

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (TAC) Notes – March 4, 2008

Chair – Ajay Singh

Ajay Singh opened the meeting with self introductions. The following were in attendance: Kelly Williams, Bruce Ross, Aric Lester, Rebekah Funes, Dan Efseaff, Scott Rice, Bobie Hughes, Kim Davis, Ashley Indrieri, Lady Bug Doherty, Scott Clemons, Ryan Luster, Gregg Werner, Denise Reichenberg, Woody Elliott, Sheldon Giesbrecht, Daniel Ruiz, Tricia Parker, Beverley Anderson-Abbs, Josh Brown, and Ellen Gentry.

Announcements

May is Watershed Awareness month. The Watershed Festival is being held, Saturday, May 3rd, at the Redding Recreational Building and Lawn in Caldwell Park. The event is free to the public. Sponsors and exhibitors may make reservations for booths by contacting Leslie Bryan at 365-7332X215 or leslie@westernshastarcd.org.

The California Native Grassland Association will be hosting a fieldtrip at Hedgerow Farms in Winters, Friday, April 18th, from 8:00am-4:00pm. For registration questions, contact CNGA at (530) 659-8458, or email admin@cnga.org.

A Public workshop for Jelly's Ferry Road at Sacramento River Bridge is being held March 15, 3:00pm-5:00pm, at the recreational site. For more information contact Kevin Rosser, (530) 385-1462X3051, krosser@tcpw.ca.gov.

SRCAF Manager Beverley Anderson-Abbs gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Proposal/Project Review Process and the six guiding principals for SB1086, in order to update new MOA representatives and the group as a whole. The review process is located in the SRCAF Handbook, at www.sacramentoriver.org/srcaf and hardcopies are available on request. Bobie Hughes, Sacramento River Discovery Center, requested a hardcopy.

Activity Reports

Department of Water Resources - Scott Rice, URS/DWR, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2008 Erosion Sites Progress Summary; the draft of the alternatives report is available on the SRCAF website. Two sites are located in the SRCA, RM83.9R (Fremont Weir) and RM177.8R (Princeton /Codora pumping plant).

The private property at RM83.9R, located near Fremont weir and Fremont gauge, was added to the erosion inventory in 2006. Erosion was noted at the toe and berm of the lower bank, including numerous trees with exposed roots (site length 570ft., bank height 20-30ft). Alternatives considered included no action, groins/jetties, low berm with bank armor, and setback levee. A setback levee was determined to be the most cost effective, technically feasible option (a slurry wall is not likely necessary). Challenges include right of way issues, long term effectiveness, and location of a borrow source. The setback area would not have an effect on other flood control structure(s). It was suggested that Fremont Bypass may be a source of material for the setback.

RM177.8R, just upstream from Princeton Codora Pumping Plant, was added to the erosion inventory in 2000 due to toe erosion and failure. Erosion is limited to toe of bank (1000ft site length). There is moderate brush cover with few trees, no in-stream woody material accumulation, and no elderberry bushes. Alternatives considered included no action, groins/jetties, thin armor layer, and a low berm with bank armor. A low berm with bank armor was determined to be the most cost effective, technically feasible option.

Mitigation activities were reviewed. No elderberry shrubs were identified. Nesting raptor and migratory bird surveys are to be conducted beginning mid-March. Additional design work needs to be completed to determine the impact on meander.

Comments and questions about the draft should be directed to Mike Dietl at Michael.L.Dietl@usace.army.mil. USACE anticipates finalizing in late March 2008.

Relevant information about these two sites from the alternatives document is posted on the SRCAF website. The entire USACE document covering all sites is too large for downloading on the SRCAF website, but can be sent out on CD if requested. Scott will obtain responses from Mike and return information to the TAC.

Aric Lester, DWR, reported that funding for the feasibility study for the Kopta Slough/Woodson Bridge Flood Damage Protection Habitat Restoration Project is being finalized. Aric will make a presentation to the TAC regarding the feasibility study and what should be included.

The Nature Conservancy - Gregg Werner gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Colusa Subreach Planning Hydraulic Analysis results. Ayres Associates used state of the art two-dimensional modeling for the entire subreach and considered cumulative impacts of all eight proposed restoration projects. The CSP Advisory Workgroup (AW) initially focused on addressing landowner questions and concerns related to wildlife habitat restoration and its effect on flood safety. Answers to those questions follow.

1. Has the channel silted in over time so that the floodway capacity is reduced?
Results of thalweg comparison are inconclusive. Modeled existing conditions elevations are lower than 1957 design capacity.
2. Does large woody debris in the channel result in higher flood flows?
The portion of the flood flow depth attributable to the presence of LWD is .1ft or less.
3. Is the floodway capacity less than the original design?
Floodway capacity as compared to design flow varies within a small range. No consistent pattern of change was found.
4. How will the proposed wildlife habitat restoration affect the flood flow levels and erosion?
Flood flow levels are at or below Design Flow or existing conditions levels with the exception of a .02ft increase at the 1000ac tract.
5. How will the proposed wildlife habitat restoration affect neighboring lands?
Changes in velocity will not result in any erosion effect to the levees or neighboring lands.
6. How will the proposed wildlife habitat restoration affect seepage through the levees?
The proposed restoration projects will not affect seepage through levees.

The analysis was peer reviewed and comments were submitted by Fran Borcalli of Wood Rodgers. Fran was chosen by the Advisory Workgroup for this job. It was noted that the results would be useful for permits in the future. Gregg reported that sites could go to the Reclamation Board en mass. The Ward Tract was moved forward as part of the Tisdale Weir mitigation using the analysis information. Copies of the CSP Hydraulic Analysis Report are available online, in libraries or by contacting Gregg: gwner@tnc.org. The next CSP AW meeting is scheduled for April 21, 10:00AM-2:00PM, at Colusa Industrial Properties.

Current Projects

Meridian Farms Water Company Fish Screen Project (RM134-135) (Sutter County) – This CALFED funded project will be completed in two phases that will consolidate three existing Sacramento River diversions located at Meridian, Drexler, and Grimes into two, eliminating the Drexler diversion. The two remaining diversions will be relocated and rebuilt with the addition of fish screens and conveyance system improvements to deliver water. The project would prevent entrainment of migrating, at-risk, native fish species and protect MFWC's water rights. Phase 1 of the project, at Grimes, will include a new 30cfs diversion and pumping plant, a new 36" pipeline at Grimes, some canal modifications, demolition of the old Grimes pumping plant, as well as a new Drexler pipeline and re-lift pumping plant. Phase 2 will include a new 135cfs diversion and pumping plant on the landside of the levee at Meridian, demolition of the old Meridian plant, and associated new discharge pipes and canal modifications. Bids for Phase 1 are expected by March 13th with work to be completed between May and November of 2008. This project came to the TAC and Board for a support letter in 2002. For more information on this project, visit #79 at www.srcfprojectracker.org.

Afton Unit, Tract 2, Habitat Restoration (RM166-167) (Glenn County) – Kelly Moroney, USFWS, reported on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Afton Unit of the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, out for public comment until the March 17th. USFWS proposes to restore riparian habitat, including mixed riparian forest, valley oak-elderberry savanna, elderberry savanna, and grassland, on 32.2 acres in order to restore and enhance riparian habitat for threatened and endangered species. Buffer areas have been included within the plan, with a 30' non-woody buffer and a 100' elderberry buffer near private property boundaries. Additionally, this will improve water quality by decreasing sediment and pesticide runoff. A hydraulic analysis was completed by Ayers Associates and showed that restoration at this site would not raise existing surface elevations nor impact

the overflows into the Butte Basin. Firebreaks will be maintained for levee maintenance and monitoring of the site will continue for 11 years under a tri-party agreement between USFWS, TNC and PG&E. Ninety acres of the unit will remain closed to the public as a sanctuary while 126ac will be open for wildlife-dependant use: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, interpretation, education, and photography. The EA is available on the websites: www.sacramentovalleyrefuges.fws.gov, www.sacramentoriver.org/srcaf and at the Refuge Office. For more information on this project, visit #134 at www.srcafprojecttracker.org. Send comments to: 759 County Road 99W, Willows, CA 95988, or call 934-2801.

New Projects or Proposal Review

Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project (RM194-195) (Butte County) – Denise Reichenberg, State Parks; and Ryan Luster, TNC; gave a presentation outlining the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park, near Chico. This project includes the 43ac Singh Unit and the 146ac Nicolaus property, separated by privately owned land. The Nicolaus property is currently owned by TNC and will be donated to State. The Draft EIR analyzes the potential impacts in compliance with CEQA and incorporates two-dimensional hydraulic modeling of the effects on flood flows in the vicinity of the project. The purpose of the project is habitat restoration and outdoor recreation development. There was concern about impacts to private land near the recreation areas with buffers and fences with boundary markers being suggested between adjoining private properties. The current phase includes planning and preparation of an environmental document. Public review ends March 17. Response to comments and the final EIR are expected in May/June. Certification of the EIR and project findings, overriding considerations, and mitigation monitoring are to be finalized in July. The DEIR is available at www.sacramentoriver.org/srcaf, www.parks.ca.gov, CA State Parks, Butte Co. Library, Scotty's Landing, or through Denise Reichenberg, Superintendent, Valley Sector, 525 Esplanade, Chico, (530) 895-4303. For more information on this project, visit #133 at www.srcafprojecttracker.org.

Programmatic Safe Harbor/Voluntary Local Program

Josh Brown gave an update on the Program which is on the next SRCAF Board Agenda, March 20. Currently DWR Flood Management in Sacramento is reviewing the Draft. Public meetings are expected to begin in April: one will be held in the Tehama/Shasta area, one in Colusa/Sutter with a third one possible in Glenn County. It was noted that the Program has great potential for streamlining, is applicable to landowners and land managers, and will help alleviate some levee problems/concerns. The Draft and Baseline survey reports will be sent out by email. For more information, contact the SRCAF office.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 1, at Willows City Hall. The next SRCAF Board meeting is scheduled for March 20, at the Monday Afternoon Club in Willows.