

DRAFT
CALFED APPROACH TO DEVELOPING A PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

1. SCHEDULE

- CALFED will extend the public comment period on the draft programmatic EIS/EIR for 30 days until July 1, 1998.
- CALFED will produce and distribute a final draft programmatic EIS/EIR including a preferred alternative and an implementation plan in November 1998.
- CALFED will produce and distribute a final EIS/EIR in mid-1999 and a certification/record of decision on the EIS/EIR in the summer/fall of 1999.

2. NATURE OF DOCUMENT

- In November 1998, CALFED will circulate a final draft programmatic EIS/EIR. It will contain a preferred alternative that will define implementation stages with emphasis on a first stage which demonstrates improvement for all resource areas (ecosystem health, levee stability, water quality, and water supply reliability.)
- The first stage of implementation shall:
 - ▶ be defined as the period prior to final approval of any major surface storage or new channel conveyance projects as may be contained in the CALFED draft preferred alternative.
 - ▶ provide linkage between the various Program elements to ensure that conflicts are reduced and benefits are achieved for all interests.
 - ▶ contain a balance of project implementation, demonstration projects, and planning activities in order to maintain steady progress on overall goals.
 - ▶ identify performance targets and milestones to guide implementation of preferred alternatives.
- The document will contain a list of actions and schedule for implementation such that all interests can assess the overall balance of the preferred alternative.

3. ASSURANCES

- The preferred alternative will include assurances that the CALFED Bay-Delta Program will make significant progress on ecosystem restoration and water supply reliability during each stage of implementation. The first stage is expected to take place for up to 7-10 years.
- The state and federal agencies will collaborate with stakeholders to develop assurances and Program continuity after the expiration of the 1994 Accord, as extended. The assurances will address the need for ecosystem protection and water supply reliability for the period prior to full implementation of a preferred alternative.