



**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

July 13, 1999

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The Honorable Michael Machado
Chair, Assembly Committee on Water, Parks & Wildlife
State Capitol, Room 5136
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblyman Machado:

This is to follow up on our June 1 meeting in which we discussed a process for implementing a range of actions to advance the goals of improved water supply reliability, ecosystem restoration, improved water quality, and improved levee system reliability for the lower San Joaquin River and south Delta region. CALFED goals for this region include attainment of the SWRCB Water Quality Control Plan and other Basin Plan standards, improving the dissolved oxygen situation in the San Joaquin River in the vicinity of Stockton, addressing South Delta Water Agency concerns with respect to water quality and supply availability, improved management of farm drainage in the region, implementation of VAMP, and improving both CVP and SWP facilities and operations to improve flexibility, reliability, and fisheries protection.

As you are aware, the CALFED agencies have proposed a comprehensive set of actions to achieve these goals (Attachment 1). Because of the critical importance to the CALFED process of resolving regional concerns through implementation of a balanced suite of actions, CALFED is devoting a great deal of effort toward expediting these actions. CALFED Program staff and participating agency staffs are engaged in the following implementation efforts:

Stakeholder Involvement:

Design an inclusive stakeholder participation process to assure that all interested parties can be informed and provide input in the implementation process which will necessarily include substantial public participation through the projects' specified environmental review process.

Schedule:

Refine the preliminary, conceptual implementation schedule which was included with the draft discussion document, "Resolving Water Management Concerns for the Lower San Joaquin River and South Delta Region." Technical staff have begun the process of refining this schedule in light of agency staff resources, and experience with similar project components elsewhere.

CALFED Agencies

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| <p>California</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Resources Agency Department of Fish and Game Department of Water Resources California Environmental Protection Agency State Water Resources Control Board Department of Food and Agriculture | <p>Federal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Protection Agency Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Bureau of Reclamation U.S. Geological Survey Bureau of Land Management U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. Forest Service Department of Commerce National Marine Fisheries Service Western Area Power Administration |
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Environmental Documentation and Permits:

Refine the groups of actions that move forward together through the project environmental documentation, conceptual design, and permit compliance activities. CALFED staff's preliminary proposal for such grouping is attached. The final decision on grouping these actions has important implications in terms of defining Project Purposes for the permits process, in terms of project management and staffing, and on the probability of successful completion of the action groups.

Management Structure:

Develop a project management structure for implementation which assures overall program coherence and coordination among the various agencies, while taking advantage of the broad range of expertise available in CALFED agencies and through consultants. The conceptual approach shown in Figure 1 is intended to achieve these goals. CALFED Program staff would work to assure the overall coordination, while various groups of agencies would be responsible for advancing specific project action groups in accordance with their areas of expertise.

Identify and assign experienced project managers to lead the individual project efforts. Given the ambitious goals set forth for CALFED, cooperating agencies, and stakeholders, it will be a challenge to meet the anticipated staffing requirements.

Identify and allocate funding to initiate program planning for the identified projects. In order to meet program goals, Tier 2 project-level environmental documentation and feasibility studies must be completed as rapidly as possible after the CALFED Programmatic EIR/EIS is completed. In order to accomplish this, these project-level planning efforts must begin soon in the current calendar year.

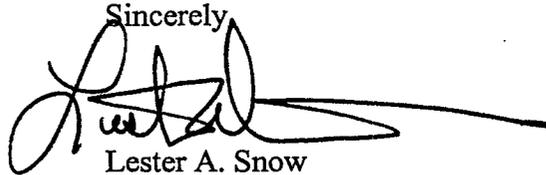
Identify critical milestones in the planning process, which can serve as decision points for relative funding allocations, for decisions on the need for specific assurance mechanisms, and for corrective actions in the planning process.

Over the next several months we will work with you and others to develop the details on these critical implementation activities. It will be especially challenging to define specific performance targets associated with some of the actions under consideration. For example, it is difficult to commit to a date-certain achievement of target dissolved oxygen levels in the lower San Joaquin River at this time, since the relative magnitudes of the various causes of this problem have yet to be identified, the effectiveness of preventive and treatment approaches have not yet been evaluated, and funding commitments for actions to solve this problem have not yet been made. The situation is similar for most of the other regional problems we are working to solve. The best approach is to continue with a collaborative process in which solution options can be developed with the consideration of stakeholder concerns and technical realities.

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If you have further questions or comments, please feel free to call me at 657-2666.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lester A. Snow", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Attachments