

2000-27
Wednesday 26



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY
2300 RIVER PLAZA DRIVE, SACRAMENTO, CA 95833-3293

CAROLYN S. RICHARDSON, DIRECTOR
RONALD LIEBERT
HENRY E. RODEGERDTS
BRENDA JAHNS SOUTHWICK
BECKY DELL SHEEHAN
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

July 19, 2000

TELEPHONE (916) 561-5662
FACSIMILE (916) 561-5691

VIA FACSIMILE

Mike Madigan, Chair
Sunne McPeak, Vice Chair
Bay-Delta Advisory Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: BDAC Recommendation on the CALFED Solution

Dear Sunne and Mike:

We are writing to convey our conditional support of your May 24, 2000 letter to David Hayes and Mary Nichols regarding the BDAC Recommendation on the CALFED Solution. Our support of your May 24th letter is conditioned specifically by the following concerns:

Summary

On page 2, in the Summary, appears the statement "The Bay Delta Advisory Council thinks that the PPA as it is written is not sufficient to be a workable solution but contains the framework for an acceptable solution if modified to include more action in Stage 1 and greater specificity of actions that will ensure continuous improvement in ecosystem restoration, water supply reliability, levee system integrity and water quality." To the contrary, the PPA as it is written does not yet contain the framework for an acceptable solution. Numerous modifications are necessary, but we agree that more actions in Stage 1 and greater specificity of actions overall would help to address the inadequacies of the current environmental document.

General Recommendations

The proposed CALFED Federal Record of Decision/State Certification of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report is not just the selection of a preferred approach to the management of the Delta and its watershed. Rather, it is a crucial planning document that should provide sufficient information and guidance to inform the public and ensure those charged with its implementation have clearly assessed both the objectives and the potential consequences of actions to be implemented by the CALFED

program. While we agree that "uncertainties in science and technology will require flexibility, and substantial commitments should not be based on highly speculative judgments," there are elements missing from the existing document that should be addressed prior to the ROD/Certification. Along those lines, we agree with your statement that, "CALFED will create clear criteria for determining significant third-party, environmental justice, and unmitigable cumulative impacts. This will be done and revisions of the plan made by a process described in the ROD/Certification." No such criteria currently exist in the draft environmental document. We will certainly be looking for these clear criteria when the final document is distributed for review and comment.

Specific Recommendations

We focus on Item 14, which specifies things that need to be identified in the ROD/Certification. We would add items that we have previously asked CALFED to identify, discuss, and specify criteria for resolution of those matters. Specifically, we refer you to our closing comments in our memorandum to BDAC, dated March 27, 2000 (copy attached).

Overall, we agree you have done a commendable job of trying to meld myriad concerns and sentiments into a coherent message for CALFED staff and administrators. While we may quarrel with specific use of language in certain areas, the concepts conveyed in the May 24th letter are consistent with a desire to reach consensus on a Bay/Delta solution that allows all interests to move forward on a cooperative and equal basis.

I would like to congratulate you on making significant progress in approaching BDAC consensus since I joined the discussion as a BDAC member representing the California Farm Bureau Federation in May of 1999. I do not think any two other people could have done a better job.

Sincerely,



BRENDA JAHNS SOUTHWICK

BJS:mo
Enclosure
\\fbnt1\legal\WP60\Brenda\CALFED\McPeak and Madigan.doc

cc: Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director, CALFED
BDAC Members