



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
752 County Road 99W  
Willows, California 95988  
(530) 934-2801

November 15, 2002

Marlyce Myers  
The Nature Conservancy  
2015 J Street, Suite 103  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Ms. Myers:

This is in response to your request for comments on the draft report entitled "*Socioeconomic Assessment of Proposed Habitat Restoration within the Riparian Corridor of the Sacramento River Conservation Area*". Our comments are intended to verify our support for increased recreation opportunities along the Sacramento River.

As you know, the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) is included within the riparian corridor that was analyzed in the report. The Refuge was established in 1989 and now totals over 11,000 acres within scattered units along 90 miles of the Sacramento River between Red Bluff and Princeton, California. We are currently in the process of developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) that will guide the management of the Refuge for the next 15 years. The CCP is mandated by Congress through the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. The Improvement Act mandates that; 1) wildlife have first priority in the management of refuges and 2) wildlife-dependent recreation activities of hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education and interpretation are the priority public uses of the National Wildlife Refuge System. These primary uses will be facilitated when they do not interfere with our ability to fulfill the Refuge's purpose or the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

In summary, we believe there are numerous opportunities to significantly increase wildlife-dependent recreational activities within the Refuge along the Sacramento River. The Refuge will be a focal point in providing those increased opportunities. We anticipate that a draft CCP that outlines public use opportunities will be available for public review in Spring 2003.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please call me at (530) 934-2801.

Sincerely,

Kevin S. Foerster  
Project Leader