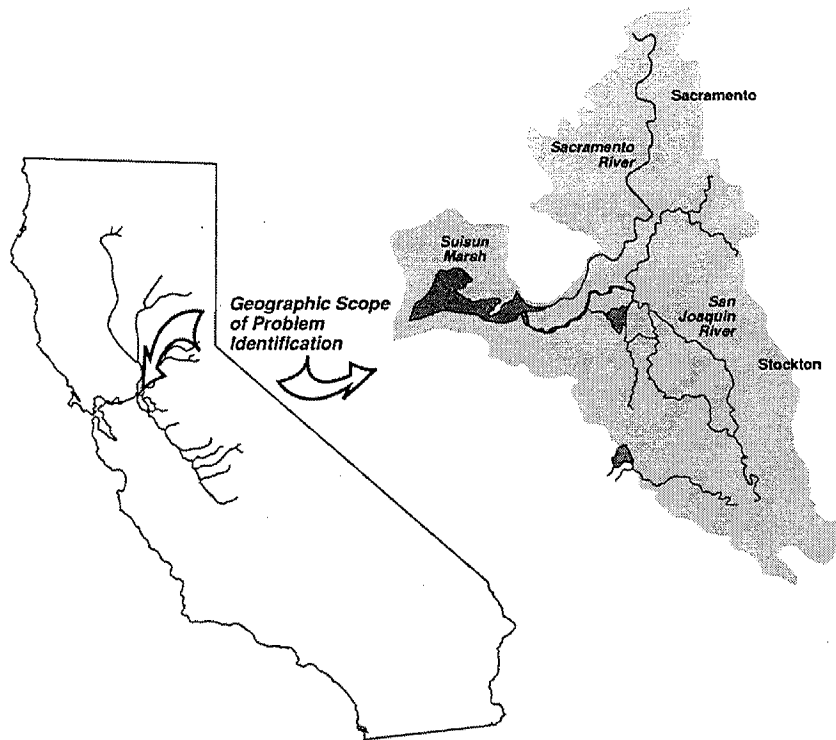


1. INTRODUCTION

A maze of tributaries, sloughs, and islands, the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary (Bay-Delta) is the largest estuary on the West Coast. It is a haven for plants and wildlife, supporting over 750 plant and animal species. The Bay-Delta includes over 738,000 acres in five counties. The Bay-Delta is critical to California's economy, supplying drinking water for two-thirds of Californians and irrigation water for over 7 million acres of the most highly productive agricultural land in the world.

The Bay-Delta is also the hub of California's two largest water distribution systems - the Central Valley Project (CVP) operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the State of California's State Water Project (SWP). The CVP and SWP were built to provide improvements in navigation and flood control, water supplies for irrigation, municipal, and industrial uses, and hydropower generation. Other purposes of the CVP include fish and wildlife protection, conservation, and enhancement. In addition, at least 7,000 other permitted water diverters, some large and some small, have developed water supplies from the watershed feeding the Bay-Delta estuary. Together, these water development projects divert about 20 to 70 percent of the natural flow in the system depending on the amount of runoff available in a given year.



Geographic Scope for Problems and Solutions

The geographic scope for the problems consists of the legally defined Delta, Suisun Bay (extending to the Carquinez Strait) and Suisun Marsh.

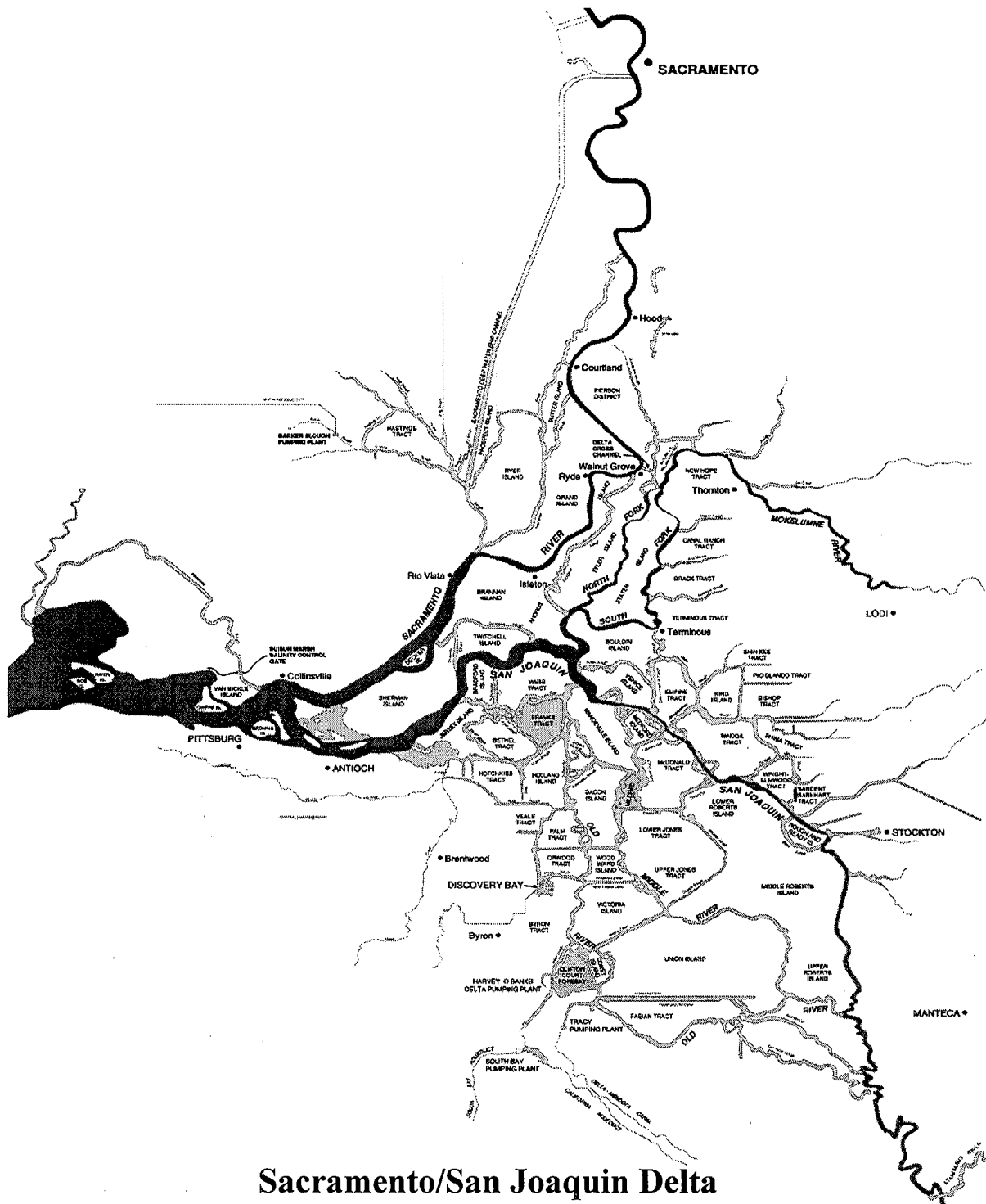
The geographic scope for developing possible solutions includes a much broader area that extends both upstream and downstream of the Bay-Delta. This solution scope includes the Central Valley watershed, the Southern California water system service area, San Pablo Bay, San Francisco Bay, near-shore portions of the Pacific Ocean out to the Farallon Islands and north to the Oregon border, and the Trinity River watershed, from which flows are diverted into the Bay-Delta system.

These diversions, along with the effects of increased population pressures throughout California, exotic species, water pollution, and numerous other factors have had a serious impact on the fish and wildlife resources in the Bay-Delta estuary. This impact, as well as other effects of the continued resource conflicts in the Bay-Delta system, is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Although all agree on the importance of the Bay-Delta estuary for both fish and wildlife habitat and as a reliable source of water, few agree on how to manage and protect this valuable resource. In the past two decades, these disagreements have increasingly taken the form of protracted litigation and legislative battles; as a result, progress on virtually all water-related issues has become mired, approaching gridlock.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program was established to reduce conflicts in the system by solving problems in ecosystem quality, water quality, water supply reliability, and levee and channel integrity. The Program seeks to do this by developing a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water supply and water supply reliability for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system. The Program has crafted alternatives that improve water quality so as to protect Delta drinking water supplies and improve the quality of aquatic habitat. Maintaining and improving the integrity of Delta levees and channels will protect agricultural, urban, and environmental uses within the Delta and protect the quality of water used elsewhere in the state. Water conservation and recycling programs can assure the efficient use of existing water supplies and any new supplies developed through the Program. **The CALFED mission, objectives, and solution principles shown in the box on page 6 guide how the Program will be implemented.** Carrying out the mission, achieving the objectives, and adhering to the solution principles will ensure that CALFED fulfills its commitment to continuous improvement in all of the four problem areas.

No decision involving water will be popular with everyone, but the one decision that must be made by everyone is to move forward together, and the time to act is now. Over the last four years, hundreds of individuals have spent thousands of hours discussing and debating options for a long-term restoration and management plan for the Bay-Delta estuary. Through the Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC), State and Federal agencies have worked with stakeholders and the public to shape these options into a comprehensive plan. This document describes the framework for such a plan, combining a specific set of actions with a vision for how those actions fit together to create a balanced solution.



Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta

The Program

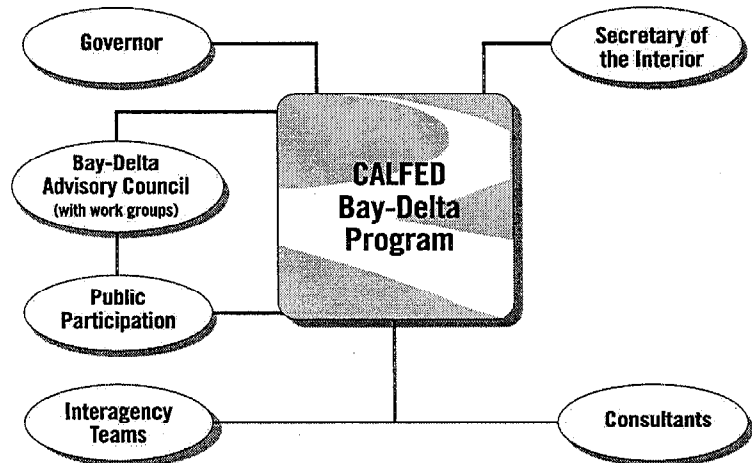
The CALFED Bay-Delta Program began in May 1995 to address the tangle of complex issues that surrounds the Delta. The CALFED Program is a cooperative, interagency effort of 18 State and Federal agencies with management or regulatory responsibilities for the Bay-Delta. In addition, other agencies, such as the California Department of Food & Agriculture, regularly participate in development of CALFED policies which affect their agencies.

The CALFED agencies appointed an executive director to oversee the process of developing a long-term comprehensive plan for the Bay-Delta. The Executive Director selected staff from the CALFED agencies to carry out the task. In addition, the CALFED agencies and stakeholders worked with the interagency CALFED Program team through multi-level technical and policy teams.

The CALFED Program is a collaborative effort including representatives of agricultural, urban, environmental, fishery, business, and rural counties who have contributed

CALFED	
<u>State Agencies</u>	<u>Federal Agencies</u>
Resources Agency of California* - Department of Water Resources - Department of Fish and Game - Reclamation Board	U.S. Department of Interior - Bureau of Reclamation* - Fish and Wildlife Service* - Bureau of Land Management - U. S. Geological Survey
California Environmental Protection Agency - State Water Resources Control Board	U.S Army Corps of Engineers* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
California Department of Food and Agriculture	U.S. Department of Commerce - National Marine Fisheries Service*
Delta Protection Commission	U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service* - U.S. Forest Service
	Western Area Power Administration

* Co-lead agencies for EIS/EIR



to the process. BDAC, a federally chartered citizens' advisory committee with over 30 members, provides formal comment and advice to the agencies during regularly scheduled public meetings. In addition, the CALFED process has included members of the public in development of every program component from ecosystem restoration to financing. The Program was divided into three discrete phases.

**CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM
MISSION STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES
AND SOLUTION PRINCIPLES**

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system.

CALFED developed the following objectives for a solution:

- Provide good water quality for all beneficial uses.
- 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.
- Reduce the mismatch between Bay-Delta water supplies and current and projected beneficial uses dependent on the Bay-Delta system.
- Reduce the risk to land use and associated economic activities, water supply, infrastructure and the ecosystem from catastrophic breaching of Delta levees.

In addition, any CALFED solution must satisfy the following **solution principles**:

- ***Reduce Conflicts in the System*** Solutions will reduce major conflicts among beneficial uses of water.
- ***Be Equitable*** Solutions will focus on solving problems in all problem areas. Improvements for some problems will not be made without corresponding improvements for other problems.
- ***Be Affordable*** Solutions will be implementable and maintainable within the foreseeable resources of the Program and stakeholders.
- ***Be Durable*** Solutions will have political and economic staying power and will sustain the resources they were designed to protect and enhance.
- ***Be Implementable*** Solutions will have broad public acceptance and legal feasibility, and will be timely and relatively simple to implement compared with other alternatives.
- ***Have No Significant Redirected Impacts*** Solutions will not solve problems in the Bay-Delta system by redirecting significant negative impacts, when viewed in their entirety, within the Bay-Delta or to other regions of California.

Phase I

In Phase I, completed in August 1996, CALFED identified the problems confronting the Bay-Delta, developed a mission statement and guiding principles, and devised three preliminary categories of solutions for Delta water conveyance.

Following scoping, public comment, and agency review, CALFED concluded that each program alternative would include a significant set of program actions which were grouped into elements to address problems for levee system integrity, water quality improvements, ecosystem restoration, and water use efficiency measures. Two additional elements (water transfers and watershed management) were added to each alternative because of their value in helping the Program meet its multiple objectives. These six program elements have generally been referred to as the *common programs*. In addition, CALFED identified three preliminary alternatives to be further analyzed in Phase II. The three preliminary alternatives represented three differing approaches to conveying water through the Delta. The first conveyance configuration relied primarily on the existing conveyance system, with some minor changes in the south Delta. The second configuration relied on enlarging channels within the Delta. The third configuration included in-Delta channel modifications and a conveyance channel that would move some water around the Delta. Each of these alternatives also included consideration of new ground and surface water storage options.

Phase II

CALFED is currently completing Phase II, which will culminate in a Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) in July 2000 and a Federal Record of Decision (ROD) and State Certification (CERT) in August 2000. A programmatic EIS/EIR, also referred to as a first-tier document, is typically prepared for a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and is required for actions proposed by or approved by state and federal agencies. In Phase II, CALFED developed a Preferred Program Alternative, conducted comprehensive programmatic environmental review, and developed the implementation plan focusing on the first seven years (Stage 1) following the Certification and ROD on the EIS/EIR.

This Phase II Report primarily focuses on the Preferred Program Alternative including background, description, and implementation plan. The full Final Programmatic EIS/EIR, appendices, and supporting technical reports -- comprising thousands of pages -- are available from CALFED and at major libraries throughout the state.

Phase III

In Phase III, following completion of the Final Programmatic EIS/EIR, implementation will begin. This period will include site-specific environmental review and permitting, as necessary. Because of the size and complexity of any of the alternatives, implementation is likely to take place over a period of 30 or more years. Part of the challenge for Phase II is designing an implementation strategy that acknowledges this long implementation period and keeps all participants committed to the successful completion of all phases of implementation.

CALFED has begun more detailed planning for the first part of the implementation phase, called Stage 1. This stage will last for the first seven years of Phase III. Even more detailed planning has occurred for the first two years of Stage 1. Specific actions, called Stage 1a actions, are being developed for the first two years of implementation. More detail on implementation is included in Chapter 4.

Public Involvement

During Phase I, which ended August 1996, CALFED held scoping meetings, technical workshops, public information meetings, and public BDAC workgroup meetings. The commitment to active public involvement continued through Phase II with additional public meetings, presentations before focused groups, media outreach, special mailings of newsletters, regularly updated information on the Program's web site, and a toll-free public information telephone line.

In addition to the many CALFED-sponsored general public meetings and stakeholder workshops, 17 formal public hearings on the March 1998 Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR were held around the state in April and May 1998. During the formal public comment period the Program received over 1800 comments which included 469 speakers at the hearings. Thousands of post cards and form letters were also received. The comments were used to improve the program plans and assist in evaluation and development of the Preferred Program Alternative. The subsequent Draft EIS/EIR with appendices included changes that reflected comments received.

WHERE TO FIND PUBLIC OUTREACH INFORMATION

- Program's website (<http://calfed.ca.gov>)
- Toll-free public information telephone line (1-800-700-5752)
- *CALFED News, EcoUpdate* and Factsheets (available from CALFED Bay-Delta Program, 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155, Sacramento, CA 95814; phone 916-657-2666)
- Bay Delta Advisory Council and other public meetings

In 1999, following the release of the December Revised Phase II Report, CALFED held several informational workshops for the public. These covered the framework for the draft preferred alternative and specific aspects of the proposed program such as water conservation and conjunctive use.

The release of the June 1999 Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR was followed by a 90-day public comment period. Sixteen formal public hearings were held in August and September 1999 at which approximately 800 people testified. Almost 1,500 letters and 2,400 postcards also were received commenting on the document. Copies of the comments and the responses to those comments can be found in the Responses To Comments documents.

The Program has worked to involve California's diverse multi-cultural communities by producing fact sheets in five languages (Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese), meeting with multi-cultural business, media, social service and agricultural organizations, and placing media notices in ethnic media outlets. Increasing awareness and knowledge among the multi-cultural communities is a continued goal of CALFED's public outreach.

Tribal Involvement

CALFED agencies remain committed to full consideration of Native American concerns in the CALFED process. As the CALFED Program evolved and the concept of a solution area developed, additional efforts were made to communicate and coordinate with tribal governments. Although there are no federally recognized tribes in the Delta, CALFED will actively engage the tribes in the Bay-Delta watershed as specific projects in these areas develop. Formal consultation with tribes will be conducted on a government-to-government basis, as required by President Clinton's April 29, 1994 Executive Order, as future projects are identified that may potentially affect Indian trust assets. If projects or activities are proposed for an area that contains a reservation or rancheria or any Indian trust asset, consultation will take place early in the planning process.

In the interim, CALFED will continue to build on its efforts to increase communication with tribal governments as the Program moves towards implementation. In July 1999, the Department of the Interior appointed a tribal representative to the BDAC. Tribal representatives also regularly attended various meetings of CALFED agency policy makers, BDAC, and work group meetings. In addition, the CALFED agencies have held several discussions with tribes through a variety of meetings sponsored by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and Bureau of Indian Affairs. In November 1999, the CALFED agencies approved \$100,000 for tribal participation in the CALFED process. Those funds will be used by tribal governments to gain information on specific tribal resources that may be affected by potential CALFED actions, facilitate increased tribal attendance and participation in CALFED meetings and workgroups, and increase education and coordination between CALFED agencies and participating tribes.

Some Delta Statistics

Area of the Watershed: The system drains more than 61,000 square miles, or 37% of the state.

Area of the Delta: The legal Delta includes 738,000 acres.

Delta Inflow*: Historic inflow ranges from 6 to 69 million acre feet (MAF) per year; average is 24 MAF.

Diversions: Over 7,000 diverters draw water from the system, including 1,800 in the Delta itself.

Delta Exports*: The SWP and CVP draw an average of 5.9 MAF (approximately 3.6 MAF for agriculture and 2.3 MAF for urban uses) from the Delta each year .

In-Delta Water Use: Net in-Delta water use averages approximately 1 MAF annually.

Flora: Over 400 plant species can be found in the Delta, not including agricultural crops.

Fauna: The Delta harbors about 225 birds, 52 mammals, and 22 reptile and amphibian species.

Fish: There are 54 fish species in the Delta, and a total of 130 in the Delta and Bay.

Marshes: There are 8,000 acres of tidal marsh in the Delta.

Levees and Channels: Over 700 miles of waterways are protected by 1100 miles of levees.

Subsidence: Some Delta lands are more than 20 feet below sea level.

Delta Farmland: Over 520,000 acres are farmed in the Delta.

Principal Crops: The most commonly grown Delta crops are wheat, alfalfa, corn, and tomatoes.

Agricultural Value: Average annual gross value of Delta production is \$500 million.

Recreation: Recreational use of the Delta is about 12 million user days per year

* Simulated flow based on historical hydrology, but with existing storage and conveyance facilities in place and operating to meet 1995 levels of demand.