

**CALFED  
BAY-DELTA  
PROGRAM**

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February 23, 1998

Mr. Alex Hildebrand  
23443 South Hayes Road  
Manteca, California 95336

Dear Mr. Hildebrand:

In a memo dated December 14, 1997 you requested technical information regarding the proposed isolated canal component which is included in CALFED Alternative 3. The memo included eight specific requests for technical information, including costs, alignment, areas affected, water levels, flood impacts, and operations. In response I have enclosed a copy of the prefeasibility report for this component, "Facilities Descriptions and Updated Cost Estimates for an Isolated Delta Conveyance Facility, October 1997," which addresses many of these questions and provides appropriate context. The cost estimates are quite preliminary and were prepared for comparative use in a programmatic evaluation. Thus, even though there is substantial detail in the cost breakdowns, this should not be confused with cost certainty.

The prefeasibility report does not include potential mitigation costs, nor does it consider the growth in present worth of the project construction expenditures over the construction period. I have requested that Dave Samson of my staff add this information, which is detailed in the enclosed cost summary. The result is a series of total cost estimates, starting with October 1996 dollars and assuming a five-year construction period, which includes all identifiable costs. Total capital costs range from \$1.1 billion to \$1.7 billion for a capacity range of 5,000 cfs to 15,000 cfs, respectively.

The route of the canal used in this evaluation followed that of the original Peripheral Canal, and is shown in Figure 2 of the pre-feasibility report.

The area of right-of-way is estimated to be about 5,300 acres, most of which is agricultural land. The affected area also includes open water, riparian habitat, wetlands, grasslands, and disturbed or developed lands. A detailed breakdown which accounts for the full 5,300 acres is not currently available.

The prefeasibility report does not address the questions regarding seepage, flood control, and operations. The original Peripheral Canal design called for an initial lift of 10 feet and water levels which could be as much as 20 feet above current land elevations and 25 feet above current groundwater levels. We have not performed new hydraulic calculations, but note that there is significant flexibility in designing the facility to address the concerns you raised. Potential design options which could be pursued in Phase III if such a facility were included in the preferred alternative include the following:

**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  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service

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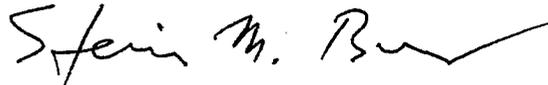
- Incising the canal more deeply in the landscape, reducing seepage potential, levee heights, and providing potential flood detention. This could increase costs since there would no longer be balance between cut and fill; conversely this approach could provide a significant new source of fill material for levee improvements.
- Seepage interceptor wells to recapture water before it damages adjacent property.
- Compensation for losses due to seepage, including the potential creation of a compensation fund prior to construction of the facility.
- Integration of the canal with local flood control works and channels to improve, rather than impede flood management efforts. Design elements could include allowing storm runoff to enter the canal.

As we have indicated in our recent meetings with the three Delta water agencies and their participants, we would be pleased to work with local interests to assure that these concerns are incorporated into future facilities design.

Canal operational scenarios have been evaluated at a systems operations level using DWRSIM using monthly time steps. Likely impacts and benefits to water supplies, water quality, and fisheries have been evaluated and are discussed in the draft EIR/EIS, so I will not elaborate on operations here. It is important to note, however, that a great deal of very detailed evaluation would need to be conducted during Phase III to address sensitivity and impact issues.

Please feel free to write or call me at (916) 653-6628 if you have further questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Stein M. Buer  
Chief, Technical Services Branch