some of our local CWA leadership. Testimony was taken by CALFED.

Delta farmers demanded:

1. that the Peripheral Canal be removed from consideration as a part of any alternative;
2. that land retirement be removed from consideration as a part of any alternative;
3. that increased water storage of winter runoff be included in every

alternative.

It is important to realize you will not be able to vote on this plan!! The decision of what alternative to move forward with will be made by Governor Wilson and Bruce Babbitt by the end of this year.

The time for action is NOW!

This is what you can do:

1. Become familiar with the Plan. It is huge, but can be reviewed at public libraries, or a copy can be obtained from CALFED's office in Sacramento. We have until July 1 to make written comments on the plan.

2. Contact CALFED and ask to be put on their mailing list. There will be two more "workshops" in the Stockton area. Try to attend and be a part of the growing group of us who are hoping to get this plan fixed now before it is really too late!

3. Contact the San Joaquin County Farm Bureau and ask them for a copy of their Position Paper. It is well written and faster to read than the whole plan.

4. Talk about this to people! Most folks don't know that this huge black cloud is looming on the Delta horizon!

5. Contact your legislator! Assemblyman Machado is Chair of the Water Parks and Wildlife Committee. Make him aware of your concerns. Notify him that the Peripheral Canal and land retirement are not acceptable sacrifices for the Delta to make on behalf of Southern California. You can reach CALFED at the following phone numbers: (800) 900-3597 (800) 700-5752 (916) 653-5147

There is no assurance that taking action will make any difference! But not doing anything will ensure that the CALFED process will forever damage the Delta and San Joaquin County's agriculture industry beyond repair. Legal challenges to the Environmental Impact Report cannot be raised later, after it is adopted. We must challenge it now. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at (209) 464-8054. I'll be happy to share what I know. We will all need to work together to try to change CALFED's Plan. The time to get to work is now!

Rogene Reynolds is a farmer on Roberts Island.

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