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To: Lester Snow and CALFED Staff

From: Scott McCreary and John Gamman, CONCUR

RE: Key Outcomes of February 26 Workshop and Implications for Next Steps in the CALFED Process

I. Introduction: As you have requested, we have prepared this memorandum to highlight some of the most important outcomes of Workshop 5, convened on February 26, as they apply to the next steps of the CALFED process. We are concurrently preparing a complete meeting summary.

In drafting this memorandum, we have closely reviewed the outcomes of the five breakout sessions. Based on this review, we have identified both process questions and some technical issues that merit further attention.

II. Overview of Questions from the Breakout Sessions

The question and answer portion of the breakout session proved to be a valuable addition to the agenda. Our review of the questions posed in each breakout group shows that over half were queries about the CALFED planning process; the other half of the questions posed related to specific actions, alternatives, or categories of actions.

Participants raised a series of questions about the process of building alternatives to date, next steps in winnowing the alternatives, key assumptions, data sources consulted and analytic methods used, and relationship of the CALFED process to other parallel water policy and planning efforts.

CALFED staff and resource people proved adept at responding to questions posed. However, the fact that so many questions were raised about the process suggests the need for greater clarity and more explicit communication about the points raised. We have excerpted representative questions in Section III of this memorandum.

III. Selected Excerpts from the Breakout Sessions

A. Questions on the Relationship Between CALFED and Parallel Processes

How does the CALFED process related to Category III , water rights, and CVPIA reform? When the EIR is produced will the No Action Alternative take into account these other processes?

How does the CALFED process relate to ongoing flood management planning?

B. Questions and Comments on the Clarity of Assumptions and Data Sources Used in Building Alternatives

What assumptions were used in varying the amount of physical habitat among different alternatives?

More work is needed to identify core element details and then to revisit "low, or moderate, or high" goals, and their achievement with respect to resource protection and conflict resolution.

When in the process will hydrologic modeling be done?

We need explicit goals and objectives for design alternatives to be implemented with an adaptive management approach. Quantitative goals and objectives will better enable us to address the conflicts in a climate of uncertainty.

C. Questions and Comments on the Process of Building and Explaining Alternatives to Date

How do you build up an array of alternatives? Why are the core issues included in the alternative descriptions? We shouldn't repeat the core actions in each alternative description, but should refer to them in these descriptions.

With the current organization of alternatives, it is difficult to relate alternatives to one another and to figure their logical relationships. It is easier to comprehend a tiered or stepwise progression concept of alternatives.

The full range of alternatives was not easy to see because it was difficult to see how the alternatives were put together.

In the summary of alternatives, the "low, moderate, and high" categories are meant to signal the intent of each alternative, they are not a rating system.

CALFED has gone from 100+ alternatives to 20. Could CALFED produce a description of the criteria that were used to narrow the number of alternatives, so that participants can better understand CALFED's interpretation of the criteria?

D. Questions and Comments on the Next Steps in Winnowing Alternatives

Who/or what entities will make the final decision on the core actions that will be either strengthened or eliminated?

How do we get from 20 alternatives to 8 to 12? Are the 20 alternatives tent stakes or representatives? Are they the outer edge or the inside?

A summary that characterizes the levels of resource protection benefit and conflict resolution for each alternative will be useful.

An alternative that has only a low level of conflict resolution and resource protection is pretty weak, would not get much stakeholder support, and should be eliminated. Another participant noted: We need alternatives that are do not cause mutual terror"

We've raised some sub-alternatives in this session. Will you carry those forward in winnowing down to 8?

Screening should be based on cost, institutional constraints (feasibility), rationale.

E. Questions and Comments on the Handling of Public Input

It's too early in the process to give a thoughtful or objective answer as to which alternatives are best.

How much time is there to provide written comments?

What are public participants going to do? Just what is done with input? Why are water transfers a core action when most surveyed BDAC member indicated that it should not be a core action. It us very unclear as to how comments are incorporated and how to submit the most effective input.

Do we need to focus on this completely to get comments quickly? What happens next?

Will comments received from Delta water agencies, individuals, BDAC members and others get the same consideration as if they had been made at this meeting?

F. Questions and Comments About Likes and Dislikes of Specific Alternatives and Categories of Alternatives

A wide range of responses was recorded in response to the core questions we posed about strengths and weaknesses of alternatives and categories of alternatives.

As part of these discussion, participants in break out sessions weighed in with several comments on the breadth of core elements, or "essential elements" as

one group called them. One recurring comment, articulated by a range of interest group representatives, was the need to include more aggressive demand management as a core action. Another action that was mentioned repeatedly was the need for a high core level of habitat protection. Some, but not all participants who raised this concern also suggested that habitat restoration (and not just conservation) should be included as a consistent core element.

Many participants wanted to know more about the linkage between actions before endorsing or critiquing particular alternatives. In addition, participants expressed interest in knowing how alternatives would affect water deliveries, whether they would generate offsite or third party impacts, how much they would cost, and how costs will be allocated before weighing in with support or opposition.

Two countervailing comments were expressed regarding Category I. On the one hand, Category I was characterized as most likely to be implemented, since it involved the fewest dramatic changes to the existing system. On the other hand, many expressed doubts that Category I alternative could really meet the full range of solution principles. Category II had a large number of positive comments, as well as suggestions for inclusion of additional specific elements.

Some commentators characterized Category III alternatives, with their emphasis on new facilities as "tending to be too costly" even without the benefit of cost information.

For all categories of alternatives, participants stressed the need to develop guarantees, assurances, or other institutional arrangements to complement the more physical descriptions of actions contained in the document.

G. Questions and Comments on the Adequacy of the Breadth of Alternatives

Participants in the break out sessions offered numerous comments and suggestions in response to the question about whether the existing range of alternatives was sufficient. One or more individual commentators recommended that more emphasis be placed on the following actions as the 8-12 alternatives are crafted:

demand side management;	intake screening;
extent and breadth of habitat restoration;	program funding;
north-of-Delta issues;	drinking water quality;
tributaries;	coordination of reservoir releases;
in-Delta storage;	salinity influx controls; and
water transfers;	additional storage.
aggressive pollutant source control;	

All of these items had their supporters. Inclusion of more emphasis on North of Delta solutions was recommended by several participants as needing more emphasis as the next round of alternatives is developed.

IV. Addressing Concerns About the Level of Detail

A recurring theme in Workshop 5 was a desire for greater level of detail. In fact, as shown by the questions excerpted above, this desire for a "higher level of detail" is not just a single concern, but several:

- provide more specificity about assumptions used;
- reference important data and information source consulted and also acknowledge the existence of important data gaps;
- provide insight about criteria used to choose among and winnow alternatives; show how solution principles were actually used as a yardstick;
- provide greater clarity about the linkage between actions;
- move towards greater geographic specificity, particularly with reference to mapped information;
- assess the cost and financing implications
- identify and document third party and offsite impacts

We want to stress that participants' desire for more detail do not stem only from a failure to understand that the alternatives presented were meant to be conceptual in nature. There also seems to be genuine confusion or at least uncertainty about exactly how the staff deliberations have unfolded. In other words, there is a prevalent desire to "see inside the black box."

Staff intends that action on some of these items will be deferred until Phase II. However, we will it will be timely to address as many of these concerns as possible as the next document is being produced, and in preparations for the Workshop 6 and some of these concerns may be addressed in the next document, and in staff introductions at the next workshop and at the BDAC meeting.

V. Next Steps

CONCUR recommends that this list of key outcomes be used to develop specific strategies that will address the structure for the document identifying the 8-12 alternatives, preparation for the April workshop, and preparation for the BDAC meeting. While a complete list of tasks is still to be developed, we want to make these preliminary recommendations:

A. Implications for the Structure of the Document Outlining the 8-12 Alternatives

Many participants offered constructive comments that might be incorporated in the formatting of the next document. These included:

- Clearly explain how the core actions differ from the alternatives.
- Put the core actions up front in the document.
- Consider portraying the alternatives in an additive or cumulative fashion.

- Explain the relationship between CALFED, Category 3, CVPIA and State Water Rights discussions.

- Explain, at least in general terms, "who or what entities will make the call cut at refining and strengthening alternatives."

B. Implications for Organizing Agenda Packets and Structuring Introductory Comments at the Workshop 6

While Workshop 5 participants seemed to be satisfied with the recap of the steps of past CALFED program actions, there were numerous questions about the process used to develop the 20 alternatives, the next steps in the winnowing process, and the procedure to be used to take account of participant input.

We recommend that each of these topics be squarely addressed in the written agenda packet that accompanies the mailing of the next document. In addition, each of these concerns should be addressed by CALFED speakers during the introductory portion of Workshop 6.

C. Implications for the Format for Soliciting Input at Workshop 6

Close to half of the input recorded in the breakout groups consisted of questions about the process. Many participants did offer preferences, but expressed confusion about clearly seeing the relationship between solution principles, actions, and alternatives. Many wanted a clearer explanation of the alternatives linkages between actions, and key assumptions.

In order to garner useful input at Workshop 6, we need to develop simple tools clearly explain the alternatives and portray the differences between them. We need to develop "yardsticks" that enable participants to see tradeoffs among alternatives, and measure progress towards meeting the solution principles. Then, we should design a simple format to allow participants to register their relative preferences across alternatives, as well as their suggestions for improvements of specific alternatives. Finally, we need to explain in advance how the input will be used during the subsequent steps of the CALFED process.

D. Implications for Facilitator, Recorder, and Notetaker Instructions

As CONCUR is working through the task of preparing the overall meeting summary for Workshop 5, we note some variation in the way each breakout group handled its tasks, and the way these outcomes were recorded. CONCUR will develop a template for the items, and will plan to schedule a detailed briefing for all facilitators recorders, and notetakers well in advance of the meeting.

Facilitators will have to work hard to draw out the implications of comments for specific alternatives, and to turn the tendency of participants to make general comments into constructive advice to advance the work of CALFED staff.