JAMES W. LOPES

44960 Lopes Court
Fremont, CA 94538
Cellular (209) 573-1650
Residence (510) 226-0904

8/7/00

Mr. Steve Richie
Acting Executive Director
Cal-Fed-Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth St, Ste. 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Richie:

As a Stanislaus and San Joaquin County walnut farmer, 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.

Through this entire process, I have been concerned about the loss of farmland, loss of water and the lack of progress on storage. As the State's population continues to grow and the environment continues to require more water, that water should come from newly developed surface storage, not from farmers.

To lose thousands of acres of farmland in California is to lose the habitat it provides for numerous animals and plants. Right now, the government owns about half of the land in California, yet 75 percent of the wildlife habitat is on private land. 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.

In conclusion, I ask two things:

1. Extend the period to review and comment on the final EIS/EIR released July 21st.
2. Hold public hearings.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

James Lopes

cc: Sen. Dianne Feinstein
Sen. Barbara Boxer
Rep. Pete Stark
Sen. Liz Figueroa
Assemblyman John Dutra
Gov. Gray Davis
County Supervisors