

CALFED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM WATERSHED STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS (SUMMARY)

CALFED Watershed Management Program Stakeholder Meetings were held on April 23, 1998, at the Secretary of State Building in Sacramento, California and on April 30, 1998, at the Holiday Inn in Redding, California. The following is a summary of the comments at each location:

SACRAMENTO

The meeting format follows:

- an overview/update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program;
- the Watershed Management Strategy;
- the proposed mechanisms for effective stakeholder involvement;
- the principles for CALFED support of watershed activities;
- short speeches on how CALFED can assist various watershed groups; and
- stakeholder comments/questions.

Lists of meeting attendees are included in the meeting sign-in and Work Group sign-up sheets.

Dick Daniel (CALFED) gave a general overview/update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. His presentation also addressed the importance of watershed management within the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and the importance of stakeholder input and involvement.

Judy Heath (CALFED) presented the Watershed Management Strategy, proposed mechanisms for effective stakeholder involvement and encouraged stakeholders to participate in the newly formed Technical Work Group.

Julie Tupper (USFS, member of Interim Interagency Watershed Advisory Team) presented the principles for CALFED support of watershed activities.

Presentations on CALFED Integration with Existing Watershed Activities

Jerry Troyan (Sacramento River Watershed Program): The SRWP was started through an EPA grant four years ago. The SRWP is just now scratching the surface, so this process requires time and patience. There are over 800 people on the mailing list for the newsletter. The SRWP recommends CALFED staff go and speak to local groups to understand them and to communicate with them. They ask CALFED to fund water quality monitoring through CMARP.

There are several points for CALFED to consider:

- The Strategy should be based on a bottom-up concept
- Local groups should not be dominated by agency decisions
- Understand the local groups
- Support successful groups
- Provide information on non-CALFED funding sources
- Focus on resolving federal issues (e.g., mining area -- good samaritan law)
- EPA should be a supporting resource, not a regulator
- The weight should be given to local groups, not state and federal agencies.

Rich Gresham (Placer County RCD): There are five watershed groups in Placer County. These groups were created by land owners and based on community plans. They used existing processes (such as the general county plans). The partnerships fall together if everyone is put in the same room. Many groups want to participate in watershed activities. He is concerned with the agency level of effort. Everyone should be equal. Local groups should put the agencies to work for them. Each group is different, but they are all working toward solving problems. He is the paid coordinator in Placer County. Groups need financial help for a coordinator. Non-profit groups should be reimbursed for travel expenses. That would be a good start for CALFED. They rely on CALFED to put muscle into asking state and federal agencies to look at the local groups differently. They want the agencies to look at what they are doing in the watersheds and see their responsibilities in a different light. Business as usual cannot go on. At the local level, CALFED should work with the counties and communities to get the state and federal agencies to look at the elements. CALFED should see how these agencies can assist the local groups.

Bob Meacher (BDAC): Two BDAC members are at the meeting and will be at the next meeting in Redding. They are watching and observing. They encourage this process. Read the document that was suggested (from the Natural Resource Law Center). Problems should be solved watershed by watershed. Mentioned his job is to secure the funding after it is decided what should be done. There needs to be reinvestment in watersheds.

Comments from Audience:

1. Before CALFED finalizes its watershed strategy, it needs to look into the document produced from a CALFED sponsored study at the Natural Resource Law Center. This addresses a structure which the Watershed Management Program could follow. Before CALFED designs the Program, it needs to decide on its function. Other agencies, including those on the Interagency Watershed Advisory Team, need to be involved.
2. The federal EPA should increase its watershed involvement in California and partner with CALFED to provide watershed funding. EPA needs to play a stronger role in the CALFED Program. Watershed Management functions need to be linked with EPA's Clean Water Action.

3. Most important is to get stakeholder involvement, communicate, and tap into talent that already exists. CALFED should go slow and bring everyone into the process. The new common program should be given time to adequately include the stakeholders.
4. Plans to form a Watershed Management Workgroup is a start in right direction to ensure stakeholder involvement. It should be stakeholder dominated. Can CALFED financially support members who participate on Workgroup?
5. Optimize the Workgroup meetings and have them well organized and facilitated. Involve the counties. The Watershed Management Workgroup needs to play catch-up with the rest of the common program workgroups. A CALFED sponsored watershed summit is recommended. It should be an extensive two day event where watershed groups can break out into workgroups and help design the strategy for CALFED in an efficient, coordinated manner.
6. The Workgroup needs to have equal participation and decision making with the Interagency Watershed Advisory Team. The relationship and function of each need to be further defined.
7. CALFED needs to stress local participation; it is not emphasized adequately in the Strategy document. There needs to be a mechanism for local participation. (Unknown)
8. Relationship between the Watershed Advisory Team, Water Quality Technical Group, and Restoration Technical Panel is not clear. Seems that there is a lack of communication internally within CALFED.
9. The Technical Oversight Entity options in the Strategy document needs to refer to existing organizations/institutions.
10. The Strategy falls short of identifying mechanisms to achieve goals and objectives. In addition, some of the goals in the Strategy seem contradictory (e.g. beneficial time shifting of run-off, increased water yield, and vegetative manipulation). Goals need to be revised.
11. There should not be just one strategy for the entire upper and lower watersheds. There should be specific strategies for basins. Individual strategies could be developed by local groups to meet the overall CALFED goals but be specific to an area.
12. \$2 million for watershed stewardship (Category III) is not enough. In addition, how will groups know what to do with their stewardship money if there is no final Strategy in place? CALFED needs to address the sustainability of the early implementation watershed projects.
13. A credibility problem exists. Several small watershed groups were denied Prop 204 funding and were given the impression they were not important. CALFED needs to

provide an incentive to participate in this new common program. Many Central Sierra counties do not want to be involved in CALFED. There is no incentive for them to be involved after the disappointment of Prop 204. These counties represent poorly resourced groups who produced proposals that failed but could have been better. They need help on writing acceptable proposals.

14. CMARP should pay attention to existing large scale programs to generate locally relevant data.
15. The word "coordinate" should be replaced with "collaborate". This helps to emphasize a collaborative role between watershed groups and the agencies. There should be a "bottoms up" watershed approach which implies a stakeholder driven process. Watershed groups do not want to be directed by the agencies.
16. A CALFED coordination role is preferred by some stakeholders. A key role for CALFED is to encourage coordination so that watershed groups will not be at odds with other organizations. A coordination plan should show how CALFED will communicate and work with local government and watershed groups. There is a tendency for intra-agency and inter-agency groups to give local watershed groups conflicting messages and not know what the others are doing. CALFED should work with state/federal agencies to coordinate the process with local groups.
17. The clearinghouse function is important and is supported. CALFED should be a point source for information on watershed projects. It should include funding information from CALFED and non-CALFED sources. Existing information clearinghouse programs should be considered (e.g. UC Davis, Chico State).
18. CALFED should adopt an umbrella approach ("community of place" concept) because watershed groups and agencies are fragmented and need to be unified. There is a lot of knowledge and decision-making occurring independently.
19. The conflicts over private and public ownership of land that hamper effective watershed improvements needs to be resolved. Only part of the Sierra Nevada is in public ownership. A great deal of private land is controlled by others (e.g. Red Emerson).
20. A grant writing class, sponsored by CALFED or a CALFED agency, would foster local involvement.
21. Not sure that participation in Workgroup would be worth the effort. It is quite a commitment. Where is the light at the end of the tunnel (e.g. funding)?
22. Upper and lower watershed activities need a tighter link. In addition, showing a demarcation between upper and lower watersheds on the geographic scope map is misleading. There should be no demarcation; there is a continuity.

23. The Strategy needs to look beyond restoration toward irrigation and water management. The goals, objectives, and principles in the Strategy reflect the ecosystem restoration component. How do the other common program components fit into watershed management?
24. CALFED needs to solicit input of groups in San Joaquin area.
25. Watershed issues were not addressed at the Fresno meeting on the PEIR/S. Make sure watershed strategy is presented before BDAC in Fresno at the June meeting.

REDDING

The meeting format follows:

- Comments from elected officials;
- an overview/update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program;
- the Watershed Management Strategy;
- the proposed mechanisms for effective stakeholder involvement;
- the principles for CALFED support of watershed activities;
- short speeches on how CALFED can assist various watershed groups; and
- stakeholder comments/questions, including short speeches on how CALFED can assist various watershed groups.

Lists of meeting attendees are included in the meeting sign-in and Work Group sign-up sheets.

The following elected officials made introductory comments at the beginning of the meeting:

Dave Meurer, Congressman Herger's Office
Assemblyman Tom Woods
Forrest Sprague, Senator Johannessen's Office
Irwin Fust, Shasta County Supervisor
Glen Hawes, Shasta County Supervisor
Trish Clark, Shasta County Supervisor
Joan Smith, Siskiyou County Supervisor
Charlie Willard, Tehama County Supervisor
Ralph Modine, Trinity County Supervisor

The following stakeholders presented prepared commentaries:

Melinda Brown, Chair, Shasta-Tehama Bioregional Council
Phil Schoefer, President, Western Shasta Resource Conservation District
Lynn Barris, Butte Creek Conservancy
Laurel Ames, Executive Director, Sierra Nevada Alliance
Martha Davis, Sierra Nevada Alliance (also BDAC member)
John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust
Dick Johnson, Shasta Fly Fishers

Dick Daniel (CALFED) gave a general overview/update of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. His presentation also addressed the importance of watershed management within the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and the importance of stakeholder input and involvement.

Judy Heath (CALFED) presented the Watershed Management Strategy, proposed mechanisms for stakeholder involvement and invited stakeholders to join the newly formed Watershed Management Workgroup. Judy also announced the upcoming solicitation proposal for watershed stewardship proposals.

Julie Tupper (USFS, member of Interim Interagency Watershed Advisory Team) presented the principles for CALFED support of watershed activities.

Comments

1. There is a need for off-stream storage in the upper watersheds. This should be an important component to storage options.
2. Critical concerns in the upper watershed include fire fuel reduction, prevention of forest fires, vegetative management, flood control, area of origin (water) rights, preservation of high quality source water, reduction of silt/soil erosion, and re-investment into upper communities (down stream water users should be required to reinvest in watershed to assure continuing flows of benefits over the long run - this message should be carried by CALFED to urban users).
3. Upper watershed projects could increase water yield through effective vegetative management.
4. Strengthen watershed appendix in PEIR/S to more adequately address the importance of upper watersheds to the problems of the Bay-Delta system.
5. Projects to reduce fire fuel should include re-use of biomass.
6. CALFED needs to partner with agencies to provide for better fire protection.
7. The Strategy incorrectly states excessive timber harvesting as a stressor.
8. Need assurances for clean water and sustainable sources.
9. Need official recognition by CALFED Program of area of origin.
10. Trinity County has been excluded on the watershed geographic map. Trinity County needs to be considered as a full participant in CALFED Watershed Management Program. Trinity River is important to the quantity and quality of the Sacramento River.
11. Rural counties should be equal partners with CALFED.
12. Restoration needs to be done first before any conveyance alternative is in place. Wants CALFED to keep this in mind when developing priorities.
13. Funding through NRCS has been taken away for soil erosion control at farms - need CALFED to support soil erosion management.
14. Do not take the best water (north) and send it to the south.

15. Address multiple landowner problems and conflicts among agencies - use Clear Creek Project as a watershed demonstration project. This project has a mix of private/public landowners, public and private users are involved and it addresses multi-environmental issues.
16. Strengthen EIR/S: provide link between improving conditions in source watersheds and improving water yield, timing of flows, quality and storage capacity protection.
17. CALFED should support project implementation at the local level. CALFED needs to regard the watershed groups as contractors. They will direct their projects to meet CALFED objectives. CALFED needs to offer funding and technical assistance to support watershed project implementation.
18. CALFED should rely on existing organizations and not re-invent the wheel.
19. Watershed Management Program information should be readily available on the internet to stakeholders. The Watershed Management Program needs to utilize internet tools to inform watershed groups about the Strategy, meetings, meeting summaries, etc. There needs to be more effort from CALFED to come to the upper watersheds for meetings with watershed groups.
20. The relationship between the Work Group and the Watershed Advisory Team needs to be developed to address the decision making process and the information flow.
21. The Strategy is a good document but it has some flaws. Getting away from top-down management is good. The concern is that there is no regulatory approach to the process. The words "compliance" and "oversight" need to be reworked. One area that needs to be outlined and highlighted in the Strategy is fire management.
22. Input is needed on dam management.
23. Increasing north state flows to the south and increasing velocities are not compatible with major spawning. Tributary enhancement is needed first.
24. There are areas in the Strategy to improve:
 - A. There is no scientific/environmental/social/financial reason to divide the upper and lower watersheds. Such a division will cause political problems.
 - B. It appears this strategy will not begin until after the canal is approved.
 - C. There is little integration of forest and agricultural land with the stream channel.
 - D. There is a failure to integrate groundwater and surface water features.
 - E. A financial strategy is not included. User pays is prospective (looking to the future).

- F. There is no integration of watershed management and flood control. Work should be done above the dams for peak flows.
 - G. There is not integration of this Strategy with the Ecosystem Restoration Plan.
 - H. There is a failure to integrate the Watershed Management Program with the Water Quality Program.
 - I. This is an improvement on getting stakeholder involvement but through past experience in the RCDs, draw on the past experiences of the stakeholders such as watershed groups, councils and planning departments.
 - J. There is a question of assurances. CALFED is ignoring the area of origin rights on several rivers because of water for fish but then that water also goes to urban areas.
25. CALFED should be analyzing desalinization costs in urban locations. This option should be used when water is needed instead of storage and conveyance.
 26. It is very encouraging that watershed management has been elevated to a program. A key issue is the water deficit. In political history, water storage issue has been based on DWR data. If a willing buyer steps up, what assurance does the public have that it can be pulled off?
 27. There is a concern that the stakeholder process will be agency dominated. Include those stakeholders not able to make the 4/23 or 4/30 meetings. CALFED needs to get out into the watersheds, not just Sacramento and Redding. Maximize outreach and provide communication.
 28. Well-designed floodplain ecosystems are necessary. SB 1086 shows the relationships. Connect all tributaries and sub-watersheds for salmonids. Upper watershed restoration should be considered.
 29. There is a concern that all the money being spent is only temporary for a short term solution.
 30. It should be emphasized that vegetative management should be a major component of the Strategy because 80% of the Sacramento River watershed is forest land. Vegetative management can increase water quality and quantity.
 31. Watershed groups are understaffed and do not get per diem to travel. Why not give block grants to watershed areas of origin?
 32. There is money available for the peripheral canal. This is an unproven system. There are now stories that there is going to be help in the watersheds. The idea is not to fix the Delta but to get the water south. There may be money to fix the watershed but the reality is that groundwater will be pumped and put into the peripheral canal and little left for the upper watershed.
 33. CALFED should use universities and sponsor teleconferences.

34. The Shasta-Tehama Bioregional Council supports a clearinghouse function for CALFED. We also support:
- A. Official recognition for Northern California in water brokering process
 - B. Area of origin rights
 - C. Sustainable new water supplies
 - D. Remedial processes like vegetative management
 - E. The closing of research and information gaps
 - F. Phase conservation
 - G. Water quality, fish, and environmental habitats
 - H. Actions with immediate and verifiable results for fisheries

There are several concerns:

- A. Rushing the CALFED comprehensive plan will derail it. Watershed management has not been integrated into the rest of the plan. Two meetings are not sufficient. Use the CRMPs. Collaborative processes have benefits.
 - B. The Strategy is not a strategy yet. Stressors are identified but there are no proposals of how to address them.
 - C. There is concern about the Work Group because of the agencies being involved.
35. The upper watershed problems have been recognized a while back. I am on BDAC to promote the upper watersheds. Watershed management is not an effective part of the common programs yet. Block grants are a wonderful idea. A small oversight group is needed to distribute money. Local governments are key. (Bob Meacher, Plumas Co./BDAC)
36. Is the watershed management element of the CALFED process lagging? This merits suspension of the comment period to allow people to comment. Stakeholder involvement is important as we have learned in the Stony Creek and Thomas Creek processes. It makes sense if a precedent has been set to slow down the process. The process is moving with political science but not sound science. If Watershed Management is as important as we hear it is, CALFED should take the time to do it right.