

CALFED Program Assessment

Comments to BDPAC Program Performance
and Financing Sub-Committee

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Karen Larsen

I reviewed the subject document drafted by the chairs of the Performance Measures Subcommittee. My only comment is that the only eco-water quality issue mentioned is mercury. The CALFED ROD included commitments for working on toxicity and dissolved oxygen. These should be called out in the document in addition to mercury.

BDPAC Water Quality Subcommittee

The separation of Environmental Water Quality seems very important, and including Hg as the only Environmental Water Quality performance called out seems odd, especially since it is related to fish consumption. Is there a human health Performance measure? If so, then this makes more sense there, and new data suggests that atmospheric deposition is also a source for methyl mercury in California's water.

On the ELPH measure, it would be helpful if the "assessment" was clarified with who is doing what. Just a sentence that says CalFED is summarizing and evaluating existing information....for the Final Assessment. I think this is the assessment referred to?

On the Address San Joaquin Valley drainage Problems, it would be helpful to know what the alternative solution to prescribed loads is. The second to the last sentence under "status" starts with "Its", is that referring to the TMDL, the interagency group?

Under the Implement source controls in the Delta and its tributaries, I would make the date for the water policy 2009-2010.

One last note, if you plan on supplying any attachments with this summary, I would find a list of the projects that the \$76 M funded in source control, and the \$2.25 million in treatment geochronology demonstration helpful.

I hope we have a chance for a broader discussion with the full subcommittee about the Stage One Performance Report . The CDWS meetings have been infrequent. It's been so long it's hard to remember where we left off for some of these discussions.. This task is probably a good way to get re-engaged.

ELPH

On page 3-5 of the Draft BDPAC Program Performance and Financing Subcommittee "Water Quality Program Performance" Report, I have the following concerns about the performance evaluation narrative for ELPH. I don't disagree with the ranking itself. Little progress has been made thus far on ELPH for two reasons at least.

First, the ELPH narrative indicates that "No schedule was adopted for Stage One". The practical result was that staff time and resources have been almost entirely focused on meeting the bromide and carbon targets through dedicated actions in the Delta and through source control in the Sacramento and San Joaquin watersheds. Water treatment innovations for Delta COC's have been another program priority. This has left about a 10% time and financial commitment to advancing ELPH (as a guess)???

The second reason for ELPH being the program orphan has been the lack of an institutional framework. Beyond Urban Management Plans there has been little incentive for water agencies and water treatment agencies to explore and to take advantage of opportunities for better coordinating water supply, water quality, and land use planning and developments in a region. The Integrated Regional Water Management Planning and Implementation grants in Prop. 50 and Prop 84 now offer real and new opportunities for advancing the development of ELPH in the future, should facilitating the use of IRWMP bond funds for ELPH projects become a priority for the Drinking Water Subcommittee and for CALFED in Stage Two

In conclusion, lack of comparable resources in the CDWS program for ELPH and lack of significant financial resources for planning and implementation opportunities (before the IRWMP sections of Proposition 50 and 84 became available), are not the right reasons to jump to judgment on the infeasibility of ELPH.

Specifically I think that it is premature to include the concern or conclusion that ELPH "may not be feasible at any cost using the existing through Delta Conveyance". I suggest that the last sentence of the ELPH status narrative be struck. I do not think it reflects the opinions of the whole subcommittee. A subsequent March 30 draft has deleted this sentence and I concur with that edit. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and i look forward to helping improve the draft report. Leah Wills

Steve Roberts

Executive Summary

Some general comments:

1. I expected the public would want to see a listing of CALFED goals, centered on Delta actions, not statewide actions, for each objective and then a comparison of accomplishments achieved. This comparison is not present. It is not appropriate to assess CALFED's performance using statewide actions.
2. This document was explained to be a retrospective review; however, it spends a great deal of time speaking prospectively about future problems and lessons learned without making the comparisons mentioned in comment 1 above. The review could be construed as a support document for a peripheral canal.
3. There is very little substantiation of general statements made by presenting supportive data. Here and in other performance documents it is impossible to verify where the data are coming from or if it is accurate. I suspect that data was combined that was not additive. Please double check you figures.
4. Several times in this document there are general statements that there is growing or mounting scientific evidence that the current through Delta conveyance system may not be sustainable. This is an overly strong prospective statement that is not supported by data. There are many studies underway to develop data and determine if this statement is indeed valid. These statements seem out of place in a retrospective performance assessment of CALFED.

Specific Comments by paragraph

First two paragraphs

1. There should be a mention that there where no specific, measurable, achievable or reproducible goals set for all programs and therefore actual progress is hard to assess. Seems that this should be a lessons learned item.
2. The CALFED EIR/S purpose and need statement says CALFED was too focused on the DELTA and not statewide. The Delta related items aren't necessarily associated with CALFED or CALFED funding.
3. The statements that the "accomplishments are related" to the broad goals of CALFED points out a problem. It is not clear that there is a link between CALFED actions and improvements to the Delta. This case has not been made.
4. Last sentence is confusing and makes a point: "Actions taken outside the Delta show more progress towards meeting CALFED goals than those within

the Delta.” What does this mean? Were CALFED achievements within the Delta or statewide? Are all of the statewide actions really a part of CALFED?

Water Supply Reliability

Generally, I see no statement of what the specific, measurable, achievable, reproducible, goals of CALFED were.

1. Sentence one –How can CALFED say they have “substantially met its water supply goals during stage one”? There is no additional surface storage. Also, CALFED was to focus on the Delta and all ratings in the Delta are low, only the “Delta related” performance is high.
2. 2nd sentence –what does “reliably” mean? Do we have proof that we have delivered more water than in an absence of CALFED? Isn’t it primarily because of drought years before CALFED and wet years after? What are our “pre-CALFED” delivery conditions?
3. What are the accomplishments that are” impressive”?
4. 4th sentence –What “modest overall performance noted above” the previous sentence said it was impressive without telling the reader what “it” was. There is mention that there are “several factors already reducing water supply reliability”
 - a. Climate change (ok it’s new) and CALFED wasn’t setup to deal with this –only thru adaptive management. However, is this been proven to actually be reducing current exports? Probably not.
 - b. I have concern over the statement “Growing evidence of the possible adverse impact on the Delta export pumps on” Delta species. I don’t believe there is ANY information that rises to the level of “Evidence” that says exports are accountable for *significant* impact to Delta fish populations- much less “growing evidence.” The POD is focused on several possible causes, pumping being the most convenient. There are also toxic substances, non native species, declining food source and habitat under study. The most recent suggestion gaining traction is the salt content of the Delta needs to vary. None of these are mentioned. At best, the scientific community is testing hypotheses on all these notions.
5. Lessons learned:
 - a. The statements don’t focus on the most efficient methods of achieving WSR. Alternatively, it does focus on possible future problems. This is supposed to be a retrospective look, not forward? It seems that a lesson learned is to develop a plan with performance measures before you undertake specific CALFED actions in the future.
 - b. The Accomplishments snapshot is questionable. Where did this info come from? New water?

- c. It seems unrealistic schedules and overly optimistic funding assumptions in the CALFED ROD would be a problem worth mentioning to avoid in the future.

WSR Program Performance Document comments

General Comments:

- CALFED has been the fortunate recipient of some wetter than normal water years since its inception. Taking credit for this is simply not reasonable. Also, counting surface storage projects by private water districts completely unrelated to CALFED and unusually abundant rainfall is simply counter to any interpretation of performance measures that are suppose to correlate to ones own direct labor.
- The data presented on program yields, capacities and expenditures cannot be verified by the surface storage program.

Summary of progress Pg 1

1. Maybe more water has been delivered but it is primarily due to hydrology. CALFED emerged from a long drought period and the last 7 years have been generally wet. The stakeholders know this and contending CALFED was the cause will hurt CALFED credibility.
2. Where did this “new water supply” figures come from? Is this an annual average yield or a storage number of acre feet? Also, it appears these may not be real water only potential “projections” that may occur if implemented in the future. These figures may be over stated.
3. We can not verify the 4 million acre feet of new storage space stated, its location in the state, its proximity to the SWP or CVP. Certainly there is no new CALFED surface storage projects on line. Why add LV and Diamond Valley? Even with them included, we still aren’t close to 4 MAF of new storage.
4. Second paragraph. The statement about more reliable water supplies is unsubstantiated. Explain what reliability means, has more water been delivered?
5. What are the major improvements you reference?
6. Second paragraph is prospective not retrospective as the purpose proclaims. Projecting into the future doesn’t address past performance.
7. What scientific evidence is there to show pumping *significantly* impacts fish? The projects have permits they operate under that require mitigation.
8. There is no mention that the Surface Storage Program has been under funded until recently (2004) and therefore schedules have been delayed. Mentioning that the WUE program has been appears preferential.

Pg2 Funding

9. The surface and groundwater storage programs can not substantiate these expenditures you should double check them and separate out the groundwater from surface storage. Our figures are as follows.

Breakdown of expenditures for Storage Program Element

Program Element	Expenditures to Date (\$ thousands)			
	State	Federal	Local \1	Total
Surface Storage\2	76,590	55,450		132,040
Groundwater	303,696		863,000	1,166,696
Total	380,286	55,450	863,000	1,298,736

\1 Local amounts are from the original table.

\2 includes \$14 million for SLLP

In Delta

10. What Delta improvements have lead to “Reliable deliveries to agricultural contractors”? We have spoken to Reclamation and they are unsure what these are. You might want to double check this.

Pg3 water transfers

11. Seems the water transfers program was successful despite the cut by the Legislature yet the Transfer Program was rated poorly. It seems the story should be it is a great program and we should push to start up the website and transfer clearing house again.

Pg 4 Increased permitted Delta pumping capacity

12. We do not agree with the statement that “Scientific research is providing increasing evidence that the export pumps are having a significant adverse effect on some delta species.” Some people believe and is generally accepted that the pumps can take fish so they have an impact. We know toxic substances, alien species, habitat, salinity in the Delta also can have impacts to Delta species. We don’t know what level of significance any of these actions/phenomenon have of Delta fisheries. There must be acknowledgment that there is no single adverse cause for decline of Delta aquatic species. This paper needs to reflect this in a more balanced way.

Surface Storage in the ROD

Revise paragraph 2

13. Deadlines included in the ROD were unrealistic and the state and federal agencies are moving forward with completing the necessary studies to determine the priority and implementability of the five projects under consideration. The studies have been delayed by many “uncertainties” that currently exist or are expected to exist in future years. For example, while the State acknowledges the need to evaluate the effects of climate change on California’s water supply, the necessary tools to evaluate and forecast the effects of future snow melt patterns, sea level rise and evapotranspiration changes are not yet available. Similarly, issues regarding Delta sustainability including, pelagic organism decline and future operations of Banks Pumping Plant add tremendous variability and uncertainty in the storage studies. As a result, many potential project participants interested in water supply benefits appear to be unwilling to commit to investing in new storage (especially storage north of the Delta) until these issues are better understood.

14. Check the 4 MAF storage total. I don’t see how this adds up. However, if it does, can you share with me your figures? You may have found a hole in the ground somewhere, but if you can’t fill it, it provides no supply reliability.

Jerry Meral

Conveyance Program

Approach: The Delta conveyance program in the ROD proposed continuing to move water through the existing, but somewhat modified Delta channels.

ROD expectations: Implement the South Delta Improvements Program, improve the Tracy and Clifton Court fish screens, plan and prepare to implement a through Delta project and North Delta flood control project, and study a screened diversion from the Sacramento River to the Central Delta.

Status: None of the ROD expectations have been fulfilled to date. Planning documents have proceeded for the South Delta Improvements Project but are extremely behind schedule. Final environmental documents have yet to be certified for any program. Some progress has occurred for the Frank’s Tract Project but even if approval is given to proceed, this may not solve long term fundamental Delta conveyance problems.

There is scientific knowledge that indicates that that increasing Delta salinity at times would improve fisheries. At present, it appears this changed salinity cannot be achieved with the through Delta facility. UC research has indicated for

more than two years that the Delta is unlikely to maintain its current configuration for more than several decades.

Greg Gartrell

Executive Summary

Decline of important aquatic species: the importance of habitat degradation, including the links to high fall salinity, loss of food, and other non-export factors are important, with a growing body of evidence. Links to export pumping effects seemed to be limited to a few months in the winter. The focus only on exports is overly simplistic and could be taken as a bias.

Levees

Emphasis should be placed on the need for emergency preparedness, lack of which has been identified as a critical issue.

Lessons Learned – levees

Need to include that we have learned we need to immediately develop an emergency response plan and implement it.

Water Quality

The claim that native fish benefit from salinity variability is overly simplistic and gives the impression native fish will benefit from saltier water. The data and numerous published papers show that, in fact, the Delta is saltier than in the past and that fresher conditions favor native fish. It appears that the PPIC report has been misinterpreted. That report suggests, without evidence, that a variable Delta will be adverse to non-natives, thus (hopefully) benefiting natives. The report does not specify the range, frequency, extent, or duration of variability, and the authors state that those conditions are not known and need to be studied. Translating that into "native fish benefit from variability" is a stretch that is not warranted. Later (in the Ecosystem section, page 3 of 5 the comment was inserted in the section on Invasives: "this sentence is questionable (referring to the variations in salinity of the previous sentence). May want to exclude based on the reference to the recent POD studies and hearings." That advice should be taken.

Water Quality – Lessons Learned

Salinity variability: same comment as above. Unsupported by and contradicted by the data.

Water Supply Reliability

Summary of Progress

Hydrologic conditions and signing the ROD helped supply reliability. The hydrology is mentioned briefly on the page 2 discussion of reliable deliveries to ag contractors. Once again there is a mention of the impacts of pumps on fish but not other possible causes.

Funding Table

Separate out expenditures on surface storage from groundwater storage.

Environmental Water Account

There is no mention of the status of the delayed long term EIR and the lack of federal authorization for a long term program – both are key issues that could end the program funding if not resolved. As a result, ranking EWA “significant progress” seems overstated.

Storage

The text correctly states that the ROD deadlines were unrealistic but it is also worth mentioning that the lack of adequate funding was a key factor in the delays. Also the concern is over the uncertainty of the overall plan for conveyance in the future, not just the current restrictions at the pumps. In the discussion of Los Vaqueros it should mention the successful March 2004 election as a significant milestone achieved.

Conservation

Include the cost per acre foot achieved (I get 1.3 billion capital cost for 125,000 af per year, the equivalent of about \$520/af assuming there are no operating or renewal/replacement costs in the future (unlikely, since we have yet to invent a maintenance free ULFT)).

Recycling

Include the average per acre-foot cost and range of per acre-foot costs (full lifecycle costs, capital, O&M, renewal replacement costs) for the projects. Entrainment levels have not been correlated with population levels, so it is not clear what the basis is for the statement.

Ecosystem Restoration

Same issue as above: it is a big stretch to say "variable salinity may benefit delta smelt...." Actually, the data indicate a fresher delta helps delta smelt, not saltier. See comment above and the editorial comment in the document on page 3 under invasive species. There is focus on NET reverse flows in Old and Middle River (the tides reverse the flow in those rivers and always have) due to export pumps, but the evidence is not solid and appears to be a factor only in some instances. It would be more accurate to state that extremely high pumping rates that significantly reduce or eliminate the ebb tide in Old and Middle River in some winter months is sometimes linked to increased salvage and may possibly be linked to population levels later.

Invasives

The parenthetical in the penultimate paragraph is accurate and should be heeded.

Lessons Learned

"It has become clear that a variable salt regime tends to benefit native species in the Delta". It is not clear and the statement is unsupported by data or peer reviewed publications, which actually contradict it. See above comments.

In addition to the written comments above, Greg also provided comments as direct edits to the draft Performance Assessment, and can be viewed by clicking the icons below:



Executive
Summary_GG commer



WQ_GG
comments.doc



WSR_GG
comments.doc



ERP_GG
comments.doc

Serge Birk

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary states that the objective of this assessment is "to create a manageable set of quantifiable goals and a system of tracking accomplishment (shortcomings) to determine whether the Program is accomplishing its goals and to guide future resource investments." Further, "the report is a retrospective assessment of the program accomplishments and shortcomings" and "the performance and ratings do not themselves infer a funding recommendation (i.e.,

'low progress is not intended to suggest greater or lesser funding is recommended in the future').

Unfortunately, the assessment is centered on providing a retrospective accounting of funding to date for the five program components assessed and fails for the most part to disclose quantifiable goals for the CALFED Program necessary to provide a useful assessment. Funding appears to be the principal factor used in assessing performance. The disclosure of quantifiable goals is not clear in the document.

It appears that program accomplishments or achievements are confused with programmatic actions. Accomplishments should be specifically linked to expected outcomes of programmatic goals of the Program and actions should be vehicles or tools necessary to meet expected outcomes or accomplishments.

The document, does highlight in the Coordination and Science Lessons Learned Section that "it is essential that actions under the CALFED Program be linked to the accomplishment of one or more of its goals and objectives both in and outside of the Delta, and that an effective tracking system be implemented to determine whether goals are being achieved and what modifications might be appropriate." This type of approach provides a more candid retrospective assessment to policy makers and the public and should be adopted in assessing the other components of the Program (ERP, Levees etc.).

The lesson learned for the Levee System Integrity component is summarized as "ongoing funding is essential to ensure key actions to support Delta Levee Integrity." This disclosure appears inconsistent with the statement in paragraph 1 that greater or lower funding is recommended in the future as a result of the assessment provided. Unfortunately, it appears that funding is the principle factor used in this case and suggests that low progress in meeting Levee programmatic goals are directly linked to limited funding levels of the Program. In my opinion, funding levels on their own should not be a surrogate for the absence of developing quantifiable goals and a system for tracking accomplishments.

Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP)

The stated ecosystem restoration goal is to improve and increase aquatic and terrestrial habitats and improve ecological functions in the Bay-Delta to support sustainable populations of diverse and valuable plant and animal species. However, in the funding section for the ERP it is stated that "to be successfully implemented the ERP was intended to have at least \$150 million from dedicated funding sources annually through Stage 1." Once again the theme of the assessment and successful implementation of the ERP is directly linked to annual funding levels. The document would be more compelling if expected

outcomes are linked to measurable progress to support sustainable populations, and/or improvement to habitat as suggested in the Coordinated and Science section above. A major achievement of the Science Program to date has been the use of workshops and independent reviews to evaluate the science components of ERP actions. The review of the adaptive management framework for the Battle Creek Restoration Project is a good example of this type of achievement. Without this review, consensus by stakeholders to endorse the Battle Creek Restoration Project would have been impossible. This should be noted in the assessment.

In the summary of progress section, the document states that “significant investments in fish screens, temperature control, and fish passage improvement upstream of the Delta and improvements in upstream habitats have resulted in an improved outlook for most salmon populations throughout the Central Valley.” The construction of fish screens has been a major focus of the ERP and it appears that these investments have benefited salmonids in the Central Valley. However, the assessment fails to acknowledge that there are uncompleted fish screens targeted for construction pursuant to Stage 1. It is unclear if the policy decision to discontinue funding of these projects is predicated on lack of funding or new knowledge that further funding of fish screen construction is not efficacious. To date, policymakers have not addressed this issue adequately. In my opinion, this assessment must indicate whether CALFED has altered its historic policy and will not continue to fund the construction of fish screen projects.

The ERP document states that the recent settlement on the San Joaquin River (SJR) also has the potential to improve upper San Joaquin River salmon populations. It is important to note that a significant investment in fish screens will be required to make the SJR Settlement Project successful. Diversion operations on the mainstem San Joaquin River will also be affected by the introduction of Spring-run Chinook salmon. The issue of dealing with the continued funding of fish screen projects should be addressed in the ERP section of this assessment document.

The draft document also states that a comprehensive review of the ERP found that nearly 80 per cent of the 119 ecosystem milestones have been met. This statement certainly requires further elucidation. As written, it implies that only 20% of the ecosystem milestones need to be completed for successful implementation. Program managers have stated in public meetings that progress to meet the milestones has been achieved and that this does not imply that the 80% of the milestones have been satisfactorily completed to date. Further, there does not appear to be any data or planning documents to indicate anticipated completion dates of these milestones. In reality, progress as reported in this document in meeting milestones is based on undisclosed priorities and criteria.

The document indicates that 538 projects were funded and that approximately 52% or 281 of those funded projects were completed. Should the reader assume that if funding is unlimited and all 281 projects are completed that the goals and objectives of the ROD are likely to have been met?

Anadromous Fish and aquatic habitat upstream of the Delta

In this section of the ERP assessment, the document states that in the past operations at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam (RBDD) have been modified due to fisheries considerations and acknowledges that significant issues remain about fish passage at this structure. It is important to note that past actions have been initiated pursuant to the CVPIA. CALFED has not supported fish passage and fish screening projects recommended and endorsed by the ESA regulating and implementing agencies at RBDD. Considering the importance of RBDD to the restoration and recovery of anadromous salmonids and sturgeon in the Central Valley, this appears to be major omission. A comprehensive retrospect analysis of the ERP should acknowledge the apparent controversies at RBDD and should include an assessment of the potential negative impacts to the Battle Creek Restoration Program in the event the RBDD issue remains unresolved.

Construction of fish screens

In this section of the report it would be appropriate to mention opportunities for fish passage improvements at RBDD in addition to recommendations made for the upper Yuba River. As previously mentioned, a clear policy relative to construction of fish screens with ERP or other CBDA resources should be articulated to guide future decisions.

Environmental Water Program (EWP)

This section should note that historically the EWP has had the support of diverse stakeholder groups. In order to best benefit from the lessons learned, this document should present an assessment of why water acquisitions failed (specifically on Mill Creek). An opportunity to secure an appropriated water right in perpetuity from willing sellers for the benefit of Spring-run Chinook salmon on Mill Creek did not get funded by the CALFED Watershed Program or ERP despite considerable investment of resources by the stakeholders to advance this restoration action of this high prioritized activity pursuant to CVPIA AFRP and CALFED ERP.

Invasive Species

It is recommended that that this section include a greater discussion on the role that invasive species have on the food web and the apparent impact that has had on the decline of the POD species. A discussion of POD related studies and projects should be presented.

California Urban Water Agencies (CUWA)

The comments from CUWA are direct edits to the draft Performance Assessment, and can be viewed by clicking the icon below:



CUWA_edits.doc

Gary Bobker

Comments from Gary Bobker are direct edits to the draft Performance Assessment, and can be viewed by clicking the icon below:



GBEdits.doc

Tom Zuckerman

The redrafted provisions would replace the first three paragraphs (Levees section):

Levees' Goal: The goal of the Levees' Program is to reduce the risk to all resources dependent upon the Delta Levee System, including agricultural and

residential use, water supply, water, gas and electrical infrastructure, federal, state and local highways, the ecosystem and associated economies, and catastrophic breaching of Delta levees.

Summary of Progress: The Levee System Integrity Program has been significantly under funded in the first seven years, creating a significant risk of causing the overall CALFED Program to be declared out of balance. Funding that was earmarked for levee improvements in Propositions 13 and 50 were actually used to replace the state's share of levee maintenance which was originally provided by annual state budget allocations. As a result, levee maintenance programs were funded, but long term levee improvements called for under the CALFED Record of Decision were not funded. The maintenance funding which is used to reimburse local maintenance districts for eligible expenditures has noticeably reduced the rate of catastrophic levee failure during this period. In 2006, Propositions 1E and 84 were passed authorizing \$275 million for Delta flood control projects and over \$3 billion of additional funding for flood control projects statewide, including those associated with the Delta. Hopefully, these funds will be used to begin to improve Delta levees to cope with increasing stresses anticipated from seismic events and global warming.

Stage One Funding: Projected Levee Program expenditures in Stage One were anticipated to be \$444 million. Actual program funding was approximately \$145 million, of which federal interests contributed less than \$1 million. Of the State's contribution of about \$125 million, approximately \$60 million was spent to reimburse local districts for about 50% of their expenditures on levee maintenance.