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Jon Parker, General Manager
Kern Water Bank Authority
1620 Mill Rock Way
Bakersfield, CA 93311

April 13, 2013

Dear Jon:

Here is my report on the California Legless Lizard (*Anniella pulchra*) survey that I have started on Kern Water Bank. I am impressed with the excellent habitat for this California Department of Fish & Wildlife Species of Special Concern.

The high water table supports scattered patches of Great Valley Mesquite Scrub habitat that is ideal habitat for legless lizards. I have placed cover boards at seven sites on Kern Water Bank property. The cover was placed in December 2012 and I checked the sites in March 2013. Three lizards were found at three different sites, all areas with sandy hummocks where Mesquite was growing.

Here are the GPS coordinates for the three sites where lizards were found (see Figures 1, 2, and 3 for photos of habitat and a photo of a legless lizard from Kern Water Bank.

35.30049n, 119.26730w

35.32242n, 119.25270w

35.32548n, 119.21767w

The addition of California Legless Lizards to the inventory of species that occur on Kern Water Bank is important. The species is listed by CDFW as "Special Concern" due to the reduced habitat for this species. This reduction is especially large in the San Joaquin Valley due to urbanization and agriculture expansion over the last 150 years.

We have recently completed a DNA study of legless lizards from all parts of the range and we found the populations that occur in the Bakersfield area are genetically distinct from populations in other part of California. If the Bakersfield populations are recognized as a distinct species in the future, the Kern Water Bank will support the largest population since much of the habitat within greater Bakersfield has been developed for housing.

Figure 1. Kern Water Bank Legless Lizard Habitat (Photo taken March 3, 2013). One legless lizard was found at this site beneath a cover board that had been placed next to the clump of mesquite bushes at the right side of this photo. 35.32242n, 119.25270w



Figure 2. California Legless Lizard (*Anniella pulchra*) found under cover board placed on Kern Water Bank.



Figure 3. Mesquite woodland on sandy soil is excellent legless lizard habitat. Cover boards have been placed at the site (35.30391° N, 119.26752° W) on December 9, 2012.



Submitted by,

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