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CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Public Comment

Date 9-10-99

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program welcomes your participation. Please use the space below for your written comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Comments:

When I arrived at 6:10 PM at the San Jose Cal Fed hearing, I promptly filled out a yellow speaker's card. I was # 48. I listened to the first 22 speakers whom finished at 8 PM. What struck me was that although all had reviewed the same documents, their perceptions were often at odds: The environmental group expressed the travesty of Cal Fed caving to the dam builders and Farmers complained that new water development was almost totally ruled out. I guess the message is that people of different backgrounds have a hard time letting themselves understand each other.

As I had to turn off the sprinklers in a lettuce field later that evening, I was not able to stay for another hour in order to present my testimony. It would have been along the following lines.

My family has farmed/ranched in the Pacheco Valley east of Gilroy since 1908. I have personally been responsible for the family partnership production agriculture operation since I finished the University of California at Davis some twenty years ago. We grow over 400 acres of Cherries, Apricots, Wine Grapes, Prunes, Walnuts, Wheat, Asparagus, and Lettuce. I know California production agriculture.

OVER

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I have been very involved with the San Benito County Farm Bureau board of directors and California Farm Bureau since 1982. I have served on the USDA Farm Service Agency California State Committee for the last seven years. I know public policy when it comes to agriculture and business.

As I reviewed the 15 public agency CalFed document, from a philosophical level, three points became vividly clear to me. A) These 15 public agencies value the environment. B) To a lesser degree, they also value the general public and the cities they live in. C) These same 15 public agencies show little understanding of, appreciation for, nor place much value in California production agriculture.

My question for the public record is: What evidence is there in this 4000 plus page Cal Fed document that these 15 public agencies (its authors) value California production agriculture? The honest answer will be very little to none. CalFed does not provide for the vast quantities of water required for Food and Fiber production. The CalFed proposal does not provide for agricultural water present or future. California has been blessed with an abundance of beauty and natural resources. But also of equal value to California's natural resources are the people that inhabit our State and the food and shelter that provide for these very same people. Cal Fed needs to acknowledge and provide for this reality.

Joe C. Zanger