

## Summary of Integration Panel Process and Recommendations

### 1. Transition from Early Implementation to Stage 1 of the Ecosystem Restoration Program

With the current CALFED schedule, FY 99, which began October 1998, will be the end of early implementation. Implementation of the long term Ecosystem Restoration Program will begin sometime during FY 00. This transition involves moving away from selecting projects based on proposals submitted and towards focussed implementation of a program with goals and objectives being addressed by specific projects. This FY 99 Action Plan represents a move away from a broad proposal solicitation and towards a more focussed program but uses both approaches.

### 2. Status of the Draft Stage 1 Action List

Both the Regional teams and the Integration Panel worked from the most recent preliminary draft of the Stage 1 ERP Actions to increase the linkage between early implementation and the direction of the long term program. In both forums, several questions were raised about the Stage 1 list and many suggestions were made to improve it. The ERP staff are still in the process of refining Stage 1 Actions and will be taking these suggestions into account as they do so. In many cases, Stage 1 Actions were identified that will require a planning phase in close coordination with existing local efforts so the actions may be modified as a result of that coordination.

### 3. Demonstration Streams and Corridors

One of the concepts in the Stage 1 Action list is that of demonstration streams and habitat corridors. Stage 1 restoration efforts will be increased in these areas to test hypotheses and conceptual models regarding the impacts and benefits of restoration. This concept is still under development and additional information is needed regarding how the concept will be implemented over time. Therefore, the Integration Panel did not specifically target the areas tentatively selected as demonstration areas: Clear Creek, the Tuolumne River, Deer Creek, the North Delta Habitat Corridor (which includes the Yolo Bypass), the San Joaquin Delta Habitat Corridor, and the East Delta Habitat Corridor (the Mokelumne and Cosumnes areas). However, the Integration Panel did review these areas to identify actions to ensure that high priority projects were included in FY 99.

The tentative selection of these six areas by ERP staff was also based on an assumption that restoration on several streams would already be essentially completed at the beginning of Stage 1. These areas included Battle Creek, Butte Creek, and the Cosumnes River. The Integration Panel reviewed this assumption and concluded that it was appropriate to try to make substantial progress towards restoring these areas in FY 99. However, because some projects in these areas were still in the planning phase, it may not be possible to completely fund all needed restoration in this fiscal year. The Integration Panel also suggested that Clear Creek be included because substantial resources had already gone into this area and it may be possible to make substantial

progress towards completion this year.

#### **4. Directed Actions and Proposal Solicitation**

In developing the FY 99 program, the Integration Panel used the draft Stage 1 list, the results of the regional meetings, the previously funded projects, and their own experience. They divided actions into three general categories. Two of these categories, designated actions and focussed proposal solicitation, are included in the attached FY 99 plan and the third, other beneficial actions, is not. The Integration Panel may propose changes in the category that an action falls into in January based on Roundtable input or other considerations such as information that becomes available on designated actions.

Designated actions are those actions that the group felt are highest priority, where it is clear which entity they wanted to do the action, the action is likely to be implementable in FY 99, and which typically builds on previously funded efforts. Many of these also include significant cost sharing from other restoration programs. Designated actions are not automatically funded. For each, a project description, budget and schedule will be prepared and reviewed by the Integration Panel to ensure that it meets their needs. These will be forwarded on to the Ecosystem Roundtable, BDAC, and the Policy Group beginning in January for their consideration. They will only be selected following this review.

Focussed actions in the proposal solicitations are actions which are high priority that do not fall into the designated action category because of questions such as who will undertake the action. Because these are high priority, including them specifically in the proposal solicitation will increase the likelihood that high quality proposals will be submitted if the project is ready to go.

Other beneficial actions includes all other draft Stage 1 actions, suggestions from the regional meetings, restoration projects where the first phase is underway with FY 98 funding, and other restoration projects. These projects range in priority from high to low. They also vary in their stage of development, degree of local acceptance, and in their technical feasibility. Rather than sorting through these actions with incomplete information, the FY 99 plan will have an open category in the proposal solicitation. Proposals will be evaluated against the FY 99 priorities and the review criteria.

#### **5. Questions for Roundtable consideration:**

- A. Are the categories "designated action", "focussed action", and "other beneficial action" appropriate?
- B. Are the actions included in each appropriate?
- C. Should the proposal solicitation be silent on the expected balance between funding available for focussed actions and other beneficial actions?
- D. Should the draft Stage 1 Action list be included in the proposal solicitation to guide applicants?
- E. Should previously funded projects be given extra consideration in the proposal solicitation?