

Comment Letter LHF

LHF

Dr. Lanny H. Fisk, PhD, PG
PaleoResource Consultants
F & F GeoResource Associates, Inc.
5325 Elkhorn Boulevard, #294, Sacramento, CA 95842
Office Phone: 530-885-9696; Mobile/Cellular Phone: 916-947-9594
E-mail: Lanny@PaleoResource.com

15 November 2005

Mr. Paul A. Marshall
South Delta Branch
Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street, 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **Inadequacy of the SDIP DEIS/DEIR**

Mr. Marshall:

I have reviewed the joint Draft EIS/EIR (hereinafter DEIS/DEIR) for the South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP) and wish to comment on its inadequacy to address **paleontological resources (fossils – the remains or trace evidence of prehistoric plants and animals)**.

I note with considerable surprise and disappointment that **potential adverse impacts on paleontological resources resulting from construction of the SDIP physical/structural component have NOT been addressed in the DEIS/DEIR**. Because of the confusion created by CEQA including paleontological resources as a subset of cultural resources, it is not unusual for paleontological resources to be inadvertently overlooked in environmental review documents. However, the absence of a discussion of potential impacts on paleontological resources in the SDIP DEIS/DEIR is particularly surprising since an earlier environmental document prepared to address construction of apparently some of the same components concluded that that project would have **potentially significant adverse impacts on paleontological resources** (see pages 17-8, -12, -16, and -19 in the 1996 DEIR/DEIS on the Interim South Delta Program, California).

LHF-1

LHF-2

Paleontological resources are sensitive, nonrenewable resources. They are not threatened nor endangered; they are already extinct. Thus, it is absolutely essential that we preserve any evidence of them for future generations to study and enjoy. Once they are gone, they are gone forever. Yet, as important and as deserving of protection as paleontological resources are, I do not see anywhere in the SDIP DEIS/DEIR a discussion that addresses the following question in CEQA Environmental Checklist Section V: *Would the proposed project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site?* **The lack of a discussion on potential impacts on paleontological resources renders the SDIP DEIS/DEIR incomplete and inadequate.**

LHF-3

1 Comments on SDIP
from Dr. Lanny H. Fisk, Ph.D, PG
15 November 2005
page 2 of 3

I strongly recommend that the standard guidelines developed by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) for the mitigation of construction-related adverse impacts on paleontological resources be adopted for the SDIP. The SVP standard guidelines represent a consensus of professional paleontologists in the United States. They have been widely accepted by federal agencies (USFS, BLM, NPS, FERC, etc.) and California state agencies (CEC, CPUC, Caltrans, etc.) with responsibility to protect paleontological resources. Even some California counties (such as Orange) and cities have adopted SVP guidelines. The SVP guidelines are rapidly becoming the standard against which all paleontological mitigation is judged.

Briefly, SVP guidelines require that each project have a paleontological resource impact assessment, including literature and museum archival reviews and a field survey, before a project begins. Then, if the assessment concludes that there is a high potential for disturbing significant fossils during project construction, a mitigation and monitoring plan is prepared that includes monitoring by a qualified paleontologist to salvage fossils uncovered, identification of any salvaged fossils, determination of their significance, and placement of curated fossil specimens into a permanent public museum collection (such as the University of California Museum of Paleontology at Berkeley).

LHF-4

The SVP's standard mitigation measures ensure that adverse impacts to paleontological resources will be less than significant. Without an impact assessment by a qualified professional paleontologist before a project begins and appropriate mitigation measures during project construction, adverse impacts to significant paleontological resources are NOT reduced to a less than significant level as required by both CEQA and NEPA. Therefore, I strongly recommend that before the SDIP Final EIS/EIR is prepared and approved that the SVP standard guidelines be studied and included as part of the environmental mitigation measures.

California has a rich fossil record which needs to be protected and preserved for future generations to study and enjoy. That is clearly one of the reasons why paleontological resources are protected under CEQA. That is also why there is a State law protecting paleontological resources found in California Public Resources Code (PRC) Chapter 1.7, Section 5097.5 entitled **Archaeological, Paleontological, and Historical Sites** (Stats. 1965, c. 1136, p. 2792). PRC Section 5097.5 specifically mandates that *"No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any . . . vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints . . . or any other paleontological . . . feature, situated on public lands..."* and defines any unauthorized disturbance of a fossil site on public land or removal of fossil specimens from public lands in the State of California as a misdemeanor punishable by both fines and imprisonment. In writing this legislation and providing its title, the California Legislature sent a message that **paleontological resources are just as important as archaeological and historical resources**. To adequately address potential impacts of proposed projects on paleontological resources and provide adequate protection for them, environmental impact documents need to include detailed information regarding potential adverse impacts on paleontological resources and proposed mitigation to reduce any potential impacts to an insignificant level. The information provided regarding potential impacts on paleontological resources should be no less detailed than one would expect for archaeological, historical, or even threatened and endangered biological resources.

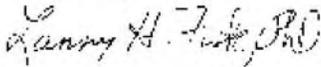
LHF-5

Comments on SDIP DEIS/DEIR
from Dr. Lanny H. Fisk, PhD, PG
15 November 2005
page 3 of 3

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the environmental review process for the SDIP. If you would like to discuss or have questions regarding my comments, please feel free to contact me via either e-mail (Lanny@PaleoResource.com) or phone (916-947-9594 or 530-885-9696). I am concerned that the record of our prehistoric past be protected and preserved for my children and my children's children to study and enjoy in the future. As California becomes covered with more and more concrete and asphalt, our fossil record is rapidly being either destroyed or rendered inaccessible. Many ground-disturbing projects undertaken in California in the past unfortunately have had unmitigated adverse impacts on significant paleontological resources. **The impacts on paleontological resources these development projects are defined by CEQA).** Appropriate mitigation measures could easily and inexpensively reduce the direct, indirect, and cumulative adverse impacts on paleontological resources to a less than significant level and, in fact, could actually provide beneficial impacts by uncovering and then preserving in museums the fossil record for the education and enjoyment of future generations.

Thank you for listening and responding to my concerns. Please add me to the mailing list to receive copies of all future communications regarding this and related projects.

Respectfully,



Dr. Lanny H. Fisk, PhD, PG
Senior Paleontologist

LHF/tbm

XC: Ms. Sharon McHale
Mid-Pacific Region
U. S. Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Responses to Comments

LHF-1

Impacts on paleontological resources were not addressed in the SDIP Draft EIS/EIR because the previous analyses in the project vicinity suggest that the potential to encounter paleontological resources in the Holocene sediments affected by the proposed project is low (Entrix and Resource Insights 1996:17-1, 17-8, 17-10, 17-15–17-16; West 1994:34–35). Although the preponderance of evidence indicates that the SDIP would result in no impact on paleontological resources, Dr. Fisk is correct in pointing out that this finding should be disclosed in the EIS/EIR; the cultural resources section of the document now includes a paleontological resource assessment.

LHF-2

The Interim South Delta Program (ISDP) (Entrix and Resource Insights 1996:17-8, 17-12, 17-16, 17-19) does assert that paleontological resources may be potentially affected by the proposed project. The analysis contained in the ISDP, however, did not make full use of supporting documents for the ISDP or the geological literature. As a consequence of relying on minimal information, the preparers of the ISDP had little recourse but to conclude that the ISDP may have resulted in significant impacts on paleontological resources. Since the ISDP, DWR and other members of the project team have defined the limits of ground disturbance much more explicitly, and additional information sources relevant to assessing paleontological sensitivity were consulted to revise the cultural resources section. The combination of more precise project information and full use of literature sources relevant to paleontological sensitivity in the project area resulted in a clear finding that the SDIP would result in no impact on paleontological resources, as documented in the Final EIS/EIR.

LHF-3

The CEQA checklist is a tool for CEQA practitioners to use in impact analyses. It is not a regulatory authority, and meaningful impact analyses can be and are conducted without specific reference to the checklist in an environmental document. Nevertheless, Dr. Fisk correctly understands that the breadth of CEQA's scope and resource definitions clearly includes paleontological resources as a part of the environment for CEQA analysis.

LHF-4

The paleontological resources impact assessment in the Final EIS/EIR is consistent with the SVP Standard Guidelines.

LHF-5

A detailed paleontological resources impact assessment is included in the Final EIS/EIR.

Comment Letter JMF

JMF

January 26, 2006

JAN 31 2006 107

Mr. Paul A. Marshall
Department of Water Resources
South Delta Branch
Draft EIS/EIR Comments
1416 9th Street, 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: South Delta Improvements Program

Dear Mr. Marshall:

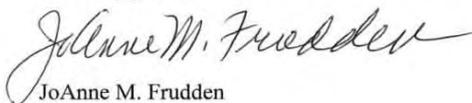
I have been a property owner in the South Delta for over 65 years and have been very much aware of the decline of the Delta. Therefore, I am very concerned about what is outlined in the South Delta Improvements Program.

Step 1 of the Program is to install several permanent barriers on the River. Is it wise to do this when there is such a decline of the Delta, its levee system and the fish population?

Since Step 2 of the plan is to ship more water south, again, is this a good time to do more of what is already destroying our Delta? The decline of the Delta and the fish is a given fact. Obviously, we are sending too much water out of the Delta. Doing more of this will only do more harm to our water supply, our fish and the beauty of the Delta.

JMF-1

Sincerely yours,



JoAnne M. Frudden
11 Donna Maria Way
Orinda, CA 94563

Responses to Comments

JMF-1

Please see Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*.

Comment Letter KG1

KG1

Mr. Paul A. Marshall
California Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street – 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/S

JAN 25 2006 00072

Dear Mr. Marshall:

I'm hopeful you actually do read my letter, even though there was an active solicitation to write from the 'Friends of the River' which may overwhelm your office, and despite the fact that I agree with every one of their points and find them well-phrased and reasoned.

I really do appreciate the opportunity to address you in response to the South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP) DEIR/S and I wanted to include my own remarks for what I think must be the direction of the water flow (increase flows into the Delta, rather than from it), because I must be like every other person far removed from the Delta: I look at that wondrous area, that I'm extremely unlikely to visit, and wonder what does it take to keep it alive.

For years I have given to 'Save-The-Bay' and 'Friends of the River' and many other environmental causes and always tried to persuade the stewards of the environment, someone like you, to see that in attempting to balance what are perceived as needs of the population of people against the life of the resource, that we are too often erring on the side of a compromise – we believe wisdom is seeing the middle ground in sharing for a need that is a few years out. This is the same logic that was used on the Colorado River and is now being played out as a disaster on the ecology, with still not enough water to share. The lands adjacent to the Colorado were viewed as a real estate revenue source for selling homes for which water had to be guaranteed. Once the population burgeoned and the silt began piling up in the manmade lakes, it was only a matter of time before the requests for more water would reemerge, as they have. The brave thing in the past would have been to not create the lakes and dams on the Colorado. The brave thing now will be to discourage any more populations from growing nearby. The brave thing in the future will be to remove the dams and allow the Colorado to flow again.

If the Delta is precious to us – precious in that it must continue to exist - then the SDIP drawdown must be squelched, because it will certainly imperil the Delta even more. The fish population will decline markedly in response to lower water levels. This is a given based on fish biology – they need room amid certain temperature constraints to breed. Take away the volume to breed... fewer will be able to spawn. This has already happened many times on many rivers around the world. Once there are fewer fish, other species suffer. Birds decline; water borne insects proliferate; salinity increases; the ocean encroaches more into the headwaters.

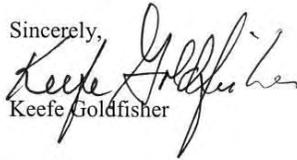
KG1-1

JAN 25 2006 000 72

Please show the courage not to compromise and actively defeat this proposal. Encourage every sort of reclamation, conservation and storage of rainfall alternative rather than encroach on this gem. Certainly, if someone like me, far removed from the area, can see the wisdom of its preservation, you, as one on the scene and a caretaker of the resource, would be most like to see this as a fair goal.

KG1-2

Please include me on your mailing list to be notified of any decisions or activities concerning this project.

Sincerely,

Keefe Goldfisher

Responses to Comments

KG1-1

Please see Master Response B *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline* and Master Response K, *Staged Decision Making Process*.

KG1-2

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

Comment Letter JLG

Dr. & Mrs. John L. Graham
6105 Skyline Blvd.
Hillsborough, California 94010

JLG

2-22-06

Calif. Department of Water Resources

FEB 24 2006 000219

Mrs. Paul A. Marshall
Berkeley, California

Dear Sir:

My husband and I urge to not of the
disastrous Delta pumping plan.

① We urge you to stop the S-DIP and
the cause or causes of the Delta fish
decline have been identified and resolved.

JLG-1

② At the minimum include or attempted
in a revised S-DIP that reduces pumping
from the Delta, improves water quality
and protects fish, and their habitat.

JLG-2

③ Implement the "Less Intensive Water Use"
scenario in California's own water
Plan, which shows that with sufficient
investments in water use efficiency
and reclamation, we can use less water
than we do today, and still meet our
needs for the next 30 years.

JLG-3

Dr. and Mrs. John L. Graham

Responses to Comments

JLG-1

Please see Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*.

JLG-2

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

JLG-3

Please see Master Response L, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the California Water Plan Update 2005*.

Comment Letter BG

BG

FEB 14 2006 00204

2-8-06

Paul Marshall, California Dept. of Water Resources
1416 9th St., 2nd floor
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Re: South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/IS

Dear Paul Marshall

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Study for the South Delta Improvement Program.

I am concerned when the San Francisco Bay-Delta ecosystem is collapsing & some fish populations are in danger of extinction, a plan is being proposed that would significantly increase the amount of fresh water diverted out of the San Francisco Bay-Delta. The exact cause for the fish declines are still being investigated, but Delta pumping is one of the basic culprits. I dream of a healthy & vibrant water system. You can create the protection of our ecological health

I urge you to withdraw the draft until the causes of the decline are identified & resolved. The restoration of the Bay Delta ecosystem is imperative for our future

BG-1

FEB 14 2006 00204

BG-2

Please draft instead a revised Environmental Impact Report / Study which will include all reasonable alternatives, such as a significant reduction in Delta pumping from current levels.

I know that there are pressures to solve problems for our need for water. Let us look to our future with intelligence for the greater balance.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Gray
75 Avon Ave.
Mill Valley, CA.
94941

Responses to Comments

BG-1

Please see Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*.

BG-2

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

Comment Letter DAG

DAG

Paul Marshall
CA Dept. of Water Resources
1416 9th Street RM 115-1
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

February 5, 2006

FEB 07 2006 00148

Dear Mr. Marshall

I am writing you this letter to express my extreme disapproval of the South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP). As a resident in Discovery Bay this project endangers my home and the safety of all of us who use the delta and call it our home. This project may cause flooding in our area during high tide season in winter and dangerous water conditions during the summer lower tide season.

DAG-1

This project would only benefit the residents in Southern California who do not use the delta and do not live here. They need to find another source of water or reduce their consumption of a resource that they do not have. Just like any other consumer be it water or power. If you don't have it you can't use it.

Regards,


David A. Guerra III


Cc: Paul Marshall
Mike Riehl
Director of Allied Fishing Groups

Responses to Comments

DAG-1

Section 5.2 of the SDIP EIS/EIR provides an assessment of the effects of the project on flood control and levee stability. The project elements have been designed to be flood neutral. Please see Master Response R, *Effects of the South Delta Improvements Program Stage 1 Tidal Gates and Dredging on Flood Elevations in the South Delta Channels*.

Comment Letter KG2

KG2

Paul Marshall
CA Dept. of Water Resources
1416 9th Street RM 115-1
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

February 5, 2006

FEB 07 2006

00195

Dear Mr. Marshall

I am writing you this letter to express my extreme disapproval of the South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP). As a resident in Discovery Bay this project endangers my home and the safety of all of us who use the delta and call it our home. This project may cause flooding in our area during high tide season in winter and dangerous water conditions during the summer lower tide season.

KG2-1

This project would only benefit the residents in Southern California who do not use the delta and do not live here. They need to find another source of water or reduce their consumption of a resource that they do not have. Just like any other consumer be it water or power. If you don't have it you can't use it.

Regards,


Karey Guerra


Cc: Paul Marshall
Mike Riehl
Director of Allied Fishing Groups

Responses to Comments

KG2-1

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

Comment Letter MH

To: 19166536077	From: 2022891050	1-21-06 1:33am p. 7 of 10
		MH
<p>January 20, 2006</p> <p>Paul A. Marshall California Department of Water Resources South Delta Branch 1416 9th Street, 2nd floor Sacramento, CA 95814</p> <p>Dear Mr. Marshall,</p> <p>Please do not divert even more water from the SF Bay-Delta. Low levels of water already threaten this important ecosystem!</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Matthew Haskett 2561 Jubilee Dr Turlock, CA 95380-8432 USA</p>		
		MH-1

Responses to Comments

MH-1

The effects of the SDIP on biological resources, including fish, are fully described in the SDIP Draft EIS/EIR in Chapter 6, which includes impact assessment for fish, vegetation and wetlands, and wildlife. Where a significant effect is found to result from implementation of the SDIP, DWR and Reclamation will implement mitigation measure(s) to ensure that the overall impact is less than significant. Additionally, DWR and Reclamation have committed to a Stage 2 evaluation as explained in Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*.

Comment Letter CWH

**MCCAHAN,
HELFRICK,
& THIERCOF
& BUTERA**
ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

1655 WILLOW STREET, SAN JOSE, CA 95125, (408) 266-4755 / FAX: (408) 266-0825

CWH
J. Bruce McCahan, C.P.A.
Charles W. Helfrick, C.P.A.
Raymond J. Thiercof, C.P.A.
James F. Butera, C.P.A.
Thomas A. Dowling, C.P.A.
Robert K. Taylor, C.P.A.
J. Mitchell Baio
* Retired

FEB 09 2006 00168

January 30, 2006

Director Lester A. Snow
California Department of Water Resources
1416 - 9th Street, Room 1115-1
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP)

Dear Director Snow:

I am a homeowner in Discover Bay, California. The SDIP proposing 4 dams that will span end to end on selected canals allowing the pumping of an additional 5,000,000 gallons of water per day to Los Angeles and other Southern California locations will rob our fragile delta environment of more fresh water. This additional enormous outflow of fresh water being sucked out of the Delta will cause the salt water to intrude further into the Delta, degrading the water quality and lowering the water level.

CWH-1

I don't think anyone can argue that during our last drought, the pumping to Southern California had a very negative impact on the water quality of the Delta. The existing pumping changes the natural tidal flow of the area. With the capacity to pump 5,000,000 more gallons a day, the impact could be catastrophic.

I doubt that the Southern California backers of this plan have little or no regard for the impact of the project for homeowners like me. Hi tide swings due to winter rain and restrictive water flow caused by the dams will cause major damage to our levees, homes and docks. During the summer months when we have low tide combined with the capability to pump another 5,000,000 gallons of water each day will cause the delta in my area to see ultra low areas and mud bottoms.

CWH-2

I have a home that is worth \$800,000 to \$1,000,000 on a fresh water bay in Discovery Bay, California with access to all the delta. Increase salinity and decreased water depth will destroy the value of my home.

Please, kill this project before it kills the Delta!

Sincerely,


Charles W. Helfrick, C.P.A.

CWH:st

cc: Paul Marshall ✓
Mike Riehl
John Beuttler
State Senator Don Perata
State Senator Tom Torlakson
Assembly Member Guy Houston
State Senator Abel Maldonado
State Senator Joseph S. Simitian
Assembly Member Rebecca Cohn
Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

Responses to Comments

CWH-1

Section 5.3 of the SDIP EIS/EIR provides an assessment of changes in water quality conditions under SDIP Stage 1 and Stage 2. The analysis concluded that salinity in the interior South Delta would decrease and slightly decrease at Emmaton and Jersey Point for both SDIP Stage 1 and Stage 2. These changes were not substantial and were considered to be less than significant.

Section 5.2 of the SDIP EIS/EIR provides an assessment of changes in tidal elevations. The analysis concluded that operation of Stage 1 or Stage 2 would result in substantial change in tidal elevations within the Delta. Table 5.2-6 provides a summary of the expected changes.

CWH-2

Section 5.5 of the SDIP EIS/EIR addresses the potential for changes in flooding within the South Delta. The analysis concluded that the slight increase in hydrostatic pressure attributable and resulting negligible effect on levee seepage, settlement, or subsidence would not affect the flood protection provided by the existing levee system. Please see Master Response R *Effects of the South Delta Improvements Program Stage 1 Tidal Gates and Dredging on Flood Elevations in the South Delta Channels*.

Comment Letter DH

DH

From: dianahickson@cwnet.com
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2006 8:27 PM
To: sdip_comments
Subject: South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/S

Paul Marshall, California Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street ? 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Paul Marshall, California Department of Water Resources,

CEQA requires an EIR to consider alternatives that reduce impacts on the environment. Clearly, the South Delta Improvement Project DEIR must include an alternative of reduced pumping from the Delta combined with conservation. | DH-1

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diana Hickson
9333 Sparks Way
Sacramento, California 95827

Responses to Comments

DH-1

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

Comment Letter FH

FH

From: towildwood@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2006 11:53 AM
To: sdip_comments
Subject: South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/S

Paul Marshall, California Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street ? 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Paul Marshall, California Department of Water Resources,

Dear Mr. Marshall:

I would like to comment on the draft EIR/Study for the South Delta Improvement Program.

I don't see this as an "improvement". I oppose any increase of water diversions out of the San Francisco Bay-Delta. Let's instead, investigate alternatives, such as water conservation measures, for restoring the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

FH-1

We need to make the very best decisions based on the very best practices and scientific facts for the future health of our environment.

FH-2

Sincerely,

Freda Hofland
27070 Sherlock Rd
Los Altos, California 94022-4239

Responses to Comments

FH-1

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

FH-2

The SDIP Draft EIS/EIR represents a full-faith effort to disclose the effects of the SDIP actions to ensure that decision-makers, including DWR and Reclamation, have the best available information on which to base a decision. As described further in the Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*, DWR and Reclamation have committed to another CEQA/NEPA compliance document that will include any new information gathered during the POD investigations, prior to making a decision on increasing diversions.

Comment Letter JEH

JEH

Mr. Paul A. Marshall
California Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street – 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

JAN 23 2006 00069

Re: South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/S

Dear Mr. Marshall:

Thank you for soliciting public comments in response to the South Delta Improvement Project DEIR/S.

Given the precipitous decline of Delta fish species, it makes no sense to move forward with a project that will "increase water deliveries" to state and federal water contractors by pumping even more water from the already stressed Delta ecosystem. This misguided project cannot move forward until the cause of the Delta fish decline is identified and resolved.

JEH-1

SDIP does not actually "improve" water quality or restore the Delta ecosystem. It simply directs water to state, federal, and local pumps to allow for more Delta diversions. SDIP should actually include an alternative that meets the essential goals of restoring the Delta ecosystem, improving water quality for biological needs as well as for consumptive purposes, and protecting Delta fish species.

JEH-2

If and when the project environmental review is reinitiated, the DEIR/S must, by state and federal law, include a reasonable range of alternatives. Currently, the DEIR/S only considers alternatives to increase Delta pumping and a no action alternative. At least one additional alternative that proposes a significant reduction in Delta pumping should be considered in a reinitiated DEIR/S. The goal of this alternative would be to restore the Delta ecosystem, improve water quality, and protect Delta fish species.

JEH-3

I urge that the SDIP DEIR/S be withdrawn until the causes of the Delta fish decline are identified and resolved. At the minimum, the SDIP DEIR/S should consider an alternative that significantly reduces Delta pumping from current levels. California does not need to increase Delta diversions to meet its current and future water needs. Increased investments in water use efficiency, reclamation, and conservation can meet our needs well into the future.

Please include me on your mailing list to be notified of any decisions or activities concerning this project.

Sincerely,



Name: JAMES E HUNTER Date: 1-16-06

Street Address: 1215 LEAVELL PARK CIR

City/State/Zip: LINCOLN CA 95648

Email: JIMFISHON@PACBELL.NET

Responses to Comments

JEH-1

Please see Master Response B, *Relationship between the South Delta Improvements Program and the Pelagic Organism Decline*.

JEH-2 and JEH-3

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

Comment Letter RI

1/05/2006 08:30 6503426157	RI
FEB 07 2006 00128 Richard Izmirian 2215 Eaton Avenue San Carlos, CA 94070	
February 6, 2005	
Mr. Paul A. Marshall Department of Water Resources South Delta Branch, Draft EIS/EIR Comments 1416 9 th Street, 2 nd Floor Sacramento, CA 95814 Fax: (916) 653-6077	
RE: Comments on the South Delta Improvements Program, Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report	
Dear Mr. Marshall:	
I have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/R) of November 2005, by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the US Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) concerning the South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP). This letter expresses some of my concerns, comments, and questions about the proposed program and its supporting documents, focusing primarily on the financial and socio-economic sections of the DEIS/R.	
Beneficiaries Pay	
During the planning phase of CALFED, a great deal of time and resources went into financial planning for the implementation stage of the program. This included the principle of "Beneficiaries Pay". It is essential to any socio-economic evaluation of SDIP that the beneficiaries be identified and their willingness or ability to pay for the project be determined. If state bond funds and federal authorizations are to be used to finance SDIP, the plan for repayment of these public funds must be considered in the economic analysis.	RI-1
Value and Cost of Increased Water Exports	
Appendix O contains projections of regional economic benefits due to water supply changes made possible by SDIP. Net marginal values used to determine the benefits of increased water supplies were determined by subtracting delivery costs of \$8 to \$36/acre foot from the production value of the water. The true cost of the water, however, should include repayment of the capital costs of the project, payments to the Environmental Water Account, cost of maintaining south Delta water quality, value of fish and wildlife impacted, levee strengthening, costs associated with potential demand hardening, economic hardship to areas of origin	RI-2

Mr. Paul A. Marshall

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such as Trinity County and Indian tribes, impacts to source communities affected by water transfers, and other redirected impacts.

Water Supply Reliability

A stated goal of SDIP is to provide improved water supply reliability. The concept of water supply reliability, however, is never clearly defined. If water supply reliability means that supply equals demand, both sides of the equation have to be looked at. In a market based water distribution system, supply equals demand at a particular price. By definition, there will never be enough water if it is priced below market value. The documents do not contain any analysis of market pricing effects on water distribution and usage.

RI-3

In our politically allocated water distribution system, which subsidizes the price of water exported through the Delta, it is necessary to put reasonable limits on water deliveries to minimize redirected impacts on taxpayers, natural resources, and communities of origin. Even with limits, however, it is inconceivable that such a system would optimize the economic efficiency of allocated water.

With such inefficiencies in mind, the DEIS/R should analyze an alternative that reduces demand rather than assume that additional supply is needed to achieve water supply reliability. Agricultural land retirement, water conservation, and intrabasin water marketing are tools that can improve water supply reliability without increased exports from and through the Delta. The additional benefit would be better economic efficiency of water use.

RI-4

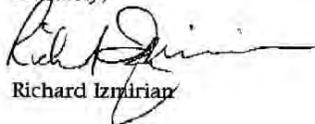
"Best Available Science" Includes Economics

The essential economic analyses needed by decision makers to evaluate issues of water supply reliability are not contained in the document. What economic choices would water users make if they had the freedom and responsibility to choose alternatives to buying newly available water supplies at true marginal cost? These choices might include buying the water at true cost, declining new water, buying water from a willing seller, water conservation, crop changes, avoidance of demand hardening, selling water privileges, and land retirement or fallowing. Trade-off analysis is a tool that can change the way California looks at water supply, water demand, and water allocation.

RI-5

Please withdraw the DEIS/R. Any new submission must include project alternatives that do not include increases in Delta water exports. A robust and meaningful economic analysis will help clarify the project need, as well as potential costs, benefits, and feasibility of each alternative.

Sincerely,



Richard Izmirian

Responses to Comments

RI-1

Identifying beneficiaries and their ability to pay is beyond the scope of a draft EIS/EIR.

RI-2

Under current Reclamation repayment structure, the method of determining water pricing was included in the analysis.

RI-3

Analysis of market pricing effects on water distribution and usage is beyond the scope of a draft EIS/EIR.

RI-4

Please see Master Response D, *Developing and Screening Alternatives Considered in the South Delta Improvements Program Draft EIS/EIR*.

RI-5

Preparing an analysis of the marginal cost pricing of water and resulting changes in demand and uses is beyond the scope of the EIS/EIR