



CALFED  
BAY-DELTA  
PROGRAM

NEWS...

Issue #5, May/June 1998

**Schedule Changed to Allow for More Public Input**

In response to requests from the public, Governor Pete Wilson and Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior Bruce Babbitt announced two changes to the CALFED schedule that will allow more opportunity for public review and input. The public comment period for the draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report has been extended 30 days and will now end July 1. In December, CALFED will release a *revised draft EIS/EIR*, which will incorporate input received during the current comment period and identify a preferred alternative. There will be an additional public comment period and public hearings for the revised draft.



*CALFED policy-makers listen to public comments in Burbank, one of 17 public hearings held throughout California.*

“We want to make sure that as many people as possible have an opportunity to review our draft documents and provide input,” said Lester Snow, executive director. “These are important decisions we are asking people to make. We want to be sure we are getting focused, substantive input so we can make a decision that all Californians will accept.”

CALFED is currently holding a series of 17 public hearings throughout California on its draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report. Comments can also be submitted in writing to:

**CALFED Bay-Delta Program**  
1416 Ninth St., #1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Call 1-800-900-3587 to find out the nearest public library location with copies of CALFED’s draft reports or to request that documents be mailed directly to you. The executive summary and Phase II Interim Report are also available at <http://calfed.ca.gov>. “All comments, whether received verbally at a public hearing or in writing, will be responded to,” said Snow. “The important thing is that Californians get involved and let their views be known.”

**What’s News ...**

- ✓ Comment Period Extended
- ✓ Incorporating Feedback
- ✓ Change in Program Schedule

CALFED/155

For more information ■ (916) 657-2666 ■ (916) 654-9780 Fax ■ 1-800-700-5752 Information Line ■ <http://calfed.ca.gov>

## What Happens to Comments?

CALFED has received thousands of public comments over the past three years. These comments have helped shape the three potential solutions currently under consideration. CALFED is also currently undergoing an *official* public comment period on its draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report. State and federal environmental regulations govern this process.

### General Comments

At public meetings and workshops, through its 800 number and website, through the numerous public working groups and from the federally chartered Bay-Delta Advisory Council, CALFED actively solicits public input. As new information comes into the Program, it is forwarded to the CALFED technical staff for evaluation. The policy leadership of the CALFED state and federal agencies considers the results of this evaluation and directs staff to take appropriate action on the comment.

One example of how this works is the Watershed Management Coordination Program. Many people commented that watershed management was so fundamental to the Program's success that it should be a stand-alone program with an equal amount of focus as the other common program elements. CALFED responded to these comments by pulling this component out of the Water Quality Program and making it its own program element, and is dedicating more resources to its development.

CALFED staff continues to work with groups and individuals interested in a more clearly defined watershed management program to further define this part of the overall CALFED solution.

### EIS/EIR Comments

Everyone who submits a comment *during the public comment period for the EIS/EIR* will receive a letter acknowledging its receipt. All comments are sorted according to topic and then forwarded to the appropriate CALFED technical staff member for analysis. Some comments may require that new research or technical analysis be conducted. After



*The decision to make Watershed Management Coordination a stand-alone program was a direct result of public input. Many people expressed concern that as part of the Water Quality Program, watershed management was not getting the focus it needed.*

the public comment period closes, CALFED will prepare a response to comments document containing information about how each comment will be incorporated into the final EIS/EIR or an explanation of why it will not be included. For example, some comments may suggest an action that has been deemed unfeasible for various reasons like cost or the impact it would have on one category of system users.

Everyone who submits a comment will receive a copy of this response to comments document. A revised draft EIS/EIR will be circulated for public comment in early 1999, and a final programmatic EIS/EIR will also be circulated for public review and comment prior to signing of the Record of Decision and Certification in fall 1999.

*Everyone who submits a comment during the EIS/EIR public review period will receive a response to comments document describing how each comment was incorporated into the Program.*

## Discussion Focuses on Implementation

Regardless of which solution emerges as the preferred alternative, a process must be in place for future implementation. Over the coming months, CALFED staff will continue to work with stakeholders to finalize assurances packages and financing strategies, two important parts of an overall implementation plan. "We are talking about implementing a solution over the next 25 to 30 years," said Lester Snow, executive director. "We need to make sure stakeholders are comfortable with not just the solution itself but how we are going to ensure it does what we say it will do and who will pay for what parts."

CALFED's financing strategy is based on a "beneficiaries pay" philosophy. Those parts of the Program that improve the environment benefit all

Californians. Therefore, those components would be financed through general obligation bonds, for



instance. Water users will be expected to pay for improvements in water quality, and so on. An implementation plan will be included in the final EIS/EIR, which is expected to be released for public comment in late 1998. "What we have now is a range of alternatives that take into account the technical analysis conducted and public input received so far," said Snow. "But in a way, we're really just beginning to see the kind of statewide exposure that will result in the broad-based public input we need to choose a preferred alternative that all Californians can accept." For more information on finance issues, call Zach McReynolds at (916) 653-3155. For information on implementation planning, call Stein Buer at (916) 653-6628.

## Change in Program Timeline

With the recent decision to extend the public comment period to July 1 and to issue a revised draft in December – with an associated public comment period – CALFED's Program schedule has changed by approximately nine months. Previously, CALFED planned to issue a final EIS/EIR for public review in December. To allow for more public input, however, CALFED will now issue a revised draft EIS/EIR in December, followed by a public comment period. The new timeline is as follows:

### CALFED Timeline

<b>3/16/98 – 7/1/98</b>	Draft EIS/EIR Public Comment period. CALFED holds 17 public hearings throughout California.
<b>7/98 – 12/98</b>	CALFED evaluates and takes action on public comments, prepares revised draft programmatic EIS/EIR.
<b>12/98</b>	CALFED expects to issue a revised draft EIS/EIR for public review and comment.
<b>1/99</b>	CALFED begins a public review period for revised draft, holds additional public hearings.
<b>6/99</b>	CALFED issues draft final EIS/EIR for 30 day comment period.
<b>9/99</b>	CALFED issues final programmatic EIS/EIR.
<b>1999 – 2030</b>	Solution implemented

## Upcoming Public Meetings

**May 28** Draft EIS/EIR Public Hearing  
Board of Supervisors Chambers,  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa  
6 p.m. Q&A  
7 p.m. Hearing

**May 29** Bay-Delta Advisory Council  
Assurances Workgroup Meeting  
1416 Ninth St., #1131  
Sacramento  
1:30 to 4 p.m.

**June 17, 18** Bay-Delta Advisory Council  
Meeting  
Doubletree Hotel  
1055 Van Ness Ave., Frenso  
6/17 1:30 to 5 p.m.  
6/18 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Additional Funding Available for Ecosystem Projects

CALFED is currently accepting proposals for ecosystem restoration programs and projects designed to improve the health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem. Last year, CALFED funded 71 projects totaling \$85,378,000. In 1998, up to \$24,550,000 will be awarded to projects that fall within nine specific topics targeted by CALFED, including floodplain management and habitat restoration, sediment management, species life history studies and local watershed stewardship. For a copy of the Proposal Solicitation Package, call CALFED at (916) 657-2666 or visit the CALFED website at <http://calfed.ca.gov>. The deadline for submittals is July 2, 1998. These funds are made available as part of the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord's commitment to develop and fund non-flow related ecosystem restoration activities prior to the completion of a long-term plan for a Bay-Delta solution. Potential applicants are encouraged to attend a pre-submittal workshop on June 2 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Sacramento Convention Center.



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1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

*After mailing  
remainder destroyed  
due to error  
6/98*

*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.*