



sacramento river
conservation area
forum
a voice for all interests



**OPEN
FORUM**
where ideas flow

Winter, 2009

Back to work

Earlier this year, we sent out notice about the grim effects the State of California's financial crisis was having on the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum. Our bond funds were suspended, and staff were told to close the doors until further notice. Here we are, December 2009 and what staff remains are scrambling to gear up for a new year. We will be hiring a new Resource Conservationist and are busy planning a Board Renewal Conference to reconnect and reinvigorate the organization for 2010.

The two day conference is scheduled for January 27 and 28 with guest speakers to include Assemblyman Jim Nielsen and Deputy Director for Integrated Water Management, Mark Cowin (DWR).

The conference will begin Wednesday the 27th at 3:00PM, with a variety of guest speakers, presentations, social and dinner. In house discussions will begin at 9:00AM Thursday for the Advisory Council and Board, followed by a regular public Board meeting that afternoon. For info about the conference contact Ellen Gentry, (530) 528-7435, egentry@water.ca.gov.

Although we remain cautious about California's financial situation, we are looking forward to a busy year ahead. Plan to begin regular Technical Advisory Committee meetings in February.

SRCAF draft Safe Harbor Agreement to be released

After five years of work, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is expected to publish a Notice of Availability for the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum's draft Safe Harbor agreement in the Federal Register December 21. The proposed agreement is aimed at encouraging landowners within the Conservation Area to enhance habitat for seven imperiled species along the river.

Under a Safe Harbor agreement, participating landowners voluntarily undertake management activities on their property to enhance, restore, or maintain habitat for species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The proposed agreement will protect landowners in their normal operations as they carry out actions that can also help two federally-protected species (valley elderberry longhorn beetle and giant garter snake), plus five state protected species (western pond turtle, Swainson's hawk, bank swallow, willow flycatcher

Board Meeting and Renewal Conference

January 27 and 28

**Granzella's Banquet Center
Williams, CA**

**Speakers include
Assemblyman Jim Nielsen
and
Deputy Director Mark Cowin, DWR**

Happy Holidays

*from
Bev & Ellen*

and western yellow-billed cuckoo).

A wide range of species-friendly actions may be covered, including protection of trees and riparian vegetation, managing activities during nesting seasons to avoid harming species, and eliminating invasive plants. In return, landowners will be protected from risk if they incidentally harm a species.

The proposed agreement will even offer neighboring landowners the opportunity to gain the same protection if they are adjacent to a property whose owner has signed onto the agreement. This neighboring landowner thus will be able to minimize their concerns when an owner signs onto the Safe Harbor Agreement.

Parties interested in the proposed Safe Harbor Agreement will find it posted on <http://www.fws.gov/sacramento>.

CVFPP forum planned, work groups gather info

The Central Valley Flood Management Planning Program, part of FloodSAFE California, is designed to assess the current State-federal flood management system and build a broadly supported vision for improving integrated flood management in the Central Valley. A valley-wide forum is planned for February 2010, in Stockton, where the draft Regional Conditions Report will be given.

The Department of Water Resources is currently hosting work groups to gather input for the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP). The goals are to promote understanding related to integrated flood management from state, federal, local, regional, tribal and other perspectives; create a broadly supported vision for improving integrated flood management in the Central Valley; and develop new data and information that can be shared for many purposes.

The current work groups are developing draft content for the Regional Conditions Report, including defining current conditions and future challenges of the flood system. This round of work groups will conclude their work this fall and the documents will be made available for public review at the Valley-wide Forum and at www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp.

The Central Valley Flood Management Planning Program is led by DWR in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board.

A presentation will be provided at the SRCAF Board



The City of Sacramento as viewed from the Yolo Basin. (Photo courtesy of Lindsey Nitta, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide.)

meeting on January 28 in Williams.

To apply to participate in one of our work groups, or to add individuals or organizations to the program database for updates, please email us at cvfmp@water.ca.gov or visit www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp.

TAC Chair changes



Ryan Bonea

Ryan Bonea, Executive Director of the Sutter County Resource Conservation District, will be serving as the new TAC Chair for SRCAF. Bonea serves on several committees and has a BA in Environmental Studies from UC, Santa Cruz. Welcome Ryan!

Basia Trout, the SRCAF TAC Vice Chair, will be leaving the Bureau of Reclamation effective January 19 for a position with the Forest Service in Redding.

It is anticipated that TAC meetings will resume after the new year. Please look for notices of our upcoming TAC schedule. If you have a project for review please contact us.



Basia Trout

For complete TAC meeting minutes go to www.sacramentoriver.org/srcaf

Battle Creek contract awarded in Shasta and Tehama

Battle Creek offers an extraordinary restoration opportunity because of its geology, hydrology, and habitat suitability for several anadromous species. The overall Restoration Project will be among the largest cold-water anadromous fish restoration efforts in North America, restoring approximately 42 miles of habitat in Battle Creek and an additional six miles of habitat in tributaries of Battle Creek.

The Bureau of Reclamation has awarded the second construction contract for the Restoration Project. This contract is for placement of fish ladders and screens on North Battle Creek Feeder and Eagle Canyon Diversion Dams on the North Fork of Battle Creek. The area is located within 5 miles of Manton, in Shasta and Tehama Counties. The contract was awarded on October 28, 2009, to Syblon Reid in the amount of \$10,813,000.00. Construction is planned to begin in February 2010. (see **Contract** p. 3)



**Water
Wise:**

Q. One inch of rain, falling on one acre of land, is equal to how many gallons of water?

About 27,154 gallons, according to the United States Geological Survey.

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Kopta Slough Project moves forward with support partners

By Aric Lester, DWR

The Kopta Slough Flood Damage Reduction and Habitat Restoration Project is still moving forward with the support of the project partners - Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum, Tehama County, State Parks, Department of Water Resources, The Nature Conservancy, City of Corning, and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Last spring funding for the project was frozen due to state budget issues, so work being conducted by DWR staff and consultants was halted until project funds and contracts were restored in August.

Over the summer, the USACE re-joined the project partnership. They are interested in using the rip-rap removal portion of the project as mitigation for repairs that will be done on the Sacramento River Bank Protection Project. The USFWS was supportive.

In November, Tom Smith and Morgan Marlatt, Ayres, presented their findings from the two dimensional hydraulic model to the project team. The hydraulic analysis, conceptual design, and preliminary cost estimate will be completed by mid December.

DWR, Northern Region Office staff will use Ayres' report to complete the geomorphic analysis and the remainder of the feasibility study. DWR expects to have a draft of the report to the project team for review and comment by February.

After the feasibility study is complete, the project team will develop alternatives for refinement of the engineering



Above, Gregg Werner, TNC, speaks to Project Team at Kopta Slough. **Below**, erosion at Woodson Bridge State Park is evident.

design and environmental documentation. DWR will seek additional funding for this phase of work.

Red Bluff Diversion Dam update

By Mike Urkov, Newfields

Red Bluff Diversion Dam (RBDD) is a serious impediment to upstream and downstream fish migration. As a result, the gates-in period at RBDD has been significantly reduced and currently operates on a two and a half month gates-in period. Current "temporary" operations allow gravity diversion during a portion of the irrigation season and provide unimpeded fish passage during the remainder of the year.

The schedule for completion of the Fish Passage Improvement Project is mandated by the National Marine Fisheries Service's 2009 Biological Opinion for operation of the Central Valley Project. The "Reasonable and Prudent Alternative" for operation of the RBDD requires the gates to be raised year-round after 2011. The Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority (TCCA) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation are working to finalize plans for a pumped diversion and fish screen to offset the changed operations at RBDD. The first construction bids should be awarded sometime in December 2009.

Although the project received over \$109M from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA or stimulus bill), with an estimated price tag over \$220M, project funding remains the top priority to meet the court-mandated schedule. If the schedule is not

met, then the ability to meet the irrigation demand for 150,000 acres of agriculture in the TCCA service area will be severely compromised.

For more information, please contact Mike Urkov, Newfields, at aschmid@newfields.com, (916) 329-3116.

Contract (con't)

In 1999, Reclamation received \$28 million in Federal funds from CALFED for the Restoration Project. PG&E is contributing to the Restoration Project in the form of forgone energy generation, voluntarily pursuing an amendment to the Hydroelectric Project's FERC license, and transferring certain water rights to the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Packard Foundation, via The Nature Conservancy, is contributing \$3 million to the overall Restoration Project for adaptive management. Specific to this construction contract, Federal funds are being provided by the Iron Mountain Mine Trustee Council; State funds are being provided by DFG and the CA Department of Transportation.

Visit the Restoration Project's website at www.usbr.gov/mp/battlecreek/index.html for additional information.



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- Walt Seaver, Colusa County
- Don Anderson, Glenn County
- Jane Dolan, Butte County
- Dan Gover, Shasta County
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Calendar of Events

SRCAF Board Conference and meeting

January 27-28

Granzella's Banquet Center, Williams

**Central Valley Flood Protection Plan
Valley-wide Forum**

February 3, 9:00 to 4:00

San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton

Snow Goose Festival

January 28-31

Chico, CA

