

LEGISLATIVE CONCEPT PAPER
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
November 9, 1999

TITLE: Governance of CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM: The CALFED Bay-Delta Program, currently in development, is a long-range program to address several interrelated environmental and water management issues with emphasis on Delta issues. Current programs addressing these issues tend to be issue-specific and less than fully integrated with other, related programs. Integration of existing and necessary new programs will be very difficult with current organizational structures, which tend to be program-specific.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Create a new governmental organization in state law to oversee implementation of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and to coordinate the actions of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program with other, related environmental and water management programs.

CONSEQUENCE OF INACTION: Informal implementation of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program by existing organizations will continue a piecemeal and uneven operation of various programs to address related environmental and water management issues. This uneven operation will mean that some issues will receive more attention than others, weakening support for the long-term program and ultimately resulting in new controversies and conflicts regarding environmental and water management programs.

ALTERNATIVES:

- Create a new organization through executive order.
- Create a new organization through interagency agreement or memorandum of agreement.
- Leave implementation to existing organizations, under the joint guidance of the Resources Agency and Cal-EPA.

HISTORY: No serious effort has been undertaken to create a new government organization to coordinate state and federal government programs in the Delta. Assemblyman Machado has introduced AB 909 (1999) as a spot bill to create a multi-member Bay-Delta Commission, but that bill has not received a hearing.

CALFED staff has worked with interested stakeholders on the development of a proposal for a government organization to oversee and coordinate implementation of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.