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Dr. Michael Healey
CALFED Lead Scientist
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
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Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Dr. Healey:

Thank you for your August 31, 2007, letter regarding the independent review of the Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) Phase 1 Report, which transmitted the review comments from the CALFED Independent Review Panel (IRP) members. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) strongly believes in having studies such as DRMS carefully evaluated by outside experts to assure that the work is completed to high standards and to have confidence in the results. For this reason, DWR very much appreciates the efforts of the IRP, and the fact that the IRP completed its review in an expedited time frame.

We have completed our review of the IRP comments and DWR staff will be working diligently with our DRMS consultant, URS Corporation (URS), to address the comments and revise the DRMS Phase 1 Report. To this end, we very much appreciated the opportunity we had on September 13, 2007 to discuss by conference call some of the most critical issues and comments with the IRP. Attached is a letter from URS to DWR that provides URS' preliminary responses and plan for addressing the Tier 1 comments.-

To address the IRP comments, the Phase 1 Report will undergo a major editorial revision to provide appropriate documentation of resources and improve the transparency of the analyses. DWR understands and concurs with the comments regarding the limited treatment of uncertainty and believes that this matter can be addressed to the satisfaction of the IRP as part of the necessary editorial revision.

We do, however, have a concern on the IRP comments regarding the seismic vulnerability of levees in the Delta. The seismic issues in California are quite unique to the state and the analysis presented in the draft Phase 1 Report has undergone rigorous review from seismic experts in California. The IRP Tier 2 comments which suggest that DRMS should have simply relied upon older studies regarding seismic vulnerability are very surprising. The previous studies were much more limited in scope and areal extent, and relied upon correlations that are generally at least a decade old. Even more surprising was the Tier 1 IRP comment that stated that the frequencies calculated in DRMS for a damaging earthquake were too high because there has not been a damaging

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earthquake in over 100 years. This latter comment seems inconsistent with our knowledge of plate tectonics and the seismic history of the Bay-Delta region.

URS is now working to address the IRP comments and will revise the Phase 1 Report as appropriate. We believe that it would be useful to further discuss many of the review comments with the IRP to better understand some of the comments so that they can be properly addressed. Accordingly, we hope to have two conference calls with panel members over the next month or so. DWR will work with URS and the ISB to facilitate the communication between the authors and the IRP in order to expedite satisfactory resolution of the comments.

We also hope to have a second round of review from the IRP after the Phase 1 report is rewritten. We have worked on the DRMS project for over 18 months, together with URS and numerous interested parties. We believe that the Phase 1 findings will be instrumental in shaping the concepts for a sustainable Delta, and that the Phase 1 Report, along with the Phase 2 evaluations, will be extremely valuable for legislative decisions and the policy-making process. The integrity of this project can only be strengthened by another review by the IRP. Accordingly, we request that the IRP reconvene towards the end of the 2007 calendar year to complete a second review of the revised report and related documents. As we address the IRP comments in the coming weeks, we will work to schedule this review with you.

Again, we thank you and the IRP members for the hard work in reviewing the report and identifying relevant problems. DWR believes that the revised report will satisfy the IRP and the public, and answer all major questions and/or concerns about the DRMS product. If you have any questions on this matter, please contact either Ralph Svetich, DRMS Project Manager at (916) 651-7020, or Sean Bagheban at (916) 651-0870.

Sincerely,

Leslie F. Harder, Jr.
Deputy Director
Department of Water Resources

Attachment