

WATERSHED PROGRAM – FINAL DRAFT

August 3, 2006

FY06-07 Work plan

Priorities

The Watershed Program uses its published program plan (July 2000) to direct implementation of the Program. It is the source for program goals, objectives, principles, and desired outcomes, and serves as the underpinning for annual and multiyear work plans. This year there are added considerations: The first stage (Stage 1) of the CALFED Bay Delta Program is scheduled to be completed by December 2007. Planning work to define and initiate Stage 2 of the Program has begun, including the role the Watershed Program will play during this next stage of CALFED Program implementation. The Resources Agency has proposed that this future role can be served by transitioning the current CALFED Watershed Program toward a “statewide Program” that will remain responsible for CALFED Bay Delta Program objectives, and serve broader needs of watersheds throughout the state. With this in mind, the program is proposing selected actions that are consistent with identified program priorities, but beyond the typical scope of previous year action plans.

The following priorities are proposed for the CALFED Watershed Program for FY 2006-07. These priorities will guide all implementation activities carried out by the program, with each programmatic action logically contributing toward addressing these priorities.

Maintain and improve watershed conditions in support of CALFED objectives through enhancing local and regional community watershed resource management capabilities

Emphasize communities where the Watershed Program and other CALFED Elements have identified the need for additional management capacity (e.g., San Joaquin River watershed).

Assist local efforts to broaden participation in watershed management partnerships to include land management and land use planning agencies.

Support watershed partnerships that have a strong likelihood of achieving multiple objectives, particularly other CALFED program objectives such as those related to the ecosystem, drinking water and water supply reliability objectives.

Encourage and assist watershed partnerships to address long-term organizational and internal financial sustainability beyond support from grants.

Provide technical and financial support to watershed assessment, planning, monitoring and performance measurement activities that provide information related to the achievement of CALFED objectives.

Support partnerships that link science-based assessment and monitoring with management and restoration in an adaptive management process.

Activities

Activities of the Program in FY 2006-07 are intended to address the program priorities listed above. Some upcoming activities are designed to emphasize one or more of the priorities, and therefore we present them under primary headings.

A. Maintain and improve watershed conditions in support of CALFED objectives through enhancing local and regional community watershed resource management capabilities

- i. The fourth Partnership Seminar will be offered. The Seminar will be conducted in Riverside, California in October 2006. This Seminar is the last to be carried out during Stage 1 of program implementation. In addition to the full Partnership Seminar, a series of 2-3 day Stewardship workshops in local venues within the solution area will be conducted to provide direct technical assistance to specific watershed communities.
- ii. Web network/training module for seminar graduates: As a follow up to the Seminars, the Program is developing a series of web based training courses. The multiple courses will provide in depth training to the 150 graduates of the seminars and help strengthen the network of watershed managers that understand the Bay Delta linkages. The training will be available at no cost on the web. The online training system will also include a technology exchange bulletin board for graduates to communicate with each other and with the Program about watershed management issues within their communities.
- iii. Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinators (DOC) Grant Program. DOC has conducted a grant program supporting watershed coordinators for the past several years. FY2006-07 is the 3rd and final year for the set of existing grants funded by the CALFED Watershed Program. These grants will be managed to completion.
- iv. Watershed Health Indicators: Implementing agencies will continue to work with the Resources Agency and others to help define a set of tracking indicators for broad use as part of the State's Watershed Action Plan.

B. Provide technical and financial support to watershed assessment, planning, monitoring and performance measurement activities that provide information related to the achievement of CALFED objectives.

- i. Grant Program: The fourth round of Watershed Program grants was awarded at the end of FY 2005-06. DWR, with assistance from the RA will manage those projects during FY 2006-07. Involvement with prior awarded projects managed by the SWRCB will also continue throughout the year, with many of those projects to be completed during the year. The Program will work with the Subcommittee and IWAT to develop the next Solicitation for Proposals, and with DWR to determine the sequence and schedule for the next round of grants.
- ii. The base budget for CDF in 2006/07 will be used to support technical assistance and outreach activities that provide information on issues concerning the impacts of wildfires and forest management on watershed health to watershed groups and CALFED agencies. Supported activities include: developing and distributing GIS data layers for vegetation, fire, fuels, and timber harvest plans; provide information on post-fire erosion; maintaining a Watershed Resources web site for disseminating [new and existing] GIS data layers and technical reports for watershed analysis. CDF will also support the development of a Reference Watersheds database that identifies and characterizes watersheds with minimal disturbance. An emphasis will be placed on watersheds that flow into the Bay delta system.
- iii. Grantee Conference- A retrospective conference of watershed program grant work will be considered. The conference will emphasize lessons learned, outcomes of projects, and contributions to the Bay-Delta system. Past and current grantees will be asked to present information related to their work, and describe contributions made to the Program objectives through implementation. The information gathered from this conference will be used to help evaluate the performance and progress of the program, identify future program priorities, and provide input on the design of future grant cycles and directed actions. DWR will be the lead for organizing and supporting this conference.
- iv. During the coming year the Program will carry out along with the Department of Conservation, an evaluation of the Watershed Coordinators Program. The evaluation will focus on clarifying and quantifying the contribution that the Coordinators Program has made toward achieving Bay Delta Program goals and objectives, particularly the capacity building objectives of the Watershed Program. The evaluation is scheduled for completion by December 1, 2006. If the evaluation results are positive, efforts will be made to identify potential sources of funding or support to continue implementation of the Coordinator Program. (See also- Action Aiii, above)
- v. The Program will continue its effort to broaden and strengthen inclusion of good science in Program implementation. That will include establishing a technical group of experts and scientists. The group will help investigate several key questions developed by the Program and the Science Program, regarding the relationship of watershed management and watershed functions to the goals and objectives of CALFED, and how best to track that relationship relative to Program implementation.
- vi. The Program will continue to provide technical assistance support through staffing 3.1 positions within DWR and one position within the California Dept. of Food and Agriculture. The desired functions for each position will be developed with regionally appropriate descriptions after obtaining advice from IWAT and the Subcommittee.

- vii. Implementing agencies have been asked by the Resources Agency to provide funding to continue support for the Natural Resource Project Inventory (NRPI), managed through the UC Davis ICE Program. Financial support will allow NRPI to begin the process of developing GIS displays of projects within the Inventory.
- viii. After consultation with the Subcommittee, the Program may elect to arrange for regional discussions regarding the makeup and functions of a potential Statewide Watershed Program and other topics of potential interest to the State and/or Regional and local interests. The format, sequencing and implementation of these discussions would be developed through interactions with the Subcommittee, advice from IWAT, and conversations with multiple regional entities in the state.
- ix. The Program will provide support as needed to assist with a joint project of the Resources Agency, Academia, and the US Forest Service to assess and monitor the effects of the Sierra Framework Management actions on watersheds. This project will provide support to implement adaptive management in the Sierra Nevada National Forests, as well as other National Forests in the state as appropriate.

Other Potential Activities

As both the adjustments within the CALFED Program develop, and as a means to transit from a Bay-Delta Watershed Program to a Statewide Program as necessary, the Program's implementing agencies may undertake additional tasks or activities to address current Program priorities. These additional activities when identified, may be carried out by direct agency action, contracted work, or focused solicitations.

Implementation Approach

- i. The Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT) will periodically convene to advise the program and the implementing agencies on implementation of the program. IWAT advises on a broad array of issues including grant program focus, priorities, and review criteria; identification of directed actions; and coordination of technical and policy support for watershed management.
- ii. Watershed Subcommittee: The participation of the public in the watershed program has been a primary strength of the Program. With the proposed transition toward a statewide focus there is a need to redefine how this public involvement will continue, and the relationship to other efforts, including integrating with and supporting "the State's 18 Month Watershed Action Plan" and the Deputies Steering committee. The program, working with the sub committee and agencies, will evaluate options and develop a revised model that seeks to capture the many benefits demonstrated to date while meeting the needs of management and decision processes that emerge around a statewide effort.

Budget

Funding by Agency

Watershed (\$ in Thousands)	Resources Agency	DWR	DOC	SWRCB	CDF	Total
Current Year appropriations for Watershed program Implementation						
Prop 50	\$794	\$917	\$228	\$100	\$159	\$2198
rop 13				\$82		\$82
F	\$117					\$117
Reappropriation of Previous Year Funding						
Prop 50		\$19000		\$5990		
rop 13				\$276		
F						

Accomplishments

Provide assistance, both technical and financial, for watershed activities that help achieve the mission and objectives of the California Bay-Delta Program as a whole.

Financial Assistance- The 05-06 CALFED Watershed Program grant cycle offered up to \$9.5 million of Proposition 50 funds for projects that met program priorities. The Dept. of Water Resources was the implementing agency for the grants. In all, there were 28 projects funded for a total of approximately \$9M of Proposition 50 funds through the grant process. Of the 28 projects funded, 14 are primarily located in the Sacramento Valley region, 5 in the Bay region, 2 in the Delta region, 3 in the San Joaquin Valley region, 3 in Southern California region and one that is a statewide project.

Financial Assistance-Nearly all 54 projects receiving awards from the Watershed Program's 2000-2001 annual grant cycle were completed by June 2005. From these grants there were 14 projects that included development of watershed assessments. These ranged from the 3,123 square miles of the Pit River Watershed in Modoc, Lassen and Shasta Counties in the Sacramento Valley Region, to the 4.4 square mile Sun Valley Watershed in Los Angeles County. In all, watershed assessments were completed covering approximately 10,000 square miles in a number of the hydrologic regions of the CALFED solution area.

Nearly all the 29 watershed program projects funded with Proposition 13 funds in the 2002 grant program administered by the State Water Resources Control Board were completed during the year. This includes 12 projects that developed watershed assessments in the Sacramento Valley region, the Bay region and Delta region, and the San Joaquin Valley region.

There are 34 projects currently being implemented that were funded by the watershed program in the 2004 grant programs administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. Of these, 19 projects are funded with Proposition 50 funds totaling \$12.3M and 15 projects funded with Proposition 13 funds totaling \$12.1M. Of the 34 projects, there are 15 projects that include development of a watershed assessment. These are located in the Sacramento Valley region, the Bay and Delta regions, the San Joaquin Valley region and the Southern California region.

The Department of Water Resources implemented the 2005-06 watershed program grants program. Of the 28 projects funded with Proposition 50 funds, there are 16 that are developing watershed assessments. These range in size from the 17 square miles in the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Watersheds in the Los Angeles area in Southern California, to the 2,216 square miles of the watersheds in Tuolumne County in the San Joaquin Valley region. In all, there will be watershed assessments developed in all the regions of the CALFED solution area.

Financial Assistance - Development of watershed management plans was another important activity supported in the initial PSP. There were approximately 22 projects in which development of a watershed management plan was the primary activity. Watershed management plans were developed in watershed throughout the CALFED solution area. In all, watershed management plans were completed covering approximately 15,600 square miles in various watersheds in each of the CALFED regions.

There were 10 watershed management planning projects completed that were administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. These were funded in the 2002 watershed program grant program with Proposition 13 funds. An additional 12 watershed management planning projects were funded during the

2004 watershed program grant program administered by the State Water Resources Control Board that are currently being implemented. An additional 10 watershed management planning projects were funded during the 2005-06 watershed program grant program administered by the Department of Water Resources. Watershed management plans will be developed in watersheds located throughout the CALFED program solution area.

Technical Assistance- Made funding available, beginning in 2003-2004 to the Department of Conservation (DOC) to allow DOC to continue providing its Watershed Coordinator Grants Program. DOC conducted a proposal solicitation for new Coordinators, with grant recommendations going to the Authority in April 2004. With concurrence from the Authority, the DOC made awards for 47 new Coordinators positions located throughout the solution area. DOC reports the following progress related to these new awards:

Funding continued to the Department of Conservation (DOC) to allow the DOC to continue the Watershed Coordinator Grants Program. A total of approximately \$3M funds were made available to continue funding 64 watershed coordinators located in 48 watersheds throughout the State. This program began in 2003-2004 with grants being made available to watershed coordinators to conduct a variety of watershed management actions in watershed located throughout the State including watershed education such as creek clean-ups and watershed workshops, watershed assessment and planning activities, watershed restoration projects such as barrier removals and riparian enhancements, removal of non-native invasive species, citizen monitoring activities including training related to water quality monitoring, and other watershed actions. In addition, 30 new watershed stewardship groups or working groups were established and over \$17M in outside funding was obtained by the watershed coordinators for additional watershed work.

Technical Assistance- In the past year, CDF began the systematic capture of Timber Harvesting Plans (THPs) in GIS for the northern portion of the CALFED Solution Area. CDF has spatially captured at least ten-years of THP history for most of the rest of the state. CDF develops these spatial databases, updates them over time, and makes them available to any party. THP history is an important input for watershed assessment.

Technical Assistance- Over the past year The Dept of Forestry's FRAP (Fire and Resource Assessment Program) has provided technical assistance to a number of groups conducting watershed assessments funded through the Watershed Program. These watershed groups include the Millerton Watershed Association, the Butte Creek Watershed Council, and the American River Watershed Council. Support was provided both in the use of GIS data layers that are developed and maintained by FRAP and on resources assessment issues. Evaluating sources of sediment and interpreting GIS layers for vegetation and fuels were common areas where support was provided.

Technical Assistance- Working with the University of California, Davis, and an agency and stakeholder steering committee, CDF completed the California Watershed Assessment Guide and Volume I of the California Watershed Assessment Manual. These documents are available on the Web at <http://cwam.ucdavis.edu>, as well as print form and CD's. Work is under way on Volume II, which will provide details on more technical watershed assessment approaches.

Technical Assistance- The watershed program conducted a Watershed Partnership Seminar during 2005. The seminar provided a two-week workshop to about 40 individuals with diverse interests

throughout the State to learn strategies and tools for working effectively in community-based and locally led watershed management. They gained hands-on experience in the skills to develop relationships, leadership, creativity, science, assessment, plant and animal ecology, and modeling to sustain healthy watersheds. Another Watershed Partnership Seminar will be conducted in October of 2006, to be held in Southern California.

Promote collaboration and integration among existing and future watershed programs at all levels.

The Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee (BDPAC) Watershed subcommittee continues to meet to promote outreach with potential partners and others interested in the California Bay-Delta Program.

DWR and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have reconvened the Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT), with a primary purpose to assist the Watershed Program to develop and update program plans and increase the involvement of science into the program. IWAT has been responsible for developing the current Multi-year and program plan.
