

# Water Quality Program Element Agenda Item No. 1

## May 21, 1998

### Background

The objective of the CALFED Water Quality Program element is to provide good water quality for all beneficial uses of the waters of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta estuary. The Water Quality Program Plan, incorporated as an appendix to the Programmatic EIS/EIR, identifies water quality parameters of concern, water quality problems, water quality objectives, and programmatic actions to improve Delta water quality.

### Program Description

Advance work for Phase III of the program has begun, with the intention of preparing to take water quality actions early in the implementation phase. In this connection, more detailed definition of water quality actions is being undertaken; detailed actions are being developed; and, priorities for implementation are being established.

The additional program detail is being developed with the assistance of the CALFED agencies working within the Water Quality Technical Group (WQTG). The WQTG is the stakeholder group of about 230 participants that continues providing technical assistance to the program. The work has been distributed among smaller working groups that have been formed to evaluate groups of water quality parameters of concern. For example, there are groups studying metals, pesticides, and salinity. Work group participants are generally expert in the subject areas of the working groups, and represent various agricultural, urban, and ecosystem interests, including CALFED agencies and other interested agencies. The work groups have been meeting actively since their formation on April 15, 1998. On May 20, 1998, the WQTG met to present the interim results of the work group efforts. In general, the work appears to be going well. By the end of July we expect work group products to be complete, and ready for incorporation into the larger CALFED work product.

### Issues/Concerns

When the work group products are complete, a determination will have to be made as to how much of the additional detail that has been developed is appropriate for inclusion in the Programmatic EIS/EIR. This decision will need to be made in coordination with the management of the CALFED Environmental Documentation Branch. When this determination is made, the Water Quality Program Plan appendix to the EIS/EIR will be revised as necessary; this product is due by the end of August.

If, as seems likely, more detail is developed than is appropriate for inclusion in the Programmatic document, we plan to set forth the remainder of the information in a separate document. We believe this approach will satisfy stakeholder and agency desire for sufficient program detail while maintaining appropriate programmatic content in the EIS/EIR.

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