



To: G. Fred Lee
From: William T. Stringfellow and Nigel W. T. Quinn
Date: July 25, 2002
Subject: Response to the Draft Peer Review Report dated July 1, 2002 from the San Joaquin River Dissolved Oxygen TMDL Studies Peer Review Panel, convened June 11 and 12, 2002.

The draft final report for CalFed Project 01-N61-02 Task 6, *Discriminating Between West-Side Sources of Nutrients and Organic Carbon Contributing to Algal Growth and Oxygen Demand in the San Joaquin River*, was reviewed by the San Joaquin River Dissolved Oxygen TMDL Studies Peer Review Panel, convened June 11 and 12, 2002.

I have read the Draft Peer Review Report dated July 1, 2002. Our report was reviewed favorably, including the comment by Alan Jassby on page 37:

“This research has produced valuable results in the context of the TMDL process by identifying large sources of BOD to the San Joaquin River, namely Mud and Salt sloughs (see Table 4, especially).”

The peer review report did not request content revisions, however the overall importance of this work was discussed at several places. The reviewers identified continued and expanded study of the upstream tributaries (p. 4 and 5) and an increased effort to understand BOD loading from upstream wetlands (p.5) as important priorities for continued funding. These recommendations are in general agreement with the conclusions and summary statement provided in the draft technical report. The reviewers made several excellent suggestions for specific questions to be addressed in further upstream studies and these suggestions have been incorporated into the report discussion section.

We agree with Dr. Jassby that “... it would be advisable to define more precisely the actual substances constituting Mud and Salt Slough BOD and their sources.” We concur with his analysis of our data (page 38, first paragraph) and have included his analysis directly in our report (page 13).

Dr. Jassby agreed that it may be possible to manage algae in Mud Slough with a phosphate control program (page 38). However there was disagreement among the reviewers as to whether algal control in the upper watershed would impact the dissolved oxygen deficit in the Ship Channel (pages 5, 7, 17, 24, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 44, 45, 46). This disagreement among reviewers parallels the disagreement among the TAC members. A disagreement among so many qualified scientists and consultants demonstrates that the impact of algal production in the upper watershed on the dissolved oxygen deficit is still uncertain. We are interested in organizing an intergrated study to examine algal production in the San Joaquin River to help address these issues.

We look forward to our continuing involvement in the development of a dissolved oxygen TMDL.