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5 November 2002

Mr. Paul Marshall  
California Department of Water Resources  
Bay-Delta Office  
1416 Ninth St. P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, Ca. 94236-0001

**Subject: Comments on the scoping draft of the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/S) for the South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP)**

Dear Mr. Marshall:

The following comments are filed jointly on behalf of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA) and the Institute for Fisheries Resources (IFR). PCFFA represents working men and women in the West Coast commercial fishing fleet, including the vast majority of California's organized salmon trollers; upwards of ninety percent of the salmon harvested by these men and women are of Central Valley basin origin. IFR is the fishermen's research and outreach arm. As organizations representing family-owned commercial fishing operations throughout the San Francisco Bay and California, PCFFA and IFR have strong interests in CALFED Bay-Delta Program's resource management practices.

Regarding the draft EIR/S for the SDIP alternatives, PCFFA and IFR share the following concerns:

**1. A further increase in export capacity will jeopardize the CALFED Bay-Delta Program's compliance with CEQA standards**

In light of the CALFED Record of Decision, the SDIP is required to provide a "balanced" approach toward water management issues in the Bay-Delta region. However, to date many of the provisions for wildlife and fisheries are unrealized. These include (1) full implementation of the Environmental Water Account (and required funding), (2) full implementation of the CVPIA (b)(2) requirement of 800,000 acre-feet of water for fisheries, and (3) full implementation of the Ecosystem Restoration Program (with associated flow increases). Therefore the EIR/S must be conducted in a manner and scope that considers the entire CALFED Bay-Delta program at its current and incomplete state of implementation.

**2. The EIR/S must account for the increased risk of take as a result of an increase in pumping capacity.**

CALFED models show that mortalities of endangered species will increase as a result of increased pumping capacity. The EIR/S is responsible for conducting all necessary investigations into avoiding this impact. The best available science, including a peer review component, should be employed during this process.

**3. Thorough attention must be paid to the CALFED RoD requirement that state-of-the-art fish-screens accompany increased export capacity.**

Due to reduced funding the construction of adequate fish-screens has been delayed at other pump facilities. The EIR/S must address this situation and ensure that measures are taken to have the required screens in place before any new capacity becomes operational.

**4. The EIR/S must provide intensive review of water quality impacts related to increased exports capacity.**

With the proposed increase in export capacity water quality in the Bay-Delta areas downstream will be to degradation. One of the most basic responsibilities of the EIR/S must be to show how conditions of the Clean Water Act and the Porter-Cologne Act will be met as a result of increased diversions from the Bay-Delta. It is critical that any water quality analysis be peer reviewed and performed in conjunction with thorough monitoring practices. Parameters included in the analysis should include dissolved oxygen levels in the South Delta, PCB, dioxin and methyl-mercury bioaccumulation.

Given the current lack of adequate funding and authorization for CALFED from federal and state sources, it is especially important that the analyses performed as part of this EIR/S are conducted with the "preferred program

alternative" as outlined by the CALFED RoD in mind. It is the firm belief of PCFFA and IFR that all possible SDIP alternatives must be reviewed from the perspective of the entire CALFED program and its components' level of implementation (see Concern 1). Only then can California's water resources truly be managed in the best interests of all beneficial users, including our state's fishing men and women and the fish species they rely on.

Sincerely,



Reid Bryson

Institute for Fisheries Resources