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CalFed Bay-Delta Program
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24 September 1999

Ecosystem Restoration Priorities for FY 2000

Dear Ms. Halverson-Martin:

I have the following comments regarding the draft ecosystem restoration priorities developed by CalFed staff and distributed during the 14 September 1999 roundtable meeting. Please distribute these comments for the 1 October 1999 issues subcommittee meeting.

In-Stream Flows and Environmental Water Acquisition - Long Term Strategy

The success of many ecosystem restoration projects will depend on in-stream flow, particularly during below-average precipitation years. Development of a long-term, consensus plan is essential. The linkage to other CalFed programs is strong. I strongly support this draft priority identified by CalFed.

Fish Entrainment and Passage

Although CalFed staff can provide the exact breakdown, it is my understanding that these projects have historically comprised a significant portion (about 50%) of the PSP and directed ecosystem restoration projects. For entrainment and passage, the draft FY 2000 priorities suggested by CalFed staff consist of a study for south delta diversions, likely to consume less than 5% of the FY 2000 ecosystem restoration funding. This represents a dramatic shift in priorities and leads me to suspect that sound scientific judgement may be compromised.

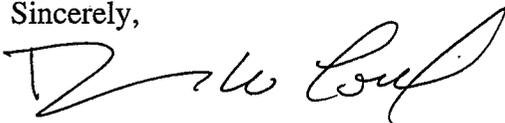
Compared to other ecosystem restoration projects, the beneficial effects of projects directed toward fish entrainment and passage will be relatively immediate and certain.

The cost-effectiveness of projects targeted for entrainment and passage, versus the cost-effectiveness of competing ecosystem projects, is a continuum question, not a threshold question. It would be more logical if the priorities were gradually realigned, versus the dramatic shift currently suggested.

Agricultural Issues

Currently, there are widely disparate opinions regarding the socio-economic impacts of retiring agricultural land and converting agricultural land to habitat. Although the parties on both sides of this issue may never concur on the ultimate value judgement of whether agricultural land should be retired or converted, the parties may be able to agree on the scientific studies that will objectively quantify the socio-economic impacts. These agricultural issues should be added to those currently proposed in the draft FY 2000 priorities.

Sincerely,



Douglas W. Lovell
Streamborn