



1110 Ninth Street, Suite 1155 (916) 657-2666
Sacramento, California 95811 FAX (916) 654-9780

May 8, 1997

Mike Stearns
47375 West Dakota Avenue
Firebaugh, CA 93622

Dear Mike:

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 1997 following up on your question from the March 1997 Bay-Delta Advisory Council meeting. We truly appreciate you taking the time to reiterate your question on the potential for seismic induced levee failure.

The seismic issue is being evaluated by our System Integrity technical team, consisting of agency experts, Reclamation District engineers and local Delta interests. A sub-team of the System Integrity technical team is exploring Delta levee seismic susceptibility by continuing research that began with the Department of Water Resources' Phase I Delta Seismic investigation. This research is an attempt to provide additional information by: installing strong-motion accelerometers at three to four levee sites in the Delta; creating a geologic model for deeper soil deposits; performing field and laboratory testing to better determine the static and dynamic properties of organic soils; testing in both field and laboratory to better determine liquefaction potential; and investigation of the potential for seismic activity in the Coast Range-Sierra/Nevada Boundary Zone. These efforts are being closely coordinated with the work of USGS and UCD. There is considerable information available regarding the physical attributes of levees and staff has collected this data and utilized it in the development of our alternatives.

Please note that agency experts review all materials provided by the seismic sub-team for accuracy. Attached is a copy of the most recent System Integrity work plan identifying the elements of the program (including an evaluation of seismic susceptibility). The purpose of the technical team is not to make policy decisions related to levee seismic stability, but to prepare technical materials for presentation to BDAC.

We anticipate being able to discuss this item in detail when we discuss impact analysis issues.

Again, we appreciate your interest in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and look forward to your continued involvement in this important effort.

Sincerely,

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Enclosure

CALFED Agencies

California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal
Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service