

**Yolo Bypass Working Group
January 10, 2017(Meeting 52); 1 PM to 3 PM,
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Conference Room,
45211 County Road 32b, Davis, CA**

Draft Meeting Summary

Meeting Participants

Jeremy Arrich – CA Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Peter Blodgett, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE)
Chris Bowles, cbec eco engineering
Mariah Brunbaugh, USACOE
Ryan Carrothers, CDFW
Jack DeWit, DeWit Farms
Mike DeWit, Tenant Farmer
Jonathon Howard, Assembly District 4
Larry Jahn – Los Rios Farm
Campbell Ingram, Delta Conservancy
Marge Kolar, Yolo Basin Foundation
Rhiannon Kucharski, USACOE
Robin Kulakow –Yolo Basin Foundation
Corey Lasso, DWR
Mike Lear – Swanston Ranch
Linda Leeman, Yolo Basin Foundation
Betsy Marchand – Yolo Basin Foundation
Petrea Marchand – Consero Solutions representing Yolo County
Stephen McCord – McCord Environmental
John McNerney – City of Davis
Selby Mohr – Mound Farms
Andrew Muha, USACE
Eric Nagy – Larsen Wurzel Associates
Meegan Nagy, Reclamation District 108
James Newcomb, DWR
Martha Ozonoff – Yolo Basin Foundation
Michael Perrone, DWR
Paul Phillips – CA Waterfowl Association
Mike Roberts – DWR
Nancy Sandburg, USACOE
Bjarni Serup - CDFW
Greg Schmid – Tule Ranch

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Kara Smith, Yolo Basin Foundation
Julie Spezia, Metropolitan Water District
Don Stevens, Glide In Ranch
Jeff Stoddard – CDFW, Manager, Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Eric Tsai – DWR
Leanne Villa – Yolo Basin Foundation
Melissa Weymiller, USACOE

Introductions:

The group was welcomed by Jeff Stoddard and Robin Kulakow. Meeting participants introduced themselves. Robin Kulakow facilitated the meeting.

1. Sacramento River General Reevaluation Study, Rhiannon Kucharski, US Army Corps of Engineers, (refer to Attachment A)

Study Background

The goal of the reevaluation is to look at the multiple needs of the Bypass system, primarily ecosystem restoration and flood management. The conclusions for the first evaluation came from the Central Valley Integrated Flood Management Watershed Study however ecosystem restoration opportunities were not originally envisioned. The study area for this reevaluation is Knight's Landing to Collinsville which encompasses the bottom third of the Bypass system (726 square miles). The ultimate goal is to improve the flood system by improving flood control thereby reducing risk, and restoring ecosystems and habitat. Improving recreational access is also an ancillary objective.

Status Update

At the Yolo Bypass Working Group meeting in December 2016, the Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) had reached the Alternative Formulation and Analysis milestone. They are currently in the Tentatively Selected Plan process. Seven alternatives have been identified with the potential for an eighth if a locally preferred plan (LPP) is added. The Corps uses different methods to analyze flood

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risk management and ecosystem restoration. Flood risk management uses a benefit cost analysis where the benefit must outweigh the risk from an economic standpoint. Ecosystem restoration uses a cost effective analysis which is based on the significance of resources and ecosystem output (what is the lowest annual cost per acre). Any restored land must be Corps land and cannot be mitigation. The “future without project condition” does assume that many actions would be in place. The Corps tried to identify all possible ecosystem restoration measures and gathered information from current projects.

The flood risk management analysis identified areas with potential flood damages, flood risk management system features, and non-structural elements. Sixty potential features were identified and some dependencies existed. Examples of features that were identified: setback levees (remove existing levees, construction of new setback levees, restore lands within floodway, account for lands already restored); restore habitat within Bypass (identify land already in conservation ownership, restoration of wetland or riparian habitat based on elevation); Deep Water Ship Channel (use to convey flood flows, construct notch and closure structure, improve east levee); setback levee along the Sacramento River main stem (remove all or a portion of a levee, construct setback levee and restore habitat).

For ecosystem restoration, the analysis is based on acreage; for flood risk the analysis is based on stage reduction. They then focused on best buy plans. Alternatives 1-3 focus on ecosystem restoration first then layered flood risk. Alternatives 4 and 5 started with flood risk then considered ecosystem restoration. Alternatives 6 and 7 are less land intensive alternatives. Alternative 7 is west side levees as opposed to the Deep Water Ship Channel. Department of Water Resources (DWR) would provide the LPP which must be submitted by April. If federally supportable, the LPP would be the plan ultimately recommended. DWR is working with the Corps to potentially avoid needing to do an LPP.

Next Steps

The next step would be to select the final array of alternatives, hopefully 4-5 maximum. To choose the final array of alternatives, the Corps will quantify flood

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risk management benefits, perform a tradeoff analysis between project purposes, identify federal interest plans (basis for cost share), and develop a LPP if necessary. Additional meetings will be scheduled to present the final alternatives beginning in Summer 2017. The Environmental review will occur after the final alternatives have been identified.

Questions/Comments – Stephen McCord asked if the alternatives considered each other or if they could be layered. *Response* - any restoration should be self-sustaining (using native species where applicable) that provides the most benefit. Selby Mohr asked how the state’s proposed tunnel project would interact with components of the Corps project. *Response* - the tunnels were included in modeling for future conditions without project. Federal and state agencies need to consider each other’s projects. Additionally, the tunnels are outside of this project’s study area and are for water supply not flood control.

1. Lower Elkhorn Basin Levee Setback Project, Corey Lasso (refer to Attachment B)

Study Background

DWR has reached out to many state and federal agencies regarding this project. The project is the result of the Central Valley Flood Protection Act of 2008 which leads to the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) update. The CVFPP leads to a Basin-wide Feasibility Study, then the Yolo Bypass, then this project. This is a system wide effort. Typically, you start at the bottom of system and work your way up to prevent duplicating effort in case effects are caused downstream. Many project/planning efforts via local, state, and federal agencies were considered; everything had to be coordinated. The Lower Elkhorn project is a near term project that will occur between 2015 and 2022. There is also funding for this project through Proposition 1E, however this money must be committed prior to June 2020.

Status Update

This year is 65% 408 design and EIR/EIS public review. The project features include creating seven miles of setback levee, maintaining agriculture in the Yolo

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Bypass, degrading existing levee with portions preserved for habitat and wind/wave protection, maintaining areas for expansion of the east side Tule Canal, preserving and enhancing vegetation for habitat and wind/wave protection, grading and improving drainage. Proposition 1E money is for flood control and this project will reduce flood stage but this project provides additional benefits of ecosystem vitality and agricultural sustainability. Alternatives are proposed.

Questions/Comments - Won't this project increase flood stage height and/or the duration of inundation downstream. *Response* - there will be a minimal increase downstream for 200-year event but will maintain the same amount of freeboard. Any significant impacts would be mitigated; however, this has not been identified as a significant impact. DWR is required to address any negative hydraulic impact.

The issues of land ownership and management were also discussed. Ideally, the state would own the land under the levee in fee simple but does not want to own the remainder. However, there are different options available.

2. Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project, James Newcomb (refer to Attachment C)

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve fish passage at the Fremont Weir and within the Tule Canal. The project would modify an existing fish ladder at the Fremont Weir and improve fish passage within the channel both upstream and downstream of the Fremont Weir. In addition, one downstream agricultural road crossing would be removed and another such crossing would be replaced with a structure that provides improved fish passage within the Tule Canal.

Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2017.

DWR and US Bureau of Reclamation propose to:

- Modify the existing Fremont Weir fish ladder to provide improved upstream passage for salmonids and sturgeon when the Sacramento River overtops Fremont Weir and immediately after the Sacramento River recedes below Fremont Weir.

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- Improve fish passage conditions in the channel that extends from the existing fish ladder upstream to the Sacramento River.
- Improve fish passage conditions in the scour channel that extends from the existing fish ladder downstream to an existing deep pond.
- Remove one earthen agricultural road crossing (Agricultural Road Crossing 3) and replace one earthen agricultural road crossing (Agricultural Road Crossing 2) with a structure that allows for improved fish passage through the Tule Canal and continued agricultural utility.

The existing Fremont Weir fish ladder and upstream and downstream adjoining channels would be widened and deepened to increase depth and decrease velocity for salmonids and sturgeon. In addition, the maximum target flow through the fish passage structure would be limited to approximately 1,100 cubic feet per second (cfs)when the Sacramento River reaches an elevation of 31.8 feet, the point at which Fremont Weir begins to overtop. This flow target would minimize impacts on existing downstream land uses in the Yolo Bypass and avoid impacts on water diverters along the Sacramento River

The public draft of the environmental planning documents will be available in mid-January.