

**Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes**

June 12, 2008  
3:00 p.m.

Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area  
Corning, CA

Chair Jim McKeivitt called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., followed by self-introductions. It was determined there was a quorum of voting members present (underlined).

<u>County</u>	<u>Public Interest</u>	<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Agency (non-voting)</u>
Butte	<u>Jane Dolan</u>	<u>Shirley Lewis</u>	
Colusa	(Gary Evans)	(Knute Myers)	
Glenn	(Keith Hansen)	<u>Don Anderson</u>	
Shasta	<u>Glenn Hawes</u>	(Dan Gover)	
Sutter	(Dan Silva)	(Russell Young)	
Tehama	<u>Ron Warner</u>	<u>Brendon Flynn</u>	
Yolo	<u>Lynnel Pollock</u>	<u>Marc Faye</u>	
Resources Agency	<u>Jim McKeivitt</u>		
DWR			Glen Pearson
DFG			Kent Smith
State Reclamation Board			(Lady Bug Doherty)
USFWS			Mike Hoover
USACE			Alicia Kirchner
Bureau of Reclamation			Basia Trout

Names listed in parentheses represent absences.

SRCAF: Manager Beverley Anderson-Abbs, Resource Conservation Assistant Josh Brown and Administrative Assistant Ellen Gentry.

Other identified attendees: Denny Bungarz (SRCAF Advisory Council Chair); Ajay Singh (SRCAF TAC Chair); Gregg Werner (TNC); Dan Efseaff, Jessica Gibbs, Mike Rogner (River Partners); Jim Spear, Erik Beardsley (NRCS); Anne Sanger (Congresswoman Matsui's representative); Aric Lester, Todd Hillaire, David Gutierrez, Dan Flory, Chris McCready, Jon Mulder (DWR); Scott Rice, (URS/DWR); Kevin Knuuti (USACE); Jim Dempsey, Woody Elliott (Dept. of Parks and Recreation); John Merz (Sacramento River Preservation Trust); Les Heringer (M&T Ranch); Tricia Parker (USFWS); Ann Elliott, Guest.

1. Unscheduled matters

Thanks were expressed to Burt and Joyce Bundy for preparing the BBQ dinner.

2. Consent Calendar

Don Anderson moved to adopt the minutes of the March 20, 2008 meeting, seconded by Ron Warner. Motion passed by unanimous vote. The Executive Committee notes for March 20, 2008 were accepted by consensus.

3. Board Member Reports

Basia Trout, Bureau of Reclamation, provided an informational handout on the Red Bluff Diversion Dam Fish Passage Project. The final EIS/EIR is posted in the Federal Register with a link on the

SRCAF website. Comment deadline is July 7. The preferred alternative includes construction of a pumping plant and operation of the RBDD for two months gates-in / ten months gates-out. Cost for the pumping plant is estimated at \$200 million. Updates have not been given at the TAC.

Don Anderson, Glenn County Landowner, reported the Hamilton City project continues to move along.

Jane Dolan, Butte County Public Interest, indicated that the Butte County Board of Supervisors has expressed concerns over traffic safety and RV Park proposed as part of a State Parks plan. The County is supportive of finding a solution to the M&T pump and City of Chico sewage outfall.

Ron Warner, Tehama County Public Interest, noted a boat tour of Kopta Slough took place prior to the Board meeting and indicated concern that continued erosion of the State Parks property could reroute the river through the park, bypassing the bridge. This could require building of a new bridge at a cost to the County of \$20 million. He mentioned replacement of the Jelly's Ferry Bridge is moving forward and SRCAF has stayed involved.

Glenn Hawes, Shasta County Public Interest, reported that three new bridges are being built on the Sacramento River in Shasta County. None of this work has been discussed at the Forum.

Glen Pearson, DWR, announced that a presentation on FloodSAFE is on the agenda, and briefly reviewed the Governor's drought declaration. The snowpack is at 67% of normal with only 55% normal runoff expected. DWR is trying to assist local communities with water issues. A budget is supposed to be to the Governor by June 15th. Northern District DWR have been cut by 10% and will have to cut assistance to SRCAF accordingly.

Alicia Kirchner, USACE alternate, reported the Hamilton City Project is in the design stage, 60% design is expected for July. The target is 90% design completion in November. The bank protection project at RM83.9 is pending acquisition of land for a set back levee. The EA for this site is being developed and will be available for public review this fall. A construction contract is being developed for RM177.8. Alicia will report back to the Board regarding USACE coordination efforts with adjacent landowners.

Kent Smith, DFG alternate, pointed out that their budget will also see a 10% cut but stated that continuing to work with the Forum is a high priority and DFG will remain fully. He added that it can be difficult to find partners for projects on the river as most money is going to the Delta. Gary Hobgood, DFG, is working with USACE on levee protection through the interagency team.

Mike Hoover, USFWS alternate, briefly discussed CVPIA funding for screen programs this year. This funding requires a 50% share. He will send additional information as available. USFWS is working with other agencies addressing USACE vegetation policy for levees, which will then roll into FloodSAFE. USACE existing policy states that there cannot be trees bigger than 2" in diameter on levees. Mike also noted that there has been a directive to consider the global climate change and the resulting change in economy over the next 30-50 years. There will likely be more water in the spring and less in the fall. Modeling may be done to see what that means.

#### 4. FloodSAFE update and information

David Gutierrez, DWR, gave a presentation on the FloodSAFE outreach program. A strategic plan has been drafted and they are looking for partners and stakeholders to engage in the plan. Until now, Flood protection has been in an emergency mode DWR is now shifting to early implementation. and trying to transition into a more strategic approach with goals of reducing the chance and consequences of flooding, sustain economic growth, protect and enhance the ecosystem, and promote sustainability.

Guiding principles include: integrate land use planning with flood risk management; and to protect and restore floodplain processes. David emphasized that it is critical for DWR to partner with SRCAF and show in detail what they are doing. A FloodSAFE Stakeholder Briefing Schedule includes a meeting at Chico City Council Chambers, Wednesday, June 25, at 9:30AM. Attendance was strongly encouraged as more details will be made available at that time including the Central Valley and outreach affecting the state plan for flood control.

Preliminary maps will be sent to 32 counties in the Central Valley by July 1, in an attempt to incorporate public information on areas that are considered hazards. It is the best information available, however hydrology and hydraulics for accurate mapping is complicated.

The strategic plan is available on the FloodSAFE website and interested parties can join the email list to receive updates. Jim McKeivitt offered SRCAF to help coordinate information, especially the initial program.

#### 5. Farm Bill

Anne Sanger, Congresswoman Doris Matsui's representative, provided information about the Farm Bill that passed May 22, specifically that portion pertaining to working lands and producers. Reauthorization has focused on conservation, nutrition, and producer support. An Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) was placed in the bill as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to promote ground and surface water conservation and improve water quality on agricultural lands. The Sacramento River Watershed is designated as one of seven priority watersheds in the nation. \$73 million in funding is dedicated for those watersheds and addressing water quality issues for 2009-2010. A unique aspect of this program allows NRCS to enter into agreements with partners. Partners can submit applications on behalf of a group and represent multiple producers, allowing for more flexibility. Details are being worked out.

#### 6. Bank Swallow Population Trends

Kent Smith, DFG, discussed the population trends and threats to the bank swallow along the Sacramento River. The swallow has been listed as threatened since 1987 and annual surveys show that populations numbers are decreasing. Through the purview of the Forum, the emergency repair proclamation and work at RM182, where a major colony was rip-rapped, bank swallow interest has been stimulated. Although efforts are being made to mitigate at RM182, the issue of temporary pump protection for M&T Ranch has also been raised.

The controversy was followed by the Forum facilitating meetings to brainstorm, with landowners and agencies, to create long-term solutions for bank swallows. The goals of the group have been to bring together knowledge along the Sacramento River and other parts of the state and develop a conservation strategy for bank swallows. Within the area influence of the Forum along the Sacramento River, 50% of the eroding bank has been rocked. Levee protection and bank stabilization is not good for bank swallows.

The Bank Swallow Group is working to get USACE at the table in order figure out what may be required for long term activities in order to move the population to 13,000 pairs on the river system and to avoid further jeopardizing the species. The group continues to meet monthly. Last month the goal would have been to have a conservation strategy drafted in a year or less, adaptive and generic in nature. Now, the goals are identifying what might be valuable, following with an outline of longer objectives, science, soil profiles, long and short term benefits, and putting information down on paper. Delivery of such information could be deliverable to those interested, along with the Forum mailing list.

Tributaries are being looked at as well, including the Feather River. CA Audubon is also working with local chapters to bring information from other parts of the state, including Cache Creek.

John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust, pointed out that if the bank swallow is downgraded to endangered, the relationship will change, involving DFG and public hearings. Information needs to be made as complete as possible.

Landowner and agency involvement is crucial in order to move forward. Meanwhile, projects have to continue and hard points need to be protected. DWR is looking at mitigation sites and finding existing sites to protect. Until there is a comprehensive picture, work is done on a project by project basis.

## 7. Manager's Report

A letter has been received by SRCAF, finalizing the Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator grant. Ten percent of the Proposition 84 funding has been released until the next fiscal year.

Work with the Deer Creek feasibility study, overlapping Kopta Slough is being coordinated. A full presentation will be made at the next meeting. Good tour handouts were made available at the Kopta Slough boat tour earlier in the day. The (2003) Draft Detailed Project Report and Environmental Assessment for Woodson Bridge are available on the SRCAF website at <http://www.sacramentoriver.org/SRCAF>.

Colusa Subreach Planning Project studies have been completed. The Environmental Assessment for seven properties is available online. The last Advisory Workgroup meeting is scheduled for Monday June 16. SRCAF attended a Colusa County Board of Supervisor's meeting to provide an informational presentation on CSP. If properties move to restoration stage, it was requested that they meet with the Board of Supervisor's to keep them informed.

Gregg Werner, TNC, added that the public review period extends for 10 more days. The Final Report, including the final landowner survey, was released last week and is available. DWR has picked up the Ward property and are looking to plant next spring.

SRCAF outreach included: the newsletter being sent by email; outreach posters; a presentation by Josh Brown, Resource Conservation Assistant, at the Watershed Festival in Caldwell Park; Josh and Beverley's attendance at a Cluster meeting with NRCS; and press releases. Three Safe Harbor public meetings have been held in Red Bluff, Yolo and Chico.

Scott Rice, DWR, has been reporting on a regular basis to the TAC. SRCAF will send out information for the FloodSAFE Program Stakeholder Briefing meeting in Chico. A local levee repair program is available for those that do not fall within the state system and non levee evaluation for future repair. The deadline for available grants is June 30. Those interested in applying have to go through a local government agency.

## 8. Board Committee Reports

The Executive Committee report included SRCAF grant funding quarterly information and the receipt of the Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator grant. Jim McKeivitt, SRCAF Board Chair, reiterated encouragement to MOA signatories, to attend the SRCAF Board meetings so that input and votes can be heard, and coordination and compliance can be made.

TAC Chair Ajay Singh complimented the SRCAF staff regarding activity reports and updates on projects and researches along the river. The following projects were reviewed:

*The Lake California Water Intake Fish Screen Project* (Project Tracker #135), was presented to the TAC in April and June. DFG is the lead for the project to design, construct, and install a fish screen that meets federal and state mandates for safe fish passage. Ron Warner moved to write a letter stating that the project meets the principles and guidelines of the SRCAF Handbook and that the design process is supported, requesting more information as installation details become available, seconded by Glenn Hawes. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

*The Elkhorn Basin/Knaggs Ranch Project* (Project Tracker #137) came to the TAC in May, as requested by SRCAF Board member Sandy Morey. Sacramento Valley Conservancy, Yolo Land Trust, and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency are partnering for acquisition and permanent protection of 1700 ac. Marc Faye moved to write a letter stating that the project meets the principles and guidelines of the SRCAF Handbook and indicating that, although the project is just outside the Sacramento River Conservation Area (SRCA), restoration would be a valuable adjunct to the Conservation Area, seconded by Lynnel Pollock. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

*Lower Deer Creek Restoration and Flood Management Project* (Project Tracker #139) representatives did not present to the TAC and was removed from today's agenda.

*M&T/Llano Seco Pumps* (Project Tracker #58) – Olen Zirkle, Ducks Unlimited, gave a presentation to the TAC and is requesting a time extension until December on the current CALFED grant to allow for completion of physical modeling and environmental documentation. Glenn Hawes moved to send a letter stating the project's time extension meets the principles and guidelines of the Handbook, seconded by Jane Dolan. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### 9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is scheduled for September 18, at the Monday Afternoon Club, in Willows.

*Special Acknowledgements are extended to the following, for their assistance with this year's annual SRCAF BBQ and boat tour: Burt and Joyce Bundy, Rick Elefant and Diana Jacobs, Marc and Gerda Faye, Adam Henderson, Bill Poytress, Koll Buer, Ron Warner, Glen Pearson, Mark Gilles, John Mulder, Denise Reichenberg, Andy Hiebert, the Tehama County Sheriff's Office and the Tehama County Farm Bureau.*