

Notes from Impact Analysis Team Leader meeting on July 7, 1997

Comments on second draft impact analysis/affected environment reports:

1. In the Affected Environment reports, be sure to discuss only things that are going to appear in the impact analysis, not extraneous materials. Rick Breitenbach found some reports that look like data dumps.
2. The descriptions of the alternatives will be standardized to be included in each technical report.
3. Assessment methods are appearing in the impact analysis reports, but should be in the Assessment Methods Section.
4. The summary that appears in the technical appendices will be, in essence, what appears in the front part of the EIR/EIS document, and should be written so as to summarize the contents of the appendix, but not using more than 25% of the space occupied by the appendix.
5. Mitigation strategies - CALFED adopts the convention that the terminology used will be "may" do such and such, as compared to "will" do such and such.
6. "Impact" can be either positive or negative, and should be written up as such. (Avoid use of "impact" to describe negative effects and "benefits" or something like that to describe positive impacts)
7. Need to coordinate with others - much water quality information appears in the other 22 reports. The author has responsibility for coordinating as appropriate.

This topic was the subject of discussion. Woodard felt such a system does not offer positive assurance that the necessary coordination will occur, especially since he has not heard much from the authors who have, apparently, been putting considerable water quality content into their documents. Breitenbach said NEPA/CEQA Unit staff will consider other, more fail safe options to assuring the necessary coordination.

8. Significance criteria are missing from some writeups.

This was a topic of further discussion. Buer indicated it was his understanding from recent case law that less emphasis is not placed on significance criteria. Another person mentioned the difficulty, in some cases, of arriving at precise significance criteria. Closure on this issue was not reached. For purposes of the Water Quality Program efforts, we will continue to assume there is a need for as good a definition of significance criteria as we can produce.

9. The writeups must indicate what the study period is.

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