



**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

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November 26, 1997

Mr. Alex Hildebrand
23443 South Hays Road
Manteca, CA 95337

Dear Mr. Hildebrand:

You wrote on October 1, 1997, to express some general concerns regarding the review of the Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP) and the reality of irreversible changes in the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

As you point out, we completed our facilitated scientific review of the ERPP October 9. It was a very constructive process. The review panel will present their report to BDAC in December. One important finding made by the panel is that the ERPP title should be changed to "rehabilitation," rather than "restoration," because we are not trying to achieve pre-disturbance levels of habitat or populations.

The scientific panel is a small portion of the review of the ERPP. As you know, we have held several public workshops, we established the BDAC Ecosystem Work Group, and we continue to meet several times each month with various interest groups who wish to offer comment on the ERPP. At present, over 900 copies of the ERPP have been sent to the public or agencies for review. As of November 10, we have received 108 letters of comment totaling over 800 pages. We will continue to accept comments through the close of the comment period on the preferred alternative and draft environmental impact documents. We will respond to all comments.

I offer the following in partial response to those questions you believe must be answered before BDAC can provide advice to the CALFED agencies. Of course, these concerns and others will be analyzed in our draft programmatic EIS/EIR.

1. We believe that our visions are achievable and that they will not result in reductions of urban amenities or production of food.
2. We expect implementation of the ERPP to have a beneficial or neutral effect on groundwater overdraft.

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
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

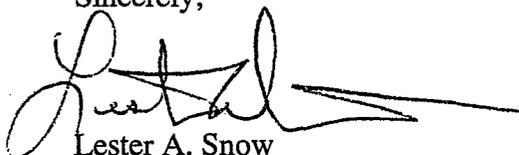
Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

Mr. Alex Hildebrand
November 26, 1997
Page Two

3. The economic cost of the ERPP is still being estimated. The direct costs could reach \$1.5 billion over the 30 year planning horizon for the Bay-Delta Program.
4. Our modeling to date indicates that the ERPP plan objectives would require about 200,000 acre feet of water in a dry year, much less in wetter years.
5. The CALFED solution principles apply to the entire CALFED proposed solution.
6. The basic scientific theories of the ERPP are applicable to the existing highly modified environment. We strongly believe that use of natural process is the appropriate model. We fully recognize that we cannot completely restore these natural processes, but we know we can restore them to a significant extent.

Thank you for your letter; we remain committed to respond to your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lester A. Snow", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director