

18698 Ave. 264
Exeter, Calif. 93221

August 9th, 2000

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

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I have serious concerns about how Cal-Fed programs will affect the environment on our farms and ranches. California agriculture is second to none in dollar value and importance to local economies. Cal-Fed should give every consideration to the significance that agriculture has on our food supply as well as the jobs created on and off the farm. Cal-Fed should find ways to avoid taking farmland out of production. Habitat conversation should be voluntary and balanced on all accounts.

Our farming operation includes stone fruit, table grapes, and kiwis. I assure you that we are interested in being good partners in preserving habitat as well as being good farmers and neighbors. We believe that voluntary measures are the best way to encourage compliance and cooperation between environmental concerns and the our desire to decide what to grow and how to grow it. Let's work together.

To maintain wildlife-friendly farms, farmers need reliable and affordable water. There is a reason that 75% of wildlife exists on privately owned land. We are good stewards of this land and consistent water supplies are a part of this formula. California farms cannot afford to lose water deliveries and neither can the habitat that thrives on our land. I believe that additional water storage is the best solution to many of our issues on this topic. Farmers must continue to be able to grow the crops that are so vital to California's growing population and economy.

Please hold more public hearings to allow for more input from the people who's lives are going to be affected by the Cal-Fed projects, the electorate of this state. Cal-Fed should not finalize its plan until citizens have been fully educated on the ramifications and have had the opportunity to review it and comment upon it.

Sincerely,


Kerry Whitson