



May 9, 2002

**VIA FAX**

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**Re: CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal #179  
"Tuolumne River--Big Bend Project"**

Dear Mr Ray:

I am submitting this letter during the comment period on the recommendations of the Selection Panel for the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal Solicitation, and specifically Proposal #179, "Tuolumne River -- Big Bend Project." I would like to comment upon (1) the Selection Panel's Initial Recommendation and (2) coordination with Department of Water Resources' Floodplain Protection Corridor Program.

These comments are made in light of issues revolving around the coordination of the CALFED ERP with the Department of Water Resources' Floodplain Protection Corridor Program (Floodplain program). At the time the Trust submitted the application to CALFED for the Big Bend project, we had already applied to DWR's Floodplain program, and received a positive initial response. The CALFED application was intended as a "backup plan" in case the Floodplain funding fell through. While CALFED was completing its review and selection processes, DWR accepted the Big Bend project for funding in full. A contract for the project under the DWR Floodplain program is currently in the last stages of being finalized, and provides for coordination with CALFED.

**(1) The Selection Panel's Initial Recommendation**

The Selection Panel's Initial Recommendation was to fund the proposal in part, and I urge the Panel to recommend the project in full, based upon the high marks the project received from the external scientific reviews (two "excellent", the highest rating, and one "good")

As the panel may know, the Tuolumne Trust has refined the work plan since submitting it to CALFED this fall in conjunction with finalizing the Scope of Work and Budget and Timeline for the Floodplain program. The current work plan addresses the concerns noted by the CALFED reviewers in a manner appropriate to the scale of this project, while allowing linkages with other projects and monitoring programs in the broader area.

For example, one reviewer commented that design specifications for the area of floodplain that will be inundated and the frequency with which it will be inundated are vague. Another reviewer noted that this "may not be knowable until a detailed site assessment is carried out." This is in fact the case. Our workplan as submitted to the Flood Protection Corridor Program includes detailed topographic surveys and the development of a hydraulic model to answer these questions. Another comment of the External Reviewers pertained to adaptive management and monitoring as related to the planting. The planting plan allows for experiments in natural regeneration, with funds available to cover necessary subsequent actions (e.g. plantings) as determined through the adaptive management process.

To summarize, the CALFED technical review panel gave the proposal a ranking of "above-average" (the second highest ranking) and the regional review panel ranked the project as "high." The technical review panel's summary stated that the panel "considers this to be a wise use of the available funds." We request that the Selection Panel recommend funding both the acquisition and restoration portions of the project proposal. Full recommendation would significantly ease coordination among the CALFED ERP and Floodplain programs.

#### (2) Coordination with Department of Water Resources' Floodplain Protection Corridor Program

I urge CALFED, in the event that it does not fully fund the project as requested in (1) above, to coordinate with the DWR Floodplain program in a manner that is consistent with the Implementation MOU (Attachment 3 to the Record of Decision), and specifically in a manner that is consistent with the categorization of the Floodplain program in "Category B." As stated in the MOU, Category B programs are "related programs and funding that should be managed and implemented in coordination with the CALFED program" (p. 28). Category B programs are distinctly different from those programs in Category A, which should be "managed and implemented consistent with the CALFED program and CALFED objectives" (p. 28).

The Floodplain program has specific objectives that are complementary but not identical to those of the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (e.g. the floodplain program does not require testable hypotheses). The Trust's application to the Floodplain program addressed that program's objectives, and was evaluated on that basis.

We expect CALFED to perform its coordination role in the same manner for both those Floodplain projects that did not and for those that did submit additional applications to CALFED (and thus underwent CALFED's review process). A rigid interpretation of coordination with CALFED in the case of a project that has been approved for funding by a Category B program may in fact do the opposite of "increase[ing] efficiency and ... avoid[ing] duplication" (MOU, page 10), the laudable goal of the MOU.

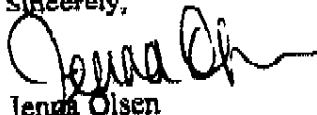
*Comments on CALFED Selection Panel Initial Recommendation  
Thames River Preservation Trust  
May 9, 2002  
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in terms of consistency with the CALFED objectives, and the procedures by which the coordination will occur.

The Trust looks forward to working with the Floodplain program and CALFED staff to implement the acquisition and restoration proposed in the Big Bend Project. Because the Trust did apply to the CALFED program for funding, we have the benefit of the full review conducted within that decision process, and fully intend to work with all of the program staff to ensure the Big Bend Project incorporates all of the comments and meets the highest standards. We believe the coordination between the CALFED and Floodplain programs can be strong without creating unnecessary duplication and delay.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

  
Jenna Olsen  
Executive Director

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# Assembly California Legislature

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**RECEIVED**

**CALFED Bay-Delta Program**

May 9, 2002

Mr. Patrick Wright, Executive Director  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal #179 "Tuolumne River--Big Bend Project"

Dear Mr. Wright:

I am submitting this letter during the comment period on the recommendations of the Selection Panel for the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal Solicitation. I urge CALFED to fund in full the Proposal #179, "Tuolumne River -- Big Bend Project." The Selection Panel's Initial Recommendation was to fund the proposal in part.

This project is a partnership among the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust, East Stanislaus Resource Conservation District, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to acquire interest (easements and full fee) from willing sellers in properties that are currently in the floodplain and susceptible to flooding, and to restore the properties, using community volunteers for part of the project.

The project has received partnership funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Community-Based Restoration Program. The project has been reviewed and recommended for funding by the Department of Water Resources Floodplain Protection Corridor Program, as created by Proposition 13. A public meeting to discuss the project was held in Modesto on October 29, 2001.



The CALFED technical review panel gave the proposal a ranking of "above-average" (the second highest ranking) and the regional review panel ranked the project as "high." The technical review panel's summary stated that the panel "considers this to be a wise use of the available funds."

This is an important project for the region that involves key partners, and I urge CALFED to recommend funding for the project in full.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Cardoza". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Dennis Cardoza  
Assemblyman 26th District

cc: Mr. Dan Ray ✓