

San Francisco Estuary Institute



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Mr. Dick Daniels
CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Daniels,

CALFED and SFEI share an interest in the development of scientifically defensible ecological goals and the monitoring of ecological health in terms of those goals. I would like to suggest three proposals (attached) for integrating work that we are currently engaged in with that of CALFED's efforts.

As you know, SFEI is coordinating the scientific support for an interagency effort to establish quantitative habitat goals for the mudflats, tidal marshlands, and diked historical tidal marshlands of the Bay Area downstream of the Delta at Broad Slough. Almost everything about the Bay Area Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project seems to closely reflect what the CALFED Group has expressed as necessary and useful for wetlands planning. The Project will produce scientifically defensible, quantitative recommendations for how much of what kinds of wetland habitats are required where (in the Bay Area), and why. Obviously, the same kinds of recommendations need to be provided for the Delta.

The Bay Area Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project (see enclosure: Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project Orientation Package) responds directly to the CCMP. Numerous implementation activities require a framework of wetlands habitat goals, and are relying upon this process to provide that framework. These include the Wetlands Management Plan being produced by the Region 2 of the California

Water Quality Control Board, the North Bay Wetlands Planning project of BCDC, the Save San Pablo Baylands project of Save San Francisco Bay Association, and the Joint Habitat Venture. Joining in support of the Wetlands Habitat Goals Project would give CALFED the opportunity to capitalize on these other efforts.

I recognize that SFEI and CALFED have different origins, with SFEI being established through the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) of the Estuary Project of EPA, and CALFED being established through the "water accord". But this should not necessarily complicate our efforts to work together, as discussions have been ongoing about the need to integrate the CALFED work and implementation of the SFEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

Although both the CALFED Group and SFEI are expected to work on behalf of the entire Bay-Delta system, the scopes of our operations tend to be a little less than that, given the size and complexity of the system, relative to our financial and human resources. The CALFED Group appears to view the estuarine system from the Delta looking downstream, while SFEI views it looking upstream from the Golden Gate. This means that our perspectives are complementary, which is further justification for us to work together.

As you might already expect, integration of the Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project and the efforts of CALFED will largely depend upon CALFED funding. This is because the Bay Area Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project is underfunded already. While efforts by the Resources Agency and others to provide additional, non-governmental funding for the Project in the Bay Area will probably be successful, the timing is uncertain, and the funds will not be adequate to extend the Project into the Delta.

I appreciate your difficult schedule, and therefore I have attempted to suggest how much can be accomplished how fast, in order to advance the Project in a timely way. I have outlined very briefly what might be accomplished through each of three approaches, at three month intervals over the next 12 months, beginning 1 January 1996. The three approaches are: (1) complete the Project for the Bay Area; (2) complete the Project for the Suisun Area; and (3) extend the Project to include the Delta. These approaches do not necessarily exclude each other. It is important to note that each approach produces quantitative habitat goals in sufficient detail and spatial resolution to inform local policies, planning, and wetlands project design. Lesser detail may be appropriate in some regards.

I also wish to note that SFEI has recently been approached by the Bay Institute to collaborate on a separate proposal to the CALFED Group for production of a broad overview of physical processes for the greater watershed of the Golden Gate, including the Central Valley and the Bay-Delta system. SFEI and the Bay Institute will continue to discuss that possibility. Based upon our discussions this week, a general overview would require completion of the GIS baseline data layers for the Wetlands Goals Project for the Bay Area.

I hope that you find the enclosed proposals from SFEI worthy of further discussion. Please do not hesitate to request more information. My staff and I look forward to working with the CALFED Group.

Sincerely,



Margaret R. Johnson
Executive Director

cc: Douglas Wheeler, Secretary, CA Resources Agency
James Strock, Secretary, CA Environmental Protection Agency
Felicia Marcus, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA Region IX