

Gary Sack
9471 Denholm Court
Elk Grove, CA 95758

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CALFED Bay-Delta Program

August 7, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director
Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I have major concerns about the **Cal-Fed Final Programmatic EIS/EIR released July 21, 2000**. Federal regulators are given broad new authority over California's water rights. What assurance do we have that local and state agencies will retain their control of California's water? The plan removes from production nearly a quarter-million acres of California farmland. Your report says it is "unavoidable." I don't feel Cal-Fed looked hard enough to avoid those losses.

Currently the government owns half the land in California, yet 75% of the wildlife reside on private land. That should tell you that farmers and ranchers are doing something right in their stewardship of land, water, and the environment. Many of the types of farms targeted to come out of production are wildlife friendly, if they have an adequate and affordable water supply.

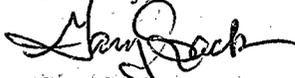
With California's burgeoning population, we now have water and energy rationing. There is little regard to hydroelectric power. I am concerned that in times of drought Cal-Fed will take water away from farms, making the effects of droughts even more severe. It will hurt families and affect the price of food to working families, and it will disrupt the environment.

I request you: (1) Extend the comment period. (2) Hold public hearings to explain what you will do and the effects on us. The public needs to have an opportunity to understand and discuss this document. Even though you may not believe you are obligated to tell us how the plan will affect us, it's the right thing to do.

Last year you held 16 hearings, I attended many of them. There were 1,000 representatives of agriculture who attended; more than half the people who testified were farm and ranch families and their neighbors. Did you hear them?

There was testimony of the wildlife that exists on farms and ranches and what some of these people were doing to enhance wildlife. Just think of what the possibilities if the government tried to be a partner, instead of an adversary.

Sincerely,



Gary Sack

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein Senator Barbara Boxer Governor Gray Davis
Congressman Robert Matsui State Sen. Patrick Johnston Rep. Anthony Pescetti
Sacramento Board of Supervisors