

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes – October 7, 2003

Chair ~ Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair ~ Stacy Cepello

The Chair opened the meeting with announcements, public comments, and/or activity reports. Kelly Moroney, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reported the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Refuge was still being reviewed in Sacramento. Burt Bundy, SRCAF Manager, announced a recap of the strategic planning process to date will be sent to all of the focus group attendees. There will be a ½-day planning workshop on October 24th to continue work on the strategic plan. The next SRCAF Board meeting is scheduled for December 4th, 2003 at the Monday Afternoon Club in Willows. Paul Hofmann, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), reported that the draft management plan for the Sacramento River Wildlife Area is undergoing internal review and will be out next month for public review. Two public meetings will be held after the draft is out, one in Chico and one in Colusa. Jeff Sutton, Family Water Alliance, announced the upcoming “Hot Cajun Nights” on November 15th at the Legion Hall in Maxwell. Contact Jeff for information on tickets. Carol Wright, Sacramento River Preservation Trust (SRPT), announced the “Salmon Conference” will be held on October 24th at the Red Bluff Community Center with discussion on salmon and watershed issues. SRPT will also sponsor a float trip from Jellys Ferry to Bend on October 19th. More information on both events is available at www.sacriverttrust.org.

The dates for future TAC meetings, and possible agenda items, were discussed. Suggestions for the agenda included a site visit to the Ord Bend Unit and/or reports on the Hamilton City and Woodson Bridge projects. The next meeting was set for **Monday, November 10th, tentatively at the Department of Water Resources conference room in Red Bluff. This location would provide internet access so that Stacy could preview the electronic fact sheet for the members. (**The meeting date was later changed to Tuesday, November 4th)

Project Updates –

- **Shahi Property** - Cathy Morris, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), updated the group on the flood-prone and eroding property which is located inside the levee in Glenn County. TNC acquired the property in 2002 and is now working to transfer the property to the State of California, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), CDFG for addition to the Jacinto Unit of the Sacramento River Wildlife Area. The donation of the property will be on the November WCB agenda and WCB had wanted the project to go before the SRCAF TAC and Board prior to that meeting. The property is not included specifically in the CDFG management plan, but once transfer occurs, the agency will be taking a closer look. The Chair suggested this site might provide an opportunity through site-specific planning to incorporate policy items #1 and #2 from the Good Neighbor Policy and look at issues such as reducing erosion through restoration, levee stabilization, and river meander. Kelly suggested the site could be considered in the analysis in the feasibility study for the Riparian Sanctuary.

Jeff raised a question about buffer zones and whether there is tangible information out there or if more studies need to be done. Stacy offered to pull current information together on buffer zones that is relevant to the Sacramento River, from both the agricultural and environmental points of view, and report back in November. It was suggested that this information might help formulate specific questions to CALFED for possible funding of additional studies.

Some suggestions for ways to offer provisions for adjacent landowners included a Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA), a pre-mitigation agreement or site-specific memorandum of agreement. It

was noted there is considerable interest in this issue, but there is a lack of money and staffing. It was suggested that the SRCAF keep the issue in the forefront. The SRCAF Manager noted he will check on the status of a SHA between CDFG and The Reclamation Board on elderberries that had been in process but has not moved forward.

Kelly commented on their approach to buffer zones which involves dialogue with the adjacent landowners to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution. Ryan Luster, TNC, and Carol Wright noted they are incorporating buffer zones in their projects as well. Carol also noted River Partners sends a questionnaire out every year to get feed back on their projects; she suggested the possibility of a presentation where proponents could talk about their successes.

- **La Barranca Unit of the Sacramento River NWR** – Kelly Moroney discussed Phase II of this project which is the environmental compliance phase. Some of the issues to be addressed include fish entrapment in old gravel pits and possible removal of a private levee originally constructed to protect the orchard. The project involves restoration on approximately 441 acres. A public workshop will be scheduled during the Environmental Assessment, the TAC will be advised when a date has been set. It has been proposed in the CCP that the site be open to the public, if accepted public use will be allowed sooner.

Stacy reported he had received a call from State Lands Commission asking if Caltrans had come to the TAC to discuss a project at Butte City. State Lands will recommend that Caltrans attend the next meeting and would like feedback from the TAC.

Project Fact Sheet - Stacy updated the group on the Project Tracker which is on the current SRCAF website at: www.sacramentoriver.ca.gov. Internet access will be available at the November meeting in Red Bluff which will allow the group to preview the site. It was suggested that a map of the conservation area on the site would be helpful for viewers to determine the area involved.

Manager's Report - Burt Bundy

- *Hamilton City* – The next workgroup meeting was moved to November 17th. A Corps of Engineers (COE) F-4 conference was held on August 28th to confirm the selection of the levee alternative. It appears that the formal request for authorization will move forward for inclusion in the 2004 COE funding request with construction in 2007/2008. A report on the Hamilton City Project will be included on the November agenda for discussion on some of the issues that are raised in a combined flood control/ecosystem restoration project such as maintenance and restoration responsibilities.

- *Woodson Bridge* – The Section 1135 Ecosystem Restoration Project for the Woodson Bridge/Kopta Slough area already has congressional authorization. The project still has to go through design and engineering with construction in approximately 1 year.

- *Colusa Sub-reach* – The Steering Committee, made up of Colusa and Glenn County Forum members and representatives from the CDFG and TNC, has met twice. An Advisory Committee will be named late spring or summer to help guide the process. The contract between CALFED and TNC has not been signed as yet.

Next meeting date November 4, 9:30 a.m., Department of Water Resources, Red Bluff