

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (TAC) Notes – February 6, 2007

Chair – Ajay Singh

TAC Chair Ajay Singh opened the meeting with self introductions. The following were in attendance: Gregg Werner, Bruce Ross, Woody Elliott, Tom McCubbins, Dan Efseaff, Kim Davis, Adam Henderson, John W. Hunt, Tracy McReynolds, Lewis Bair, Tom Ellis, Dan Ray, Kelly Moroney, Scott Woodland, Burt Bundy, and Ellen Gentry.

Announcements

Kelly Moroney reported on the Sacramento River Refuge status. The Defenders of Animals is the complainant in a lawsuit against the refuge for not fully complying with NEPA on hunt programs. The refuge has until April to complete a supplemental Environmental Assessment, which will go out for a 30 day comment period in two weeks. A press release will be sent, addressing hunting on the refuge.

Activity Reports

The Sacramento River Refuge, DFG, M&T Ranch and others will meet Friday to discuss the Environmental Assessment for toe rock and options for using gravel along the river bank opposite the M&T pumps. Spur dikes or future gravel removal will be looked at as part of Phase II.

Colusa Subreach Planning met yesterday (02/05/07). The Sacramento River State Recreation Area Master Plan, Recreation Access Plan, and Fiscal and Economic Analysis have been completed. CSP is moving ahead with the hydraulic modeling for the entire Subreach. That subcommittee will begin its review next week. The model is calibrated against the best available data for 160,000cfs through Butte City, and will be compared to 1957 data. Information will be made available on the SRCAF website. A public meeting will be scheduled to discuss information in the summer.

SRCAF is working with DWR Flood Management regarding erosion site repairs and to determine appropriate mitigation sites for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, bank swallow, and other protected species. Listed critical erosion sites are being rocked at a fast rate. GIS, land adjacent to public lands, and geology are all part of the discussions for mitigation as part of larger restoration projects. Restoration done to date may or may not be used for levee mitigation based on how it was paid for (i.e., federal funds are limited).

Current Projects/Updates

Dan Efseaff, River Partners, reported the Llano Seco Riparian Sanctuary project is moving forward. They have received a letter regarding project funding through a DFG Directed Action for the cooperative project with PCGID for restoration options. The first phase is working on environmental compliance and design, while the second phase will address solutions and cost. Burt reiterated that the SRCAF is very supportive of this project and offered any assistance in moving the project forward.

Greg Golet, TNC, reported he got a call from DFG regarding the CALFED Science Program monitoring grant, and is expecting to be under contract in April.

New Projects or Proposal Review

Tisdale Weir Channel Rehabilitation Environmental Documentation – Scott Woodland, Program Manager; and Dan Ray, DWR, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Tisdale Bypass Channel Rehabilitation Project (RM 119). The weir has a design capacity of 38,000cfs. A survey of the channel will be done to account for the accumulation of sediment. Proposed work includes the removal of approximately 1.7 million cubic yards of sediment, which will be spoiled to adjacent agricultural properties and the north levee. Landowners have been consulted regarding the spoils area and maintenance of ag. The majority of the tree corridor will be left in place; 26 acres of trees will be taken out to create ramps, and trees will be put in at Reclamation Road to force flow. Once excavated, seed planting will occur. No land will be taken out of production. Mitigation will occur as needed. The bridge will be relocated over the weir, going from 37 piers to 9. The proposed construction date is July 2, 2007. Comments are due March 2.

Programmatic Safe Harbor discussion

Burt reported Beverley Anderson has been working on a Programmatic Safe Harbor discussion, looking at species to cover under the Programmatic Safe Harbor and the state equivalent Voluntary Local Program, in order to determine habitat and standard activities that are beneficial when entering into a SH. Both the state and federal program, referred to as SH, are funded by the Working Landscapes grant. SH is a voluntary program designed to help species by providing net conservation benefits in the way of habitat and providing the landowner assurances. Three SRCAF board members have indicated interest in participating. SRCAF has been selected for funding; however, the contract is not yet in place.

Tracy McReynolds, CDFG, offered to look at state species and share information with Jenny Marr and send comments in shortly.

Lewis Bair reported having worked on an aquatic SH wherein some activities have been developed. He encouraged additional rice habitat for Giant Garter Snake.

John Hunt, NRCS, discussed baseline programs. Burt reported some funding is available to do baseline work ourselves. Landowners could also hire their own firm if desired and would not have to go through a state or federal employee. SRCAF recognizes and understands privacy concerns. Hunt added SH is a good bridge between landowners and conservation. NRCS offered to be a resource contact.

Dan Efseaff, River Partners, noted, in his experience, each site has a list of target species and specific design recommendations. He suggested Beverley contact him for detailed information.

Ajay suggested talking to levee districts as well as discerning any retroactivity to the agreement.

Burt requested that any additional suggestions or ideas be sent to SRCAF.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next TAC meeting was set for March 6, at Willows City Hall.