

LETTERHEAD OF ALL 15 AGENCIES AND CALFED**DRAFT--Feb. 13, 1998**

March 16, 1998

Dear Interested Persons:

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. This draft report is an important step in the cooperative effort by fifteen state and federal agencies with regulatory and management responsibilities in the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento/San Joaquin River Bay-Delta to develop a long-term solution to the problems affecting the Bay-Delta system. As many of you know, the objective of this collaborative planning process is to identify comprehensive solutions to the problems of ecosystem quality, water supply reliability, water quality, and vulnerability of Delta levees and channels to natural disasters, using a process designed to result in solutions of manageable scope that will be implementable. We invite your comments on this document before the public comment period ends on June 1, 1998.

This report is a joint product of the efforts of each of the CALFED participating agencies, and represents a major step in the process toward collectively achieving CALFED's objective. It identifies twelve alternative methods (within the three basic categories identified in Phase I of the Program) to achieve this objective and analyzes the environmental impacts of those alternatives. Each of these alternatives includes the core programs which address the problem areas of ecosystem quality, water supply reliability, water quality, and vulnerability of Delta levees and channels, as well as a range of storage and conveyance options.

A concise explanation of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, its purposes, and the process by which we plan to proceed is included in the Phase II Report appendix, which is part of the draft EIS/EIR. Readers may want to begin with this report to better understand the whole of the Program before reviewing the more detailed information in the remainder of the document.

The primary purpose of this Programmatic EIS/EIR is to inform decision-makers and the public about the impacts the various alternatives could have on both the human and the natural environment and to evaluate how well the alternatives meet the project purposes. This environmental review and refinement of alternatives is the major focus of Phase II of the Program. Because the implementation of a preferred alternative will follow the approval of a preferred program alternative, this Programmatic EIS/EIR by its very nature focuses on the interrelated long-term and cumulative consequences of each of the alternatives.

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system. We invite you to share with us your comments and suggestions on this Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR, using the information in this document as a tool to help us move forward toward achieving that goal together. Public comments should be forwarded to the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 252-34, Sacramento, CA 95814, Attention: Rick Breitenbach, before the close of the public comment period on June 1, 1998.

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