

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting -March 21, 2002

Chair Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair Stacy Cepello

Chair Anjanette Martin opened the meeting followed by self-introductions. During the public comment period Henry Rodegerdts, CFBF, requested that the TAC notes be forwarded to the members prior to the meeting to give an opportunity for review and corrections. It was agreed that the staff would email the notes to the group. He also commented on the Comprehensive Study website and the need for a better process as regards meeting notifications. Annalena Bronson advised Henry that his comments would be noted and taken back for consideration.

Anjanette asked about the status on the With/Without Inner River Zone and the SRCA Background documents that the TAC had been discussing. Stacy noted he is calling the Background document a final draft but there could be changes made in the future. Stacy suggested the final draft be emailed to everyone at the same time as the TAC Notes.

ACTIVITIES UPDATES -

Paul Ward, DFG, announced an upcoming presentation on May 6th to the Butte County Fish and Game Commission. The presentation will be on the Sacramento River Conservation Area and will be directed to the sporting community and public access issues.

Scott Clemons, WCB, announced there were no new projects to report but did make a handout available on five ongoing projects that are within the SRCA boundaries. The total acres to be restored are 530.

Marie Sullivan, F&WS, announced that the Refuge has been sending out the Environmental Assessments and she will pass along the message if someone needed a copy. CALFED will have draft recommendations out mid-April (ERP Restoration Program). Proponents of the Conceptual proposals for the Watershed Program will be notified by mid-April if they meet criteria.

Cathy Morris, TNC, distributed maps of four properties, all within the Inner River Zone:

RM243 - Altube Property -consists of 72 acres. They have received a partial grant to purchase the property; will go to the Wildlife Conservation Board for the balance.

RM194 - Butte County -consists of 40 acres, belongs to State Park. The seller will continue to farm for at least two years.

RM181 - Glenn County - consists of 20 acres. This is a new acquisition. The orchard is approximately 20 years old, the landowner does not want to continue to farm any longer.

RM148 - Boeger Property - consists of 129 acres, 55 acres are in walnuts that will continue in production. They received a CVPIA grant to buy the Boeger and Ward properties, should close within the next month. Finding of No Significant Impact has gone out.

A comment was made about the small attendance of landowners at the last TNC meeting. Cathy noted the next meeting was tentatively set for April 3, but that was not confirmed as yet. They are trying to determine better ways to contact the landowners.

Stacy reported that one of the issues brought up was that the modeling done by the Comprehensive Study stopped at Woodson Bridge. It was determined that DWR would do that work for the Study from Woodson Bridge to Keswick. There is not quite as much detail but it is the best inundation mapping that has been done on that area. Stacy will bring the final report to the TAC or will try to have available via email. The report will eventually be on the Comprehensive Study website.

Mike Madden, Butte County, reported that (1) a recent ballot measure was passed that will allow Butte County to form a Resource Conservation District (2) Cherokee Canal - COE study is going on addressing sediment reduction, may be a potential COE Sec. 206 or 1135 project; (3)Butte Creek

Floodplain Study - currently have a 1 year contract to do a 3 year study; they are trying to extend the terms; (4) a team has been formed to address Phase 2 of the Clean Water Act, regarding Storm-water discharge, that is based on the population threshold; looking at a 5-year window of compliance with annual milestones that need to be met.

Anjanette gave an update on the Sacramento Valley Management Agreement - Phases 1-7 have been completed. Phase 8 would probably result in re-allocation of water in the northern area. Instead, the water users, counties and irrigation districts, have approached the State Board to let the water users work out ways to meet water quality standards among themselves, i.e. Sites Reservoir (long term), fish screens, system improvements. They will be looking for funding for the improvements. April 15th is the deadline for the short- term agreement.

Mike Madden - Noted July 4 and Labor Day draws huge crowds at the Park in Chico - they have been directed by the Board to come up with the impacts involving law enforcement, fire, and others. Carol Wright noted April 17th at CSU, Chico will be a day to raise awareness of activities on the River - not just as a " tubing" waterway; it's an effort to raise the value of the River.

Burt noted Tehama County is starting the review process of its General Plan.

CALTRANS has purchased a piece of property for mitigation purposes located between Los Molinos and Vina and within the SRCA. The property consists of a prune orchard and riparian ground. The prune orchard will eventually be leased or sold.

PROPOSAL/PROJECT MAPPING – Before discussion began Carol Wright commented that the focus has been on restoration, but that is only a part of it - don't have the process for reviewing other types of projects. Stacy discussed the form to be used for new project tracking. There could conceivably be 2-3 databases to include new projects, existing projects, and the CALFED PSP process which is current and overlaps with the first (proposals but not yet adopted). Some of the proposals do not have a specific location tied to them, but those will still be listed by area or region. Stacy showed a "mock-up" of a page for a website that is in process - it was developed in house but they have contracted with the Geographical Information Center at California State University, Chico to build and maintain the Web project. (Will need Internet explorer to access). The concept is to eventually have one site to come to for all information. CVPIA projects will be noted only as available on the CALFED website. When find out which CALFED projects are recommended for funding, they will be noted.

HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS - Stacy noted that changing the actual data in the Handbook is an extremely slow process; they are finding some problems with the DWR data and data furnished through Chico State regarding vegetation that stops halfway through Colusa County. The changes being worked on now are a result of last year's amendments. The changes may come out as a published hard copy or they may come out on the web only. Stacy gave an overview of the data that is impacted within the reaches and noted that adjusted tables also impact other parts of the Handbook. Burt referred to some of the text that is being changed in the Handbook and noted as well that each change can impact other parts of the Handbook. The language will change again as a result of the current proposed amendments; there is also the question of how to deal with the language from a historical perspective.

Carol asked a question regarding the amendment to the motion that referred to coordinating with activities that "relate" to the Inner River Zone. Burt responded that Denny Bungarz spoke to that issue, specifically because of concerns that Hamilton City could be eliminated from the process and that language would preclude that from happening. Burt also commented that by removing the line it may

be that a questionable project will not be brought forward as there is no requirement for that. A question was raised about the Board eligibility as a result of the new definition; it does reduce the pool but did not affect current membership. The group discussed the direction from the Board to discuss language to make the Handbook conform as a result of the removal of the outer boundary. Stacy asked for direction from the group on project tracking and how to define the area. Paul Ward suggested that it needs to be something very vague, otherwise the end result is back to making a line. John Merz questioned whether this group can decide the issues without more information. From an ecological viewpoint, the line doesn't matter but the change in relationships needs to be addressed. Scott questioned the TAC's attempt to define an area as wavering from the literal direction from the Board as to where projects are to be reviewed.

In response to a question Burt noted the Handbook amendments do not have to be done on an annual basis only. Tom Evans, FWA, stated he hoped the changes to the Handbook would not be rushed. Henry commented that the Handbook is referred to as a living document but did not feel that that was the case; changes made months ago are still not reflected. The TAC members agreed to move forward with a recommendation to the Board that the Handbook needs to be re-formatted as soon as possible so that it can reflect amendments to it in a more timely manner. John also suggested the Board needs to understand the data issues and how difficult it is to change; there may not be language to discuss for a month, possibly two.

Burt informed the group that the Conservation Area as newly defined encompasses approximately 82,000 acres.

The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m., Willows City Hall, Willows.