

# Southern California Water Committee, Inc.

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October 28, 1997

Mr. Mike Madigan, Chairman  
Bay Delta Advisory Council  
CALFED Bay Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1115  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Madigan:

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program has determined three alternative solutions to the long-term problems affecting the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta. The Southern California Water Committee first addressed the proposed solution alternatives and significant issues that must be included in the programmatic environmental review document in October 1996. In the months following, as the Bay Delta Advisory Council has been refining those alternatives, the SCWC has been considering further the principles we believe must be included in the final solution alternative.

The final alternative must meet a basic principle: Delta conditions must be created to meet current and future water needs, including exporting water in excess of that necessary to meet water quality objectives protecting all beneficial uses.

The alternative finally selected must include the following to ensure that a long-term solution will restore the Bay Delta Estuary and improve California's water supply reliability.

(The comments in *italics* represent additional and revised principles for a Bay Delta solution, as adopted by the Southern California Water Committee on October 23, 1997).

- ***IMPROVED WATER QUALITY*** - Improve the quality of water diverted from the Delta to assist in protecting public health and to assist in the control of the costs of treatment and use, including use for wastewater reclamation and conjunctive groundwater programs. Higher quality water will allow for water supplies to go further resulting in less dependency on Delta water and lower associated costs.
- ***RESTORED ECOSYSTEM*** - A comprehensive program of physical habitat restoration in the Delta, the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds, and Suisun and San Pablo Bays, and other programs to control factors that adversely affect the Bay Delta ecosystem, must be core elements. ***Programs for management of flows to benefit aquatic habitats must allow for multiple uses of stream flows to serve both instream needs and diversion requirements to the extent that Delta outflow and water quality criteria are met.***

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*A cooperative effort of business, government, water agencies, agriculture, and public interests.*

- **ENHANCED EFFICIENT WATER MANAGEMENT** - Urban and agricultural water management programs need to be encouraged. But, demand management should not be a fight to save water to meet all needs, rather an agreement to manage water wisely. Additional incentives should be in place to further encourage businesses to reduce water consumption. *The preferred alternative should address opportunities for reclamation and recycling water as a source of new or enhanced supply throughout the state.*
  
- ▶ **INCREASED WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY** - Options to improve water supply reliability and predictability are a must. A full range of management measures will allow for the ability to meet environmental needs and provide the opportunity to export water in excess of what is needed to meet water quality objectives. *It is important to base performance of the water management system and water supply enhancements on their dry and critical year capabilities to assist water suppliers to plan their drought strategies. Recognizing the obligations of the major water diversion projects to current participants, there should be opportunities for other parties, cities, districts and businesses, to purchase and transport water available from new storage, conjunctive use, and water transfer options.*
  
- **ASSURED IMPLEMENTATION** - Institutional changes are needed to assure the implementation of the agreed upon alternative, *particularly implementation of the ecosystem features and programs along with physical components for improved management of the water supply system. Ecosystem restoration must be viewed as a long range endeavor to be accomplished through implementation, evaluation, and adjustment as the environment responds to the program. Institutional changes to give permanency to the CALFED structure and the CALFED paradigm of consensus management would ensure that a "deal is a deal."*
  
- **REASONABLE COST** - The lowest cost alternative is not necessarily the best option. We should not *eliminate reasonable alternatives just because of* higher costs if that creates a permanent fix to problems in the Delta. *Recognizing the national and statewide interests in restoring, preserving, and enhancing the environmental situation in the Delta, financing solutions for the ecosystem restoration need to draw on sources of funding from the public through State and federal means. The portion of the solution financed by local interests must be formulated with regard to time span and interest rates to assure only moderate impacts on water rates.*

The Southern California Water Committee supports key components that balance the objectives of the CALFED program. The preferred alternative must include five elements: increased storage upstream, in-Delta, and downstream; ecosystem and habitat restoration; efficient water management programs; actions to improve water supply; and actions to decrease levee vulnerability.

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The preferred alternative for a long-term Delta solution must include a mechanism to assure reliable water deliveries to water users. The Southern California Water Committee supports a Delta conveyance system that has the capacity to minimally meet drinking water needs and optimally approximate combined State Water Project and Central Valley Project conveyance capacity.

Peak flows must be captured during limited times and therefore the specific alternative, whether a through Delta conveyance, an eastside isolated transfer facility or a combination of both, on a needs to be made basis. The Southern California Water Committee believes that a Delta conveyance is the highest priority; and if planned and implemented properly, and in conjunction with the key elements described above, constitutes a comprehensive Delta solution.

The final alternative must be founded on sound scientific and engineering principles. It must encourage water management operations that are adaptable and flexible. The approach to financing Delta improvements must be based on a benefits, not causation, approach. The schedule to accomplish the plan elements need to be linked such that improved water reliability and water quality are achieved in concert with habitat and species improvement.

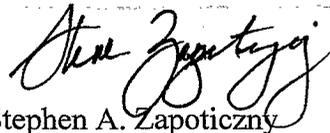
Given that the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is still defining and quantifying the problems to be solved, the SCWC will continue to refine its recommendations concerning the solutions that will best meet Southern California's regional needs for water supply enhancement and certainty.

The Southern California Water Committee remains committed to the CALFED Program as it proceeds to select a preferred solution to restore the Bay-Delta Estuary and thus improving California's water supply reliability.

Very truly yours,



Robert A. Krieger  
Chairman  
Southern California Water Committee



Stephen A. Zapotoczny  
Vice Chairman  
Southern California Water Committee  
Chair, SCWC Bay Delta Advisory Task Force