

## Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes – October 17, 2002

Chair: Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair: Stacy Cepello

Anjanette Martin opened the meeting followed by self-introductions. Cathy Morris, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), updated the group on the Vereschagin property acquisition. The property, part of the “J” Levee project, is scheduled to close at the end of this month; it consists of approximately 300 acres of prunes and 154 acres of walnuts. It will continue in agriculture until the location of the levee is determined.

Cathy also discussed the TNC Directed Action Proposal #170 “**Restoration of the Confluence Area of the Sacramento River, Big Chico and Mud Creeks**”. This proposal initially looked at acquiring 3 properties in a flood prone area; the Singh property has already been purchased, so the proposal has been revised to 2, encompassing approximately 271 acres. They are still asking for monies for 3 properties for baseline studies. State Parks has shown an interest in being the long-term owner adding the property to the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park. CALFED had asked that they address hypothesis testing that was in the original proposal. (1) Why restoration makes sense at this site and (2) What can be learned from this to advance scientific understanding? A question was raised about the Rock Creek Project in Chico and how it tied in with this project. It was noted that there needed to be coordination with Butte County flood issues and adjoining landowners, i.e. the M&T Ranch, because of possible increased access. Cathy reported they have been in contact with the adjoining landowners and local government representatives and will continue to coordinate their efforts with them. It is hoped this project will increase the capacity and have a positive, rather than negative, impact on the flooding issues. After discussion, the Committee did not feel there had been significant changes to the project, it fit within the guidelines of the Handbook, and comments would be noted.

Scott Clemons, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), suggested there needed to be more coordination between agencies so that each could look at the other’s data; there were many studies going on but there could be better inter-agency communication. Stacy noted there is a process in the Delta, the “Interagency Ecology Program for the San Francisco Estuary” but not in the Sacramento Valley. Scott also asked about the Beard Property acquisition discussed at the September 19<sup>th</sup> TAC, what was the conclusion regarding consistency with the SRCAF guidelines? Anjanette advised Scott there were no objections raised, but there should be a letter to WCB to that effect. It was noted that all projects, not just CALFED, should have documented resolutions.

Carol Wright, Sacramento River Partners (SRP) announced a site visit to the Del Rio Property on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 5:00 to talk about their management plans. Anyone interested in going out to the property can meet there or at the SRP office in Chico. Contact Carol at her office 530-343-8737 or on her cell phone #530-925-2295. Carol also discussed SRP’s monitoring process; they have just finished their year-end monitoring which involves visiting each site, lengthy reviews of each property, then determining the next steps. Planting will start soon on approximately 235 acres within the Pine Creek Unit, Sacramento River

Wildlife Area, owned by the Department of Fish & Game. Anyone interested in those planting plans can contact their office.

Mike Roberts, TNC, announced they have just received the Ayres report that evaluated a modified levee alignment in Hamilton City. TNC will make additional CDs and the report will be posted on their website. TNC has also just received results from the Meander Migration Model; the first section looked at the area north of Hamilton City to the Ord Ferry Bridge. It was suggested that Eric Larsen, UC Davis, come to the Board or Executive Committee to discuss the modeling results.

CALFED Directed Action Proposal **#89, M&T/Llano Seco Fish Screen Facility- Short-Term/Long-Term Protection Project**. Les Heringer, M&T Manager, was unable to attend the TAC meeting. Todd Manley, Northern California Water Association, reported that the proposal has been re-submitted. One comment was made concerning the hypothesis - that there can be a meandering river and fish screen protection at the same time - the standard for fish screens does not allow any river movement. The SRCAF has supported this project in the past and the changes in the re-submitted proposal did not appear to significantly alter the proposal.

CALFED Direction Action Proposal **#116, Reclamation District No. 108 Consolidated Pumping Facility and Fish Screen** – Lewis Bair discussed the project which is looking at combining 3 pumping plants rather than screening each individually. CALFED had asked to (1) see the final design (2) see support letters from adjacent landowners on the land acquisition portion of the proposal and (3) have a review process as part of the design (a 1-2 day workshop will be held for this purpose). There were no significant changes noted to this proposal.

Two other Direction Action Proposals from TNC were discussed, however, because they were not given enough time to respond, CALFED has granted an extension for re-submittal. Once they are completed, the SRCAF will be notified. There will be a 30-day comment period on these as well. The proposals are:

**#167, Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Quantifying Ecosystem Flow Regime Needs for the Sacramento River** – Mike Roberts discussed this proposal and some of CALFED's concerns which included questions regarding the hypothesis, the lack of opportunity for public comment, and lack of support from the SRCAF.

**#171, Sacramento River Restoration: Chico Landing Sub-Reach** – Greg Golet discussed this proposal which involves restoration on parcels currently in conservation ownership. He noted the changes to the proposal will be science-based.

Carol Wright raised a concern about the review process of re-submitted proposals. The changes that have been made to the original proposals need to be clearly identified to help the TAC determine whether the proposal continues to meet the Handbook guidelines. She also asked that all project proponents be asked to fill out the SRCAF Project Review Form. It was noted that the information as to what changes or information CALFED requested on the Directed Projects was available, but it is very time consuming to research each project. Another question pertaining to process was asked about the function of the TAC, whether or not there is a vote taken on a project, or if there is general agreement? The Chair indicated that if there are no objections raised, the determination of whether or not it meets the Handbook guidelines goes forward to the Board with comments, negative and positive, noted. The same would be true of the re-submitted

proposals, unless they were altered considerably, the recommendation would not change. There was also a request for more clarification on the role of the SRCAF, whether public outreach or review, in the PSP process. The Chair asked for volunteers to work on a committee that would work to revise the project review form to include a section specific to Directed Action Proposals identifying how the re-submitted proposal had changed from the original. Carol Wright, Stacy Cepello, Paul Ward, and Lewis Bair volunteered to work on the form and to look at some of the other issues concerning process. Tom Evans, FWA, who served on the previous project review committee, will also be asked to serve. The Chair asked that they report back by the December TAC meeting.

The discussion and comments from the TAC on the re-submitted proposals will go forward to the Executive Committee and a letter will be drafted to CALFED prior to the November 1 public comment deadline. A separate letter will also be sent to CALFED noting general concerns about the proposal review process including the quick turn-around time asked of the project proponents and the suggestion concerning coordination between agencies for exchange of data.

Bonnie Ross, Department of Water Resources/Flood Protection Corridor Program, reported that there is up to \$30 million available in the current funding cycle. They will be scheduling pre-submittal workshops to give applicants an opportunity to ask questions about the 2002-2003 proposal solicitation process. The dates of the workshops will be posted on their website: [www.dfm.water.ca.gov/fpcp](http://www.dfm.water.ca.gov/fpcp).

Annalena Bronson, DWR, discussed the Comprehensive Study baseline information. A matrix of comments to the Draft Interim Report, 2002, and responses to those comments, has gone out. They are still looking at having the technical documentation available to the public by December. On December 20<sup>th</sup> the Reclamation Board will accept the report and there will be an opportunity for public comment. The Landowner Assurances Committee had looked for the available baseline information in its efforts on the Good Neighbor Policy (GNP), specifically the section on baseline studies. That will have to be re-visited when the Corps releases the data; however, it was also pointed out that the GNP is site-specific.

The new TAC date was set for Tuesday, the first week of each month. The next meeting will be December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:30 a.m., Willows.