

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

1220 N Street, P. O. Box 942871
Sacramento, California 94271-0001



May 6, 1994

Mr. Steve Yaeger
Deputy Executive Officer
Bay-Delta Oversight Council
1416 - Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Yaeger:

This is the perspective response to your solicitation for comments to the draft report on Introduced Fish, Wildlife, and Plants in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary.

I am with the Integrated Pest Control Branch of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, with the specific programs of Weed and Vertebrate Pests and Hydrilla. Our focus is to eradicate, control or contain specific non-native plants that are potentially detrimental to agriculture.

The comments made on page 24 concerning the California Department of Food and Agriculture's pest rating system are accurate. Our Branch focuses on the "A" rated weed species, however, we may become involved with pest weeds rated "B" if requested by the local county agricultural commissioner.

We sometimes work with the Biological Control Unit of the California Department of Food and Agriculture to use various biocontrol agents to help us in the control of "A" rated weeds in situations where current technology makes eradication unfeasible due to terrain or the size of the infestation. The Biological Control Unit is involved with many "B" and "C" rated weeds, some of which you address in your draft briefing paper.

Your draft report deals with established introduced plants in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. The potential introduction and establishment of additional non-native species is not addressed. *Hydrilla verticillata* could be very devastating if it goes established in the Delta, also the zebra mussel, *Dreissena polymorpha*. Another alien plant species that may already be there, but not mentioned in the report is purple loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria*.

Our biologists have been surveying the Sacramento River and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for hydrilla on an annual basis for many years. This survey will probably change to every two years in the future. It might be possible for our personnel to map some of the exotic plants you mention in your draft report. This could be coordinated* through me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ross A. O'Connell".

Ross A. O'Connell
Senior A. O'Connell
Integrated Pest Control Branch
(916) 654-0768