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By Mike Taugher and Andrew LaMar  
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**CalFed pact ignores dam expansion foes**  
**Negotiators will include an enlargement of the Los Vaqueros reservoir**  
**in a program to stabilize California's water supply**

Despite the pledge of a local water board president that he would fight it to his "last dying vote," state and federal negotiators will include an expansion of a Contra Costa reservoir as part of an ambitious program to stabilize California's water supply and fix environmental problems in the heart of its circulation system.

Los Vaqueros Reservoir, which was completed just over two years ago at a cost to local consumers of \$450 million, is among the handful of water supply projects that will be included in a final agreement. That agreement is scheduled to be unveiled Friday in Sacramento by Gov. Gray Davis and high ranking federal officials, possibly including Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

The agreement will include proposals for eight new or expanded storage projects, proposals to increase water-use efficiency, and environmental measures to address fish and wildlife habitat in the 738,000-acre Delta and a vast watershed that covers more than one-third of the state.

Any new storage project would be subject to years of additional study before it could be built, and the Los Vaqueros project would have to receive approval from voters in the Contra Costa Water District.

"They want to do five years of additional studies. They are talking about a decision on reservoirs in the years (2004 and 2006)," said Walter Bishop, Contra Costa Water District general manager. "This is a marathon, not a sprint."

State and federal officials briefed representatives of urban water districts and agricultural and environmental groups Tuesday. Several participants, including Bishop, disclosed some of the details contained in the version of the 45-page agreement. Bishop said participants were not allowed to take notes or keep copies of the agreement, which state and federal officials said might be modified before Friday.

Tom Hannigan, director of the state Department of Water Resources, said the plan contains "no real surprises." He said state officials intend to unveil the plan at a press conference Friday.

Phil Trounstine, the governor's director of communications, told reporters Wednesday there would be a major announcement Friday but refused to elaborate.

Reaching agreement on a plan to restore the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta while providing for the state's growing water needs is a major milestone for state and federal officials, who have negotiated intensely behind closed doors for six months. Their meetings have run around the clock in recent days.

The officials said they were under the gun to settle the plan and launch it before a new president, who could delay or alter the process, moves into the White House in January.

Plans to expand Los Vaqueros, like almost any other plan to boost surface water storage, are sure to be controversial. Because the reservoir was approved and financed by the Contra Costa Water District, an expansion would be subject to approval by the district's voters.

Water board president Joseph Campbell told the Times in April that he would oppose any such expansion to his "last dying vote," an assertion that some believed signaled the death of the project.

"What I don't know precisely is how they will get around the opposition of the local district," said Tom Graff, a lawyer with Environmental Defense.

But on Wednesday, Campbell backtracked from his previous statement. He said his pledge was based on information he had received that led him to believe the expansion was linked to a proposal to build a canal that would circumvent the Delta to deliver northern Delta water to the reservoir near the Delta's southern end. Campbell is adamantly opposed to such a diversion, called a "peripheral canal."

"I was responding directly to that," he said, adding that he would wait to see the final agreement before deciding how vocal he will be about the project.

"I'm not saying I would only oppose if it's connected to the peripheral canal," he said, acknowledging he was opposed to reservoir expansion in some degree no matter what.

Still, the local board has taken no official position on Los Vaqueros expansion except to set out a list of conditions, including a guarantee that the district maintain control of the dam and protect the environment and increase recreation.

In addition to Los Vaqueros, state and federal negotiators have agreed to move forward with additional study of seven other storage projects:

Flood leveed islands in the Delta and use them for storage.

Increase ground water storage in the San Joaquin Valley by 1 million acre-feet.

Expand the Friant Reservoir, on the San Joaquin River, from 520,000 acre-feet to 1.2 million acre-feet.

The project would flood another 3,500 acres.

Build another dam on the San Joaquin River.

Build an off-stream Sites Reservoir west of Sacramento near Williams that could hold upwards of 1 million acre-feet.

Build a canal to send water from the California Aqueduct to Santa Clara County and other places without having to go through the San Luis Reservoir. That would free reservoir capacity for other uses.

Expand Lake Shasta Reservoir, which holds 4.2 million acre-feet, by another 290,000 acre-feet.

The storage portion of the agreement is only one part of the larger CalFed pact, which has been in the works in one form or another since 1994, when the state and federal government formed CalFed.

Water for 22 million users, mostly in Central and Southern California, flows through the Delta, including for the 400,000 customers of the Contra Costa Water District.

The mission of CalFed is to improve supplies and protect the Bay-Delta's threatened and endangered species without hampering quality and flow through the state's water hub.

But after five years, CalFed appeared to take on water itself, a victim of the contentious battle among farmers, city dwellers, environmentalists and state and federal agencies. Negotiations stalled over what projects to pursue and how to pay for them.

In December, when poor flow into the Delta created water too salty to drink and forced the Contra Costa Water District to divert supplies from Los Vaqueros Reservoir, many criticized CalFed as ineffective and useless.

Shortly after, top state and federal officials began meeting behind closed doors to jump start CalFed by developing the plan for the first phase of restoring the Delta.

On Wednesday, state officials worked to draft the plan's final language, and several who have followed the negotiations said they expected copies of the final plan today.

Now that a plan is in hand, it will be up to policymakers to decide how to implement and fund it, Hannigan said.

"I think that both Congress and the Legislature will engage," Hannigan said. "They will have view of the (record of decision) and what it entails and what is expected of the state and Congress."