



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
California/Nevada Operations Office
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 120
Sacramento, California 95825-0509

July 13, 1999

Honorable Michael J. Machado
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5136
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Assemblyman Machado:

This follows up the June 23, 1999, meeting between you and members of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). The purpose of that meeting was to discuss the South Delta improvements, including the barriers program, as well as the overall CALFED Program.

I want to affirm to you our support for the comprehensive approach to the South Delta barriers proposed through the CALFED process. The information available to the CALFED Policy Group indicates that construction of two barriers, in Old River at Tracy and in Middle River, combined with appropriate dredging in South Delta channels and extension of agricultural diversions, will alleviate the water quality and stage problems faced by local agricultural users. Implementation of the Ecosystem Restoration components of the CALFED proposal, including but not limited to, habitat restoration and the consolidation and screening of agricultural diversions, combined with real-time management of the barriers by the Barrier Operations Coordination Team, provides the necessary assurance that the South Delta facilities can be implemented to meet their goals and be protective of the vulnerable fish found in the area. Our technical staff, as well as the Department of Water Resources, played an important role in the development of the proposal, and provided the entire CALFED South Delta package is implemented, we do not foresee any problems with permitting these facilities.

I also want to assure you that, should the CALFED proposal, once fully implemented, monitored and evaluated, fail to adequately address the problems faced by agricultural users in the South Delta, the Service will consider all possible alternative solutions, including construction of a permanent barrier in Grant Line Canal. A decision to change approaches should only be made after careful consideration of all the additional information that will be developed during implementation of the CALFED proposal.

As you are aware, the issues surrounding the south Delta are complex. The continued commitment by all parties is needed to complete the CALFED process and develop a long term solution that is equitable to each.

Please contact myself or Wayne White of the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office if you have additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Spear

cc: Mr. Lester Snow, CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Kirk Rodgers, USBR Sacramento
Mr. Tom Hannigan, DWR, Sacramento
Mr. Ryan Brodrick, CDFG, Sacramento