



Nash Ranch

10615 Old Oregon Trail, Redding, CA 96003
phone: 530-221-2904 or 530-225-2762 fax: 530-225-2769
email: mnash@shastalink.k12.ca.us Or bnash@scedd.org

RECEIVED

AUG 21 2000

CALFED Bay-Delta Program

FROM THE DESK OF
BOB NASH

August 18, 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:

Regrettably, I find the present Cal-Fed process and the recently published final Environmental Impact Statement / Report a very thinly veiled maneuver by urban bureaucratic interests to divert water away from the California agriculture industry in the name of the environment. Cal-Fed must recognize California farmland as a valuable environmental resource as well as a crucial economic base for the State of California. The Cal-Fed plan will take nearly 250,000 acres of farmland out of production in the name of the environment. Further, Cal-Fed promotes future farmland idling water transfers to urban uses. Cal-Fed has not given reasonable consideration to the environmental impact of the proposed direct or the indirect idling of farm land and it has given no consideration to the economic impact of such a conversion of farmland. The plan needs to look for ways to reduce the loss of farmland.

Farmers can't contribute to provision of wildlife habitat or feed people or contribute to the economy without farmland and without reliable and affordable water. California agricultural water use has not increased in the past thirty years all the while production has increased nearly three fold. California agriculture will not need an increase in supply of water in the future, but it does and will continue to need a reliable and affordable supply of water. At the same time, the relevant wildlife habitat continues to need and deserves a more reliable supply. And future urban growth dictates additional need for water well into the future. Cal-Fed can help farmers additionally contribute to wildlife habitat without idling vast acreages of prime farm land. Further, Cal-Fed must develop environmentally sound additional water storage with adequate yield. Additional water storage will help provide water supply for the environment and future increased water supply for urban use without taking water supply away from agriculture, the largest economy in California.

One of the questions that I am unable to answer is: what happens to all the water presently applied as irrigation to the proposed 250,000 acre farmland conversion? It seems safe to assume that neither US Fish and Wildlife nor California Fish and Game will continue irrigating so called wildlife habitat. Does that unused irrigation water, probably as much as 700,000 acre feet or more, then become available to the highest bidder? Or does it just run out the San Francisco Bay?

I really fear for the future of Agriculture in northern California, especially the Sacramento Valley. The potential economic impact is staggering.

Cal-Fed should hold public hearings to explain its plans before they become final so that the public and the agriculture industry can better understand how the Cal-Fed plan has changed and how it will affect people and agriculture. Further, Cal-Fed should not finalize its plan until has been adequate opportunity to review and comment.

Sincerely,



Robert Nash, Owner-Operator

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Rep. Wally Herger
Governor Gray Davis
State Sen. Maurice Johannesen
Assembly Member Dick Dickerson
Chairman of the Shasta County Board of Supervisors, Irwin Fust
Chairman of the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, Kay Bryan