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P. Joseph Grindstaff,
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State Agencies

The Resources Agency:

Department of Water Resources

Department of Fish and Game

Delta Protection Commission

Department of Conservation

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

California State Parks

The Reclamation Board

California Environmental Protection Agency:

State Water Resources Control Board

California Department of Food and Agriculture

California Department of Health Services

Federal Agencies

Department of the Interior:

Bureau of Reclamation

Fish and Wildlife Service

Geological Survey

Bureau of Land Management

US Army Corps of Engineers

Environmental Protection Agency

Department of Agriculture:

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Department of Commerce:

National Marine Fisheries Service

Western Area Power Administration

October 21, 2008

To: David Mraz
Office Chief, Delta Suisun Marsh
Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

From: Cliff Dahm, Lead Scientist
CALFED Science Program

Subject: INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF REVISED DRMS PHASE 1 REPORT

Dear Mr. Mraz:

The CALFED Science Program is pleased to present the completed review of the revised Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) Phase 1 report. The Science Program received the revised DRMS Phase 1 report in July 2008 and assembled a panel of eight (8) internationally renowned independent scientists and engineers to conduct a thorough evaluation of the DRMS effort. This independent review panel (IRP) discussed the report in a conference call on August 19, 2008, carried out a series of fact-finding calls with the DRMS authors, and met in Sacramento, CA for discussion on September 4 and 5, 2008. The attached review was submitted to the CALFED Science Program on October 20, 2008.

The IRP concludes that the DRMS analysis found in the revised DRMS Phase 1 Report (Draft 4) is now appropriate for use in DRMS Phase 2 and serves as a useful tool to inform policymakers and others concerning possible resource allocations and strategies for addressing risks in the Delta. The DRMS Phase 1 Report is much improved. The revised report adequately addresses both the tier 1 and tier 2 concerns of the IRP in the first review in all areas except the role of ecosystem consequences. The DRMS authors are to be commended for the substantive improvements in the revised DRMS Phase 1 analysis.

The IRP had three issues of significance that are highlighted in their report. The first issue involves the limited assessment of ecosystem risks in the Delta. Ecosystem consequences are not adequately covered in the analyses, and this limitation needs to be clearly acknowledged as you proceed with the Phase 2 analyses.

The second issue focuses on caution required when interpreting scenarios where a series of models are linked and predictions are made far into the future. The third issue concerns some specific details in certain analyses that need to be carefully considered to ensure scientific credibility as Phase 1 results are used during the Phase 2 study and beyond.

In addition, the IRP correctly points out the critical importance of the executive summary of this lengthy and detailed report. The executive summary will be the main vehicle for communication of the results of this report. The IRP conducted a detailed review of the executive summary (Appendix 5) and it is critical that their comments are carefully considered in the preparation of the final executive summary. Their review will help ensure that the executive summary is factual, accurate, and precise.

I very much appreciate that the Department of Water Resources opened up this detailed and important document to independent peer review. This independent review, and DWR's commitment to revisions to address the review comments, has resulted in a report of greatly improved quality, credibility, and usability for the entire CALFED community. The latest review shows clearly that this revised version of the report is much improved and generally ready for use in Phase 2 for risk management in the Delta. There is much substantive information in the report and the various analyses will be most useful as the future of the Delta is considered.

The Science Program would like to make this review public as soon as possible and will work with you to discuss options regarding process and timing of its release.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-0463 or email me at cdahm@calwater.ca.gov.

cc: Johnnie Moore, Chair, DRMS Independent Review Panel
Ralph Svetich, DRMS Project Manager, DWR
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