

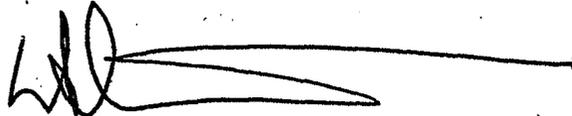


M e m o r a n d u m

Date: September 10, 1997

To: CALFED Management Team

From: Lester A. Snow, Executive Director
CALFED Bay-Delta Program



Subject: Integration of Floodplain Management Efforts with the CALFED Process

Summary

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is developing a long-term program to address four major areas of concern in the Bay-Delta including ecosystem health, water quality, water supply reliability, and levee system integrity. The comprehensive flood damage reduction and environmental restoration studies which will soon be initiated by the Corps and the State will provide opportunities to meet many of the CALFED objectives in these areas. To ensure that the agency floodplain management activities address the CALFED Bay-Delta solution, these activities need to be coordinated with the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. One of the floodplain management activities is the comprehensive evaluation of the San Joaquin and Sacramento River Basins to be undertaken by the Corps of Engineers and the State of California, of which the result will be a master plan for floodplain management. The Corps, the State, and CALFED need to work together in developing and implementing future plans for flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration.

One approach to coordinating floodplain management studies with the CALFED Bay-Delta Program would be for progress on the comprehensive Sacramento River and San Joaquin River basin studies to be reported to CALFED regularly through the CALFED Policy Group as shown in the attached organizational structure. A second approach could be a continuation of the present parallel but separate programs with a less formal reporting and coordination effort.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Management Team co-chairs be designated as the leads to work with the Corps, the Department of Interior, and the State to implement the more formal reporting and coordination process described in the attached organizational structure.

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
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

Detailed Discussion

General

In response to the recurring flood threat in the Central Valley of California, as reflected most recently in the damages caused by the floods of January 1997, members of Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, the Corps of Engineers, the Governor, the State of California, and environmental and other resource groups have underlined the need to examine flood damage reduction and floodplain management activities throughout the Central Valley from a comprehensive basin-wide perspective. This comprehensive evaluation should include consideration of the full range of structural and non-structural measures, as well as the diverse but interrelated water and associated land and environmental resource management objectives.

Many efforts are being undertaken to look at the water and related resource problems in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins. The San Joaquin River Watershed Management Plan, the Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Habitat Management Plan, the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan, and other studies have identified needs and opportunities to better manage the floodplains of the Central Valley. Efforts by the Corps and the State continue in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basin studies to address the problems that will persist after efforts to recover from the latest floods are completed.

The broad Federal study authorities and State Flood Emergency Action Team recommendations allow the flexibility to investigate the widest array of potential solutions and to consider the highest levels of flood protection, environmental restoration, reservoir operation, and floodplain management. Structural and non-structural measures such as re-operating reservoirs, modifying weirs and bypasses, setting back levees, restoring river meanders, acquiring floodplains, and relocating flood prone properties will be evaluated in the comprehensive feasibility studies.

Comprehensive Study Process

The Sacramento River and San Joaquin River basins have different geographic, hydrologic, institutional, flood management, and other aspects. While their unique characteristics require two separate studies, the comprehensive Sacramento River and San Joaquin River basin studies that the Corps and the State are undertaking will both follow the same series of steps that identify and respond to problems associated with the flood damage reduction and environmental restoration objectives for the study areas. The steps, as scheduled by the Corps, are:

- **Specify Flooding and Environmental Resources Problems and Opportunities --** This step will include developing baseline study area and sub-area maps in Geographical Information System (GIS) format using existing information whenever possible, and collecting information from the State's report on the 1997 floods, the Corps' 1997 Small Community Assessment, CALFED's Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan, the State's Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Habitat Management Plan (SB 1086), the San Joaquin River Watershed Management Plan, the State's Delta Tributaries Watershed Program, and other activities.
- **Inventory, Forecast, and Analyze Flooding and Environmental Resource Conditions --** This step will utilize comprehensive basin models that describe hydrologic and hydraulic, ecological, and land use/economic conditions in the study areas. Potential flood damage reduction and environmental restoration measures will be screened using these tools. Alternative watershed management plans will be formulated from these structural and non-structural measures during the next step.
- **Formulation of Alternative Plans --** This step entails developing criteria which will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative plans, and developing an array of complete alternative flood damage reduction/environmental restoration plans that address the identified problems.
- **Evaluation of Alternative Plans --** The economic, environmental, and social effects of the alternative plans will be assessed using the evaluation criteria, and compared with the baseline conditions that would be expected to prevail if flood damage reduction or environmental restoration actions are not taken.
- **Selection of Recommended Plan --** A master plan will be selected from the alternatives that will provide the framework for managing flood damage reduction and environmental restoration efforts throughout the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River basins. Feasibility reports will be prepared describing the effects of the plans from national, regional, and local perspectives.

The comprehensive studies should include public workshops involving focused study groups made up of stakeholder representatives and general interested public members. These study groups may focus on economics, agriculture, recreation, industrial, environmental restoration and flood damage reduction issues. Focused study group members can include stakeholders already identified by the CALFED Bay-Delta Advisory Council public involvement process.

The recommended plan will provide the framework for basin flood damage reduction and environmental restoration and management. The implementation of specific projects within the framework may be carried out by various entities, depending on the project and authorities.