

DRAFT**CALFED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY**

March 10, 1997

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop and implement a long-term comprehensive plan to restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is developing and implementing a comprehensive plan to address a declining ecosystem, uncertain water supplies, and imperiled water quality. This plan will include an integrated approach to solving these problems and watershed management is one of the components of that approach. Watershed management will be included in each of the three alternative Bay-Delta solutions as a means of improving water quality, enhancing sources of drinking water, improving ecosystem health and increasing water yield.

As defined in this policy, watershed management is a comprehensive integrated basin-wide approach that may address many of the existing water quality problems as well as the ecosystem restoration needs. For example, water quality problems could include but are not limited to point and non-point sources, ground water and surface water quality degradation. Ecosystem restoration may include fish, wildlife and habitat restoration actions. A watershed-wide focus will help to better integrate and coordinate State/Federal resource management programs with local watershed activities, while ensuring long-term benefits for the Bay-Delta system.

A primary role of CALFED is to coordinate the solution of Bay-Delta system problems on a large scale. CALFED watershed management will be an outgrowth of this role, emphasizing the efforts of diverse interests - environmental, agricultural, industrial, municipal and other local, State and Federal agencies - working together to achieve long term solutions to the problems of the Bay-Delta system.

CALFED fosters local stewardship and supports community based watershed interests. CALFED might, for example, work with local agencies to assist in the formation of alliances and cooperative projects to improve water quality for beneficial uses on a larger scale than might be possible with local agencies working alone or in more narrowly scoped programs.

CALFED supports sound scientific investigations and pilot programs to develop and demonstrate methods for protecting and enhancing beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System. An important component of CALFED support for programs is to assure development of adequate technical documentation to support decision-making in a long-term adaptive management process. For example, CALFED might assume a leadership role in coordinating assessment activities throughout the watersheds tributary to the Bay-Delta to assure uniform data collection protocols, uniform application of quality control, standardized analyses, and compatible database structures.

on activities that are consistent with its solution principles to reduce conflict, and to be equitable, affordable, durable, implementable and not to have significant redirected impacts. Other criteria such as technical, economical, financial and institutional feasibility will also be considered for any watershed management project.

The problems to be addressed by CALFED are those in the legally defined Delta (generally extending north to the City of Sacramento, east to Interstate 5, south to Tracy and west to Chipps Island), Suisun Bay (extending to the Carquinez Strait), and Suisun Marsh. To address problems in the Delta estuary, CALFED activities may extend throughout the Central Valley watershed, the Southern California water system service area and the portion of the Pacific Ocean out to the Farallon Islands.

In all such activities, it will be the CALFED Bay-Delta Program's initial role to assist implementation of projects on a larger watershed scale to help unify individual watershed management activities:

- CALFED may take an active role to help plan and coordinate outreach and educational programs.
- CALFED can serve as a source for information related to watershed-wide activities affecting the Bay-Delta system.
- CALFED will make available funding information by publishing lists of watershed funding sources on a periodic basis.
- CALFED will support and foster local watershed management activities through technical, financial and policy activities.
- CALFED will solicit assistance in developing selection criteria for CALFED funded watershed implementation projects.
- CALFED will develop a Watershed Strategic Plan containing a stakeholder agreed-upon vision for the future of the watersheds affecting the Bay-Delta system. This plan will establish water quality, ecosystem restoration, and resource goals.
- CALFED will solicit technical information and will involve the stakeholders and agencies to develop a standardized approach to assure uniform data collection protocols, application of quality control, standardized analyses, and compatible database structures.
- CALFED can enter into partnerships with entities managing watershed programs.
- CALFED will conduct a survey to assess the number of stakeholder groups who have a vested interest in the benefits of a watershed program. Watershed stakeholders will be actively solicited for their cooperation and CALFED can help to serve as a central network of information to share among the stakeholders.

CALFED watershed management activities will be fully coordinated with existing or new watershed management programs affecting the Bay Delta System including, but not limited to, the State Water Resources Control Board's Sacramento River Watershed Program, the Sacramento River Toxic Pollutant Control Program, and the federal, State and Regional Water Quality Control Board's Watershed Management Initiative Programs.