

SRCAF Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting notes – November 1, 2011

In the absence of Chair Tom McCubbins, SRCAF Resource Conservation Assistant Rob Irwin opened the meeting with self introductions.

The following were in attendance: Michael Fehling, Tricia Bratcher, Adam Henderson, Peter Coombe, and Anjanette Shadley Martin.
Staff: Ellen Gentry.

Announcements and Public Comments

Adam Henderson, DWR, reported on workshops available for IRWM Regions that have not requested their full \$1M in Prop 84 Planning Grants. The next Northern Sacramento Valley IRWM TAC meeting will be held November 17 in Willows. The NSV IRWM board meeting is scheduled for December 5 in Willows.

The CA Water Plan held a two day 2012 Plenary Meeting in Sacramento last week, as part of the process of preparing the CA Water Plan Update 2013. DWR provided information and solicited information from stakeholders on the CWP. CWP activities will accelerate in the coming months so they can meet deadlines.

DWR is offering assistance in completing the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant "Notice of Interest" forms, which are due November 21. Please contact Ricardo Pineda, at rpineda@water.ca.gov, with a subject line of "HMA Assistance for [insert your community's name]", or leave a message at (916) 574-1449 through Monday, November 4, by close of business.

In reference to the public comment period for updating regulations, regarding financial assistance for flood management projects in CA - The proposed updates to the regulations will supplement criteria and process for determining the percentage of state financial assistance in flood management projects, as well as update terms and definitions pertaining to cost-sharing. These regulations will update sections 570, 571, 574 and 575, to Title 23 of the CA Code of Regulations. Workshops will be held to receive comments.

The Central Valley Flood Protection Plan is hosting workshops for workgroup members. For more information on this and other DWR announcements, go to <http://www.water.ca.gov> .

Activity Reports

Tricia Bratcher, DFG, reported carcass surveys began weekly in October and numbers are promising. Fall run on Mill Creek indicated fish are entering the system. They are in the process of hiring to assist with 24 hour videos, a priority on Battle Creek and Mill Creek. Also, fall Chinook were observed near Cow Creek, which was encouraging, indicating conditions are good for fish. Monitoring will continue through November/early December. Monitoring late run in consort with carcass surveys on upper Sacramento will include dewatered redds from Keswick to Balls Ferry. Redd surveys are being done cooperatively with USFWS. Progress reports are available; data is supported to keep flows up. Contact Tricia at Pbratcher@dfg.ca.gov for details.

New Projects or Proposal Review

There were no new projects or proposal reviews.

Projects/Updates

Update on the potential closure of State Parks along the Sacramento River and Sacramento Valley – Michael Fehling, Superintendent, CA State Parks Northern Butte District, Lake Oroville Sector, reported

on the largest district in the state parks system. This district manages 29,000acs, 1,950 campsites, 140mi of trails, has 2M visitors annually, an annual revenue of \$3M and \$5.5M in operating costs.

Of the 14 Northern Buttes Park units, Clear Lake State Park, Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park, Lake Oroville State Recreation Area and McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park remain open. Sutter Buttes State Park and Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park are technically open. Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, Colusa Sacramento River State Recreation Area, Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park, Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area, William B. Ide Adobe State Historic Park, Shasta State Historic Park, Weaverville Joss House State Historic Park and Castle Crags State Park are closed.

In the Valley Sector, “seasonal closure” to permanent closure is slated for William B. Ide Adobe SHP, Woodson Bridge SRA, Bidwell-Sacramento River SP, Bidwell Mansion SHP, Colusa-Sacramento River SRA and Sutter Buttes State Park.

From 1979 to 2011, State Parks have increased by 500,000ac and 1M visitors, but staffing levels have remained the same and there has been a decrease of budget by 44%. Budget reductions have increased by \$33M, another \$11M is expected in 2011/2012FY and \$22M in 2012-2013FY. Goals of the closure are to protect the most significant natural and cultural resources, maintain public access and revenue generation to the greatest extent possible and protect closed parks so that they remain attractive and usable for potential partners. Consequently 70 parks are closing to meet reductions, 208 parks will remain open, 92% or annual park attendance will be retained and 94% of existing revenues will be preserved.

The following factors were considered in closings: statewide significance, annual visitation/public access, fiscal strength-estimated net savings from closing, ability to physically close, existing partnerships, infrastructure and land use restrictions. This results in limited staffing or caretaker status, with no law enforcement, no continual coverage and no routine patrol. Leaving gates open assumes that visitors will pack it in, and out. Natural resource projects will continue or be phased over a number of years. Cultural resources would lose curators and technicians with no artifacts inventoried. Then can be taken to McClellan, protected on site and kept on site if possible. Donors may want artifacts back. It is more cost effective to leave onsite with climate control, security, etc. Closures will depend on the state’s economy, but a 3-5 year plan will be developed. The parks will remain as public land and no museum collections will be sold. A disproportionate amount of the 70 parks on the closure list are in Northern and Central CA. Keeping parks open can be done by the assistance of partners that can run the parks, or assist in funding by developing a concession agreement (for profit business), operating agreement (non profit) or contingent fund (donations).

Presentation of the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program (AFRP), Cow Creek watershed fish passage barrier assessment – Tricia Bratcher, CA Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), reviewed the 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA), formerly known as the CA Fish and Wildlife Protection Act. The purposes of the CVPIA is to protect, restore and enhance fish, wildlife, and associated habitats in the Central Valley and Trinity River basins of CA; address those impacts resulting from the CVP, improve operational flexibility, expanded use of voluntary water transfers and improved water conservation, contribute to CA’s interim and long-term efforts to protect the Bay-Delta; and achieve balance among demands for use of CVP water. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and CDFG are joint leads in managing and coordinating CVPIA and 23 Section 3406 fisheries related provisions.

The AFRP area of coverage includes: Paynes Creek, Antelope Creek, Mill Creek, Deer Creek, Cottonwood Creek and Cow Creek. Tricia reviewed issues affecting salmonid production, watershed accomplishments and upcoming and current projects for each of these areas. She also included information on the Cow Creek Watershed Anadromous Fish Passage Assessment and Prioritization for Remediation Project, including information on the final restoration plan, the need for a barrier inventory as identified within the Cow Creek Watershed Management Plan (2005), and methods used. The timeline indicates natural barriers will be validated by Spring 2012, Field Inventory below natural barriers by Summer/Fall

2012, identification of priorities and development of geodatabase by March 2013, a draft report by June 2013 and a final report by September 2013.

For more information on Northern Area AFRP, please contact the following: Tricia Parker Hamelberg, USFWS, (530) 527-3043, tricia_parker@fws.gov; Brenda Olson, USFWS, (530) 527-3043, Brenda_olson@fws.gov; Tricia Bratcher, CDFG, (530) 225-3845, pbratcher@dfg.ca.gov; or go to the AFRP website at: <http://www.fws.gov/stockton/afrp/>.

Informational presentation of CA meteorology and global weather patterns – Pete Coombs, DWR Environmental Scientist and DWR Climate Change Specialist, gave part one of a four part series, “Climate Literacy” - a course he is also presenting to DWR employees. Pete reviewed climatology, including long term average conditions, precipitation, jet streams, and wetness indexes for the Sacramento River hydrologic region. CA’s hydrologic water year is from October 1 to September 30.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting was set for 9:30-Noon, Tuesday, December 6, at Willows City Hall. **[This meeting has subsequently been cancelled.]**