

Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee
Subcommittee on Drinking Water
Draft Minutes
Meeting of May 31, 2002

The Drinking Water Subcommittee met on May 31, 2002 (meeting agenda attached).

Meeting Summary

Introductions

Members introduced themselves, including one new member, Leah Wills from Plumas County.

Draft minutes April 26, 2002

Several names were added to the April 26, 2002 attendance list. The Subcommittee reviewed and approved the minutes from the April 26, 2002 meeting without further comment.

Drinking water funding—Karen Schwinn, USEPA; Dave Spath, DHS; Jim Bennett, SWRCB

(Please refer to the attachment for the funding summaries distributed by the agency representatives at the meeting)

Presentation summarized several types of potential USEPA Funds that can support the CALFED Drinking Water Quality Program. There are three basic categories of USEPA funds for statewide water quality issues.

1. Clean Water Act - State Revolving Fund, \$100 million/year in low interest loans disbursed by the SWRCB through an annual priority setting process. Jim Bennett summarized the drinking water aspect of his programs, which is only one of several equally important factors in the SWRCB funding considerations, and somewhat inflexible when it comes to redirecting monies for other purposes.
2. Safe Drinking Water Act - State Revolving Fund, a fairly new program at about \$75 million/year, primarily in the form of low interest loans. Likewise money is disbursed through an annual priority setting process by DHS with public input. The priority score process was discussed in length by Dave Spath. The demand is much higher than the availability.
3. Clean Water Act - the largest grant potentially relevant to CALFED is the Non-point Source Program (Section 319), with \$5 million/year distributed by the SWRCB for statewide water quality implementation. Additionally some Water Quality Planning (Section 205/604) money from \$0.5 million to \$1 million/year also goes to the SWRCB for disbursement.

Issues/comments/ideas

- Drinking Water Quality Program is one of the most under-funded CALFED programs, need to look to other opportunities for funding activities in the Record of Decision and the strategic plan. An example was given demonstrating that programs exist within agencies that would allow funding of CALFED water quality programs through existing funds and authorities.
- California has the lowest interest rate on loans disbursed from the revolving funds compared to the other states. The interest rates are half of the bond rate. The state must provide 20% of the match to the USEPA funds. The State does not have to pay back the federal money. The recipients pay the state back, thereby creating the revolving funds.
- The state matching money comes from bonds and the general fund. Currently there is insufficient state matching money for the existing 2002 federal funds.
- There is a question whether federal research money parked in other offices can be directed to benefit the CALFED programs. Because research funds usually deal with issues years into the future, they may not provide direct assistance. However, examples exist where the agency is seeking input on how to allocate funds, and input with a CALFED focus may help.
- There are two other potential funding sources. One is grants from DHS and the SWRCB to support staff, and many grants were also given to the regional institutions without restrictions.
- Question was raised regarding how to better formulate public policy to address water quality needs. Agreement on the strategic plan and how to implement it is one answer. There is a need for an overall strategic evaluation of all water issues in California and how the CALFED piece fits in. Some success stories demonstrated the importance of getting distinct and different interests together to discuss the issues.

Water bond—Joe Caves (invited)

Kate Hansel (CALFED Bay-Delta Program) and Leslie Friedman-Johnson (The Nature Conservancy) presented this agenda item. Both are involved in “getting, keeping and tracking money.” The Water Bond will cover two years of funding that is consistent with CALFED objectives. A large range of dollars from \$374 million to \$634 million will cover basically three areas. Safe drinking water has \$435 million, which will go to DHS, \$100 million for clean water and water quality will go to the Water Board, and \$100 million for contaminant and salt removal will go to DWR.

Issues/comments/ideas

- The Water Bond signature drive was part of the Prop. 40 campaign in an effort to gain public support since CALFED is less intuitive.
- The initiative approach was the result of the Legislature and administration not willing to support a legislative bond for water quality purpose this year. It qualified for the November ballot in March after collecting enough signatures.
- So far support is good. Opposition is small and speculative.

- The Water Bond is only earmarked at the program level, not for specific projects. The intent is to fund CALFED.
- State money shall not be the only focus. CALFED by nature needs to look for federal money for support. The passing of the bond may strengthen the position for requesting federal money.
- Regarding November “bond fatigue,” the polling results seem favorable considering the number of bond issues that will be on the ballot and economic conditions.
- There is the issue of Californians not speaking with the same voice both at the federal and the state levels. Elected officials need to be made aware of the public support for the bond.
- Cost sharing and strategic planning need to be addressed before the November election.
- Costs for priority projects/programs will be needed for spending negotiations after the bond passes.

Review of workshop: “An Equivalent Level of Public Health Protection”

Follow-up issues

- Standardization has reduced costs in a number of industries. Can standardization reduce costs in the area of drinking water treatment technology? Lowering costs by competition and standardization may be something to explore.
- The source control and source water protection was not well addressed.
- Environmental justice will be addressed.
- Further information is needed on:
 - ◆ Treatment and water quality issues for other agencies
 - ◆ Watershed issues and water quality
 - ◆ Relative impacts of different sources, including point and non-point sources (presentations on sanitary surveys, for example, or on dischargers issues)
 - ◆ A narrative on the ELPHP diagram (Tom Zuckerman volunteered to start this).
- A work plan for the summer meetings will be developed.

Other Issues

Public perception of health risk

Ron Linsky (National Water Research Institute) discussed findings of a survey NWRI conducted. They found that 60% to 70% of patients asked their doctors whether their drinking water was safe, and physicians were considered the most trusted source of health information by the public. These surveys informed efforts designed for public outreach. Such knowledge will be helpful for public education when needed.

Modeling to support strategic planning

Dr. Hanneman presented his ideas for using computer models to help the Subcommittee assess strategic alternatives

- A STELLA simulation model could be developed based on the ELPH diagram.
- There is enough information to link pieces together and make a useful model.
- We would need to work out the technical details of how to develop the model and fill any data gaps.
- Could such a model be developed by September? We would need to find out who else has/is developed/developing related models. We could start by assessing the ELPH diagram and take it to the modeling people for expansion.
- Develop a narrative of model descriptions.
- We might need to narrow the scope. Bromide or TOC reduction can be translated into risk reduction. Take several representative parameters first for simulation to see how successful it can be.

Review action items

- Presentations on source water quality issue and watershed efforts. A good presentation on non-point source pollution is also desired.
- Review commitments and reporting to BDPAC.
- Dedication of resources may be needed to carry out the desired activities.

8500 cfs gaming and meeting water quality goals.

- Not addressed. This issue will be addressed in the next meeting.

Subcommittee recommendation to BDPAC re: treatment technology

Eugenia Laychak described the general process of the Subcommittee forwarding recommendations to the BDPAC. The BDPAC and its Subcommittees are operated under some interesting requirements and laws on public meetings from both the federal and State sides. One requirement from the federal side is that any groups of stakeholders that are using collaborative or consensus-based process to provide recommendations to federal agencies has to have a charter. With CALFED, instead of having nine charters for the nine separated subcommittees, we have one charter for the full committee. The full committee is allowed to and has created several subcommittees, and what the subcommittee is set up to do essentially is fact-finding. Part of fact-finding is to use the collaborative approach.

The BDPAC is setting up a process, and the DWS was asked last December to develop priorities for the year. Based upon those priorities, the Subcommittee will schedule forwarding recommendations to the committee. This is on the BDPAC September meeting agenda for which the Subcommittee would forward its strategic plan. The recommendations will be forwarded by the co-chairs to the full committee. There will be a written recommendation

included in the committee packet. Once the recommendations reach to the full committee, they will be included on the agenda and the full committee will deliberate on them. The full committee will also have the options to accept, reject, change, table the recommendations or just send them back to the Subcommittee for reconsideration. But if the full committee does accept the recommendations and act on it, the recommendations will be forwarded to the CALFED agencies and the Policy Group. Then the CALFED agencies and the Policy Group will deliberate on them, and sometimes, the Policy Group may delegate the deliberation to its Management Group. Once CALFED is done with deliberation, it will report back to the full committee as to what it did and the rationale.

The recommendations should be from both co-chairs, and include a summary of discussions to help the committee understand what kind of deliberations were made by the Subcommittee.

This will be on the agenda and discussed with the strategic plan at the BDPAC meeting in September.

Issues/concerns

- Most discussions were incorporated into the memo dated April 25. It will also be helpful to include any major issues or concerns and how they were resolved.
- There are two things out of this memo. First it gives the reasons why advanced treatment studies are important related to CALFED activities and how they relate to our overall strategy which always comes down to treatment at the end. Second, it is to ensure our understanding on these studies related to feeding back to this group and oversight to the Science Program through this Subcommittee.
- Take a broad look rather than focusing on an individual treatment project.
- In terms of timing, because of the status of the budget and there is at least another month before we know outcome; therefore, waiting till September won't jeopardize the timing on recommendations.
- Funding is still up in the air, and most of funds DWQP is going to be using for grants are all earmarked. There won't be any foreseeable funds between now and September, therefore three months won't affect the timing on when to get the recommendations out.
- Scheduling is powerful because CALFED moves ahead with the integrated program, and CALFED relies on information to move other pieces. If the scheduling information doesn't come in a timely fashion, then all of CALFED's projects could suffer.

Public comments/issues

None.

Next Meeting

June 28, 2002 - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.