

**BDAC Public Meeting  
March 21, 1996  
Draft Meeting Summary (For Internal Review)**

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **General Overview of Process**

**D R A F T**

Lester Snow. The CalFed Bay Delta Program is in the planning or pre-scoping phase. The Program is holding comments regarding design of alternative components for the implementation phase. However, the Program is also identifying components for early implementation, prior to certification of the EIR/S.

The process of refining the 20 alternatives to 10 has three components:

- 1) The process is collaborative and based on review and comment from stakeholders and other members of the public. The process is risky unless all stakeholders are heard.
- 2) The process is performance based. The refined alternatives must meet the stated objectives and solution principles.
- 3) The process includes a healthy range of approaches to ensure a good mix of alternatives and a range of costs.

BDAC members Hap Dunning, Roberta Borgonovo and Ann Notthoff asked for more information regarding assumptions and the effectiveness of the alternative components in addressing issues. They also questioned whether enough of a foundation has been laid to refine the alternatives within the current schedule. Dunning questioned whether the schedule allows for maintaining good feedback from stakeholders and referred to the March 5, 1996 letter from the Environmental Water Caucus. He stated the CalFed Core Actions do not adequately capture the Essential Elements. Borgonovo expressed a need to articulate a vision of the ideal goal before refinement of the alternatives. Notthoff wanted to know the assumptions behind the alternatives to help her constituents determine if the alternatives will provide the identified outcomes. Habitat strategy and agricultural issues were brought up as examples of issues where more specificity was needed. She wanted to know the difference between the Core Actions and Essential Elements.

Judith Redmond questioned whether water markets or transfers would be a core action, given the number acres that have been retired.

Gary Bobker (Bay Institute) summarized the letter by expressing insecurities about moving ahead with the schedule. He expressed a desire to deal with the foundation issues and to create a vision of the essential elements. He added it would be difficult to review the draft alternatives without the visioning and laying of the foundation.

Lester Snow expressed the comments raised a concern, but the timing of the letter did not allow for a specific response at the meeting. He pointed out that these types of policy questions may be appropriate for the workgroups. Snow mentioned the solution principles will become more important as the process moves forward and the stakeholders try to achieve consensus and balance.

Mike Madigan said the BDAC process is evolving. Members are required to be representatives for their positions and be more active in their involvement. BDAC will start resolving substantive issues. Members must recognize their dual role of representing their constituencies while reaching consensus. They must express their concerns and deal points and recognize the points for compromise in a timely fashion. They should make efforts to attend meetings, but if they can not, they should find someone who can represent their views.

### 3. Summary of Issues

#### *Habitat Strategy & CVPIA Implementation*

Dick Daniel presented the issues. The strategy is based on restoration of natural functions of the system and has several broad components:

- An elaborate public process to identify problems and actions.
- Actions have multiple benefits, i.e. levee maintenance incorporates habitat protections.
- A suite of indicators will measure progress towards meeting goals and determine if actions work.
- The strategy incorporates an adaptive management approach.

Several BDAC members expressed concern and raised questions regarding whether the CVPIA fish and wildlife measures were incorporated into the CalFed Habitat Strategy. The CVPIA goal of doubling the natural production of anadromous fish by the year 2002, was brought up several times and several asked if the CalFed strategy embraced the goal.

#### Other BDAC comments:

- (?) Need more specific measurable criteria to ensure goals are met. Ecosystem restoration is a new concept. The more precise we can be, the better the chance for reaching consensus.
- (Richard Izmirian) Include a list of indicators and identify assumptions.
- (Stuart Pyle) Identify a general habitat strategy that serves as an umbrella for the restoration actions.
- (Pietro Paravano) Have goals or targets identify the number of fish to be produced. Keep to CVPIA fish doubling goal.
- (Roberta Borgonovo) Concentrate on habitat improvements. Use models applied to successful restoration programs.
- (Dick Daniel) Translate scientific data to terms that can be understood by others.
- (Borgonovo) Articulate what a natural system looks like.

- (Daniel) Need adaptive management measures to assure achievement of goals/targets.
- (Steve Hall) Stress role of monitoring and develop a system all can agree to.
- (Mary Selkirk) Include in process evaluation of alternative components, as narrowing occurs. The Process should look at the full range of comments, from those that address very broad issues to those that are very specific.
- (Alex Hildebrand) Be aware there may be tradeoffs between protecting natural species and exotics.

**Public Comments (Gary Bobker):**

- Have strategy provide quantity and quality of habitat restoration to meet recovery requirements.
- Stated restoration goals and targets are needed to meet thresholds.
- Flow and timing are not adequately addressed in strategy.

Mike Madigan appointed Mary Selkirk as chair of the Habitat Strategies & CVPIA Implementation Workgroup. The first meeting date is April 22, 1996.

*Financial Strategies*

Zach McReynolds presented the issues summary. His presentation focussed on:

- Cost allocation strategies
- Budget issues
- Alternative statewide revenue sources
- Financial structure

The Financial Strategies workgroup consists of Roberta Borgonovo, Tom Maddock, Tom Graff, and Eric Hasseltine.

Eric Hasseltine said the workgroup is looking ahead to addressing how alternatives will be implemented. They are looking at costs, value and effectiveness of alternatives.

**Comments/Questions:**

- (?) Identify list of issues relating to implementation of alternative financial strategies. Rank or rate alternatives that meet technical objectives. Allocate costs to those who benefit from improved levees, water supply, water quality and environmental restoration. However, consider the ability of different sectors to pay for the improvements.
- (Izmirian) Identify alternatives to GO bonds. Develop a set of alternatives which do not need a popular for implementation.
- (Bob Raab) Identify a broad funding base, such as a utility or water tax, which does not need a broad based vote.
- (Borgonovo) How do CVPIA and other programs fit into CalFed funding schemes?
- (Raab) Create a Delta Utility user fee, to be paid by farmers, fishermen and water users.

- (Pyle) Identify how future financial decisions will be made, especially for an adaptive management scheme. Institutional assurances are needed to determine when funding is available for later phases of projects.
- (Raab) Add to the workgroup mandate the task of identifying how future financial decisions will be made.

Rosemary Kamei wanted clarification on the level of responsibility for the workgroup. Zach McReynolds and Mary Schoonover explained that the workgroup would investigate and conduct fact finding. The group will not vote or develop recommendations. The role will not preclude the group from developing consensus on issues, but BDAC will deliberate and make recommendations.

### *Water Transfers*

Lester Snow introduced the issue. Water transfers help habitat restoration, but there are tradeoffs. Transfers have economic impacts on local, small, rural communities and they cause groundwater overdraft. Other tradeoffs include reallocation of water from agriculture to other uses and mitigation for third party impacts.

### BDAC Comments/Questions

- (Borgonovo) Discussion of third party impacts will require coordination with other workgroups, such as the Financial Strategies group.
- (Judith Redmond) "Water transfers" is too narrow a name for the group. There are significant third party impacts from transfers. Perhaps the workgroup scope should be expanded to "Reallocation Impacts."
- (?) Assess effects of transfers on return flows during different seasons.
- (?) Do water transfers decrease consumptive use?
- (Pyle) Look at statewide implications of reallocating water from agricultural to habitat restoration and other uses. Review recent studies such as the Palos Verdes and Mendota drought studies.
- (Hildebrand) Address consequences on food suppliers.
- (Snow) There are many transfer options. Identify the pros and cons of each.
- (Don Bransford) In northern California transfers were facilitated through conjunctive use. Problems focus on regulations and the process. Third party impacts were not a problem.
- (Tib Belza) Transfers overseen by committee and with community support can be successful. Look at transfers on a regional and case-by-case basis.
- (Selkirk) Transfers may create opportunities to create greater markets.
- (Raab) Transfers raise the question of equity. What are the implications on reassignment of water rights?
- (Borgonova) Address groundwater management issues and how conjunctive use relates to transfers and storage. Need groundwater overdraft protection. Water Resources Control Board authority over groundwater is still a gray issue.

- (Mike Mantell) The Federal and State joint drainage programs provide multiple options, especially for restoring wildlands.
- (Redmond) The different ranges of agricultural land retirement options in the alternatives will cause vastly different scopes of impacts. 70,000 to 75,000 acres will have far different community and regional impacts than retirement of 700,000 to 800,000 acres. Issues center on regional barriers, and willing sellers vs. impacts on communities.
- (Sunne McPeak) Reserve class 1 soils or soils that produce the top 40 crops for agricultural use, to ensure transfers do not preclude cultivating the best soils.
- (Hildebrand) Viability cannot be determined by soil class, alone. Must look at financial solvency of agriculture operations.
- (Bransford) Lower quality soils provide wildlife and other benefits.
- (Pyle) Track current transfers.
- (Pyle) Transfers may not be the only option available to accommodate growing need for water. Demand management and water supply enhancements should be addressed.
- (Pyle) Need practical range of strategies.
- (Pat McCarty) The recent programs, over the last five years, that have retired marginal lands may limit future retirement. These limits may increase the cost of agriculture land retirement..
- (?) Retired lands may be used for salt balancing and drainage controls.
- (Borgonova) Recognize institutional constraints.

**4. Draft Alternatives**

Steve Yaeger explained that all major concepts of the 20 alternatives are in the 10 alternatives. The alternatives are being refined and improved to ensure they meet the objectives. The Program is hearing growing support for actions and Essential Elements. Assumptions, such as whether conveyance facilities will be lined or unlined, will be specified in more detail during Phase 2.

Ann Notthoff again asked for clarification of the assumptions. Lester Snow explained that the question is partly answered in later phases and when developing operational specifics of alternatives. Steve Yaeger explained that one assumption relates to the baseline condition used, in comparing alternatives. The baseline includes, for example, CVPIA accords that are currently operating now. Those that are not currently implemented would not be a part of the baseline condition.

Steve Yaeger provided a general range of costs, for implementing different stages of development. The costs are not solely water user costs.

- Stage 1 - Core Actions: \$ .5 billion
- Stage 2 - Essential Elements (includes 70,000 acres of agricultural land retirement): \$1 billion

- **Stage 3 - Additional habitat, levee and water quality actions (the westside conveyance facility doubles costs): \$1 billion to \$10 billion**

Lester Snow explained that Alternative I was the most expensive and pointed out that identifying more than one revenue stream may help solve funding issues. Ray Remy expressed a desire to have SB 900 (Costa) include financing for core actions.

Lester also explained that during pre-scoping, the CalFed Bay Delta Program is conducting a qualitative assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the different alternatives. The process used for refining the 20 alternatives to 10 relied mainly on comparing alternatives relative to each other. The Program must feel comfortable that it has chosen the right alternatives for Phase 2 evaluation. The baseline case and no action alternative have not yet been defined.

Rick Brietenbach further explained the baseline case (or existing condition), for the purposes of the EIR/S, will describe what is occurring now. The No Action Alternative incorporates the future condition. For example, the CVPIA components can be included in the No Action Alternative because they are mandated. However, it is possible they may not be included if one of the EIR/S assumptions is that projects must have permits and completed environmental studies.

Sunne McPeak, Mary Selkirk, Steve Hall, Roberta Borgonovo and Ann Notthoff expressed concern about what projects would be included in the base case and No Action Alternative. Issues raised include, ensuring that the CalFed goal embraces the CVPIA targets, ensuring stakeholders are comfortable with chosen alternatives, clearing stating the method of measuring Program progress, and knowing the level of demand management that will be included in the baseline.

### **5. Upcoming Program Activities**

Mary Kelley reviewed the schedule for the upcoming progress report, public workshop and scoping meetings. She urged BDAC members to attend the meetings.

### **6. Public Comments**

Jim Blake (Metropolitan Water District) - The CalFed Process and the San Francisco Bay/Delta are a #1 concern for MWD. Issues need to be addressed in a statewide context. Urban users needs, including reliability, improved water quality and environmental concerns are key issues. Demand is expected to increase by 1 MAF by 2010. MWD believes the alternatives underemphasize urban water quality concerns. Good water quality is needed for their conjunctive use and water reclamation programs. MWD has an aggressive local water

conservation program to meet the Program's demand management components. MWD is involved in three types of transfers: spot, option and contract.

John Mills (Regional Council of Rural Counties) - The Council wants to be part of the CalFed process as it affects water issues in areas above the dams. He urged the Program to consider the upper reaches of the Bay/Delta watersheds for solutions and to use a watershed management approach. Suggestions for inclusions in the Program: the SWRCB Regional Watershed Management Program and Sierra Nevada Ecosystem report.

Gary Bobker (Bay Institute) - The program should include more explicit assumptions used to refine the alternatives. He asked how would workgroup output be integrated into the CalFed and BDAC processes.

Pinky Brennan (Antioch) - Mr. Brennan expressed grave concern for dumping of selenium, boron and 18 pesticides from farms and agricultural drains into the San Joaquin river. He urged BDAC to address the agricultural runoff issue.