

Description of the Bay-Delta Advisory Council and It's Purpose and Role in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Introduction

On December 9, 1992, Governor Pete Wilson created the Governor's Water Policy Council of the State of California (Council) consisting of representatives of eight State departments and agencies with responsibilities for implementing State water policy, and sharing information and coordination activities related to the State's long-term water policy. On September 10, 1993, the Federal Ecosystem Directorate (FED) was created with the goal of coordinating Federal resource protection and management decisions in the Bay-Delta Estuary and its watershed. The FED is comprised of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Council and the FED are collectively known as CALFED.

A Framework Agreement was developed between the Council and the FED to establish a comprehensive program for coordination and communication between the Council and the FED with respect to environmental protection and water supply dependability in the San Francisco Bay, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary and its watershed (Bay-Delta Estuary). The Framework Agreement is an acknowledgement of the critical importance of the Bay-Delta Estuary to the natural environment and economy of California, in recognition of the multiple, complex resource management decisions that must be made to stabilize, protect, restore and enhance the Bay-Delta Estuary. Three areas where Federal-State coordination and cooperation are particularly important are water quality standards formulation, coordination of Federal and State Project operations to comply with regulatory requirements, and development of a long-term Bay-Delta solution. There is a shared State-Federal interest in pursuing long-term solutions that adequately address the multiple environmental, economic, and water supply needs in the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

In the Framework Agreement, it was determined that the public must have a central role in the development of a long-term Bay-Delta solution. A group of citizen-advisors selected from California's agricultural, environmental, urban, business, and other interests who have a stake in finding a long-term solution for the problems affecting public values in the Bay-Delta Estuary has been chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act as the Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC). BDAC will advise and assist CALFED in developing an equitable strategy for meeting economic and environmental objectives in the Bay-Delta Estuary.

Purpose, Objectives, and Goals

The purpose of the BDAC is to provide advice and guidance on the long-term solutions to address the underlying causes of problems affecting the San Francisco Bay, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary and its watershed (Bay-Delta Estuary) public values. These values include: water quality, protection of the Bay-Delta Estuary and its fish and wildlife resources, effective planning and operation of water systems, and maintenance of Delta levees and channels.

Specific Responsibilities of the BDAC Include:

- a. Advise CALFED on the Program Mission, including both the problems to be addressed and a specific set of objectives for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.
- b. Advise CALFED on measures to be taken to ensure public participation and provide a forum for public access and comment to the process.
- c. Review and comment on draft reports prepared by CALFED staff including program objectives, solution alternatives, and alternative evaluation criteria.
- d. Advise CALFED on the adequacy of proposed solution alternatives as part of the NEPA/CEQA environmental documentation process.

Period of Time Necessary for the BDAC and Termination Date

The Bay-Delta Advisory Council is expected to exist until such time as the NEPA/CEQA process is completed.

Frequency of Meetings

BDAC will meet quarterly or more frequently at the call of the Chairperson with the advance approval of the Designated Federal and State Officials, who must also approve the agenda. Meetings of the Bay-Delta Advisory Council will be open to the public and will be announced in the Federal Register.

Membership

There will be approximately 20 to 30 members on the BDAC. Members will be jointly appointed by the Secretary of Interior and the Resources Secretary. The committee will be comprised of a balance of citizen-advisors representing California's agricultural, environmental, urban and other affected interests.