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January 27, 1998

Mr. Rick Woodard
CALFED
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

L A R R Y
W A L K E R



ASSOCIATES

Subject: CALFED Water Quality Technical Group, Parameter Assessment Team

Dear Rick:

This letter is written to provide comments regarding the activities of the CALFED Water Quality Parameter Assessment Team (PAT) and the long term plan for implementation of the CALFED water quality program. As I have stated previously, I have several significant concerns regarding the process.

The adoption of "target levels" for Parameters of Concern, which go above and beyond the list of existing water quality standards, is my major concern. Once blessed by CALFED and the PAT, such numeric target levels will take on a life of their own and will, over the years, be given more weight than was originally intended. The target values will be presumed to hold special significance, despite the informal nature of the current procedures for adoption of these "target levels" by CALFED. Therefore, *it should be anticipated that these target levels would be used in the future either as the equivalent of water quality numeric standards or as the basis for interpretation of narrative water quality standards.* These concerns are particularly applicable to the sediment and tissue-based target levels, since no formal sediment or tissue-based standards exist in California.

For the above reason, I strongly recommend that target levels be restricted to existing water quality standards. This position is consistent with your previous statements that it is not CALFED's intent to set new regulatory standards.

If CALFED goes beyond the use of existing standards in setting its "target levels", I believe that the process for establishing the target levels must be upgraded significantly to include augmentation and formalization of the PAT, additional scientific documentation to support proposed target levels, scientific peer review, and expanded public participation. I do not believe the current PAT structure and process is adequate for handling the equivalent of a standard setting process.

A second concern I have is with the absence of a clear implementation plan to address the questions of (1) the significance of listing a pollutant as a Parameter of Concern, (2) the use of target levels in water quality management activities, (3) the ability to delist a Parameter of Concern. I understand that you are currently seeking comments and advice to assist in the development of this plan. However, in its absence, my earlier concerns regarding the establishment of target levels are amplified.

Finally, I have concern with the policy by CALFED of not providing written response to comments. I believe that such responses are required to maintain credibility in the public involvement aspects of the CALFED process.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please call me if you would like to discuss these issues.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Grovhoug
Vice President