

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (TAC) Notes – January 9, 2007

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, Henry Lomeli, Aric Lester, Rob Ginno, Don Anderson, Curt Martin, John Merz, Bruce Ross, Woody Elliott, Vicki Newlin, Christine Stifter, Casey Walsh-Cady, Tom McCubbins, Ryan Luster, Lady Bug Doherty, Basia Trout, Shirley Lewis, Dan Efseaff, Scott Clemons, Burt Bundy, Beverley Anderson-Abbs, and Ellen Gentry.

Announcements

John Merz announced the 8th Annual Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway will be held January 25-28. There will be over 40 field trips, workshops and exhibits, junior naturalist activities, an art exhibit and welcome reception, the gathering of wings banquet and auction. Register online or by phone: (530) 345-1865, 1-800-852-8570, www.snowgoosefestival.org or info@snowgoosefestivals.org

Activity Reports

Aric Lester, DWR, reported on the emergency work that has been done along RM182. Roxanne Yonn, Manager, URS Corp. Public Affairs and consultant to DWR for the 2006 Emergency Levee Repairs Project, gave a presentation at the August 1, 2006 TAC meeting on the 29 emergency repair sights, however, RM182 was not included. Although the project was an emergency issue and not required to go through CEQA, the site was originally purchased for its habitat value, with active bank swallow nesting habitat. The emergency levee repair grew to 3,000 ft and became a bank revetment. DFG owns property downstream and Llano Seco owns across the river. The question of appropriate mitigation was raised, as well as how the rock affects others downstream, and are there other projects in the emergency plans that have not been presented to the TAC?

Preservation Trust noted the SRCAF can provide a positive role in pulling permitting agencies together. In the instance of RM182, a decision was made in the field without feedback. The Trust will be asking to talk about this process at the SRCAF Board meeting January 18. Public outreach has been good until now, however Northern District DWR did not know about this additional project either. Although not an agenda item, RM182 will be brought up at the next SRCAF Board meeting. SRCAF sent a letter to Rod Mayer, Chief, Division of Flood Management, earlier this month, asking to share information. There has been no response to date.

Aric reported that he has received correspondence from Michael Perrone, DWR Environmental Services, indicating that they have created a list of sites being looked at for mitigation for these bond funded projects.

Current Projects/Update

Wilson Landing/Jewett Creek - Scott Clemons, WCB, announced a meeting February 15 at the Capitol Bldg. in Sacramento, beginning at 10:00 am. Two projects will be considered for WCB funding: Wilson Landing and Jewett Creek.

CSP - Gregg Werner reported Colusa Subreach Planning projects are underway. The projects were chosen with the entire workgroup. The Fiscal and Economic Effects Analysis

is available online at www.sacramentoriver.ca.gov and in libraries. The scope of work was reviewed by the group. The final report will be given at the Advisory Workgroup meeting February 5, 10:00AM. There was consensus on the Master plan for expansion of the Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area, including boat ramp, trails, day use, and camping facilities. State Parks is attempting to get this plan into the funding stream. Three public meetings have been held on the recreation plan. The hydraulic analysis is moving forward. It was noted there are two weirs there. Summaries are available upon request.

Del Rio (RM175) – Dan Efseaff, River Partners, gave an update on the Del Rio restoration plan. A February 16 meeting will be held by the Reclamation Board to review addressed concerns for permitting.

New Projects or Proposal Review

Jewett Creek Restoration (Project Tracker #121) - Ryan Luster, TNC, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Jewett Creek Restoration. TNC acquired this property in 2000 from the Rapanich family. A series of meetings were held: June 2001, an initial public meeting was held to discuss Jewett Creek Integrated Farm Plan; April 2002, the draft Jewett Creek Integrated Farm Plan was presented; and November 2002, the Final Integrated Farm Plan was completed. TNC sold the property to the Ginno family with a conservation easement in January 2006. Outreach activities include: December 2006 TNC notification of neighbors of proposed restoration, January presentation to SRCAF TAC, and a January 18 presentation at the SRCAF Board meeting.

Project goals include: restoring 87 acres to wildlife habitat (25 acres valley oak riparian forest, 45 acres mixed riparian forest, 17 acres wet meadow). 140 acres will remain in walnuts. Maintenance of the site will begin in the spring of 2008 through 2010. Self sustaining habitats are expected by 2011. Restoration will be monitored through 2032. Funding is provided by WCB, USFWS, TNC, and the Ginno family.

The baseline biological assessment has been done, including soil mapping, groundwater hydrology, adjacent remnant vegetation sampling, estimated flood return interval frequency, and historic aerial photography. Help and expertise was offered for arundo eradication. Originally the Rapanich family altered the stream angle and put in culverts. A solution for the existing, small culverts and resulting drainage problem will be investigated separately with the Ginno family in the future. A hydraulic analysis may assist with alternative solutions.

Curt Martin, neighboring landowner, suggested assurances that there won't be problems in the future with the culvert problem, Ryan Luster explained that there will be yearly monitoring until 2032 as part of the management plan that would ensure that if there are problems the easement holder and landowner can deal with it. He also recommended meeting with neighbors periodically to determine if there any noticeable problems in the future.

Buffers are provided by the walnut orchard at the Chuck Crain property line and with the grass, trees, and south waterway. No permit from DFG is required to do the restoration in the creek channel. Shirley Lewis reviewed "dewatering", pointing out that it is expected that

agriculture lands will be flooded, and as long as nothing interrupts the drainage process there is no problem.

Scott Clemons applauded those involved, including landowners, in the easement along the river, and suggested this partnership could be a model for others.

It was determined that this project meets the principles and guidelines of the SRCAF handbook, with the concern raised regarding drainage and a suggestion that hydraulic analysis be included to the owner and funding agency.

Cross Boundary Issues

Ajay has been studying what Stacy Cepello had compiled on Cross Boundary Issues. He will send an email for comments to the committee regarding what is appropriate, what is being addressed, and what issues are not.

Programmatic Safe Harbor (PSH) discussion

Burt opened the discussion on the SRCAF starting the process to develop and administer PSH agreements. Currently, SRCAF is renegotiating funding levels, establishing parameters of the program, and developing the agreement. Grant work would include developing baseline information. Aerial photography, adjusting vegetation surveys, and taking into account types of vegetation, will give overall baseline. There will be some grant money available for private landowners to have surveys done on their land by non-agency biologists. If individual properties already have a SH they can either continue as an individual SH or continue under the PSH.

Non-federal organizations, agencies, or private landowners could sign on to get regulatory assurances under the PSH in exchange of net conservation benefits for species. Identification of state and federally listed species was reviewed, along with proposed VELB delisting and possible delisting of the Bald Eagle, as well as the possibility of including fish. The grant proposal covered the whole Sacramento River Conservation Area, but could be modified if necessary.

A suggestion was made that the initial agreement be started with a small number of species, adding species once an agreement is in place. In a meeting with DFG personnel, a suggestion was made to add the western pond turtle. It was requested that the SH agreements that are already in existence have links on the SRCAF website if possible.

PSH will be a regular item on the TAC agenda. Draft information will be made available to the committee.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next TAC meeting was set for February 6, 2007, at Willows City Hall. The Tisdale Weir Channel Rehabilitation proposed cleaning will make a presentation at that time.