



# SAN BENITO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

August 11, 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:

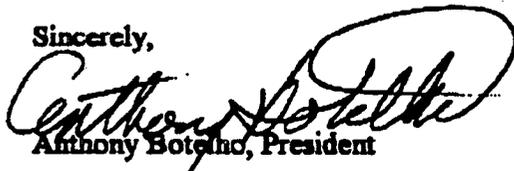
I am concerned about how Cal-Fed programs will affect the environment on farms and ranches. Agriculture is an important part of California's environment. Cal-Fed plans to convert nearly a quarter of a million acres of farmland to habitat and other uses. It should study the environmental impact of that land conversion. Cal-Fed must seek ways to avoid taking farmland out of production.

I know many farmers who enhance the wildlife value of their farms. We are stewards of the land and we want to be partners in environmental restoration. But we oppose requirements that tell us what to grow and how to grow it. Cal-Fed must work with us in a cooperative spirit.

To maintain productive and wildlife-friendly farms, farmers need reliable and affordable water. Cal-Fed must move aggressively to develop new water storage that provides adequate yield. Without more storage, California won't have enough water for the environment in dry years. That means water will be taken away from farms, especially during droughts. Without water, farmland loses its value as habitat and as a vital food resource for California's growing population.

Cal-Fed should hold public hearings to explain its plans before they become final. Cal-Fed should tell us how its plan has changed and how it will affect people. Cal-Fed should not finalize its plan until citizens have adequate opportunity to review it and comment upon it.

Sincerely,

  
Anthony Botelho, President

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Rep. Sam Farr

Governor Gray Davis  
State Senator Bruce McPherson  
Assembly Member Peter Frusetta

County Supervisors