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STEVE KINSEY
SUPERVISOR
4th District County of Marin

March 10, 2009

TO:

Natural Resource Conservation Service
FAX: 202-720-4265

FROM: Liza Crosse
Administrative Aide to Supervisor Steve Kinsey
Phone Number 415-499-3246

Number of pages including this sheet: 2

Dear NRCS staff member,

Please forward this letter to the Financial Assistance Programs Division.

If there are any questions please give me a call.

Regards,

Liza Crosse

March 11, 2009

Financial Assistance Programs Divisi
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Nat Conservation Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW., R
Washington, DC 20250–2890

Subject: Docket Number NRCS–IFR-

Dear USDA-NRCS Financial Assist Division;

As the County Supervisor represen y's agricultural lands, I urge th USDA to change program requirements in Farm Bill E al Rule (NRCS-IFR-08005), related to land and applicant eligibility. I am specifica n Section 1466.8, paragraph (c) NRCS which states that "publicly owned land is eligible if it anaged component of the agricultural and forestry operation and the conservation practic o an improvement in an identified resource concern that is located on private land." I strongl aragraph be revised to be more flexible in allowing EQIP improvements to be made on ands.

Some of Marin County's most pr al lands are located on federal lands that are not in close proximity to private lands They a nt to our local agricultural industry, for example the dairies on National Park lands pr ay Area's milk supply. These dairies and a number of beef ranches operate under lease agreem e National Park Service which require them to pay for all infrastructure improvements. In addition nder great economic pressure as the cost of doing business in the Bay Area is very high n are subject to TMDL's that mandate all agricultural operators to implement best management pra n order to achieve water quality standards. These farms are not eligible for EQIP conservation im s because of the requirement th EQIP improvements can only be made on public lands w environmental benefit on adjacent or nearby private land.

I strongly urge NRCS and the C rporation to change the EQIP eligibility requirement by allowing conservation practices owned land when there is a private agricultural business operating on public land, and w usiness operates under a long term lease/permit which holds the permittee solely respon for improvements on the operation. This change is vitally important to sustaining agriculture in Marin County.

If you have any questions I w be glad with your representative at any time.

Sincerely,

Steve Kinsey

Steve Kinsey, Supervisor

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329, San Rafael, CA 94903