

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting notes – August 3, 2010

Chair: Tom McCubbins

Vice Chair: Denise Rist

Tom McCubbins opened the meeting with self introductions. The following were in attendance: Josh Brown, Laura Westrup, Rebecca Funes, Hans Carota, Mary Randall, Len Moeller, Mary Fahey, Jas O'Growney, Kris Lamkin, Liz Brackmann, Claudia Street, Robert Capriola, Zach Mendes, Aric Lester, Eugene Massa, Peter Coombe, Stan Cleveland, Margie Graham, Tricia Bratcher, Lester Messina, Wade Wylie, Doug Ross, Rob Irwin and Ellen Gentry.

Announcements

SRCAF

Ellen Gentry, SRCAF, announced Beverley Anderson-Abbs has started a new position with DWR Northern Region Office, Water Quality and Biology Section, as an Environmental Scientist. Applications for the SRCAF Manager position are being accepted until August 23. Details can be found on the CSUC Research Foundation website.

Activity Reports

Long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP)

Claudia Street, Projects Manager, Glenn County Resource Conservation District, introduced their new Watershed Coordinator, Liz Brackmann. Claudia noted the Central Valley Water Board released a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the ILRP within the Central Valley Region. The Draft PEIR provides programmatic analysis of impacts resulting from the implementation of five programmatic alternatives and a Central Valley Water Board staff recommended alternative for regulating waste discharges from irrigated agricultural lands. The public review and comment period for the Draft PEIR is open until September 27. A local Public Meeting is planned for September 10 at the Chico Holiday Inn and Conference Center, 685 Manzanita Ct. The Draft PEIR is online at: www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb5/water_issues/irrigated_lands/long_term_program_development/

CVFPP Phase 2 Management Action Workshops

Mary Randall, Regional Coordinator, DWR, reported on the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Round 2 Management Actions Workshops, beginning August 24, 2010. Four workshops are planned, each no more than four hours in length: Small Communities Considerations; Rural/Agricultural Areas Considerations; Urban Areas Considerations; and Integration of Environmental, Water Supply & Other Benefits. The purpose of the workshops is to identify community considerations related to application of identified management actions and opportunities for integration of environmental, water supply and other benefits into management actions. Input received through the workshops will be reviewed and addressed by DWR. Modifications to the management actions will be reflected in materials for the subsequent meetings of the Regional Management Actions Work Groups.

Shasta Tehama Watershed Education Coalition ILRP

Jas O'Growney, TCRCD and STWEC Program Manager, reported on a part of the Shasta Tehama Watershed Education Coalition of commercial irrigators to respond to the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) requirement for constituents to be monitored is part of the management plan. Two sites were monitored; located on Coyote Creek and Anderson Creek. The survey, as part of the watershed management plan, was triggered by *E. coli* exceedances in both creeks. The surveys were given to growers in the coalition whose property touched the creeks and were between the testing site and five miles upstream. Surveys were anonymous; there was 100% response. All surveyed were using at least 3 BMPs; the average was 4.5. The analysis is available to anyone interested, by contacting Jas O'Growney at jas@tehamacountyrcd.org.

New Projects or Proposal Review

Central Valley Gas Storage Project (PT#156)(Colusa County) - Rob Irwin gave a brief review of the project which proposes to convert, construct and operate the depleted Princeton Gas Field, located south of Princeton, as a natural gas storage facility. The conversion of the depleted gas field would require the construction of surface facilities, including a 10ac compressor station site, a 3.1ac remote well pad site, observation wells, a 1ac metering station site, and natural gas connecting pipelines. The purpose of the project is to add high-deliverability natural gas storage in Northern CA that is connected to PG&E Line 400/401. The objectives: to increase the total amount of natural gas storage capacity and the reliability of supply in Northern CA where storage is in high demand; mitigate potentially costly conditions related to CA's reliance on imported gas by allowing purchasers to buy gas when the supply is

adequate and the price is low, inject it into the proposed project for storage and withdraw and use the stored gas when supply is short and prices are higher; and to develop a storage facility that is in close proximity to PG&E's existing gas transmission facilities. The draft mitigated declaration will be available on the SRCAF website.

Eugene Massa, Colusa Basin Drainage District, added that a permit is being sought from the Public Utilities Commission for the Environmental Report and that the public comment period has expired. Eugene has received a final draft. He said there were concerns of contamination if an eruption occurred in this area. His district had indicated more information was needed prior to a final draft; problems need to be addressed and mitigated.

Current Projects/Updates

East Sand Slough Invasives Management Project Phase II: Riparian Forest and Trails Improvement proposal (RM246) (Tehama County) - Tom McCubbins mentioned Tehama County Resource Conservation District received grant funds for this project which is critical to TCRCD's long term initiative related to fire management within Tehama County's Westside wild lands and ongoing efforts related to Forest Service and City of Red Bluff lands within the East Sand Slough. The project calls for camp crews to remove dead and decadent vegetation, planting of native species, and the removal of trash and encampments along with the development of primitive trail routes.

In June 2008, the City of Red Bluff acquired 25acs of riparian land on the north end of the East Sand Slough, which contains Lake Red Bluff. This land was acquired as mitigation for development on an adjacent parcel located on the west side of I-5. In August 2009, TCRCD entered into an agreement with the Mendocino National Forest to identify and treat invasive plants on both City owned and Forest Service properties, within the East Sand Slough. This agreement also called for the development of a 5 year integrated weed management plan and procedures that will lead to the control of invasive plants throughout the East Sand Slough and surrounding agricultural lands. Project work began in October and included the use of manual treatments, as well as grazing sheep and goat herds to remove invasives.

Phase II continues efforts of TCRCD, the Sacramento River Discovery Center, the City of Red Bluff and the Mendocino National Forest, to develop an expanded multi-agency recreation area throughout the East Sand Slough.

The TCRCD plans on entering this project into Project Tracker and giving a full report at a future TAC meeting.

California Water Plan Update 2013

Lewis Moeller, DWR, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the scoping process, planned content and an Update 2013 Project Management. The PowerPoint can be viewed at the SRCAF website: www.sacramentoriver.org.

The process involves a variety of Water Plan collaboration processes, including a State-agency steering committee, Federal Agency Network, Tribal Advisory Committee, public advisory committee, interest-based caucuses, regional place-based forums, Statewide Water Analysis Network, all-stakeholder plenary sessions and Resource Management Strategy Workshops. This collaboration will 1) recommend strategic goals, objectives, near-term and long-term actions that would conserve, manage, develop and sustain CA's watersheds, water resources and management systems; 2) prepare response plans for floods, droughts and catastrophic events that would threaten water resources and management systems, the environment, property, health, welfare and livelihood of the people of CA; and 3) evaluate current and future watershed and water conditions, challenges and opportunities.

Proposed enhancements include water resources, regional planning, collaboration, data metrics, analysis and adaptive management.

Formation of the advisory committee, interest-based caucuses, and regional forums will involve an application process. Representation is sought for a broad range of interest-based and place-based members. The deadline to submit applications is August 25, 2010. Contact Lewis at lmoeller@water.ca.gov for more information. Visit the Water Plan Web Portal at www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/ac.

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Update

Wade Wylie, Engineer, DWR, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the collaborative effort to manage all aspects of water resources in a region. IRWM is designed to cross jurisdictional, watershed and political boundaries, and brings together multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals and groups. It attempts to address the issues of all the entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions.

IRWM was created by the IRWM Act of 2002 (SB1672). Prop 50 was passed by voters in the fall of 2002 providing \$500M for competitive grants that fund IRWM projects. In 2010, supplemental funding is approximately \$7.4M. Prop 84 was passed by voters in 2006, providing \$1B for IRWM planning and implementation, creating 11

funding regions. Grant programs available include Prop 84 (planning and implementation), Prop 1E (guidance provided via P84 guidelines) and Local Groundwater Management Assistance (LGA). Wade also reviewed upcoming solicitations, application deadlines and eligibility requirements. For more information contact Wade, the Sacramento River Regional Representative, at GWylie@water.ca.gov, (916) 651-9250 or go online to www.water.ca.gov/irwm/index.cfm.

Green Sturgeon monitoring in the Upper Sacramento River using DIDSON

Peter Coombe, DWR Division of Integrated Regional Water Management, gave a PowerPoint presentation, focusing green sturgeon, research and DIDSON, a dual frequency identification sonar. Green sturgeon are the largest and most ancient of cartilaginous fishes. There are 25 species of these long living, anadromous, bottom feeders. They can reach 7ft in length and weigh up to 350lbs. There are two Distinct Population Segments (DPS): Northern DPS (Rogue River, Klamath River and Umpqua River) and Southern DPS (Sacramento River System). The Southern DPS were listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in 2006. They're also listed as a State species of special concern. Their critical habitat was designated in 2009.

The focus of this study was population estimates. There are two scenarios for green sturgeon population estimates: detect with DIDSON camera and detect with ultrasonic acoustic tags. DIDSON works in waterways with rocky, uneven beds, where other acoustic measurement products have been ineffective. DIDSON transmits pulses of sound then listens for echoes returning from objects in the "field of view" of the sonar. Objects of different sizes, shapes, ranges and positions return echoes of different strengths and intensities, from different directions and come back at different times. DIDSON collects these echoes and maps them to form an image.

Peter showed slides of how the heavy DIDSON camera is attached to the floor of the DWR boat and how it must be used underwater. On board computer screens are shielded for viewing and counting species. Survey units aggregate and spawn in units more than 5 meters deep. About 125 units have been studied over approximately 2-3wks. An average transect was taken to get an estimate of fish. Peter showed DIDSON videos of parts of the surveys on the Sacramento River above Deer Creek and at the mouth of Antelope Creek.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next TAC meeting was scheduled for 9:30-12Noon, September 7, at Willows City Hall.