

June 26, 2000

Ms. Jane Dolan  
Chair, Butte County Supervisors  
Administrative Center  
25 County Center Drive  
Oroville, CA 95965

Dear Ms. Dolan:

This responds to your May 16, 2000 letter restating a number of Butte County's concerns with the CALFED Program and requesting an extension of the 30-day period following the release of CALFED's Final Programmatic EIS/EIR (Final EIS/EIR).

We have reviewed thousands of comments on the June 1999 draft CALFED Programmatic EIS/EIR and have prepared responses that will be included in the Final EIS/EIR. The following brief excerpts, are taken from some of the responses to Butte County's comments, in the Final EIS/EIR:

The ERP requires all project applicants to coordinate with local government and all projects will be thoroughly evaluated by qualified experts; The ERP proposal to allow the Sacramento River to meander was taken from the citizen and landowner process developed in the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook (SB 1086); The "hard points" policy objective of SB 1086 is integrated into the ERP. Future redesign and reconstruction of bridges should include bypasses and other flood relief measures; CALFED is not proposing to change any regulations, water rights or standards. CALFED will operate within the existing regulatory and statutory water rights framework. Individual CALFED agencies will continue to exercise their respective authorities; and CALFED acknowledges the role that agricultural land plays as a substitute for natural habitat. Our "wildlife friendly" incentive program intends to increase those benefits.

CEQA does not provide for comments on the Final EIS/EIR. NEPA provides a 30-day period, before a decision on the proposed action can be made or recorded. This 30-day period is not a second public or agency review and comment period. Comments submitted during this 30-day period will be provided to CALFED decision makers for their consideration, but neither NEPA nor CEQA require lead agencies to respond formally on a Final EIS/EIR.

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**CALFED Agencies**

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

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

Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Forest Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Western Area Power Administration



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CALFED and Butte County have been working together to coordinate CALFED actions, particularly Ecosystem Restoration Program actions. We will continue to coordinate with Butte County and if necessary we will expand our efforts to ensure we address the concerns raised by Butte County. For further information, you may contact Rick Breitenbach at (916) 657-2666.

Sincerely,

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

Steven R. Ritchie  
Acting Executive Director