

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes – September 2, 2003

Chair ~ Anjanette Martin

Vice Chair ~ Stacy Cepello

Burt Bundy, SRCAF Manager, opened the meeting with self-introductions, announcements, and public comments.

John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust (SRPT), announced an upcoming Salmon Festival in Oroville on September 27th. The Salmon Country conference will be held on October 24th at the Red Bluff Community Center with tours available on the following day. On October 19th the SRPT, in conjunction with Friends of the River, will sponsor a float trip from Jellys Ferry to Bend. Cost of the float trip will be \$35.00 including lunch.

Kelly Moroney, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, reported the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge is currently being reviewed and will be out for public comment in November. The feasibility study on the Rio Vista Unit should be completed this month. Kelly will make a presentation on the study results at the October or November TAC.

Woody Elliott, Department of Parks and Recreation, noted a third and final public meeting will be held to discuss the preferred alternative for the general plan being developed for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park.

Jeff Sutton, Family Water Alliance (FWA) discussed the status of the fish screen project at Roberts Ditch. They are currently going through the permitting process and a more detailed discussion on the project will be placed on a future TAC agenda.

Tricia Bratcher, California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG) reported the first meeting of the California Watershed Council was held on August 28th in Sacramento.

Stacy Cepello, Department of Water Resources (DWR), gave a brief update on the Sacramento River public access website. They are still in the process of correcting some errors and the agencies have not finished their review. The site can be viewed at www.sacramentoriver.org, however, and input would be appreciated. DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation had scoping meetings on the 20th and 21st of August on the program that is replacing Phase 8, the Sacramento Valley Water Management Agreement. The close of the comment period will be mid-September; additional information is available on the DWR website: www.dwr.water.ca.gov.

Activities Updates – Dan Efseaff from River Partners reported on:

- CALFED Riparian Sanctuary Study – an agreement has been signed and work will begin on October 1 to investigate restoration alternatives on a 500-acre site on the Refuge.
- La Barranca Unit, Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge – River Partners has received preliminary approval for funding to address issues identified in the feasibility study.

Dan noted that the June 19th site visit to the Ord Bend Unit Restoration site had raised interest in learning more about the work being done there. Kelly reported he has extended an invitation to the Board to visit the site because it addresses some of the issues raised in the Landowner Assurances Committee. He also noted they are trying to use some of the same practices throughout the refuge.

Tricia Bratcher reported she is now the coordinator for the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program for Shasta and Tehama Counties. Tricia reported they are looking at \$3 Mil in funding so there won't be money available for new projects; proposal solicitations for ongoing projects will go out late fall or winter. The Watershed Program received 683 concept proposals with 200

being asked to come back with full proposals. The Cantera Program has \$100,000 set aside in several counties for proposals dealing with watershed monitoring; requests for proposals will go out late September.

Ernie Ohlin, Tehama County Flood Control, reported the Feasibility Study for Woodson Bridge is still ongoing. DWR will be doing some soil sampling in the near future; an informational presentation will be made to the TAC when appropriate.

New Projects or Proposal Review –

- Acquisition of a flood-prone portion of Grevie’s Afton Ranch – Mike Roberts from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) discussed an acquisition project involving 83 acres inside the levee at Rm 166. All of the adjacent landowners have been notified of the sale. The property is expected to be transferred to the USFWS for addition to the Refuge. It was noted that a 15-acre piece is a riparian mitigation site for the Corps of Engineers (COE). A question was raised about the reference to the *Socioeconomic Assessment of Proposed Habitat Restoration within the Riparian Corridor of the Sacramento River* on the project fact sheet because many had disagreed with the assumptions. The Economic Impact on Glenn County report, completed earlier for the SRCAF, was not referenced and it was suggested that both studies should be on the fact sheet. It was pointed out that while the “Glenn County” study had different assumptions, many had disagreed with those assumptions as well. Since economic studies are based on assumptions, the question was asked how to satisfy the criticism and address the issue on a case-by-case basis. There has been some discussion on the possibility of earmarking a percentage of each project for a Landowner Assurances Fund as a way of address impacts. Ernie Ohlin noted that in working with the locals on various projects, he has found many landowners recognize the economic benefits for them from some of these projects such as selling flood-prone property to purchases more productive land. Mike Roberts asked that the members not lose sight of the fact that the studies are done in response to requests for more information; some may not be happy with the results, but it is an attempt to bring more information into the process.
- Tisdale Boat Launching Facility – Mary Keller, Sutter County, discussed the funding received from the Department of Boating and Waterways for a new ramp facility. The current ramp, located ½ mile upstream from the proposed site, is privately owned. The ramp has a heavy siltation problem because the owner has not always fulfilled his agreement to keep the channel clear. There is no off-site mitigation required with this project. In response to a question about whether they had consulted with NOAA Fisheries, Mary noted the CEQA documentation is done they will do NEPA.

Tehama County has two new ramps, one at Mill Creek and one at Woodson Bridge, and in the past has also had an ongoing problem with siltation. Denny Bungarz will be asking the SRCAF Board to look at the issues of permitting and maintenance on ramps in all of the counties and has offered to chair a committee to look at ways to address these problems.

Update on Electronic Version of Project Fact Sheet – Stacy will have an electronic version available at the next meeting –the fact sheet will be on the current SRCAF website.

Manager’s Report – Burt reported that the Hamilton City Project continues to move forward. The preferred alternatives for the J-Levee location were discussed at a meeting in

Sacramento on August 28th; the 6a alternative seems to be the one moving forward. The COE is also interested in a recreation component to this project; public input is still welcome. Another workgroup meeting will be held on October 7th.

Next Meeting – The next meeting is scheduled for October 7th, 9:30 a.m., Willows City Hall.