

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 17, 2006

CONTACT: Jeanie Esajian, (916) 445-0464
Keith Coolidge, (916) 445-0092

CALFED Science Conference Hits Top Delta Issues News Conference October 23 – 12:15 p.m.

The decline of threatened fish species in the Delta and lessons about levees learned from Hurricane Katrina are some of the issues that will take center stage at a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta-focused conference.

“Making Sense of Complexity: Science for a Changing Environment” is the theme of the 4th Biennial Science Conference hosted by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. CALFED is a collaboration of 25 state and federal agencies charged with restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta’s fragile ecosystem while maintaining its role as a primary supply of California’s water. The conference will be held October 23-25 at the Sacramento Convention Center.

Raymond B. Seed of the University of California, Berkeley, will headline the conference’s opening plenary session with his talk on “New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina: Lessons for California Levees.” He will draw parallels between what happened in New Orleans last year and the potential for a similar crisis in Northern California.

“New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina was not just an issue for southern Louisiana,” said Dr. Seed, a member of the New Orleans Levee Investigation Team sponsored by the National Science Foundation. “It was a wake-up call for the entire nation,” he said. “And there is no state in which more important and more urgent levee and flood protection issues are being addressed than right here in California,” he added.

Dr. Seed also chairs the new California-funded, \$7 million Delta Risk Management Strategy to study flood risks in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

“POD: Pelagic Organism Decline or Price of Development,” presented by Ronald T. Kneib, Senior Research Scientist at the University of Georgia’s Marine Institute at Sapelo Island will focus on the intersection of pelagic organisms that are dependent on the Delta’s ecosystem and the encroachment of development. Currently, there are 240,000 homes either under construction or planned in the south Delta.

-MORE-

4th Biennial CALFED Science Conference 2006
October 16, 2006
Page 2

“Balancing the collective needs and wants of an expanding human population with respect to the distribution and use of water resources will continue to be a persistent global challenge for resource managers into the foreseeable future,” noted Dr. Kneib. “Ultimately, choices regarding resource use will be made by society, with or without the best scientific understanding of a system. In many ways, managing pelagic organism decline and the price of development in the Bay-Delta watershed are indistinguishable as separate problems because they are so tied together,” he concluded. “The challenge is solving both.”

Speaker Nancy D. Denslow of the University of Florida’s Department of Physiological Sciences focus attention on new molecular technologies that can be used to determine the effects of contaminants on wildlife when she discusses “The Promise of Microarrays and Proteomics Approaches to Assess Endocrine Disruption in Fish,” during Monday’s Plenary Session.

Dr. Denslow will delve into DNA replication patterns and contaminants in wildlife that have interfered with the normal hormonal regulation and reproduction of organisms. These disruptions are believed to be behind the recent finding of fathead minnows that have both male and female reproductive organs. Dr. Denslow will report on these findings and their implications.

These Plenary Session speakers will be followed by scores of other topics over a three-day period that will focus on the Delta’s most pressing issues, including a full discussion of the decline of pelagic organisms in the Delta, the system’s levees, regional climate change, sea level rise, mercury contamination, invasive species and pyrethroid pesticides.

Other speakers of interest are highlighted in the accompanying [“Reporter’s Tip Sheet.”](#) More information on the 2006 CALFED Science Conference can be found at http://science.calwater.ca.gov/conferences/sciconf_newsroom.shtml.

The conference will begin with registration at 8 a.m. and a welcome at 9 a.m. Plenary speakers will begin at 9:10 a.m. Tuesday’s and Wednesday’s sessions will begin at 8:30 a.m., all on the Convention Center’s third floor, 1400 J Street, Sacramento, CA.

Check in for members of the news media will begin at 8 a.m. Monday in Room 310 of the Convention Center. A news conference with key speakers will be held at 12:15 p.m., also on Monday in Room 310.

#####

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative effort of 25 state and federal agencies working with local communities to improve the quality and reliability of California’s water supplies and revive the San Francisco Bay-Delta ecosystem. CALFED is the largest, most comprehensive water management effort in the nation.