



Memorandum

Date: September 30, 1998

To: CALFED Management Team

From: Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

*K. Howell
for LAS*

Subject: Funding for Madera Ranch

Issue

Should the CALFED Policy Group recommend use of FY 98 or FY 99 federal Bay-Delta Act funds for land acquisition at Madera Ranch as part of the development of a conjunctive use project?

Discussion

At the last CALFED Management Team and Policy Group meetings, the potential use of federal Bay-Delta Act funding for land acquisition at Madera Ranch as part of the development of a conjunctive use project was discussed. The major concern of the Policy Group was the overall risk associated with proceeding with land acquisition on the project while planning is still in the early stages and many questions remain unresolved.

The BDAC Ecosystem Roundtable discussed this issue at their September 21 meeting. Most Roundtable members indicated that the project could ultimately prove to be a good project and, if so, that it may be acceptable to use FY 99 funds. However, several Roundtable members felt that it was not acceptable to proceed with the land acquisition at this time, given the early planning stage of the project and the significant number of issues that still need to be resolved.

The major issues that need to be resolved include project cost, yield, and feasibility, impacts on local and upstream water users, relationship with CVPIA, and environmental impacts and benefits. Three Roundtable members prepared more detailed comment letters which are attached.

Staff Recommendation

While the project has merit and the sponsors should continue to pursue its development and work to resolve the issues, the Policy Group should not approve FY 98 funds for the project. If progress can be made on resolving the issues, the project should be reconsidered for FY 99 funding.

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