

October 13, 2005

-Meeting Notice-

**The CALFED Science Program presents a workshop as part of:**

**An independent review of the Interagency Ecological Program  
work-plan for investigating the Pelagic Organism Decline in the  
San Francisco Estuary Delta**

**October 24 - 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Stanford Room (Lobby Conference Room)  
Moss Federal Building  
650 Capitol Mall  
Sacramento, CA**

**Problem Statement:**

A recent (2002-2005) decline in abundance estimates (indices) in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for several pelagic fish species has raised concern on the part of scientists and stakeholders that natural or anthropogenically-induced variation within the Delta aquatic ecosystem may be jeopardizing its ecological resiliency. Species potentially at increased risk include threadfin shad (*Dorosoma petenense*), striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*), longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), and the federally and State-listed endangered Delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*). As part of a multi-agency effort aimed at establishing potential causes of, and identifying an appropriate research strategy to further characterize the pelagic organism decline (POD) in the Delta, the CALFED Science Program, in collaboration with the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP), has convened a panel of independent scientists to provide a review of the IEP data synthesis associated with the 2005 IEP POD Work-plan. The independent review panel will also review the 2006 Draft IEP POD Work-plan and provide recommendations relevant to continued investigation of the pelagic organism decline in the Delta. This independent panel will address the need for appropriate peer review for CALFED Science Program-associated activities as outlined in the CALFED 2000 Programmatic Record of Decision.

**Background on the Interagency Ecological Program:**

The Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) for the San Francisco Bay / Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary consists of 10 member agencies, three State (Department of Water Resources, Department of Fish and Game, and State Water Resources Control Board), six Federal (Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Geological Survey, Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Environmental Protection Agency), and one non-government organization (The San Francisco Estuarine Institute). These 10 program partners work together to develop a better understanding of the estuary's ecology and the effects of the State Water Project (SWP) and Federal Central Valley Project (CVP) operations on the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary (see <http://www.iep.ca.gov/> for more information).

### **Interagency Ecological Program Mission Statement:**

To provide information on the factors that affect ecological resources in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary that allows for more efficient management of the Estuary.

### **Pelagic Organism Decline and IEP Work-plan Review:**

The CALFED Science Program will convene a review panel of independent scientists to evaluate and comment on the initial results of the Interagency Ecological Program's (IEP) 2005 evaluation of the potential causes of extremely low populations of Delta pelagic fish and zooplankton and to comment on the 2006 work-plan for the Pelagic Organism Decline work. The review will provide an independent evaluation of the data gathered, analytical methods used, the conclusions reached, and the proposed new work-plan prepared by the Pelagic Organism Decline synthesis team. The Panel will comment on the 2006 work-plan and offer guidance to the program to improve the work-plan and associated activities where needed.

Materials to be provided to form the basis of the review will include:

- 1) IEP Fish Monitoring Program Element Review (December 2004 draft version)
- 2) IEP 2005 Work-plan to evaluate the decline of pelagic species in the upper San Francisco Estuary (2005 IEP POD Work-plan)
- 3) Synthesis Report of data collected pursuant to the 2005 IEP POD Work-plan, including identification of data sources, methods used, analyses applied, and any summary conclusions or discussions
- 4) Draft IEP 2006 Work-plan to investigate the decline of pelagic species in the upper San Francisco Estuary (2006 IEP POD Work-plan), including rationale for proposed work based on specific findings from 2005 IEP POD activities and other ongoing supporting investigations

Comments from reviewers and the review synthesis will be directed to items 3) and 4), above.

The Review Panel will consist of nine scientists with expertise in the ecology and physiology of resident Delta fishes and zooplankton, aquatic toxicology, statistics, population and systems modeling, and the integration of estuary ecosystem physical and biological process information.

The Panel members will review the 2005 IEP POD Work-plan, the Draft IEP 2006 Work-plan, and other supporting documents. This material and additional information on review panel members can be viewed at: [http://science.calwater.ca.gov/workshop/workshop\\_pod.shtml](http://science.calwater.ca.gov/workshop/workshop_pod.shtml).

### **Review Scope:**

The primary objective of this workshop is to provide an opportunity for review panel members to hear directly from agency staff planning, collecting, and analyzing population-related data within existing IEP monitoring programs, and to clarify any technical issues associated with the data, the analyses, or the assumptions underlying the analyses. A second objective is to provide stakeholders and other public attendees a limited opportunity to point out scientific data that may have been overlooked in the assessment and work-plan, or different approaches to analyzing the data.

This is an information gathering workshop dealing with the 2005 IEP POD Work-plan, the proposed 2006 IEP Draft Work-plan, and supporting documents. The panel will not be providing a summary of their findings, conclusions, or recommendations at this workshop. Their findings and suggestions for draft work-plan revisions will be documented in a report to the IEP Management Team and the CALFED Lead Scientist due November 14, 2005. The panel is expected to present its findings orally at a public meeting to be held in Sacramento at that time. The final report and the announcement of the November public meeting will be posted on the CALFED Science Program website (<http://science.calwater.ca.gov>).

### **Format:**

The overall workshop format is intended to foster communications among the speakers (and accompanying staff) and the review panel.

- There will be several presentations by agency staff and other technical representatives dealing with important components of the IEP monitoring program and associated data. Each presentation will include sufficient time for responses to questions from the panel.
- During presentations questions or comments will not be accepted from public attendees.
- Attendees from the public wishing to make brief comments on data or analyses will be asked to make their comments during comment periods identified in the workshop agenda.

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### **For More Information:**

- A draft agenda and background material has been posted to the Science Program website: [http://science.calwater.ca.gov/pdf/workshops/SP\\_workshop\\_pod\\_agenda\\_draft\\_091505.pdf](http://science.calwater.ca.gov/pdf/workshops/SP_workshop_pod_agenda_draft_091505.pdf).
- Workshop notes and PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the Science Program website: [http://science.calwater.ca.gov/workshop/workshop\\_pod.shtml](http://science.calwater.ca.gov/workshop/workshop_pod.shtml) by October 27, 2005.
- If you need reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact Colleen Kirtlan, California Bay-Delta Program at (916) 445-5511, TDD (800) 735-2929.
- Please allow **extra time** for parking and security screening procedures at 650 Capitol Mall. Current photo identification is required. Cameras and cell phones with camera capability are prohibited without prior written review and approval from CBDA, Federal Protective Service and GSA Property Management for the 650 Capitol Mall building. Please contact Terry Smith at the California Bay-Delta Authority at (916) 445-5345 or [tsmith@calwater.ca.gov](mailto:tsmith@calwater.ca.gov) for building access information.