

Information Packet

Existing Conditions, No-Action, and Cumulative Action Workshop

**July 11, 1996
Sacramento**



**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

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July 1, 1996.

Dear Workshop Participant:

Thank you for your continued interest in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

Recent workshops have focused on the development and description of alternatives and the approach for refining the alternatives and conducting more detailed analyses. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is now at the point where decisions need to be made regarding how effects of the alternatives will be measured.

Included in the attached Existing Conditions, No-Action, and Cumulative Actions Workshop packet are descriptions of the proposed approaches to developing the existing conditions description, the No-Action Alternative, and the cumulative impact analysis for the CALFED Programmatic environmental impact report/environmental impact statement (EIR/EIS). I hope that you will join us at the workshop on July 11 to learn more about these approaches and to provide your input on the proposed approaches.

Existing conditions will be one of the baselines against which the impacts of the action alternatives will be compared. Existing conditions include all of the current resources that could be affected by the Program alternatives, a historic perspective of these resources that describes how they reached their current state, and a description of resource conditions that reflect the dynamic nature of certain of the resources. Additionally, the description includes elements proposed to be included as part of existing conditions. These elements include items such as Bay-Delta water quality standards, biological opinions, the Coordinated Operations Agreement (COA), and Central Valley Project Improvement Act activities that are currently being implemented.

The No-Action Alternative will be another baseline against which the impacts of the action alternatives will be compared. The No-Action Alternative describes future physical and biological conditions which are likely to exist in the absence of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. Developing a No-Action Alternative requires some analysis of actions proposed by others to determine whether they are sufficiently certain to be implemented, and therefore whether they should be included in the No-Action Alternative. To conduct this analysis, CALFED has developed criteria for screening potential actions to determine whether they should be included in the No-Action Alternative. The No-Action Alternative also requires

CALFED Agencies

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

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that we project likely elements that will be in place in the future including Bay-Delta water quality standards, Trinity River flows, additional CVPIA actions, and the Monterey Agreement. It is important to remember that the No-Action Alternative is only a basis for comparing the potential consequences of implementing the alternatives. As such, including or excluding an action from the No-Action Alternative is not, in any way, intended to be a judgement regarding the merits of that action, or an assessment of the likelihood that the action will be implemented in the future.

The purpose of the cumulative impact analysis will be to display the effects of the action alternatives on the environment when they are considered in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Like the No-Action Alternative, the cumulative impact analysis also requires an assessment of various actions that may be implemented by others.

Please read the attached materials so that you can tell us where the proposed approach needs further refinement. Following the workshop, we will be preparing a final report that addresses each of these topics.

Thank you for your continued interest and involvement in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

Sincerely,



Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Attachments