

# an Update on the



# CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

March through June 1996

## Collaborative program develops possible Bay-Delta solutions.

"Everyone seems to agree -- the Bay-Delta system is fixable if we collaborate creatively," says Lester Snow, executive director of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

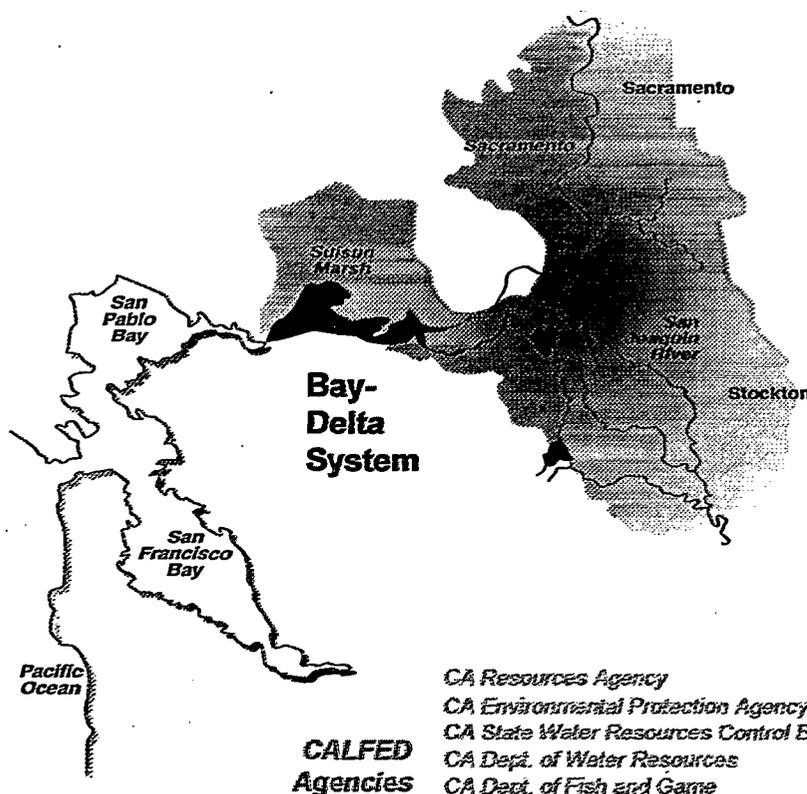
Launched last summer, this federal-state program has been bringing together once-contentious Californians from the agricultural, business, environmentalist,

and urban sectors to solve problems plaguing the area at the confluence of the San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers.

Two-thirds of California's water for homes, businesses, and farms flows through the Bay-Delta, while two endangered fish species and hundreds of other fish and wildlife species rely upon the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

In February, the Program released the first draft of alternative solutions for Bay-Delta problems. Derived directly from more than 10,000 person-hours of public input, the alternative solutions are combinations of actions that together resolve problems in Bay-Delta ecosystem health, water quality, water supply, and vulnerability to destruction.

A refined list of 3 to 5 alternative solutions is expected by early June.





## ***Progress: June 1994-June 1996***

### **What's in the alternative solutions?**

Each draft alternative is a combination of many actions -- such as operational and policy changes, habitat restoration, and water flow adjustments -- that together form a comprehensive solution to problems in the Bay-Delta's four critical areas: ecosystem health, water quality, water supply, and vulnerability to disaster.

The Program operates on the premise that no single operational change or new facility will solve the myriad interrelated problems in the Bay-Delta system. Hence, each alternative is designed to include a balanced array of disparate actions that, when combined, solve many problems simultaneously.

Far from being final products, the draft alternatives are subject to significant change based on further public input and technical analysis.

While the alternatives vary in emphasis and detail, they share certain "core actions," cost-effective measures that already enjoy broad acceptance among stakeholders. Currently, the core actions address habitat restoration, screening of diversions, protection of anadromous fish, reduction in reliance on exports, levee upgrades, better water quality, and increased supply predictability.

Five Federal and five state agencies sign a Framework Agreement pledging to work together on Bay-Delta issues, including water quality standards; non-flow-related ecosystem problems; and a comprehensive long-term solution. **June 1994**

Bay-Delta stakeholders and the CALFED agencies under the leadership of Governor Pete Wilson, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, and US EPA Administrator Carol Browner sign the historic Bay-Delta Accord, agreeing on water quality standards and endangered species measures for the Bay-Delta. **December 1994**

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is launched as a fast-paced, collaborative effort to develop a long-term, comprehensive solution to Bay-Delta problems relating to ecosystem health, water quality, water supply, and system vulnerability. The Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) is formed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Hundreds of stakeholders and members of the general public attend 5 public meetings and 5 day-long technical workshops. In February, the Program releases 20 draft alternative solutions. **June 1995 - February 1996**

The Program expects to release a refined list of 8 to 12 alternative solutions, along with a progress report. **March 1996**

Hundreds are expected to attend another public, day-long technical workshop aimed at providing public input to the list of 8 to 12 alternatives. Hundreds more are anticipated at 8 public scoping meetings scheduled around the state where the Program will gather input on the 8 to 12 alternatives and public guidance on the environmental review phase. **April 1996**

The Program is expected to release a refined list of 3 to 5 comprehensive Bay-Delta solutions which will undergo a programmatic environmental review. **June 1996**



Call for an up-to-date schedule of public events: 916/657-2666.

# questions

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**How does the CALFED Bay-Delta Program build upon the December 15th, 1994, Bay-Delta Accord?**

While the Bay-Delta Accord was virtually unprecedented in reconciling competing water interests, it primarily provided interim, rather than long-term, protection for the Bay-Delta, including recommending water quality standards which were to be considered for adoption by the State Water Resources Control Board. The Accord is built on the premise that the CALFED Bay-Delta Program will develop generally-acceptable long-term solution to Bay-Delta problems by mid-1998.

**What will I and people like me get out of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program?**

Under the Program's "solution principles," the Bay-Delta solution must be equitable, addressing problems in all critical areas: ecosystem health, water quality, water supply, reliability, and system vulnerability. Accordingly, Bay-Delta stakeholders with a concern in any of these areas will benefit from the Program. Environmentalists, for example, will appreciate the improved ecosystem for fish and wildlife. Both urban water users and farmers should have a more reliable, higher quality water supply. People who live and work in the Delta, and everyone who depends upon the Delta's infrastructure, will benefit from a system that can better withstand disasters and daily wear-and-tear. If you have any doubt that your concerns will be incorporated into the Bay-Delta solution, you are encouraged to participate in the Program's public involvement activities. For more information, call 916/657-2666.

**How will a Bay-Delta solution be funded?**

The solution could be funded through an array of mechanisms, from Federal appropriations to general obligation bonds to public-private partnerships. While the Program is currently working on a funding strategy, funding tactics will not be fully developed until the end of Phase II. Notably, the Program anticipates staging implementation of the solution over several years, making it possible to pay for the solution incrementally.

**What is the relationship between the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and SB 900?**

SB 900 could potentially provide funds for Bay-Delta activities supportive of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. However, SB 900 and the Program are separate. Funding the CALFED Bay-Delta Program's solution does not rest upon passage of SB 900.

**Will legislation be required to implement the Bay-Delta solution?**

Implementation of the ultimate Bay-Delta solution could require one or more pieces of legislation dealing with funding or policy issues. However, because the Program is still developing alternative solutions, it's impossible to say now what the ultimate solution will look like and therefore what will be required to implement it. At the end of Phase II, in mid-1998, the Program will recommend one preferred solution, based on the outcome of the programmatic environmental review. Then it will be possible to estimate the implementation measures that will ultimately be required.

# solution principles

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*Six principles* guide the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and define the parameters of a successful solution. A Bay-Delta solution must...

**Reduce Conflicts in the System.** The solution must reduce major conflicts among beneficial uses of water.

**Be affordable.** An affordable solution can be implemented and maintained within the foreseeable resources of CALFED Bay-Delta Program and stakeholders.

**Be equitable.** An equitable solution will focus on resolving problems in all problem areas. Improvements for some problems will not be addressed without corresponding improvements for other problems.

**Be implementable.** An implementable solution will have broad public acceptance and legal feasibility. It will be timely and relatively simple compared with other alternatives.

**Be durable.** A durable solution will have political and economic staying power and will sustain the resources it was designed to protect and enhance.

**Pose No Significant Redirected Impacts.** The solution will not solve problems in the Bay-Delta system by redirecting significant negative impacts, when viewed in its entirety, in the Bay-Delta or other regions of California.

*These solution* principles help ensure that the Program accomplishes its mission:

*The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System.*

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## Looking ahead

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**The work of the** CALFED Bay-Delta Program divides into three phases. Phase I will end by June 1996, when the Program will recommend 3 to 5 alternative solutions for fixing the Bay-Delta system.

During Phase II, these solutions will undergo a Tier One environmental review as required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This first-tier environmental review will examine potential broad environmental impacts of each alternative solution and develop recommendations for mitigation.

*Phase II: Tier One environmental review of three to five alternative solutions: June 1996-June 1998.*  
*Phase III: Tier Two environmental review of the solution, implementation: June 1998 and on.*

By June 1998, Phase II will conclude with the publication of a Tier One Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in which the Program will recommend one preferred solution.

In Phase III, scheduled to start in June 1998, this preferred solution will be subjected to a Tier Two environmental review, in which the elements of the solution -- such as specific habitat restoration or storage construction projects -- will receive more detailed analysis. Also in Phase III, implementation will begin.