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AUG 14 2000

CALFED Bay-Delta Program

August 10, 2000

Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director
CAL-FED Bay/Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie,

As a Sacramento County grape grower, I am concerned with the final Cal-Fed EIS/EIR released July 21. I respectfully request you give us more time to review and comment on your document. It is much too large to digest and much too complex to understand. I also request you hold hearings to explain what the Cal-Fed program will mean to us.

I am concerned about the loss of farmland, loss of water and the lack of progress on storage. As California's population continues to grow and the environment continues to require more water, that water should come from newly developed storage, not from farmers.

Farming provides wildlife habitat while producing food. Water for farms is used to grow plants. Those plants give off oxygen and help clean the air. I continue to pay taxes on that land and survive on the income. This farmland is sustainable. I am not destroying the environment; I am helping to preserve it.

I do not believe we really want to lose thousands of acres of farmland in California and lose the habitat it provides for numerous animals and plants. Right now, the government owns about half the land in California, yet 75 percent of the wildlife habitat is on private. Why is this??

The answer is simple. The animals like what we are doing. Our land and water is well managed and cared for. When the government decides to buy land because of a particular species, that species often goes elsewhere because the government fails to manage the land properly.

Again, I request you grant additional time for comments and hold public hearings before you implement the plan.

Sincerely,



Kevin Steward