

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes- April 18, 2002

Chair ~Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair~ Stacy Cepello

Chair Anjanette Martin opened the meeting followed by public comments. Annalena Bronson announced an upcoming Comprehensive Study meeting on April 26th in Sacramento. Stacy discussed an April 19th meeting from 2:00 to 4:00, also in Sacramento, put on by DWR to evaluate impacts to flows as a result of off-stream storage.

Activities Updates - Anjanette asked that new and existing projects be presented using the new project form accompanied by a map. As to process, new projects come to TAC first, then to Board. The SRCA staff will email the project review form to all of the TAC members. Ultimately, possibly within a month, the form will be available on an interactive website and information will be entered directly by the proponent which will allow better project tracking. Lewis Bair, RD 108, informed the group of two proposed projects they had submitted to CALFED: (1) Consolidated Pumping Facility and Fish Screen – the three largest remaining diversions will be combined. A study was started last year and this was determined to be the cheapest alternative; total cost approximately \$14 mil. with an approximate 1-1/2 year timeline for completion. Initial panel recommendation is “Consider as Directed Action”. (2) Sediment Removal Project. Funding was requested to address the sediment deposition behind the Wilkin Slough Positive Barrier Fish Screen; deposition of sediment behind the screens is occurring at a rate of an inch a day. Lewis noted this is a main diversion facility limited in its capacity until this problem is remedied. Funding would include installation of a pump for jetting sediment from the floor of the fish screen structure. They have federal funding for \$415,000 – they are seeking \$415,000 cost share from the state. The project was not recommended for funding. He expressed concern that the reason for rejection was because this was viewed as a maintenance issue; because of the monies invested in fish screens there needs to be funds available to deal with problems such as this that are developing at these structures. Lewis used the project review form as a base for his reporting on the two projects and when asked for input responded that the form seemed simple and fairly straight-forward.

There was discussion on the best way to disseminate information on the projects. There was a suggestion that a 1-page handout be made available to the TAC members. It was determined that, for the short term, the project information will be emailed to the SRCA staff at least a week prior to the meeting and the information will be forwarded to the group.

Ernie Ohlin and Dawit Zeleke discussed the River Vista Project at Woodson Bridge. Approximately 1300 acres were restored several years ago; now looking at potential for some type of project at the site to help alleviate flood issues on South Avenue. There is a need to open drainage through there and one possible alternative is re-opening the box culverts. This will not solve all the flooding issues, but will increase drainage and allow traffic across the roadway longer and/or to re-open sooner. Ernie noted this is a collaborative effort between Tehama County, TNC, and Kelly Maroney from the Wildlife Refuge, and fits the big picture of what the SRCA is all about. The project will be presented in depth at the next TAC.

Marlyce Myers, TNC, updated the group on the economic assessment being conducted between Red Bluff and Colusa by Jones and Stokes. The SRCA will facilitate a presentation and discussion of a draft report at 1:00 p.m. following the June 20th TAC meeting. Final revisions will be based on comments from the meeting.

CALFED Update – Rebecca Fris was introduced to discuss the initial panel recommendations on the PSP's. Rebecca noted that there were a total of 260 proposals. Of those, 56 were recommended for funding; they are currently in the comment period and then will go to the funding entities. In June or July there will be a final decision; money should be forthcoming by the end of the year. 35 projects were recommended "Consider as Directed Action" which indicates they were good proposals but required some revisions and additional review prior to being recommended for funding. The revisions need to be made by August; there will be another review process with the panel reconvening in the fall to reconsider those proposals. CALFED will contact those directed action projects as to how to proceed. Rebecca commented that the funding is available for these projects.

The panel will meet again and look at those that were not recommended; unsure of the process yet, they will not be dealt with in the short term but will be resolved before the next PSP process. Rebecca noted a letter had been sent to the counties within the SRCA showing those projects that would occur within their jurisdictions.

Anjanette opened discussion on what the recommendation will be from the TAC to the Board regarding the public comment period for the ERP; what are the considerations of the SRCA? The short period of time for public comment does not allow adequate time for in-depth analysis. It was also noted that some of the funded projects were never seen at the SRCA. Anjanette suggested a need to reiterate that the projects should be consistent with the goals and principles of the Handbook; restoration should take place but adherence to the handbook would mean, i.e., limited river meander in some places. Stacy suggested that the letter from the Board needs to be foundational. The ROD (Record of Decision) lays out the relationship between CALFED and the SRCA; the Handbook lays out the guidelines and principles. The letter should clarify those relationships and make note of the goals and principles; projects should then be balanced against these principles for consistency. This would be broad rather than project-specific and would exemplify what this organization represents. The lack of time for adequate proposal review should also be noted. Stacy agreed to work with the SRCA staff to prepare a draft of this language to present to the Board.

Kim Davis noted some projects will be more time-sensitive and those should be noted when presented to the Board.

Lewis noted it would be helpful if they could have had personal contact in the PSP process;

Rebecca commented that they are legally restricted from doing so.

Les Heringer, M&T, reported the proposal they submitted to CALFED for funding a study to determine the long-term solution on the gravel bar intrusion had been recommended "Consider for Directed Action". Les noted what the objections were to the proposal and referenced the Handbook which addresses limiting meander where appropriate. There was also a recommendation that a steering committee be appointed. Burt suggested the SRCA offer services to facilitate that committee, as well as help any of the projects that meet the SRCA guidelines. Les expressed his concern about the time that the process will take.

Update on the new website -Stacy updated the group on the new website being developed; a link is now available on the SRCA website to access mapping and CALFED PSP's. The database will eventually have all the information being required by the project review form. This is a good, first step in project tracking.

Manager's Report - Colusa Sub-reach – Burt reported The Nature Conservancy received funding to address issues going on within that subreach. The project is a collaboration between TNC and SRCA to open the process to more local involvement. In response to a question about the Handbook update, Burt noted that the document has been converted over to a word processing format and changes to it that were a result of the first set of amendments have been incorporated.

Burt announced the next Hamilton City Workgroup meeting will be held on May 20th. The Next Landowner Assurances Committee meeting will be on May 21st at the Colusa Farm Bureau office.

Anjanette closed the meeting reminding everyone to use the “Project Fact Sheet” along with maps for clarification on the location of projects; Stacy offered assistance in the preparation of maps if needed.

The next TAC meeting will be on May 16th, Willows City Hall, Willows.