

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting - November 14, 2001

Chair Anjanette Martin opened the meeting followed by announcements and public comments. Ben Carter wanted to clarify that Stacy Cepello's role was intended to be as vice-chair rather than co-chair as shown in the SRCA Notes. He also welcomed, and thanked both Anjanette and Stacy for accepting their new duties. Anjanette announced that she and Ernie Ohlin will be on the review panel for the ERP CALFED grants in the Sacramento Valley. The team of reviewers is expected to meet the first week in December and public review will be the first week of February. Anjanette also noted the first scoping on Sites will be held on January 9th at the Maxwell Inn from 6-9 pm.

Tom Evans, FWA, requested Agenda item #4 be moved ahead of Activities and Updates. Tom advised the group that at the Sutter County Board of Supervisor's meeting on November 13th the Supervisors voted 5-0 to adopt a resolution in support of a request to remove lands outside the levees from the conservation area and limit it to the Inner River Zone. He also noted that the resolution will be considered by Colusa and Glenn County Boards at their November 20th meetings, and possibly Butte County. The petitioners were looking for the Board of Supervisors to approve the wording to confine the area to the IRZ. This would then be brought to the SRCA Board.

A question was raised as to process, as the SRCA was not aware of the intent to appear before the Board of Supervisors. Ernie Ohlin requested that on further issues, if something like this is going to take place, that the Board be advised prior to such an action.

Ben noted these requests have been made before; the petitioners feel they aren't getting satisfaction so they decided to go another route.

Questions were also raised as to whether or not the Board could modify the Conservation Area, what the consequences are, and whether or not this would violate the MOA.

It was noted that by excluding those areas, the landowners would not have an opportunity to review and have a say in projects. It was suggested that at the heart might be a lack of communication as this program is set up for the people that are seeking to remove themselves.

Les Heringer noted that maps showing levee re-alignment at a recent Comp. Study meeting, and the F&WS Biological Opinion on riprap, have all elevated levels of fear on the part of landowners.

Burt advised the group that he would call each of the counties and ask if the SRCA can address their Board. He suggested the group move forward with discussion on the definition of the area between the IRZ and outer boundary of Conservation Area. It was determined the first two priority issues to discuss were (1) what is it? and (2) what to call it?

Tom Evans referred to the practical effect of renaming it; if it does not address impacts of conversion to habitat it will not alleviate concern of landowners. He noted Sutter County requires zoning change if someone wants to convert to habitat. Taking rezoning issues to the county would be an alternative to coming before the SRCA.

Questions was raised as to why can't do both, SRCA and county review?

Ben suggested the TAC and Board need to address the impacts and/or protections for a landowner who is out of the SRCA and county ordinance requires rezoning, versus staying in the SRCA and having benefits of the Landowner Assurances Committee.

Scott Clemons remarked that the underlying tension seems to be the perception that the SRCA does not care about the landowners.

Ben noted the perception is that this body intends to do them harm. Fear of what will happen if they are in a conservation area is what is driving them; they see conservation groups buying and converting land at a fast pace.

Burt noted the SRCA has done a lot more than people may see. A lot of acquisitions discussed outside the IRZ were discarded because of what they may encounter, this organization has had an impact there.

Carol noted that the objections and concerns voiced at the SRCA have played a big role in the way the Sacramento River Partners has developed their land management plans.

Following the discussion, a preliminary list of issues was compiled that relate to having the area outside the IRZ, the advantages and disadvantages, and how the area should be described. These points will be taken to the Board for suggestions and direction.

Action Plan -

1. Name and definition of the area
2. Communication, coordination, notification
3. Landowner Assurances - address landowner /neighbor concerns (good neighbor policy)
4. Project tracking/project review/support
5. Address economic/tax/land appraisal issues
6. Law enforcement/fire protection mutual assistance
7. Provide a buffer of compatible agricultural/land use
8. Area of study – seepage, compatibility of conservation, etc.

Activities Updates

Carol Wright, SRP, announced they are working on permitting issues; they had a meeting with DF&G and Reclamation Board members to discuss the permitting process. They need staff to understand there is a timeline they have to work under and also that communication has to be shared.

Greg Golet, TNC, discussed the Public Use/Recreation study. They have had a couple of meetings to talk about public access issues. How will land going into conservation affect public use and how it can be better managed? Initially, the study will be looking at describing current conditions, and what the opportunities are for more coordinated management, public meetings with landowners and land management groups to look at demographics, maintenance problems, what areas are accessible and what activities would impose greatest impact. They will bring the refined scope of work to the TAC asking for comments and for names of people to be contacted for public meetings.

Stacy announced DWR is working on a contract with Chico State for a website that will provide public access information.

Stacy made reference to Appendix D in the Handbook, a series of tables that show land use, riparian vegetation, and ownership categories by Reach. They are in the process of trying to update all tables to reflect changes to this data by the recently adopted Handbook amendments. The TAC Committee will review the tables, then go to Board. Stacy noted when he gets to that point, he will email the updated tables to the Committee so they can review prior to the meeting.

Scott Clemons reported the Pine Creek Unit might be on WCB February agenda. This is a 480-acre piece of state property and they are looking at possible restoration on 300 acres. The property was formerly in prunes and almonds but flooding has taken the land out of agriculture. The Sacramento River Partners are looking at high ground for restoration. Another portion may be a large riparian forest. There could be public access to the property at a later date through

adjacent property. They will bring information to the Board in December.

Manager's Report

Burt introduced Les Heringer, M&T, to update the group on the gravel removal which began on November 3rd and should be completed in 2-3 days. The gravel is being placed on a spoil site 1/8 mile up river and will be left there for one of the agencies to use for stream restoration. Les also noted that the discussion at the SRCA level made it possible for this project to move forward.

Project Review Process – Burt discussed handouts of a draft project review for both funded and proposed projects within the SRCA. Stacy is working on a map that would show locations of the proposed projects. New projects would have form for applicant to fill out and that would be entered into database. This information will be available on a website. Burt asked for any comments or suggestions from the group.

Next meeting - **December 13th** - 9:00 a.m., Willows City Hall, Willows

January 17th - 9:00 a.m., Willows City Hall, Willows