

## **Technical Committee Meeting Notes - September 19, 2002**

Chair Anjanette Martin opened the meeting followed by self-introductions, announcements and public comments:

John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust, announced the upcoming river float trips October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> from the \*Jellys Ferry area to Bend, approximately 9 miles, beginning in the morning and ending mid-day.

\*Correction

### **Activities Updates -**

Kelly Moroney, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, informed the Committee the Refuge is working with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Tehama County on a Feasibility Study at South Avenue. They hope to have a draft out for review in approximately 6 months.

Paul Ward, Department of Fish and Game (DFG), introduced Gregg Werner from TNC who is working with them in the development of a management plan for DFG properties. Currently, they are gathering information that will include looking at the interaction between other public and private lands. They will be looking for public input later in the year.

Carol Wright, Sacramento River Partners (SRP), and Dave Means, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) discussed the "Beard Acquisition" project (RM199) consisting of approximately 20 acres of walnuts and 900 feet of river frontage. WCB is the funding agency. A primary goal of the project is increased public access to the Sacramento River. A change in zoning from agricultural to commercial has already been completed in Glenn County. The Chair asked that the SRCAF Project Fact Sheet be used, for consistency; Carol noted theirs is formatted from that sheet. A question was raised concerning the levee and whether this would be folded into the Hamilton City project? SRP is coordinating with Jose Puente from the Hamilton City Community Services District.

SRP presented the Pine Creek Restoration Project (RM195-197). The DFG and WCB are working with SRP to develop critical riparian habitat on approximately 235 acres within the 450 acres of the Pine Creek Unit owned by DFG. The permitting process has been completed and SRP hopes to be planting this fall; they expect increased public access, dependent on what the DFG management plan will allow. Becky Miller, DFG, noted a MOU is being developed and should be completed shortly. Carol commented that the permitting process had been extremely slow. Burt noted The Reclamation Board has concerns about restoration in the floodway, i.e. in the case of elderberry bushes, mitigation is required and this can slow the permitting process. A question was raised about a possible scenario where grasslands are planted, but cottonwoods or willows sprout; does the Reclamation Board address this issue? It was noted that once the artificial water system is pulled they usually die, but long-term maintenance and responsibility are important issues to the Board. Although they do have an inspection process, once the land is turned over to federal ownership, the Board loses control. Many members of the TAC agreed that a standard for restoration activities and maintenance is lacking. This issue is one that could be looked at through the TAC and the Good Neighbor Policy (GNP) so that people could have some assurances about long-term effects.

### **Discussion of Good Neighbor Policy – Project Review baseline information –**

The SRCAF Board had charged the TAC to discuss an objection that had been raised to language

in the Good Neighbor Policy requesting that project proponents provide baseline studies. Carol Wright, SRP, noted that the SRCAF Project Fact Sheet was agreed to, and adopted, as the format to be used for information gathering. The language in the GNP appears to be asking for additional information (social, cultural, historic) from the project proponents. Her concerns included limited staff, time, uncertain obligations and resources in order to comply, and whether or not agriculture would have to do the same.

John Merz noted the issue of cumulative impacts is an important one and is raised frequently; while there are a series of activities going on there isn't a comprehensive project. The question was raised again about the role of the SRCAF, as that of a facilitator or a project lead, and how to look at the larger picture. The Chair noted that is one thing the GNP is looking at and trying to address. Annalena Bronson, Department of Water Resources, discussed the Comprehensive Study and the efforts being made to provide a system-wide baseline study. Sub-reach planning is also looking at large sections of the river.

One concern noted was that the goal of the Handbook is large and a cumulative impact study has not been done for a project this size. Burt informed the group that this issue had been reviewed legally and the SRCAF was not considered a "project". While it was recognized there were cumulative impacts, it was determined to be the responsibility of The Reclamation Board and The Comprehensive Study. There was a suggestion that it might be time for legal counsel to look at this issue again.

A question was raised as to whether or not attaching the permit to the Project Fact Sheet would satisfy baseline information requirements referred to in the GNP? It was agreed that because there is a permitting process to go through, if those agencies are satisfied, that information could be added to the Project Fact Sheet. That information is also available for public review and will be provided if requested. The TAC will recommend to the Board that the existing Fact Sheet be revised to include a section on permitting that would include what permits are required, how they were obtained, existing baseline study information, and CEQA/NEPA, if applicable. The LAC may want to revise language in the GNP to reflect this recommendation. It was also suggested that the LAC review the SRCAF MOA; many of the same issues were addressed there and this could be referenced in the GNP to avoid misinterpretation in the future. Tom Evans, FWA, expressed concerns that the permitting process does not cover baseline studies. Annalena will provide additional information on what the Comprehensive Study has available at the next TAC meeting. It was noted that cumulative impacts would continue to be an ongoing issue.

### **CALFED Proposals -**

- Directed Actions –The re-written directed action proposals are due October 1, 2002 followed by a 30-day comment period (Oct. 7 to Nov. 4). M&T is meeting with several people, and is in process of re-writing the proposal. RD 108 has been assigned a point of contact and has responded to comments; they will bring additional information to the next TAC meeting. Proposal information will be available on the CALFED website. Although there is existing funding in place for these projects, ongoing contract problems have resulted in funding delays. CALFED staff anticipate another round of PSPs in the spring but they will be much more focused on certain goals and specific needs. There will be another comment process further down the line, possibly December. For more information contact Dan Ray at CALFED (916) 657-2666.

### **Manager's Report -**

- Hamilton City – A media event is scheduled for 9/23 where an announcement will be made concerning state funding assistance for a Feasibility Study that combines flood control and ecosystem restoration. While similar to the COE Section 205 Feasibility Study, it provides a better funding path for the local sponsors. They hope to have the study completed by fall, 2003.
- Public Use/Recreation Study – A meeting is scheduled for Monday evening, 9/23, for public input on public access uses on the River. The inventory has been done and a matrix of public use facilities will be available for review. The study is looking at the Red Bluff to Colusa area, it was suggested it should cover Redding to Colusa, especially from the standpoint of mapping. Can use BLM information, could be another phase also.
- Colusa Boat Ramp Meeting – Burt and Gregg Werner met with representatives in Colusa to discuss the problems being encountered at their boat ramp site.
- Del Rio Wildlife Area – SRP held two public input sessions seeking input to help determine what the different interests are for that area and what facilities are most needed. The management plan for the property will be developed after receiving the feedback. Anyone interested in being a part of the planning can contact Carol Wright or the SRCAF staff for more information.
- Woodson Bridge- The project to remove rock on state property is still being assessed; there would have to be some mitigation because removal of the rock would also remove habitat.
- CALFED Working Landscapes Subcommittee is looking at ways to promote wildlife friendly agriculture and agency coordination. A draft working plan is available on the CALFED website ([www.calfed.water.ca.gov](http://www.calfed.water.ca.gov)) as is additional information on this new Subcommittee.
- The Advisory Council meeting has been set for November 6<sup>th</sup>, meeting place TBD.
- There will be a presentation on “Incidental Take” by state and federal representatives at the November TAC meeting.

The next meeting will be on **October 17<sup>th</sup>**. (There had been discussion by the Board about changing the Board and TAC meeting dates; however, it was decided to schedule the next TAC on the third Thursday, as usual, pending further notice.)