

Draft 1/27/99
Summary of Water Transfers Information Clearinghouse

Proposed Recommendation for CALFED Policy Group

As part of the CALFED legislative package, CALFED will develop and recommend state legislation to create a California Water Transfers Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse would perform the functions described below, and would aid in resolving many of the third party and resource protection issues associated with water transfers.

A. Functions and Authority

1. Data collection, technical baseline analysis, research and methodology development
 - a. Collect, develop and analyze baseline data to provide information on existing surface and groundwater conditions, including streamflow accretion and depletion.
 - b. Perform technical baseline analysis on groundwater - surface water interface; develop a model on the groundwater - surface water relationship in the Central Valley.
 - c. Collect information on transfers of all types (except intra-District transfers) for purposes of developing baseline data.
 - d. Use baseline data to develop methods for broadly supported impact analysis.
 - e. Develop analysis guidebooks and a "toolbox" of mitigation strategies to help proponents and decision makers address impacts.
2. Public disclosure
 - a. Make all data (baseline and proposal specific) and research publically available
 - b. Provide public notice on all proposed water transfers (which meet specified criteria) and ensure public discussion and comment.
3. Other possible functions (**provided on a fee for service basis** and/or provided as a service, **separate** from informational functions)
 - a. Advice and assistance to local decision makers on technical impact analysis (i.e., groundwater, streamflow accretion/depletion, water quality and third party economic).
 - b. Cumulative impact analysis of transfers on a stream or watershed basis.
 - c. Development and management of monitoring programs; advice or recommendations on the level of analysis desirable or useful for different types of transfers.

The primary clearinghouse function is to **ensure that decision makers and the public** have complete and **accurate information** regarding a proposed transfers, by means of information disclosure, ensuring public participation, and technical work such as baseline data collection and analysis and regional groundwater-surface water modeling. Other functions would be secondary.

Technical work could be done by Clearinghouse staff on contract with other agencies, such as the University of California, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, or the U.S. Geological Survey.

B. Content of Legislation

Enabling legislation would:

- Create the Clearinghouse within the State Water Resources Control Board
 - define authority in terms of primary and secondary functions described above;
 - State Board water rights jurisdiction would **not** be expended;
 - jurisdiction would cover the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys;
 - responsible for ensuring that the notice of a proposed transfer was provided to all interested parties and that public process requirements were satisfied
- Require transfer proponents (of specified water transfers) to give notice to the Clearinghouse.
 - notice would include specific information on the proposal for purposes of making the information broadly available (i.e., through a web site).
- Specify that the Clearinghouse would not function as a market broker or water bank (i.e., not directly participate in water transfer transactions)