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AUG 18 2000

CALFED Bay-Delta Program

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August 16, 2000

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Steve Ritchie
Acting Executive Director
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street #1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: CALFED Final EIR report

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I write this letter as an orchard farmer located in Walnut Grove, California. I have attended numerous CALFED meetings over the past few years, and feel continued frustration with the attitude "the bureaucrat/the bureaucracy knows better" that I received in these numerous public meetings.

In a recent issue of the Farm Bureau weekly newspaper *Ag Alert*, I see that again CALFED is taking the same posture in its final EIR plan in the form of eliminating almost 250,000 acres of active farm ground.

Mr. Ritchie, it has long since passed time where the government can make unilateral decisions to take farmland out of production, especially here in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Here in Walnut Grove, because of farm reverses already in process through the Tri-Valley bankruptcy, etc., we are in danger of losing one to three businesses in our small town. Already we have seen consolidation and limitation of prices charged to the producers for goods and services necessary to our farming business.

My ranch ships products not only for domestic use here in the United States, but also exports all over the world crops such as cherries and pears of all kinds. Removing this much farmland from production will only exacerbate an already fragile economic process. It is time to enter the long-range planning similar to that engaged in by Governor Pat Brown with the creation of the California Water System. That process not only involved transportation facilities, but most importantly created additional reservoirs to make extra water available for the entire state. In 1974, then Assemblywoman Pauline Davis explained to me that although the state had a substantial number of water contracts, that the state had over-allocated then available reservoir supplies. In following this matter

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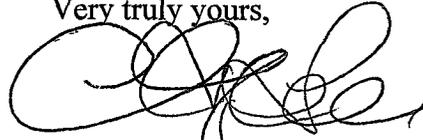
since the early '70s, it is abundantly apparent that although the state's water needs have grown tremendously, there has been no update in allocation for additional reservoirs. You and I both know that this situation will only lead to a disaster not only for the farmers but for the general population as well.

I strongly urge you to take command, so to speak, of this process and revise the thinking in Sacramento which assumes that such a large amount of farmland can be taken out of production with relatively small economic cost. Such thinking defies reality and although may solve some problems for a five-year period, will create huge problems in the long run. I do not believe Governor Davis would approve such a plan if he were to be apprised of the true economic consequences.

I sincerely urge you to revise that section of the EIR which seeks to remove this acreage from production and instead focus directly and immediately on the creation of additional water storage.

Thank you in advance for your courtesy and consideration.

Very truly yours,



CHRISTOPHER A. LEE
Attorney at Law

cal/jk

cc: Sacramento Bee