J Levee gets another boost of flood funding, protection for Hamilton City on the way

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Hamilton City >> Momentum continues for the flood control project along the Sacramento River near Hamilton City. Millions of dollars in new levee construction funds are working their way through Congress. The most recent news was that the Senate Appropriations Committee approved \$15 million for this fiscal year. That's the same amount included in President Barack Obama's budget, and the same amount already approved by the House of Representatives. The full Senate still needs to vote to approve the \$15 million.

The full dollar amount for the project is \$73 million and includes 6.8 miles of setback levees along the west bank of the Sacramento River. Over time, 1,400 acres of habitat restoration will be installed.

If all goes well, the project could be done by 2018.

In 2014 Congress approved \$8.6 million and in 2015 \$3.8 million was approved. The local match of funds

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The plans for \$73 million in improvements along the Sacramento River include 6.8 miles of setback levees and habitat restoration. The levee is shown in purple on the diagram.

has been almost \$2 million, and another sizeable local share of cost will include a donation of land from the Nature Conservancy.

For a fact sheet on the project: https://goo.gl/qeYsP2

In January, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers removed and transplanted about 30 elderberry bushes along the levee. A safety review has also been completed. Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District will donate soil to the project, and that soil has been tested and approved.

Two contracts are out to bid, and should be awarded in July. The first contract is to construct a portion of the levee, and the second for vegetation for that stretch of the levee. More field work will begin in September.

Citizens in Hamilton City have worked to gain support for the project for years, including meeting with elected officials who represent the area. For several years, the project was approved but stalled due to national budget issues.

In 2014 funding was approved, with more funding approved the next year. Once federal money begins to flow, it is usually easier to achieve more funding, local leaders have noted.

When funding was approved in the House, Hamilton City Reclamation District 2140 put out a big thanks to Congressmen John Garamendi, D-Fairfield, and Doug LaMalfa, R-Richvale.

This week it was time to thank Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the ranking Californian on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

"She is totally committed to seeing the project get the funding it needs," Lee Ann Grigsby-Puente said in a press release. Grigsby-Puente is president of Reclamation District 2140.