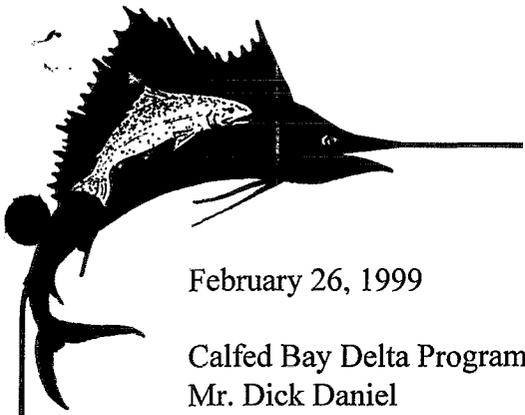


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DAN BLANTON

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February 26, 1999

Calfed Bay Delta Program
Mr. Dick Daniel
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Dick,

On February 22, 1999 I sent you an e-mail expressing my concern over CALFED's Franks Tract restoration proposal. I haven't received any comment from you regarding my letter or concerns and I would, indeed like to hear from you. The language of the proposal couldn't help but lead Franks Tract users to construe the worst for current users and that there would be long term economical damage to both local and extraneous economies. I encouraged an extensive letter writing campaign through my website bulletin board, angling media, various other user groups and conservation organizations.

A few of those folks have reported hearing from you. Myself and a multiplicity of others would like to know the exact "restoration" plan CALFED has for Franks Tract. I've heard things from "just creating a few islands and channels", to much more. Many also believe it would be in the best interest of all, that CALFED, hold a public information meeting on Bethel Island at which your planners could explain the plan and maybe even show us a "blueprint" of what is proposed.

Below is the original letter I sent to you. I believe the concerns outlined are valid and deserve the consideration of CALFED directors.

Sincerely,

Dan Blanton

Original e-mail letter sent to Dick Daniel

February 22, 1999

Calfed Bay Delta Program
Mr. Dick Daniel

Dear Mr. Daniel:

My name is Dan Blanton. I'm an avid angler who specializes in fly fishing

and I'm considered one of the pioneers of Pacific saltwater fly fishing, particularly for striped bass, which spans 45 years. I'm also one of the Nation's leading outdoor writers with regard to angling and in addition to being on staff with several major publications, I also host a very popular website with one of the most active angler forums on the Internet.

It was through this forum that I was alerted to a CALFED proposal to fill in the delta lake called Franks Tract (or radically alter its existing physical character) to create shallow tidal wetlands and to reduce the "value" of it to striped bass, largemouth bass and other introduced species. While I realize most of the CALFED proposals were published for public review, most folks simply didn't have time to weed through reams of pages. After checking with several people of the Bethel Island business community, I learned only a couple even had wind of this proposal. It is fair to say that most of the very large Franks Tract users groups, consisting of fisherman, hunters, boaters, water sports enthusiasts, and all related economies, would have never considered CALFED would make such a radical proposal that would effect so many different user groups.

The concept of filling or radically changing the nature of Franks Tract is unacceptable. I am, however, not opposed to the concept of creating shallow wetlands out of smaller lakes and other areas that do not so adversely effect anglers, hunters and the business community. There are several options, including Rhode Island, for example.

Fishing/boating/water sports in Frank's Tract has existed in earnest since it was formed. It has been a major factor in the economy of Bethel Island. During the past decade Franks Tract has become one of the most popular fly fishing resources for striped bass, largemouth bass and panfish in the State, if not the entire country. I've written at least five feature articles for both National and regional magazines, the latest of which was a cover story for California Fly fisher, focusing on Franks Tract as the "hub" of the delta fishery. Franks Tract has become a popular fly fisher's destination with people traveling from all over the U.S. and from abroad to enjoy this wonderful resource. One of the principal reasons Franks tract is a great fly fishing/light tackle lake, is because it is relatively shallow but not too shallow, allowing the effective use of flies and lures. Deep water striped bass habitat is useless to fly fishing. To take it away or diminish its angling and boating value would be a travesty.

Since my first article in 1993, the popularity of Franks Tract, surrounding sloughs, rivers and Mildred Island, has become profound. There are now five fly fishing/light tackle guides making a living from guiding on Franks Tract and other close-by waters. At least a half dozen large fly-fishing clubs hold annual events on Franks Tract. My website community holds a fund-raiser

there as well as the Striped Bass Association. For decades, countless bass fishing organizations have held tournaments which involve Franks Tract.

Additionally, Chuck's Bait & Tackle on Piper Slough has been able to purchase two completely outfitted rental skiffs to accommodate the demand of those who want to fish Franks on their own. Others have also been able to increase the number of available rental skiffs. I can continue to provide you example upon example of how Franks Tract has benefited the economy of Bethel Island and surrounding communities.

However, the economic value of Franks tract from user groups extends well past the local communities: Fly shops from Sacramento to Santa Cruz and Fresno have all provided delta clinics to customers who wanted to learn about this great place. They've sold tackle, booked guides, etc.. One shop, the San Jose, Fly shop even has a large mural of Franks Tract on the shop wall...

I've taught many of these clinics and I've given countless slide presentations to fly fishing clubs and at large sport fishing shows, the latest of which was the I.S.E. San Mateo show, where I presented three slides shows during the week on fly fishing the delta, with Franks Tract as the hub. There was standing room only in the auditorium.

My website is the major source of continuing delta/Franks Tract reports, news, and general communication. I have already posted my urgent request that all anglers and other user groups write to you and their legislators, strongly opposing the CALFED Franks Tract proposal to fill or otherwise physically alter Franks Tract in such a way as to lessen its value to game fish and user groups.

It is clear the only group CALFED consulted was the local farming community, land owners who would obviously object to the flooding of their islands. Fisherman, hunters, and other large user groups were left out of the loop and some perceive this being done on purpose. I'm not necessarily of that view but I do believe you must stop now, back up and include ALL the user groups in any further decision-making process. I am willing to participate on a personal level. I've also been in contact with several Bethel Island business people and have urged them to get involved.

I will continue to urge opposition to this proposal using all my resources.

Sincerely,

Dan Blanton
Dan Blanton Outdoor Ventures