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Sept. 15 1998

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BAY-DELTA ACCORD EXTENDED

SACRAMENTO – State and federal officials are extending the historic Bay-Delta Accord for an additional year, reaffirming the commitment to continue work with the major water interests – agricultural, urban, fishing and environmental – to develop a long-term solution to the state’s problems in the Bay-Delta system.

[QUOTES needed]

The agreement extends the commitments of the state and federal governments outlined in the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord until Dec. 31, 1999, at which time a CALFED Record of Decision (ROD) is expected. The ROD is the document in which the state and federal agencies finalize the programmatic decision. The final decision package will replace the Accord and implementation of Stage 1 of the CALFED program will begin.

The Accord extension allows the state and federal agencies and stakeholder interests to continue work towards a Bay-Delta system solution without interruption. In December, CALFED expects to issue a revised draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) that takes into account public comments received to date, describes the preferred alternative, outlines assurances and finance package, and details proposed Stage 1 actions (approximately seven years) of program implementation. A public comment period will follow the release of the revised draft document, with public hearings to be held around the state early next year.

Following the public comment period, CALFED will respond to comments, finalize selection of the preferred alternative, complete environmental compliance documentation, and release a final EIS/EIR in late fall 1999. After a final public 30-day review, a Record of Decision/Notice of Determination should be made in December.

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CALFED Agencies

California	The Resources Agency Department of Fish and Game Department of Water Resources California Environmental Protection Agency State Water Resources Control Board	Federal	Environmental Protection Agency Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Bureau of Reclamation U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Department of Commerce National Marine Fisheries Service
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The original Accord was signed Dec. 15, 1994, and set forward principles towards the implementation of a permanent Bay-Delta protection plan. Several important aspects of the Accord were scheduled to expire in December 1998.

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