



**CALFED  
BAY-DELTA  
PROGRAM**

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August 2, 1999

The Honorable John Doolittle, Chair  
Subcommittee on Water and Power Resources  
1526 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Doolittle:

This letter is to clarify testimony and responses provided during the Subcommittee's hearing on May 20, 1999, regarding California Central Valley Water Management.

Mr. Pombo raised questions regarding the amount of acreage that might be affected by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, particularly with reference to the ecosystem restoration program element as proposed for implementation in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Secretary Babbitt, in responding, provided information on the amount of acreage that has been affected to date by ecosystem restoration actions, commonly called Category III, which are financed by stakeholders, the federal government, and the State government.

Our environmental impact analysis indicates that about 111,000 acres of land in the Delta might be affected by the upper limit of ecosystem restoration actions under the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. Other elements of the program may affect additional acreages. This is a maximum estimate, used to ensure that we have adequately analyzed all potential effects from all potential program actions. We fully expect significantly fewer acres to be affected, once implementation and adaptive management are underway. Additionally, as described below, effects on agricultural land do not always result in conversion of use to non-agricultural purposes. We are cognizant of the potential for both positive and negative effects from changes in land use. To minimize the potential for negative effects, we have adopted a policy preference in which restoration activities will occur first on existing public land, as appropriate. If additional land is needed, we will work with landowners in voluntary efforts, including acquisition of easements, to achieve habitat restoration goals. The next priority will be a combination of fee and easement acquisition, with the fourth priority on acquisition of fee title, as necessary to achieve program objectives. Acquisition will be on a willing seller basis, will emphasize local coordination and partnerships, and will include appropriate mitigation for agricultural resource impacts.

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**CALFED Agencies**

<b>California</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Resources Agency</li> <li>Department of Fish and Game</li> <li>Department of Water Resources</li> <li>California Environmental Protection Agency</li> <li>State Water Resources Control Board</li> <li>Department of Food and Agriculture</li> </ul>	<b>Federal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Protection Agency</li> <li>Department of the Interior</li> <li>Fish and Wildlife Service</li> <li>Bureau of Reclamation</li> <li>U.S. Geological Survey</li> <li>Bureau of Land Management</li> <li>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Agriculture</li> <li>Natural Resources Conservation Service</li> <li>U.S. Forest Service</li> <li>Department of Commerce</li> <li>National Marine Fisheries Service</li> <li>Western Area Power Administration</li> </ul>
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The Honorable John Doolittle  
August 2, 1999  
Page Two

Our experience in the Category III program is that this priority arrangement is working to minimize land use changes. Of 33,526 acres affected by Category III projects as of May 1999, nearly one-fifth (19%, 6,377 acres) underwent no land use change because these lands were existing habitat, much of it already in public ownership. Of the land in agricultural use, a large portion of the acreage (22,938 acres) is being maintained to some degree in agricultural use, either farming or grazing. A small portion of the acreage (4,211 acres) is being converted from agricultural use to wildlife habitat.

I hope this information is helpful. Please call me at (916) 657-2666 if you have questions on this material.

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

cc: The Honorable Richard Pombo

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt  
Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable Mary Nichols  
Secretary for Resources