



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
Post Office Box 2176  
Los Banos, California 93635

29 July 2009

Mr. Matt Ackerman, LEED-AP AIA  
Catalyst Architecture, LLC  
123 E. Goodwin Street  
Prescott, AZ 86303

**Re: FWS/San Luis NWR Complex comments –  
Conceptual Design of Visitor Center/Headquarters Building**

Dear Matt:

This initial conceptual design for the visitor center/office complex successfully incorporates all the key elements comprising the FWS's standard design parameters while incorporating innovative features to deal with local and regional conditions such as temperature, sun, aspect, cooling, and site conditions/restrictions. Catalyst has done an excellent job in designing a structure to standards while looking to minimize operations and maintenance costs.

The floor plan is efficient and logical, despite the multitude of demands on this fairly complex building. One complexity is the large size of the staff that needs to be accommodated within this building; the design cleverly accommodates all staff while minimizing excessively lengthy corridors, use of a two-story building, or other features that would reduce station productivity and communication, and increase energy costs. The sheer size of the building could easily lend itself to a design that is warehouse-like and very unattractive and forgettable; however, you have created a building that is as beautiful and memorable as it is functional.

The elements of the office complex meet the current needs of the station's staffing level and activities and should aid in increasing station productivity and intra-office communications. The design will also allow for staffing flexibility in the future. The design of both the visitor center and the office complex offer a welcoming and efficient atmosphere for the public and FWS staff, greatly capitalizing on the attractive views and visitor opportunities of the site. The visitor center portion of the facility will provide a memorable experience for the public while facilitating and enhancing their use of the refuges and their many programs.

Sincerely,

Kim Forrest  
Wildlife Refuge Manager

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