

CALIFORNIA FISH AND WILDLIFE
STRATEGIC VISION PROJECT

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR REVIEW

Comments Through January 24, 2012

From: Joe Richards
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2012 4:23 PM
To: Strategic Vision
Subject: Comments on Strategic Vision

I have reviewed the draft vision document and offer the following thoughts:

1. Whenever I review strategic document like this one, I look for indicators that: (1) suggest the attitude of the management team and stakeholders in developing the vision, and (2) gauge the general direction an agency is headed. In this regard, I noted that the words "hunting" and "fishing" appear only a few times in the draft. For an organization that has its roots in the sporting community, I find the lack of emphasis on hunting and fishing as curious.

It would appear from the vision document that the management team intends to transform the department from a "wildlife management and conservation" organization to an agency that tries to achieve broad environmental protection goals. This concerns me for two reasons:

- a. There are already plenty of state and federal agencies that are charged with "protecting" the State's environment.
 - b. California's hunters and anglers need an advocacy agency, not only to protect sporting opportunities, but also to develop rational wildlife management and conservation policies that will ensure our State's fish and wildlife populations are available for future generations.
2. I am retired from a career in land use planning and conservation, including three years running a conservation agency responsible for the implementation of a regional HCP. This gave me the opportunity to work with federal and state wildlife officials. Whenever an implementation issue was raised for discussion, the CDFG staff always took a practical approach to resolving the matter at hand: balancing regulation, science and local priorities. I'm concerned that the new "vision" will result in an organizational attitude that could change that common sense approach.
 3. The draft strategic vision sets out some very broad goals that set the stage for a variety of new programs. The missing link, of course, is cost. Our State is bleeding red ink. If anything, the DFG should be developing a vision that is focused, unambiguous and actually rolls back some of its programs to reflect fiscal realities.

The sporting community, I believe, has always been a strong supporter of the CDFG mission but this vision and some recent "partnerships" have stained that support. It is important for an organization to evaluate its performance and recharge its batteries for new challenges. However, the CDFG should stay true to its roots and set out a vision that strongly supports fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Joseph Richards

Riverside, CA