

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes for May 17, 2001

Dan Keppen, Chairman, opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m. Ramon Vega, USF&WS announced the Environmental Assessment document outlining the 10-year restoration plan for the Wildlife Refuge went out today for a 45 day comment period.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES REPORT

Burt Bundy, SRCA Manager, updated the committee on his recent trip to Washington, D.C. as a representative of the State Reclamation Board. The meetings concentrated on flood control issues and specific projects within the SRCA, specifically Woodson Bridge and Hamilton City. Pete Rabbon, General Manager of The Reclamation Board facilitated the meetings and Tim Ramirez, Resources Agency was able to answer questions on CALFED.

Hamilton City – Funding for Pre-construction, Engineering and Design was requested for the 2002 COE budget. Need to request funding from both the Senate and Congressional representatives to move this project forward. The next Project meeting is scheduled for June 18.

Woodson Bridge – Funding through the COE Section 1135 program was discussed. Key is the balance between flood control and ecosystem benefits to the area. Also need support from both Senate and Congressional representatives.

Reach 1 IRZ Meeting – Attendance was disappointing at the 5/14 workshop in Cottonwood held to discuss the Inner River Zone guidelines. Over 750 informational packets were mailed and the meeting was noted in the local papers but only 15 people were present. Five Board members did attend and several questions were asked after the presentations. No changes to the Draft IRZ guidelines were suggested.

M&T/Llano Seco & Refuge Pumps- There was a meeting on 5/14 of “affected parties” at the M&T Ranch to discuss the Stillwater Science draft. The general consensus was that the study needed more work – there were a lot of unanswered questions. Right now it looks like there is a 50/50 chance of getting something done this year. Les noted that the City of Chico would be sending a diver down to check on their diffusers. Burt stated that even dredging as a short-term solution creates a lot of questions that will need to be addressed, how much, how deep, and what to do with the spoils? The permitting process will take time and if Stacy is to do it, he needs something from CALFED or DWR telling him to move forward. A letter will be drafted by Les, Burt and Stacy to be sent to Stillwater Sciences, outlining the questions raised by the committee.

Current Draft Agricultural Conservation Area language – Draft language was made available at the meeting. John Merz, SRPT, asked for clarification on the last sentence that noted, “If adopted, it will require some other compatible language to be included in the Handbook”.

TNC has funds available through Great Valley Center that will be used to address management issues between conservation and agricultural properties. Further information is available through Dawit Zeleke, Agricultural and Restoration Programs Manager at TNC.

Burt discussed the Handbook amendment process. Advisory Council and MOA Signatories will have to be notified. He also mentioned a letter will be going out asking for current appointments to the Advisory Council as there have been many changes. An annual report to the Advisory Council is also required and will be going out in the near future.

PRESENTATION ON SEDIMENT AND DEBRIS TRANSPORT

Koll Buer, DWR, discussed the sources and transport of sediment and debris and some of the changes that have taken place in the balance between erosion and deposition due to human influence. Koll noted, too, that Shasta Dam has changed everything; it has stopped all bedload, and has impacted

suspended sediment as well. Koll felt there had been a reduction in erosion post Shasta, while it varies from year to year, the overall average is less, as is sediment and debris. A 1982 study showed streamside vegetation at 30% frontage (approx. 50' strip) and agriculture 70% but current data, that reflects acquisitions, would change those percentages.

INNER RIVER ZONE GUIDELINES

Stacy Cepello, DWR, discussed the draft language for the IRZ in Reach 3 noting how important Hydrology was in this Reach. A handout was made available that listed 2 alternatives: (1) "The IRZ in Reach 3 includes the historic location of the river channel for the past 100 years and the erosion predictions for the next 50 years". (2) "The IRZ in Reach 3 above the upstream end of the eastern project levee shall include the historic location of the river channel for the past 100 years and the erosion predictions for the next 50 years. Downstream of this point the IRZG will consist of the flood way within the federally authorized flood control levees, it does not overlap the operation and maintenance jurisdiction of local maintaining entities, as designated by the Reclamation Board". Stacy was asked to show the differences graphically at the next meeting.

ECON COMMITTEE REPORT –

Anjanette Martin discussed the draft paper with public comments that the Committee has been working on which will be added as an addendum to the Glenn County Econ Study. Anjanette stated the committee would like another review of the study done by an Agricultural Economist at Chico State and would like to ask Dave for a 2-week extension for submitting the public comments report. John Merz noted need to decide what the format is and if there are changes in the next printing, will they be clearly noted? It was decided Paul Ward, DF&G, and Anjanette would contact Dave Gallo and set up a meeting to discuss concerns. Will come back to TAC after all comments are compiled. Burt noted the Board would receive the Study as an informational tool only.

ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED #2- IMPACT OF RIP-RAP ON RIPARIAN HABITAT

The sub-committee met after the last TAC and recommended the 1st alternative of the three suggested modifications which was to remove the phrase "While the construction of bank stabilization has resulted in a loss of riparian habitat along the Sacramento River". Discussion followed which included both acceptance of the change by some and real concern by others if this language were adopted. While it was generally agreed that riprap does prevent the natural processes of river meander to occur, and this might be a part of the wording change, the Committee could not reach consensus. Burt agreed to coordinate another meeting, or email discussion, of the sub-committee for further discussion to try to reach an acceptable compromise.

SAFE HARBOR PRESENTATION, USF&WS

Marie Sullivan, USF&WS, advised the committee that no one was available for this meeting but will have a speaker for the June 21st TAC meeting to talk about Good Neighbor Policy, Safe Harbor and the options that are available. It was suggested that the state side should be also be presented at some point.

It was noted the Biological Opinion is available for review; Marie stated the Corps is still working on the prudent alternatives with USF&WS. Mike Thabault from their office will come to the next SRCA Board meeting to talk more about the Biological Opinion.

PROJECTS/ACTIVIES UPDATES

Ernie Ralston from Matrix Environmental Planning discussed the "Wild Goose Gas Storage Project" which involves construction of a 25.5mile gas pipeline that will cross the Sacramento River south of Princeton. Construction is set to begin in the fall of 2002.

Marlyce Myers, TNC, discussed the JSA Socio-Economic Study that looked at potential costs and benefits associated with establishing a riparian corridor along the Sacramento River between Red Bluff and Colusa. This study will be used as a tool to help inform decision-making. The draft assumptions have been distributed to meeting participants, Board members, and other interested parties for comments. They will be soliciting input through the end of this month and comments will be forwarded to JSA.

Mike Roberts, TNC, handed out an update on the Beehive Bend Sub-reach and noted he would be glad to give a presentation to anyone who needs more information.

The next TAC meeting will be June 21st in Willows, 9:00 a.m.