

Bill Jennings
Mike Lozeau
DeltaKeeper
3536 Ranier Avenue
Stockton, CA 95204

DRAFT

7/17/97

Dear Messrs. Jennings and Lozeau:

This is in response to your July 2, 1997 letter expressing concern that CALFED is on the threshold of approving water quality projects in the Delta without having adequately prioritized the problems to be addressed.

We recognize that much is yet to be learned about water quality conditions affecting the Delta system, not the least of which are toxicity questions. To address the need for technical information, CALFED will propose implementation of a Comprehensive Monitoring, Assessment, and Research Program (CMARP). This program will be the means of assessing all CALFED activities, including water quality, ecosystem restoration, levee and channel stabilization, and activities related to water supply reliability. I believe implementation of this program is critical not only to enable activities to be prioritized, but also to enable ongoing assessment and adaptive management as various facets of the CALFED program are implemented.

I envision the CMARP would include the types of toxicity evaluations, tissue studies, bioassessments and risk assessments you recommend, and that the program would be flexible and of adequate duration to enable the results of CALFED actions to be fully evaluated and modified as needed. Also, we plan that the information will be accessible. The program is intended to be performed in collaboration with existing functions such as the Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay monitoring programs. And, we do envision a role for citizen volunteers. A comprehensive quality assurance/quality control plan will be a critical element of the CMARP, as this will enable the information products produced by various contributors to be evaluated comprehensively.

As development of the program has just begun, no decisions have been made as to what type of management structure it would have or what agencies or other entities might have responsibilities for its implementation. Therefore, it is not known whether an independent oversight board or some other structure would be adopted. While these decisions will be made by CALFED agency policy makers, we will recommend adoption of a management structure that balances the concerns of all stakeholders. I have asked the staff of the CALFED Water Quality Program to take the lead in developing this multi-faceted program; a draft framework document will be circulated to provide you and other stakeholders the opportunity to provide input to this process before any program decisions are made.

I believe it is important for us to view implementation of the principles you advocate as a process. It will take years to get some of the technical answers we seek; and, some technical questions are likely never to be completely resolved. Yet, we must move forward to correct the

problems of the Delta Estuary. Our plan is to begin soon to implement ecosystem restoration projects, among which are water quality activities. Even though we do not know all we ultimately need to know, we can begin setting the information gathering process in motion by implementing the CMARP, and we can begin undertaking actions that would clearly be beneficial. As an example, pollution prevention actions for non-point discharges have the potential to reduce toxicant loadings from a number of sources. Activities such as public education programs directed at environmentally safe usage of household chemicals have the potential to make improvements over a broad spectrum of water quality parameters of concern to the Bay-Delta estuary. I believe it may be appropriate that such projects be considered for early funding, even though all the facts are not yet in as to the present effects of these discharges.

As we move forward in developing the CMARP and beginning to implement water quality actions your help and participation is welcome, and will be appreciated. If you have questions about development of this program, I recommend contacting Rick Woodard, Water Quality Program Manager, at (916) 653-5422.

Sincerely,

Lester Snow
Executive Director

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