

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (TAC) Notes – November 7, 2006

Chair - Ajay Singh

Acting Vice Chair - Beverley Anderson-Abbs

TAC Chair Ajay Singh opened the meeting with self introductions. The following were in attendance: Gregg Werner, John Merz, Woody Elliott, Lady Bug Doherty, Lyle Tullis, Eric Akana, Dan Efseaff, Ernie Ohlin, Tricia Parker, Jerry Brownfield, Basia Trout, Scott Clemons, Kelly Williams, Bruce Ross, and Beverley Anderson-Abbs.

Announcements

The Sacramento River Preservation Trust Snow Goose festival will be held January 26-28, 2007.

Tricia Parker, USFWS, reported that a Salmonid Recovery Plan Team has been created and the first meeting will take place in Sacramento, November 8, 2006. The Battle Creek Watershed Group will be meeting November 14 at the USFWS office in Red Bluff. The Red Bluff USFWS office has recently hired Shelley Wingo, for the Partners program.

Woody Elliot reported that the Big Chico Creek boat ramp is in place and will be open for use once protection for nearby vegetation is put in.

Planting has been completed on two River Partners projects, La Barranca and Drumheller Slough, and these sites are ready for winter.

Activity Reports

Red Bluff I-5 Bridge Repair (RM 244) - Eric Akana, Caltrans, reported on the Antelope Bridge repair in Red Bluff. The bridge was to be replaced because of fatigue cracks in the girders. Due to funding considerations, full replacement will not occur and a retrofit will be done instead. This option will involve less tree removal in the area and the work will be done during low water. Although population growth in the area may warrant three lanes in both directions on I-5, the bridges will not be expanded as originally planned. Concerns were raised about impacts to recreation near the bridge with salmon fishing occurring on the gravel bar on the south bank and a well used trail passing under the bridges on the north side of the river. A question was also raised about possible cost share with the new developments in Tehama County.

Jellys Ferry Bridge Replacement (RM267) - Jerry Brownfield, Tehama County Public Works, reported on the Jellys Ferry Bridge replacement. The existing steel truss bridge was built in 1949 and was determined seismically deficient in 1998. It will be replaced with 50% of the \$11 million cost being covered by the transportation improvement fund. Design of the new two lane bridge will occur in 2008, with building in 2010. Since the existing bridge cannot be removed due to emergency access requirements, three possible new upstream alignments are being considered. Although historical, the old bridge will be demolished upon removal; the upstream alignment options do avoid the historical Ferry landing on the south side of the river. Any of the three possible alignments will impact the BLM recreation area on the upstream side of the bridge. Kelly Williams, BLM, pointed out that this location was in need of repair and updating and plans would be made to move the facilities to the downstream side of the bridge. Several studies are in progress, including underwater surveys and hydraulic analysis. It was indicated that a full Environmental Impact Report may not be required for a bridge replacement.

Shasta Ranch Mining (RM279) - Lyle Tullis, Tullis Inc., has applied for permits to mine concrete grade aggregate from 268 acres of the 997 acre Shasta Ranch. This site has been zoned for gravel mining. The project consists of three phases. Phase 1 would include building a 100 year fish exclusion levee at the south end of the ranch and mining from 68 acres behind the levee. When Phase 1 is finished, Phase 2 would begin to the west of Phase 1. The overburden from Phase 2 would be used to fill Phase 1 with

plans to re-establish agriculture. Upon completion of Phase 2, the levee would be removed, and a new levee built upstream where Phase 3 would begin. Additionally, a 12 foot levee aligned perpendicular to the river flow would be built at the south end of the property to block the view. No riparian habitat would be removed during the process. In response to concerns that have been raised previously, Tullis Inc. will widen the roads in the area and create a four foot pedestrian path. They will use commercial power to avoid generator noise and will not work when there are likely to be school children on the roads. Tullis Inc. has been monitoring the site for contaminants. Concerns were raised about the construction and future maintenance of the levees as well as the potential loss of spawning gravel in an already gravel poor river. Scott Clemons suggested widening the riparian corridor and the possibility of putting the remainder of the property under an easement. John Merz expressed concern about possible hydraulic problems created by a levee built perpendicular to the flow of water and suggested restoring some of the oak woodland on Phase 1 after completion. It is expected that mining will begin next spring.

Current Projects/Updates

CSP - Gregg Werner, TNC, reported that they have applied for a time extension for Colusa Subreach Planning (CSP), from April 2007 to April 2008. The research projects requested by the Advisory Workgroup are being completed. The Draft Fiscal and Economic Analysis Report was presented at the CSP, Monday, November 6. The Recreation Area plan should be completed by mid-November with the final public input meeting on December 4 at 6:30pm. The Hydraulic Analysis and the Pest and Regulatory Effects Study are being completed and should be available in early 2007.

BLM Projects - Kelly Williams, BLM, gave updates on several projects. The Jellys Ferry Restoration, with River Partners, is moving forward. A hydrologic study on both sides of Battle Creek at Gover Ranch is being completed to look at overflow channels and hydrologic restoration of the creek as well as the vegetation restoration. A fish bypass has been completed for the Orwick irrigation diversion, replacing a poorly designed CDFG bypass pipe, to allow out migrating juvenile spring run salmon to get back into the river and not become fertilizer. Permits for this project are posted on the USFWS website. The Barge Hole cleanup will occur November 14, 15, with boulders being placed along the sides of the access road on Nov. 16 and 20. The NRA legislation was not introduced by Congressman Herger but will be introduced at the beginning of the new congress with matching House and Senate Bills.

Del Rio (RM175) - River Partners recently went to the Reclamation Board to obtain permits for the Del Rio project. This project has a Safe Harbor Agreement in place and elderberry bushes have been planted as mitigation for DWR's emergency levee repairs. Concern was raised by the Reclamation Board about elderberry bushes on the levees and levee maintenance. Dan Efseaff and Scott Clemmons explained that the levee photos shown at the Reclamation Board meeting were not the levees at Del Rio and had been misrepresented as such.

Cross Boundary Issues Sub-Committee Update

Ajay has been getting up to speed on the Cross Boundary work done prior to Stacy Cepello's departure. He was unclear as to who was on the subcommittee and it was explained that Stacy had sent information out to everyone and received comments and suggestions from anyone willing to participate. It was pointed out the Pest and Regulatory study for the CSP may answer several of the questions that the subcommittee had been working on, which was the reason for holding off on further work with this group.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next TAC meeting was set for January 9, 2007, in Willows. A request was made for a presentation by USFWS about the VELB review for possible de-listing at the next TAC meeting.