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Oct. 22, 2001 Jim Nickles  
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#### **New Citizens Group to Advise State and**

#### **Federal Agencies on the Bay-Delta Program**

A diverse group of Californians has been appointed to a new citizens committee that will advise state and federal agencies on implementation of a unique plan to improve state water supplies and the health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

The 28 members of the new Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee represent virtually all areas of the state and a variety of environmental, water, Tribal and community interests. (A list of members is attached.) They have been asked to serve at least for the first phase of the CALFED program, which ends in 2007.

In announcing the appointments, Bennett Raley, the Interior Department's Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and California Resources Secretary Mary Nichols praised the appointees for their commitment to work together to enhance the state's most critical natural resources.

"The committee members have an enormous job ahead of them as the CALFED program sets into motion the most significant improvement to California's water management system in decades," said Raley, the federal lead on the CALFED Policy Group. "We appreciate their willingness to serve their nation and state in working together on this sweeping effort to restore the Bay-Delta environment and improve water supplies for those many Californians who currently have, or will, face water shortages in the future."

"CALFED impacts all of California, but local commitment and involvement is the key to its success," Nichols said. "This new advisory committee is an example of this partnership. It is a group of highly qualified and dedicated individuals who will help us carry out the vision of CALFED in the Bay-Delta region over the next three decades."

The committee will meet for the first time on December 5 in Sacramento. Its members will advise the Secretary of the Interior and California's Governor on implementation of a 30-year master plan to improve the state's water supplies and revive the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The state and federal governments adopted the CALFED strategy in August 2000 after more than five years of study, negotiations and public hearings.

The Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee is expected to form a number of work groups that will focus on specific issues, from environmental justice to water use efficiency.

"Public involvement has been one of the hallmarks of the CALFED program," CALFED Director Patrick Wright said. "And this group will maintain that tradition. The committee is essential to ensure that we continue to have a balanced and open process."

San Francisco Bay and the delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers comprise the largest estuary on the West Coast of North America. A vital habitat for fish, waterfowl and other types of wildlife, the Bay-Delta is also the hub of California's water-delivery system.

For more information about the Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee, coordinator Eugenia Laychak can be reached at (916) 654-4214.

**Note to news media:** To reach individual members of the committee, contact Jim Nickles at (916) 651-9706 or (916) 798-9853 (mobile).