

# CALFED BAY-DELTA WATERSHED PROGRAM

## BDAC Watershed Work Group Meeting Summary

The Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) Watershed Work Group met on February 19, 1999, in Sacramento. The BDAC Watershed Work Group (Work Group) was created to address the public's request to have more participation in the CALFED Watershed Program (Watershed Program). The Work Group provides a forum for stakeholders covering a broad geographic area and wide array of interests. Attendees of the Work Group meetings have direct interaction with the Watershed Program's Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT) and an opportunity to review and comment on Watershed Program draft documents. In addition, the Work Group may provide input to the BDAC on issues related to the Watershed Program.

### Introductions

Work Group co-chairs, Martha Davis (Sierra Nevada Alliance) and Robert Meacher (BDAC/Regional Council for Rural Counties), began the meeting with introductions. A list of meeting participants (Attachment A) and meeting handouts (Attachment B) is included.

The meeting participants were notified that the Watershed Program Plan, as well as the other CALFED Common Program plans were available on CALFED's webpage: [www.calfed.ca.gov](http://www.calfed.ca.gov).

Ken Coulter of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) announced that \$5 million in federal grants are available for watershed restoration to local groups. The grants are limited to \$30,000 to \$300,000 per project. For further information contact Mr. Coulter at 916/657-0682.

Sara Denzler of the Department of Water Resources also announced that a total of \$87,000 is available for restoration of urban streams. Priority will be given for small projects (<\$15,000). For further information contact Ms. Denzler by telephone at 916/327-1664 or e-mail: [sdenzler@water.ca.gov](mailto:sdenzler@water.ca.gov).

### Common Program Collaboration

Peter Kiel (CALFED Bay-Delta Program) was present to discuss how to improve the efficacy of the collaboration between the Watershed Program and the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP). Mr. Kiel reviewed the progress of the ERP over the last year. He explained that projects have been identified, priorities have been set, and a strategy developed. The strategy, entitled the Strategic Plan for the ERP, is available on CALFED's website.

Mr. Kiel explained that the ERP staff members are currently collaborating with a group of scientists to determine priority actions for Stage I (first seven years of implementation). After determining these actions, a series of regional workshops to present this information to the public is planned. These workshops would likely be held in June or July.

## *Questions and Comments*

- A meeting participant inquired about adaptive management and asked if the ERP was taking the lead or if the Comprehensive Monitoring Assessment Research Program (CMARP) was. Mr. Kiel stated that the ERP has not operationalized the adaptive management process yet.
- A meeting attendee asked if the ERP has placed any focus on the upper watersheds. Mr. Kiel explained that because the ERP is heavily focused on improving fisheries and fish habitat, most attention has been directed on the lower watersheds below the dams.
- Ms. Davis stated that the Strategic Plan does address short-term priorities, but asked how well the Plan addresses a watershed. Mr. Kiel replied that the ERP has chosen three pilot projects to examine the whole watershed - Deer Creek, Clear Creek, and the Tuolumne River. He added that these projects will address the needs of a watershed and fisheries, including reducing sediment and improving stream flows.

Ms. Davis noted the three watershed pilot projects, but expressed concern in regard to the lack of a watershed approach to the overall ERP. Mr. Kiel replied that the Program is still broad enough to integrate a more holistic approach.

Another meeting participant suggested that the ERP look at all of the streams with a "top-down" holistic approach. Although Clear Creek has a dam, the ERP should examine the whole stream; actions at the top of the drainage can complement fish downstream.

- A meeting attendee commented that CALFED mainly addresses the Sacramento River and tributaries with little discussion regarding the San Joaquin River. Therefore, the residents of the San Joaquin Valley feel like they are being left out of the process. Mr. Kiel noted that the ERP does have a fair amount of actions planned for the San Joaquin River including three main tributaries: Tuolumne, Merced, and Stanislaus rivers.
- Mr. Kiel was asked how the ERP was addressing private property rights issues. He replied that the actions in the ERP will be implemented with willing sellers only; no regulatory powers will be used to take land. He added that the ERP is sensitive to tax-base issues.
- Mr. Kiel was asked if the pilot project on the Tuolumne River would address the lower or upper reach of the stream. He stated that the entire stream will be addressed.
- A meeting participant commented that there is a huge lack of communication among the Work Groups and the Common Programs. He suggested that in addition to Work Group meetings for each Common Program, CALFED should also conduct general meetings to share information. There is currently a lot of overlap on the issues.

- Dennis Bowker asked Mr. Kiel what he envisioned the Watershed Work Group's role to be in the implementation of the ERP. Mr. Kiel noted that the ERP is currently working with a group of scientists and agency representatives to develop a more detailed strategy. After some consensus is reached, the ERP staff will conduct regional meetings to present this information to the stakeholders. Ms. Davis stated that the Work Group has a lot to offer the ERP now; stakeholders should be involved in the development stage, not just sold on the final product. John Lowrie added that the local watershed groups are a tremendous source of knowledge that the ERP should utilize.
- A meeting attendee stated that the Watershed Program is constrained by the lack of allocated staff (three staff members at ½ time). Mr. Kiel stated that the ERP has four full-time staff members and another individual at 1/4 time. A Work Group participant commented that this small number of staff is inadequate for running two large and potentially expensive programs.
- Eugenia Laychack (CCPDR/CALFED) stated that CALFED staff members are looking closely at the integration process. Currently, they are examining how to "bundle" actions. The integration process needs to include all of the elements, including water quality, water use efficiency, and water supply.

*Update: CALFED has released a document entitled "Draft Bundles of Early Implementation Actions (Pre-ROD and Early Stage I). The document may be found on CALFED's website under "current publications."*

- A suggestion was made that CALFED needs to take a watershed approach to the entire program. Dennis Bowker added that CALFED needs to not only apply adaptive management to on-the-ground projects, but also to the Program itself.
- A meeting attendee suggested that the ERP needs to examine the watershed from top to bottom and have statewide representation. It was added that the communication between the ERP and the Watershed Program needs to be improved and that a joint meeting would be a good start.
- A Work Group participant stated that all four CALFED objectives should be incorporated into all of the six Common Programs to create multiple benefits.
- A meeting attendee noted that there are many locally-driven watershed efforts underway that could bring valuable insight to all of the CALFED Programs. It was also mentioned that planning and scientific studies must be conducted in conjunction with landowners, otherwise, there will be no buy-in and the projects will not succeed.
- A comment was made that CALFED needs to coordinate with other agency programs such as the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List and the Watershed Protection Restoration Council (WPRC).

- A meeting participant suggested CALFED seek a firm commitment from all of the CALFED agencies. It was added that there needs to be more collaboration between the efforts of grassroots and agencies.

***Written Comments***

Three questions regarding integration were posed to the Work Group. Otis Wollan (Placer County Water Agency) suggested that the meeting participants jot down their thoughts on post-its during the lunch break. The following are the responses:

***Question #1 - What are some areas of mutual interest between the ERP and the Watershed Program?***

- We need to meet together with the ERP Work Group, CMARP, and other Work Groups to find out what we hold in common. "We are divided by our convictions and united in our doubts." Peter Ustinov.
- From a watershed perspective, all our work is ecosystem restoration.
- Local relevant watershed monitoring and assessment, education, landowner buy-in, dam re-operations, and the consequences.
- All areas - one of mutual interest.
- Integration should involve local efforts first, move on to regional, then address basin-wide level.
- The upper sheds.

***Question #2 - What improvements could be made to the Watershed Program and/or Ecosystem Restoration Program to better achieve the goals of CALFED?***

- Combine the ERP and the Watershed Program.
- CALFED goals cannot be achieved unless we view watershed management/watershed health as a goal so we do not continue to create problems.
- Combine.
- Specific to the Ecosystem Roundtable process, it is my hope that the Watershed Work Group will learn that more grassroots participation in the processes that define how the Work Group functions is vitally important to the success of this group. This may mean paying the costs (travel and time) for grassroots individuals to participate in meetings and workshops. Agency people can participate because they are paid to.

- Watershed Program meetings needs to be facilitated to accommodate more input. Questions and expected output products needs to be better defined. In combined meeting with Ecosystem Restoration Program, it is even more important to PLAN the meeting well, and facilitate it.
- Ecosystem restoration cannot move forward without local watershed buy-in.
- The Watershed Program suggests that the San Joaquin River is included in the watershed solution, yet, the folks south of Sacramento that could add a lot to coming up with solutions must come north to participate. The Watershed Program should make an effort to come south.
- Integration makes great sense IF it can be done in an expansive, inclusive, integrative way.
- Clearly the Ecosystem group must include the upper watersheds to meet the long-term goals of CALFED. These two groups are not and should not be separate. You cannot complete ecosystem restoration without fixing the entire watershed.
- Need to assess other watershed programs, etc. so CALFED does not “reinvent the wheel.” Start with the WPRC Final Report.
- ERP may provide scientific expertise, however, the Watershed Work Group does indeed have considerable technical expertise and should not be perceived as just the “warm and fuzzy folks!”
- Regional meetings to bring together the various Work Groups to discuss how the different programs fit together. Involve landowners as you go along to have a broader perspective on problems/solutions. Check ego at the door with regard to presenting “the solution.” Science is only ½ of the equation.
- Much more input from local watershed groups.
- Expand staff. Implement projects on ground. Research needs to evolve through adaptive management. Watershed Group Program too general and has no teeth. Original DRAFT Watershed Program Plan was better than current Program Plan. Upper watersheds are the key to ecosystem restoration and the Programs should be joined as one. Stop turf wars and blend all Programs together. Science will never know all or have the one correct answer. Implementation needs to be adaptive.
- Early involvement of stakeholders in science issues.
- Clear, accessible, regular progress reports. Use of list serves and media to distribute them.

***Question #3 - Taking these improvements, how can we make them operational - or put them into place?***

- Start with integrated meeting. Focus on PROCESS of HOW you can integrate, not expecting to get it all at one meeting. Focus of staff now at CALFED in CONTENT. You have got to rethink engaging stakeholders with more sophisticated PROCESS.
- Have joint meeting with ERP, CMARP, and other Common Programs. Have a CALFED-wide definition of "watershed."
- Joint support staff, plus increased levels to adequately perform tasks.
- A starting point would be a joint meeting where we outline each others goals, plans, etc. to determine where we are all headed. Must include, soon thereafter, water quality, water quantity groups. You, CALFED, cannot get there without water and where it comes from.

**Watershed Legislation**

Ms. Davis stated that a meeting was held earlier in the day to discuss watershed legislation. She explained that Assembly Member Dickerson has agreed to introduce a spot bill regarding watershed protection by March 26, 1999. The language of the bill was drafted by representatives from Regional Council of Rural Counties and Sierra Nevada Alliance, and Steve Fitch of Assembly Member Dickerson's office. Mr. Fitch stated that the legislation could be a one-year or a two-year bill, but suggested that the two-year timeframe would likely be a better route for the bill to take.

There was some discussion among the Work Group participants regarding the nature of the legislation. It is undecided if AB730 will focus on watershed restoration (i.e. act as a vehicle for funding) and/or watershed coordination. Mr. Fitch assured the meeting attendees that there will be plenty of time to develop the legislation. Laurel Ames agreed to act as the clearinghouse for watershed legislation comments; please send them to [sierran@sierra.net](mailto:sierran@sierra.net).

**Letter to CALFED**

Mr. Meacher stated that he has drafted a letter to Lester Snow, Executive Director to CALFED, on behalf of the Work Group. The letter encompasses many of the issues that have been raised over the previous Work Group meetings including need for better integration, funding for the Watershed Program, and recognizing the importance of stakeholder efforts. It was announced that the letter will be revised and distributed at the next Work Group Meeting.

**Implementation Strategy**

Mr. Lowrie stated that the Watershed Program staff has drafted a list of "desired outcomes" that will be included in the Implementation Strategy. Work Group participants were encouraged to review the draft document and provide comments to Mr. Lowrie at [lowrie@calfed.ca.gov](mailto:lowrie@calfed.ca.gov). Mr. Lowrie added that some unanswered questions still need to be worked out including the decision-making process. The discussion on implementation will continue at the next Work Group meeting.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Alcott, Rob	East Bay Municipal Utilities District
Allen, Bob	Burney Forest Power
Ames, Laurel	Sierra Nevada Alliance
Aumack, Laurie	Battle Creek Watershed Project
Barris, Lynn	Butte Environmental Council
Beaulaurier, Diane	
Bowker, Dennis	Napa County RCD/CALFED
Carpenter, Mark	Westlands Water District
Cooper Carter, Kristin	CSU/Chico Research Foundation/Environmental Resource
Program	
Coulter, Ken	State Water Resources Control Board
Cornelius, James	Tetra Tech
Cornwall, Caitlin	Sonoma Ecology Center
Dale, Richard	Sonoma Ecology Center
Davis, Martha	Californians and the Land
Denzler, Sara	CA Department of Water Resources
Drake, Nettie	Panoche/Silver Creek CCRMP
DuBois, Bill	CA Farm Bureau Federation
Gaumer, Dianne	Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy
Grimes, Russ	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation - Fresno
Harthorn, Allen	Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
Heiman, Dennis	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Henly, Russ	CA Department of Forestry/TWAT
Holt, Buford	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Jerauld, Frank	Amador RCD - Jackson
Kavvas, M.L.	UC Davis - Department of Engineering
Kelly, Ross	
Knecht, Mary Lee	Jones & Stokes/CALFED Watershed Program
Laychak, Eugenia	CCPDR/CALFED
Lossius, Bob	Lake County Public Works
Lovejoy, Erika	Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative
Lowrie, John	USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service/CALFED
Mar, David	Westlands Water District
Meacher, Robert	Regional Council of Rural Counties/BDAC
Minton, Jonas	Water Forum
Merz, John	Sacramento River Preservation Trust
Metz, Loretta	USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service - Willows
Nakamura, Gary	Shasta-Tehama Bioregional Council
Nelson, Earl	Western Area Power Administration
Newlin, Vickie	Butte County
Niles, Cheryl Lovato	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Parkin, Ann Marie	Metropolitan Water District
Rentz, Mark	California Forestry Association
Sime, Fraser	CA Department of Water Resources
Spurlock Hank	

Thomas, Rick  
Trojan, Jerry  
Tupper, Julie  
Wills, Leah  
Wollan, Otis

Metropolitan Water District  
Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District  
U.S. Forest Service/IWAT  
Plumas Corporation  
Placer County Water Agency

**Meeting Handouts**

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Meeting Agenda;  
Draft Watershed Program Implementation Strategy;  
Assembly Bill No. 730;  
Draft Letter to Lester Snow on Behalf of the Watershed Work Group;  
BDAC Watershed Work Group Meeting Participants (as of January 8, 1999); and  
Watershed Work Group Meeting Summary - January 8, 1999.