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March 25, 1998

Mr. Greg Steel
VSM Investment Group
603 Parkwood Drive
Chico, CA 95928-9160

Dear Mr. Steel:

At the February 12 meeting in Chico you asked who would make the alternative selection decision for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. You requested a list of the names of the individuals and agencies that would be accountable for the decision.

As I indicated in my response during the question and answer period, the CALFED agencies retain all their existing statutory authorities in this process. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program serves as the facilitator for managing input from agencies and stakeholders, formulating alternatives, and drafting the impact analyses. The CALFED Policy Group collectively is expected to make the decision some time after the close of the public comment period June of 1998, based on the individual determinations of each participating agency and taking into account the available technical information, policy concerns, and stakeholder input. The decision on the preferred alternative would be documented in the final EIS/EIR, which is scheduled for release by the end of 1998.

It is important to emphasize however, that the CALFED process is the first attempt at consensus-based water resources planning at this scale and complexity. We do not have a historic precedent to follow, and consequently, we find ourselves in the position of frequently revising our solution process to be responsive to problems and issues that arise as we move forward. Please keep these caveats in mind. I have prepared a list of likely Policy Group participants which I believe will make or express the decisions of their respective agencies.

Technically, only the lead agencies for the Programmatic EIS/EIR need to sign off on the document; these are the Resources Agency, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is not clear at this time how the members of the Policy Group will formally participate in the decision to certify the final Programmatic EIS/EIR.

CALFED Agencies

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

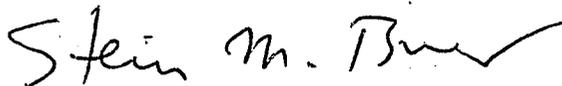
Federal
Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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

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If you have further questions about the decision process, please feel free to call me at
(916) 653-6628.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stein M. Buer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Stein M. Buer
Assistant Director

Enclosure