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### **Bay Area Communities Address Environmental Justice of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program**

**For Immediate Release  
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NORTH RICHMOND, Contra Costa County – Representatives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program will join Bay Area residents at an Aug. 15 workshop on the potential benefits and impacts of the CALFED agencies' ambitious ecosystem and water-management plans on the region's minority and disadvantaged communities.

The workshop, organized by CALFED agencies in conjunction with the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water and other community groups, is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Verde School, 2000 Giramita St. It is open to the public. Organizers expect at least 100 people to participate.

Residents and community groups will have a chance to comment on how they might be affected by CALFED agencies' ecosystem, water-supply and water-quality programs. They will also hear from state and federal officials about how the agencies' plans will benefit the Bay Area.

North Richmond residents have a number of environmental concerns, from water pollution to protection of local wetlands, said Whitney Dotson, an official of the Neighborhood House of North Richmond and a member of the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water. The workshop will help them voice those concerns and possibly get some answers, he said.

"From our perspective, the community has been very concerned about a lot of water issues for a long time," Dotson said. "They are very concerned about the environment."

Another member of the coalition, Arlene K. Wong, applauded the CALFED agencies for tackling environmental-justice issues.

"We thought this was a very important step for CALFED to be taking, to reach out to these communities that have not been well heard from," said Wong, an official of the Oakland-based Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security.

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#### CALFED

##### California

The Resources Agency  
Department of Water Resources  
Department of Fish and Game  
The Reclamation Board  
Delta Protection Commission  
Department of Conservation  
San Francisco Bay Conservation  
and Development Commission

California Environmental Protection Agency  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Department of Health Services  
Department of Food and Agriculture

##### Federal

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Geological Survey  
Bureau of Land Management  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Forest Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Western Area Power Administration

In the CALFED Record of Decision, a 30-year strategic plan adopted last year, state and federal agencies committed to identifying activities that may have a disproportionate impact on minority, low-income, Tribal or other populations, and to take actions to reduce those impacts.

“The workshop represents an opportunity for public participants to get involved and provide input regarding integration of environmental justice in the CALFED program,” said Dan Wermiel, CALFED’s environmental justice coordinator.

CALFED program staff will conduct several environmental-justice workshops around the state in the coming months. The next is planned for Aug. 29 in Delano. Others will be scheduled in Southern California, the Delta region, and the Sacramento Valley.

CALFED agencies will use testimony from the workshops to develop an environmental-justice element for their ecosystem and water-management projects.

For more information about the workshops or CALFED’s environmental-justice initiative, contact Dan Wermiel at (916) 657-3649. For information on the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, contact Arlene Wong (510) 251-1600.

*The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is the six-year-old coalition of state and federal agencies working to improve the quality and reliability of California’s water supplies while restoring the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary to ecological health. The CALFED Record of Decision, adopted in August 2000, is the largest water-management and ecosystem restoration plan in the nation’s history. The document outlines more than \$8 billion in expenditures in the first seven years. CALFED is not an agency. It is a collaborative program run by the CALFED agencies to coordinate and plan the management of the Bay-Delta’s resources.*

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