

# **CALFED Policy Group**

**April 15, 1999  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Resources Building  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1131  
Sacramento**



## Memorandum

Date: April 7, 1999

To: CALFED Policy Group

From: Lester A. Snow

*Engelina Keychelt*  
*EW*

Subject: April 15 Policy Group Meeting

Enclosed for your review are the agenda for our April 15 Policy Group meeting, along with accompanying written briefing materials. As you know, we are rapidly approaching the time for decisions on key aspects of the CALFED Program, as well as the draft revised programmatic EIR/S. The May Policy Group meeting will focus on the approvals necessary to print and release the revised draft EIR/S for our target date of June 25, 1999. This overall approval will include a number of implicit program decisions which we will discuss as part of the April meeting.

Since the release of the draft Phase II Report in December, we have worked to ensure ongoing agency input on each Program Plan and in all of the efforts identified above. It is imperative that we have your agency support on each of these components in order to meet our June release date. *We need to know now of any significant concerns your agency may have with any of these components, or any changes you suggest to any of the documents.* Our intention is to obtain your approval on May 15<sup>th</sup>, having resolved all of the issues necessary to send the EIR/S to print.

In order to ensure adequate final deliberation of each program component, we have scheduled weekly meetings of the CALFED agencies most closely involved with the Program. Prior to the May 13 Policy Group meeting, we intend to cover each component of the EIR/S and each related program component which you will be asked to approve for printing and public release in these weekly meetings or other suitable venues.

The primary purpose of this upcoming meeting will be to make some initial decisions and set the stage for the decisions which must be made in May.

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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

**April 15 Meeting Decision Items**

- **Description of the Preferred Program Alternative**

At the meeting on April 15 we will be asking for your approval of the description of the Preferred Program Alternative. This description is a requirement of the programmatic EIR/S. It is intended to fully describe the parameters of the preferred alternative; as such it must accurately reflect the policies set forth by the Policy Group. This description has been undergoing revisions based on agency comments and will be distributed prior to the meeting.

- **Water Management Strategy**

We will advise you of the progress on developing support for the Integrated Storage Investigation. In addition, you will be briefed on the proceedings to date of the DNCT on the feasibility of creating and utilizing an Environmental Water Account (EWA). The DNCT will report on their progress to date and will make a recommendation to the Policy Group as to whether, and how, to proceed on the EWA. You will be asked to provide direction to them on their recommendation. Your packet also includes a brief memo on progress to date on refining the range of water demands for developing and testing the strategy.

**Progress to Date on Key CALFED Program components**

- changes and additions.

- **South Delta Improvements**

You will be briefed on progress to date in resolving the outstanding concerns among the CALFED agencies on the proposed package of South Delta improvements. No decision will be sought from you in April. However, the CALFED agencies involved in these proposed projects have been meeting intensively over the last several weeks, and will continue to do so through early May in order to prepare you for making a decision on the set of South Delta improvements. A written update will be distributed prior to the meeting.

- **Governance**

CALFED staff will present a proposal for interim CALFED governance; this is a Policy Group concurrence item. Staff will also brief the Policy Group on progress made toward development of a long-term governance structure for each CALFED program element. Staff will seek your comments and direction.

- **Finance**

CALFED staff will present the proposed scope and level of detail of the CALFED finance strategy that will be included in the June 1999 Phase II Report to be released with the draft EIS/R. You will be asked to concur with the proposal.

- **Comprehensive San Joaquin River Flood Control Study**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Water Resources jointly initiated the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study after the flooding of 1997. The program has recently completed a major milestone and will present a progress report and its potential implications to CALFED.

**Outcomes of March 25 BDAC meeting and proposed joint meeting May 12, 1999**

The Bay Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) held its most recent meeting on March 24-25 in Bakersfield. On March 24 BDAC members, interim federal BDAC representative David Cottingham, interim state representative Ron Remple and Policy Group member Walter Yep received an update on the concerns of southern San Joaquin Valley agricultural interests during an informative, locally sponsored tour of agricultural and groundwater banking operations. At the full BDAC meeting on March 25, the Council focused on the Water Management Strategy, the Stage I bundled actions and CALFED governance. Members expressed general concurrence with the Program's approach in the Water Management Strategy, as well as the current proposal for "bundling" Stage I actions, which the Policy Group discussed on March 10<sup>th</sup>. However, members expressed particular interest in further deliberation on the Water Management Strategy objectives. In addition, BDAC members continued their protracted discussions on storage while focusing on CALFED's proposed Integrated Storage Investigation. No concurrence was reached by BDAC on the Integrated Storage Investigation as currently proposed.

With respect to CALFED governance, BDAC was generally supportive of the direction of the Governance Work Group with regard to overall CALFED governance and an implementing entity for the ecosystem restoration program.

As you know, earlier this year we proposed that the Policy Group hold joint discussions with BDAC on key policy issues prior to release of the draft revised EIR/S. **Therefore I propose that you meet with BDAC members on the afternoon of their meeting on May 12, which precedes the May 13 meeting of the Policy Group here in Sacramento.** The likely topics for joint discussion will be the Water Management Strategy objectives and CALFED governance. Since BDAC remains the primary voice of the public on the CALFED program, your meeting with them for these joint discussions should help to inform your decisions on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Please confirm with Mary Selkirk as soon as possible as to your availability for both the May 12 session with BDAC and the May 13 Policy Group meeting.

Your packet contains the following materials:

- Draft agenda
- March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting summary
- Memo on EIR/S Schedule and Critical Issues

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Description of the Preferred Program Alternative  
South Delta Improvements Proposal  
Governance: briefing memo  
Finance: briefing memo  
Briefing materials on the San Joaquin Comprehensive Flood Control Study  
Update on 404 Compliance Strategy  
Water Management Strategy and Environmental Water Account Update  
EIR/S Public Hearing Schedule  
Action memos from Policy Group and Small Group  
Memo on DWR's process for assessing impacts of spring pulse flows on the San  
Joaquin River  
CALFED Ops Group proceedings  
1999 Policy Group Meeting Calendar

Let me remind you once again of the confidential nature of the documents you receive either in your meeting packets or on the day of your meetings. They are internal documents for your review only and are not to be distributed to others. In addition, as you know, all discussions which take place in Policy Group meetings are confidential.

I look forward to meeting with you all on April 15th.