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July 21, 2000

Dear Interested Parties:

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Programmatic EIS/EIR) for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program in either hard copy or electronic format, and/or only those hard copy documents you specifically requested. Many of you commented on the Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR issued in June of 1999, and this final document includes responses to those comments.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative effort by eighteen state and federal agencies with regulatory and management responsibilities in the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento/San Joaquin River Bay-Delta ecosystem. The purpose of the Program is to develop a long-term plan to restore ecosystem health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system. The objective of this collaborative planning process is to identify comprehensive solutions to the problems of ecosystem quality, water supply reliability, water quality, and Delta levee and channel integrity.

This final report identifies a Preferred Program Alternative to achieve these objectives, and evaluates the environmental impacts of proceeding with this plan. It also analyzes the environmental impacts of each of three alternatives, and compares the Preferred Program Alternative to the other alternatives. Each of the alternatives includes the core programs which address issues of ecosystem restoration, water use efficiency, water quality, Delta levee and channel integrity, water transfers, and watersheds, as well as a range of storage and conveyance options.

The primary purpose of the Programmatic EIS/EIR is to inform decision-makers and the public about the impacts the various alternatives could have on both the human and the natural environment and to evaluate how well the alternatives meet the Program purposes. Because the Program is a long-term plan for the Bay-Delta ecosystem, the Programmatic EIS/EIR is a programmatic level planning document, focusing on the interrelated long-term consequences of the various alternatives. Subsequent environmental review for the project-specific actions involved in implementation of the Program will follow the approval of the Final EIS/EIR.

California

- The Resources Agency
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Water Resources
- The Reclamation Board
- California Environmental Protection Agency
- State Water Resources Control Board
- Department of Food and Agriculture
- Delta Protection Commission

Federal

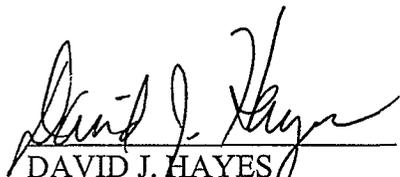
CALFED Agencies

- 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

- Department of Agriculture
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Department of Commerce
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Western Area Power Administration

We appreciate the active participation by many of you in helping us craft the alternatives described in this Final Programmatic EIS/EIR, and your comments were instrumental in providing us additional information with which to consider the impacts of those alternatives. We urge you to continue your participation as we move forward to implement the comprehensive solutions described in this plan.

The CALFED lead agencies will not make a decision on the proposed action until 30 days after release of the Final Programmatic EIS/EIR. After the 30-day waiting period, the CALFED lead agencies will complete a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD will state the actions that will be implemented and will discuss all factors leading to the decision. For further information, call CALFED at (800) 900-3587.



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MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources
State of California



STEVEN R. RITCHIE
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CALFED Bay-Delta Program