

**Program Coordination Team  
Meeting Summary  
July 15, 1997**

The July meeting of the Program Coordination Team was held July 15, 1997 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Introduction**

The objective of the meeting was to update PCT on work groups and technical teams; and to discuss the alternative narrowing and evaluation process.

**Item 1 - Discussion of CALFED Response to Agency Concerns about Draft Alternatives**

CALFED staff is still compiling a response letter to agencies regarding the draft alternatives. An ad hoc will be scheduled, if necessary, to address PCT concerns.

**Item 2 - Detailed Explanation and Discussion of Proposed Alternative Narrowing and Evaluation Process--Preparation for CALFED Policy Group Meeting, August 14 & 15**

This is the most significant issue for the meeting, as Policy Group has made it the top priority for their August 14 and 15 meeting. Program staff would like another ad hoc on July 31, with a write up on potential alternatives for narrowing going out to PCT in advance of that meeting.

Loren Bottorf, Program consultant, presented an overview of the decision process for selection of a preferred alternative.

Step 1 is alternative narrowing, where cost and engineering/technical feasibility are reviewed. Technical problems are identified, the variation is modified to remove problems; if this is not possible, the variation is dropped. When two variations are found to achieve the same conveyance functions, cost and impact are compared, and the alternative with the higher cost eliminated. The goal is to reduce the number of variations to 6-10 in August. Step 2 is detailed evaluation, where information from impact analysis and prefeasibility studies are used, then the information is arrayed and ranked on a decision matrix. Variations must be ranked in potentially 300-500 areas. Many of these will be the same from one alternative to the next, so the Program must identify distinguishing characteristics. Because of the number of areas to be ranked, it's important to eliminate unfeasible variations to ensure higher quality work on the remainder.

Action: PCT should be preparing their Policy Group members to make decisions on August 14 and 15.

Ron Ott, Program consultant, passed out packets of maps and comparison tables for the specific variations to be discussed at the meeting, then gave a presentation comparing the variations and recommending five variations be eliminated from the pool. These comparisons dealt with cost, function and impact.

- ▶ Alternative 3A (canal) is preferred over 3C (pipeline). **Alternative 3C is recommended to be dropped**, primarily due to cost. Concerns about an open canal were expressed: potential for drowning; evaporation; and contamination.

Action: Program staff needs to address these concerns in the write up for the July 31 ad hoc.

- ▶ Alternative 3B (canal) is preferred over 3D (pipeline). **Alternative 3D is recommended to be dropped**, primarily due to cost.
- ▶ Alternative 3E (large isolated facility plus in-Delta storage) is preferred over 3F (Chain-of-Lakes). **Alternative 3E is recommended to be dropped**, primarily due to cost.
- ▶ Alternative 3I (multi intake conveyance) incorporates the feature of Alternative 2C (multi intake conveyance). **Alternative 2C is recommended to be dropped**, due to cost and limited flexibility without storage and that its features will be evaluated in Alternative 3I.
- ▶ Alternative 3B (canal) is preferred over Alternative 3G (shop channel). **Alternative 3G is recommended to be dropped**, primarily due to cost.

The cost of any of the variations could be 35 percent higher than estimated or 10 percent lower. This is as far as we can go, using the information we have.

Program staff need to know what are the distinguishing characteristics. This is something that must be nailed down in order to continue the process.

Action: PCT needs to know who proposed which alternative, to prepare Policy Group members for politics.

Next, PCT discussed the Distinguishing Characteristics of the variations.

#### **Water Quality Distinguishing Characteristics:**

Program staff plan to examine In-Delta water quality, and export drinking water quality. PCT suggested that water quality may need to be handled by zone. The PCT suggested that the export characteristic not be limited to drinking water quality. There were concerns raised about the resultant impact to water quality in the upper watershed, and whether the effects of storage had received enough consideration. Program staff confirmed that we'll look at water quality in the various zones if it differs between areas.

#### **Ecosystem Quality Distinguishing Characteristics:**

Program staff will be looking at export diversion effects on fisheries, Delta flow circulation, and

storage and release of non-environmental water. PCT wants to know more about the effect of Delta flow on fish, and requested that the effects on X2 water to be included in the write up. PCT members questioned the necessity of distinguishing non-environmental water and recommended that the item be changed to "storage and release of water."

Program staff asked PCT whether connectivity of habitat should be included as a distinguishing characteristic, because it would favor one alternative over another by limiting the preferred alternative to an isolated facility. PCT wants to give this some thought before giving direction on this issue.

**Levee System Integrity Distinguishing Characteristics:**

The Levee System Integrity program is basically the same for all alternatives. Program staff will look at the risk to export water supply facilities and operations All variations will affect habitat if levees fail, except peripheral water.

**Water Supply Reliability Distinguishing Characteristics:**

Program staff will be looking at how water supply opportunities change between alternatives, and the amount of deliverable water. PCT members asked if water use efficiency will be included as a water supply reliability distinguishing characteristic. Program staff doesn't plan to include it because it's a common program. One PCT member expressed interest in possibly adding water use efficiency to the distinguishing characteristics list.

Water transfer opportunities will be included as a distinguishing characteristic, since they vary between alternatives. One benefit is increased opportunities for water use efficiency. Transfers can lead to conservation.

Other water supply reliability distinguishing characteristics are system operational flexibility, and South Delta channel stages. Some PCT members are concerned that operating criteria are not being developed alongside the alternatives. It was recommended that CALFED should plan to develop operating criteria for a facility at a later time.

PCT cautioned against playing with standards, and want to look at how we can increase water supply reliability while increasing benefits for fish and wildlife.

PCT members urged caution in how Program staff characterize water purchases. What people think they're buying regarding water can be a huge problem.

Regarding average annual supply versus critical supply, Program staff are studying both, and have numbers for both. PCT was concerned that both are not being arrayed, and emphasized they'd like to see both arrayed.

**Other Distinguishing Characteristics:**

Program staff will evaluate total costs, assurances and effectiveness, habitat disturbance, land use changes, socio-economic impacts, and consistency with solution principles. PCT wants to be sure the writeup of total costs will be a complete articulation of what's factored into the ranking, e.g., costs of mitigation, operating, cleanup.

Program staff advised PCT that some alternatives rely on real time monitoring, which is not included in the cost of ERPP. PCT wants to see that cost when making tradeoffs.

**Assurances Distinguishing Characteristics:**

PCT questioned the effectiveness of including Assurances as a distinguishing characteristic. Program staff explained we want to use assurances to help select the preferred alternative. Additionally, some PCT members would like to see physical assurances addressed.

**Action:** PCT should consider what the most important tradeoffs are for the Distinguishing Characteristics, and provide guidance to Program staff.

Finally, PCT requested the last sentence on page 7 of the July 11 narrowing write up be worded more diplomatically in future write ups. It currently states that the selection of the preferred alternative will be based on the judgment of CALFED staff and agencies, which is true, but PCT is concerned it doesn't appropriate reflect the contribution of public input from stakeholders.

Overall, PCT wants to capitalize on Policy Group momentum. Policy Group believes they'll be taking 17 variations down to 6. Some PCT members urged Program staff to give Policy Group the opportunity to cut more than 5 variations; if Policy Group isn't comfortable, they won't do it.

**Item 3 - Discussion of Revised Draft of Program Approach with Respect to San Joaquin River Water Quality Problems**

Rick Woodard reviewed the revised draft of the Water Quality Policy Statement, and requested PCT to identify any issues or concerns that still need to be addressed. He requested concurrence to send the statement out to stakeholders, especially agricultural stakeholders.

One area of concern was the first sentence, which describes the problem area as the legally defined Delta. BDAC and CALFED had decided to include the Suisun Bay area as well.

Amended language was suggested for one of the priorities points on page four, regarding the Tulare Lake Basin. Program staff will incorporate the amended language.

Concern expressed regarding the underlying tone re CALFED -- does it send the wrong message regarding our intentions? Program staff suggested a cover memorandum clarifying CALFED's intentions. Also, staff requested specific language be provided to add to the statement.

**Action:** Gail Louis and Penny Howard will discuss this paper, then get back to Rick Woodard within a week with suggested language.

Question regarding reference to Drainage Oversight Committee. Some PCT members believe this group may have been abolished and disbanded. This needs to be confirmed.

On page 5, the paper suggests we use "proven technology." PCT prefers the term "best implementable technology."

#### **Item 4 - Discussion of Revised Water Transfers Paper Being Developed by Transfers Agency Group**

Rick Soehren furnished PCT with a draft Water Transfers discussion paper, then asked for concurrence to send the discussion paper to the BDAC Water Transfers Work Group, essentially making it a public document.

Action: The discussion paper refers to attached issue papers, currently only available to CALFED agencies. PCT requested references to those documents be deleted.

Concurrence was granted by PCT for CALFED to send the discussion paper to the Water Transfers Work Group, which is set to meet on August 7 for the first time. The meeting package will be mailed out next week.

a Water Transfers Policy Paper was also distributed for discussion by PCT. PCT suggested revisions to item No. 4 regarding the potential evolution of CALFED agencies' roles and responsibility with respect to water transfers.

Staff then distributed an Assumptions Paper for Agricultural Water Use Efficiency, drawing attention to the definition of irrecoverable versus recoverable loss. This document was informational, and PCT discussion was limited.

#### **Item 5 - Impact Analysis Reports Distribution--Discuss Most Useful Way to Obtain Comments**

Frank Piccola distributed impact analysis reports to PCT members. The next iteration of impact analysis reports, originally scheduled for August 1, has been pushed back to August 25 to allow more than a cursory review. This process is two-fold: PCT members are helping Program staff with the review, and the process helps the Program keep agencies informed.

Staff also passed out a list of technical reports with Agency review assignments. We won't have 60 days to review the Administrative Draft. Since these technical reports go into the Draft, please give as much detail as possible.

Action: Program staff requested the PCT to concentrate their review on the reports assigned to them, although agencies may review any or all of the reports if they wish. Comments should be turned in by July 25 to be incorporated in the August 25 iteration.

Action: If there are any problems with the assignments, PCT members should contact Frank Piccola right away.

**Item 6 - Status of ERPP, Volume III**

Volume III of the ERPP to be finished soon, with a working draft available in 2-3 weeks. Volume II will be sent to the printer after Loren Bottorff finishes his review. Volume I has already been released.

BDAC's Ecosystem Restoration Work Group teams need to refine components of Volume III. Program staff need help with concepts and policy. The crux of the process is defining criteria for phasing in the program.

Release of the Volume III Preliminary Working Draft triggers the 45-day review period. Many people on the Scientific Review Panel are academicians, so it's important to meet an early September deadline.

**Item 7 - Status of HCP/404**

Frank Piccola passed out memorandums to update PCT on Habitat Conservation Plan and 404(b)(1) Analysis.

The PCT will meet ad hoc on Thursday, July 31 to further discuss the narrowing process. The next regular meeting of the PCT is scheduled for August 13, 1997 at 9:00 a.m.