

Technical Advisory Committee Meetings – May 6, 2003

Chair - Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair - Stacy Cepello

The Chair opened the meeting with self-introductions and announcements. Carol Wright, Sacramento River Partners (SRP), informed the group she would be moving to the Sacramento River Preservation Trust where her focus will be species recovery and protection. The contact information for Carol will remain the same. She also reported on the “Salmon Country Conference”** to be held on May 10th in Red Bluff. Scott Clemons, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), noted their quarterly meeting will be held on May 14, 2003, 10:00 a.m., at the State Capitol.

(** Note: Since the TAC meeting, a notice has been sent out indicating the Salmon Country Conference had been postponed.)

Activities Updates – Stacy reported on “North of Delta Offstream Storage” in place to look at the benefits of Sites Reservoir in relation to flows. Currently, not a lot of analysis is being done. Stacy noted The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has a directed action proposal on ecosystem flow regime needs. The proposal will look at what the flows are and what flows are needed in the system for it to function properly, i.e. for a cottonwood forest to regenerate and remain viable and healthy. DWR is currently monitoring regeneration of cottonwoods on a gravel bar and noted regeneration would be expected in this unusual year.

Stacy also discussed the Sacramento Valley Water Management Agreement (SVWMA) among northern California water users, Bureau of Reclamation, and Department of Water Resources to meet water quality and flow requirements in the Delta. This agreement will take the place of the Bay-Delta Phase 8 which has been postponed and will be dismissed January 30, 2003. In the short term there will be approximately 40 different projects (at this time) that will be implemented over the next 10 years that will ultimately result in 185,000 acre feet annually to meet flow regime requirements from non-federal/state sources (i.e. water transfers, groundwater recharge, system improvements, fish screens, and water use efficiency). The long-term program will look at what other water supplies will be developed; Sites reservoir is a part of that long-term program. There was some discussion on what is “new water” and if that would apply to Sites. Northern California Water Association has binders and cds available for more information on the SVWMA (www.norcalwater.org).

Scott Clemons announced they have a copy of the restoration plan for the Pine Creek unit owned by the Department of Fish and Game (DF&G). He noted it shows the effort that goes into a restoration project. Dan Efseaff, SRP, will give an update at the next TAC and will provide information on the project to the SRCAF staff for distribution prior to the next meeting.

Discussions have been ongoing between the Reclamation Board, DF&G, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) concerning elderberry plantings on state lands. DF&G’s legal department is currently reviewing the matter. It was suggested the TAC could benefit from hearing more information on this issue.

Burt Bundy, SRCAF Manager, reported on the strategic planning for the Forum which has just begun; questionnaires from the consultant, Marc Smiley, have been sent out to the Board members and committee chairs. Four focus groups will be formed and several stakeholders will also be interviewed in the process.

John Thomson, USF&WS, reported on the CALFED Proposal Solicitation Packages. The first phase will be for “next-phase funding”; packets should be out late summer or early fall.

Woody Elliott, Department of Parks and Recreation, gave an update on the development of the general plan for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park. There was a public scoping meeting in March and another will be scheduled in the near future. The final plan should be completed by June, 2004.

Project Review – Carol Wright noted a brochure has been completed on the Del Rio Project (formerly the Pamma Property); she will make it available to the TAC for informational purposes.

Scott Clemons thanked the SRCAF for the letter regarding three proposed projects that were presented to the TAC in April. The letter informed the WCB of the review and that the projects were determined to be consistent with the principles and guidelines of the SRCAF Handbook.

Burt reported the Project Review Committee had met to discuss the review process. While the Fact Sheet provides general information on a project including contact information for additional questions, there is a need for a more defined and credible process. The SRCAF cannot require all projects to come before them but there needs to be an atmosphere that promotes and encourages proponents to be involved in the process. Some suggestions from the Project Review Committee included (1) asking that Fact Sheets be provided to staff 10 days prior to the TAC meeting so they can be distributed and reviewed prior to the meeting (2) discussion at the TAC review of each of the Handbook principles and how the Project addresses those (3) local contacts will include owners of land within the project, adjoining landowners, and SRCAF Board members from the county involved. Under Technical review, the presentation should address at a minimum: (1) proponent, location, and type of activity (2) funding source (3) ecological information (4) permitting anticipated (5) adjacent impacts (6) anticipated product or goal and (5) Handbook consistency. At the Board meeting the TAC Chair or representative will advise the Board of the TAC review and indicate if the TAC recommends that the proposal is consistent with the Handbook. The project proponent should be available at the Board meeting to answer questions and address concerns. The Board then determines that a proposal is or is not consistent with Handbook principles and guidelines and Board policy; staff will provide a letter to the proponent relaying the Board recommendation.

At the April 17th Board meeting Ben Carter had asked that information on a project be provided to the Board prior to the Board meeting to allow time for review and also asked for a clearer direction from the TAC regarding Board action. A question was raised about policy actions #1 and #2 in the draft Good Neighbor Policy (GNP) and the recommendation from the LAC to the Board to incorporate those into the project review process. There was no formal action taken by the Board on this recommendation; Burt will discuss the matter with the LAC Chair. The Committee felt that the new review process clearly allowed those issues listed under the GNP #1 & #2 to be included and discussed at both the TAC and Board level. A question was raised about the technical review of projects at the TAC and how much technical information is too much. Jeff Sutton, Family Water Alliance, referred to #2.f in the GNP concerning consideration of buffer zones on the project property and the need for technical answers on developing effective buffer zones. Stacy suggested there may be staff available to review the literature and look at the science that is out there that might help answer those questions.

Following discussion of the project review process, there was consensus that the recommendation from the TAC would be (1) to move the project review process, as outlined,

forward to the Board and (2) to recommend that the Board take action. The information will be included in the Board packets to allow time for review prior to the Board meeting.

Stacy reported that the public information website has been constructed and is ready to go. Existing projects will be used to build a database, the next step will be to make input available over the web. They hope to have it up and running in a month.

Manager's Report – Due to time constraints, Burt reported briefly on the Woodson Bridge Project. The feasibility phase of the project has just begun and should be completed in approximately 18 months with design and construction to follow. A more comprehensive Manager's Report was available as a handout.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3rd, 9:30 a.m., at the Willows City Hall. There will not be a TAC meeting in July.