

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes for April 19, 2001

Burt Bundy, SRCA Manager, opened the meeting at 9:35 for Chairman Dan Keppen who was en route. Following self-introductions, the meeting proceeded with announcements and public comment. Ramon Vega, USF&W, discussed several scoping meetings scheduled on the Comprehensive Conservation Plan, a 15- year master plan for the refuge. The first meeting will be on 5/30 in Red Bluff followed by meetings in Chico and Colusa. Mike Madden, Butte County OES, stated that he has had favorable feedback that the SRCA is now a force that is being recognized as effective and is being listened to. Chuck DeJournette brought the group's attention to a 4/18 article in the Sacramento Bee concerning the Endangered Species Act. He mentioned that President Bush is cutting funding for mapping which may prolong review by the agencies.

GLENN COUNTY ECON STUDY

Dave Gallo and Ron Adams were introduced to discuss the study on the economic impact of public land acquisition and habitat restoration in Glenn County within the Sacramento River Conservation Area. Dave noted that the study was funded through CVPIA ,started about 3 years ago, and completed approximately 1 month ago. Following his discussion, comments and questions were entertained from the audience. One question asked pertained to peer review, Burt responded that copies of the study have been sent to three different groups for technical review and methodologies. Another question addressed the benefit side of the study and whether commercial fisheries were taken into account, Dave noted they were not because that is not a part of the Glenn County economy. It was noted that each county will be different and will present different scenarios. Burt also mentioned that the Inner River Zone below Chico Landing has not yet been defined so the area in the study was a "best guess". When asked about a public comment period Dave noted these are their conclusions, their best estimate of impact on Glenn County, they are not looking for public comment to make changes to the document. He agreed, however, to add an appendix to the report with a summary of public comments. A committee consisting of Mike Madden, Les Heringer, Paul Ward, and led by Anjanette Martin, will compile the list and present the comments in a formal document for addition to the report by June 1, 2001.

INNER RIVER ZONES

Stacy Cepello, DWR, began the discussion with a brief overview of the evolution of the language defining the IRZ in Reach 1. Stacy noted that the 100 year meander belt reflects 1896 to 1997, a physically mapped area that is the result of floods and flows both before and after Shasta Dam. Stacy also explained that if this definition is adopted, a table would be generated that will give a breakdown of the total number of acres involved and the land use. After a question and comment period there was consensus that the language as presented be sent forward. It was suggested, however, that pre & post Shasta Dam information should be made available at the public workshop meeting to be held May 14th. Questions were raised at the last TAC meeting about the Reach 4 definition that included concerns about the 10-0 delineation and whether or not the weirs and by-pass should be named. Language brought to this meeting included wording that The IRZ guideline does not include the Tisdale Weirs. Further discussion about the definition resulted in the following modified language: "The Inner River Zone guidelines within Reach 4 consist of the floodway within the federally authorized flood control levees, which does not ~~overlap~~ conflict with the operation and maintenance jurisdiction of local maintaining entities (~~typically 10 feet inside the toe of existing federally authorized flood control levees~~); as designated by The Reclamation Board. The IRZ guideline does not include the weirs or by-pass area." This language was accepted by the Committee to send forward to the Board. Burt Bundy read suggested new language defining the Sacramento River Conservation Area that would replace current language in the Handbook. One of the reasons for the new language is to try to reduce the fears of some that the entire conservation area is "targeted" for conversion. Scott Clemons, WCB, suggested the new language is silent on the subject of restoration on land outside the Inner River Zone for meeting the goals of the SB1086 program. There was also a question raised as to the use of the APA (Agricultural Preservation Area) which is not referenced anywhere in the Handbook. Burt noted this is a preliminary draft subject to changes and welcomed any suggestions and comments as this moves along.

Tom Evans, FWA, asked a question about the amendment process – whether all issues, whether policy or technical, are first referred to the TAC before going to the Board and was advised that was the procedure. He then expressed concern that the language, which specifies the recommendation from the TAC be placed on the

agenda for the next Board meeting, was not feasible and suggested a time line of two months. It was noted, however, that being placed on the agenda did not mean it had to be acted on at the next meeting, it could be starting point for discussion on the issue. Tom also asked that the issue of "Safe Harbor" be placed on the next TAC agenda. Marie Sullivan, USF&WS, suggested the Committee have the appropriate party address the TAC on defining the term, as it is an extremely complex issue.

PROJECT/ACTIVITIES UPDATES

Burt updated the committee on Hamilton City; a meeting was held on 4/16 at the Hamilton City Fire Hall and the group was briefed on the current situation with the COE Section 205 Flood Control Study and the Comp. Study Initial Project. He also noted a meeting with a representative from Congressman Ose's office to discuss possible funding for Woodson Bridge. Annalena Bronson, DWR, gave a brief update on the Comp. Study. and the findings to date including what can be done to (1) improve conveyance, (2) increase system storage and (3) floodplain management. Annalena noted the website for input to the Comp. Study is www.compstudy.org. The document is currently on the website and they should have a message board available by June 15. Les Heringer, M&T, reported that Stillwater Science is working on the study on the gravel bar problem; it should be done within two-three weeks. When completed, the SRCA will coordinate a meeting at the pump site for Stillwater to give their presentation. Mike Roberts, TNC, reported on the 4/16 Hamilton City meeting and the Ayres Engineering study that was done looking for geologic control. He also discussed the hydraulic modeling at Beehive Bend. They will initiate a study in Chico, River mile 205 to 195, and will use Comp. Study data. Scott Clemons announced the quarterly meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board will be May 18th at the State Capitol 10:00 a.m.; an item on the agenda references funding to F&WS for 2 properties on the east side of the river below Highway 32 that are owned by TNC and are being acquired for the refuge.

F&WS BIOLOGICAL OPINION

Marie Sullivan discussed the USF&WS riprap study on the impact of riprap on seven sites that the COE is considering protecting from River 26.9 to River Mile 164. Marie noted the jeopardy opinion is in the draft stage and they are still in negotiations with the COE. At issue are the impacts of this and future bank protection projects on the following species: the Delta Smelt, the Sacramento Splittail, the Giant Garter snake, and the Longhorn Elderberry Beetle. Marie felt the study provides support that riprap does adversely affect aquatic species; still don't know which, if any, prudent alternatives will be implemented. Marie noted there is no public review on biological opinions. Questions were asked about impacts to landowners and Marie stated that if they issue a jeopardy opinion there should be no direct implications for landowners; things would be handled on a case-by-case basis.

"ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED" #2 – IMPACT OF RIPRAP ON RIPARIAN HABITAT

Paul Ward, DF&G, gave a brief recap of the background of this issue. Discussion began approximately 1-1/2 years ago but was put off until the Board was formed and the amendment process was in place. At their 9/09/99 meeting the Riparian Habitat Committee reviewed a letter from the Flood Control Association that voiced concern with the Handbook's language regarding bank stabilization and the loss of habitat. Bob Clark, CCVFCFA, felt the language was too strong. Mike Madden noted emergencies call for the use of riprap occasionally but Butte County has started planting in the riprap which in some areas has reduced the visibility of the riprap entirely. Annalena noted that habitat survives by being destroyed and re-created; riprap precludes this natural process. Stacy stated that riprap is a tool, appropriate to use on occasion, but inappropriate to equate bank stabilization with habitat restoration. It does not allow natural processes to take place so habitat can take care of itself. It was agreed to modify the language by deleting the first sentence in the 2nd paragraph under Bank Stabilization, Pg. 1-5, "~~While the construction of bank stabilization has resulted in a loss of riparian habitat along the Sacramento River~~". The change will be circulated and brought to the next TAC meeting.

The next meeting will be held on May 17, 2001 at **9:00 a.m.** at the City Hall, Willows, Ca.