

CALFED BAY DELTA PROGRAM PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY-1995

Program Receives Array of Comments in Many Forms

In the first seven months of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, through December 1995, the Program sought input into Program design and development through a wide array of formal and informal opportunities. These opportunities are highlighted in the *CALFED Bay-Delta Program Public Outreach Activities 1995 Summary* (mailed with your BDAC materials).

Through this array of small-group meetings, conferences, BDAC meeting, public meetings and interagency reviews, we have received a good number of comments on all aspects of the program--from comments regarding specific suggestions on the wording of the Mission Statement to questions about how the Program should address baseline conditions in the upcoming environmental review process.

We have attempted to keep the Program as open as possible to review and comment by a wide number of participants. Toward that end, comments have been encouraged through a variety of mechanisms. They come through the traditional methods such as public comments made at meetings and through formal letter writing, and through more informal methods such as the E-Mail and small group discussions.

While up to now we have not responded directly back to all commentors, each has been important to the Program as we have made changes and advanced ideas in our progress through Phase 1. Where applicable, comments were reviewed by program staff responsible for that area of Program development and were incorporated into revised Program products. The following discussion highlights some of the comment topics received up to this point.

Comments from Public Meetings

Over 300 people attended one of the 5 public meetings held throughout the state during Phase 1 of the Program. The majority of people who spoke at these meetings asked questions of the Program staff. Many attendees asked questions about program process and timelines. In Stockton, several people requested that the specific concerns of San Joaquin county be recognized in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. Everywhere people wondered if certain potential actions (such as greater demand management or an isolated transfer facility) would be automatically in or out of the program. Several times the audience wanted to know what would happen to the CALFED Bay-Delta Program if major changes in the CVPIA were made or other major programs were significantly altered or eliminated. At nearly every meeting, someone stated that the need for a successful Bay-Delta Program was great and that decisions made here would affect the lives of all Californians.

Mission, Problem Statements, Objectives and Solution Principles

A great many of the comments received so far concern the specific wording of the Mission Statement, the Problem Statements, the Objectives and the Solution Principles. After Workshop 3, comment fell off regrading Mission as the consensus process resolved most of the outstanding concerns on that element of the Program. Many commentators wanted specific word changes made to the objectives and or problem statement and were concerned that a specific issue was not addressed or covered adequately.

Many of these concerns were addressed through successive redrafts of the Mission, Problems and Objectives accomplished at the second and third workshops. Draft Solution Principles were also redrafted after review of the comments and are included in your packet for the meeting today.

Action Descriptions and Categories

Many comments were received on the Draft Action categories and descriptions. Most commentators requested greater detail be provided in order to more accurately evaluate the actions. We have addressed these concerns in the Draft Alternatives now available which contain substantially more detail than our original action categories.

Demand Management

Several comments concerned the Program's intent with regard to managing demand as part of the Bay-Delta solutions. Some have suggested demand management is a key to environmentally sound solutions. Others have stated that managing demand may only provide a marginal benefit in terms of overall Bay-Delta issues and water availability. A discussion paper on this important issue is part of your BDAC packet.

Emerging Issues

Several recent comment have addressed issues related to the environmental review phase of the Program. The question of what will constitute a "baseline" program or policy has been asked. People with proposed projects in mind are interested in how the Program will define these "baseline" and existing conditions. These kind of issues will continue to be raised as we move into the scoping phase of environmental review.

Comment Tracking In Phase 2

With the advent of Phase 2, the environmental review phase, all comments and Program responses will be officially logged and tracked. As is the case now, comments will be forwarded to staff and consultant teams working on that particular issue. In addition, periodic reports will be available summarizing the comments received on the program and describing the response of the Program to that comment. Of course, individual response letters will still be needed on certain subjects and the Program will strive to make those responses in a timely way.