

DRAFT

~~January 10, 2000~~ January 11, 2000

Assemblyman Michael Machado

Dear Assemblyman Machado:

Subject: Grant Line Canal Issues

During the summer Lester Snow promised to provide you with an update on CALFED's evaluation of the Grant Line Canal Barrier. Mr. Snow promised to provide that update after the end of the public comment period, which ended on September 23.

In May, CALFED recommended a preferred alternative to be evaluated along with other alternatives in the project-level environmental documentation for South Delta Improvements, in order to help identify and resolve the various technical and policy issues surrounding the south Delta. CALFED made its recommendation with the best available information at the time, including a recognition of the uncertainty involving many aspects of that information, and with detailed information regarding stakeholder concerns and interests.

Based on operational experience over the past several months, input from the stakeholder community, ongoing coordination with the Corps/DWR Comprehensive Flood Control Study, and progress with our technical studies, CALFED agencies believe that it is appropriate to re-evaluate its specific recommendations with respect to south Delta facilities improvements. This re-evaluation will be conducted in the context of the project-level feasibility and environmental documentation process over the next two years. CALFED will pay particular attention to developing an appropriate implementation sequence, such that incremental actions can provide balanced improvements across the various resource categories at each implementation step. The south Delta conveyance actions under consideration include:

- Construction of a new screened intake at Clifton Court Forebay with protective screening criteria.
- Construction of either a new screened diversion at Tracy with protective screening criteria and/or an expansion of the new diversion at Clifton Court Forebay to meet the Tracy Pumping Plant export capacity.
- Implementation of the Joint Point of Diversion for the SWP and CVP, and construction of interties.
- Construction of an operable barrier at the head of Old River to improve conditions for salmon migrating up and down the San Joaquin River.

- Implementation of actions to ensure availability of water of adequate quantity and quality to agricultural diverters within the south Delta, and to contribute to restoring ecological health of aquatic resources in the lower San Joaquin River and the south Delta. Actions may include channel dredging, extension and screening of agricultural intakes, consolidation of agricultural intakes, operable barriers, levee setbacks and levee improvements (such as levee reinforcement or seepage control). Actions will be staged, with appropriate monitoring and testing to guide the implementation process.
- Operational changes to the SWP operating rules to allow export pumping up to the current physical capacity of the SWP export facilities.

These alternative conveyance actions would be implemented in concert with the proposed bundle of actions for the Lower San Joaquin River and South Delta Region, which incrementally addresses ecosystem restoration, water quality, water supply reliability, and flood control. Other (non-conveyance) actions include actions to improve drinking water quality to urban diverters (such as relocation of agricultural drains) and creation of fisheries and wildlife habitat. CALFED will assess the effects of alternatives on recreation, flood control, and other resources and interests of the Delta. All proposed actions are subject to refinement, and may be modified in the course of the detailed project planning and environmental documentation process.

If you would like to have additional information on the specific alternatives under consideration and on the status of our technical studies, we will be pleased to provide it.

Sincerely,

Steve Ritchie
Acting Executive Director
CALFED Bay-Delta Program