

99-114

APR 19 1999

April 15, 1999

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

Dear Mr. Snow,

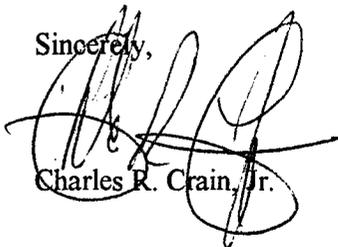
This is a letter of support for CALFED funding for the acquisition of riparian habitat in the Sacramento River Floodway. As a farmer in Glenn, Butte and Tehama counties, I have first hand experience with the farming of flood-prone lands along the Sacramento River and the negative economic impact of the river on some adjacent, low-lying property. I support the Nature Conservancy's efforts to acquire existing riparian habitat, as well as agricultural properties adjacent to the Sacramento River which are not economic to farm. In certain cases where properties cannot be split, it is sometimes necessary to purchase limited viable agricultural property to complete the purchase. As long as all reasonable alternatives are exhausted in the divestiture of the viable agricultural land, and the TNC is willing to continue leasing the moderately productive agricultural land until it becomes not economically viable, then I believe any negative impacts have been adequately mitigated.

I would also like to express my support for the "Agricultural Leasing Program" on the lands acquired by the Nature Conservancy. I lease approximately 900 acres of walnuts owned by the TNC. While a portion of the revenue from the agricultural contracts provide The Nature Conservancy with funds to operate their restoration program, a portion is paid to the farmer. There is no doubt that these local leases retain agricultural income within the local economy.

Being one the area's largest farmers, my wife and I own properties that border the TNC in ten different locations. To date, the TNC has been a good neighbor, and has limited our exposure to conflict with the neighboring habitat development on adjoining properties. TNC managers have been courteous and professional in dealing with any neighborly issues. One of the sites where we border the TNC, is Beehive Bend. I am looking forward to working with the TNC on the future management of the flood control systems and the Beehive Bend Site-Specific Management Plan. I am encouraged that TNC is including landowners in this process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles R. Crain, Jr.

C R A I N O R C H A R D S

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