

**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

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July 3, 1997

James P. Burgess, Director
Office of Habitat Conservation
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Springs, MD 20910-3282

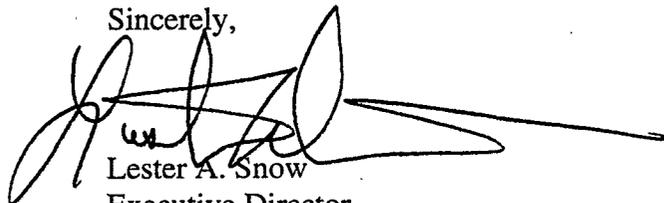
Dear Mr. Burgess:

This letter is in response to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) solicitation for comments on the Essential Fish Habitat rulemaking.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a joint State-Federal partnership (including NMFS) with the "mission" of developing a long-term comprehensive plan to restore the Bay-Delta system. A significant portion of our efforts include the restoration of habitat important to species covered by the proposed Essential Fish Habitat rule, especially anadromous fish. Any guidelines or rules issued by the Service should clearly accommodate and support such broad-based resource management activities as contained in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. The rules and guidelines should not provide additional regulatory process which can have the effect of delaying implementation of important ecosystem restoration measures, or interfere with the CALFED timeline for adopting a long-term solution to Bay-Delta issues. Consideration should be given to specifically referencing the CALFED Bay-Delta Program as a model for ensuring conservation and enhancement of Essential Fish Habitat.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Attachment

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