

**YOLO BYPASS WORKING GROUP
MEETING 25**

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: MAY 29, 2003

LOCATION: California Department of Fish and Game
Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters
45211 County Road 32B (Chiles Road)
Davis, CA 95616

IN ATTENDANCE: Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation (YBF)
Dave Feliz, California Department of Fish & Game (DFG)
Ed Towne, Bull Sprig Outing
Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)
Casey Walsh Cady, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
Chadd Santerre, California Waterfowl Association (CWA)
Bryan Plude, Canvasback Consulting
Margit Aramburu, Delta Protection Commission
John Currey, Dixon Resource Conservation District (Dixon RCD)
Marianne Kirkland, Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Trevor Greene, DWR
Ted Sommer, DWR
Boone Lek, DWR/Reclamation Board
Pat Fitzmorris, Ducks Unlimited
Chris Fulster, Glide In Ranch
Dick Goodell, Glide In Ranch
Dave Kohlhurst, Glide In Ranch
Don Stevens, Glide In Ranch
Jeanne Jones, Jones and Associates
Armand Ruby, Larry Walker and Associates
Greg Schmid, Los Rios Farms
Ron Morazzini, Supervisor Mike McGowan Representative
Ken Rood, Northwest Hydraulic Consulting Engineers (NHC)
Ken Martin, Rising Wings
Butch Hodgkins, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA)
Mick Klasson, SAFCA
Tim Washburn, SAFCA
Tony Lucchesi, Wildlands Inc., Pope Ranch
Kingsley Melton, Assemblywoman Lois Wolk
Tom Harvey, USFWS Stone Lakes NWR
Rachelle De Clerck, YBF
Beth Gabor, Yolo County Board of Supervisors
Paul Robbins, Yolo County Resource Conservation District (RCD)

Brett Williams, Yolo County Parks and Resource Management Division
Walt Chechov, Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS)
Tom Moore, NRCS
Chuck Dudley

NEXT MEETING: July 10th, 2003. 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

Dave Ceppos called the meeting to order and began introductions of attendees. Mr. Ceppos briefly covered the agenda and the purpose of the Working Group. The Working Group is open to the public and has been in existence for 3 and one-half years. It provides a focused opportunity for farmers, wetland managers, land owners and agencies within the Bypass to discuss Bypass related issues as well as provide guidance and opinions on such issues. The Working Group is continually funded by CALFED.

Mr. Ceppos updated the Working Group on an action item from the January 23rd, 2003 meeting. Working Group participants who had questions regarding the Farm Bill were to contact John Currey, Dave Guy or Dave Ceppos. No one was contacted with questions.

Mr. Ceppos asked if there were any changes or edits to the draft January 23, 2003 meeting minutes. No changes or edits were requested and the January 23, 2003 meeting minutes were adopted as final.

**Update on Individual Landowner Interviews in Bypass
Dave Ceppos, CCP**

One of the tasks under the current CALFED contract is contacting individual landowners about their interest in potential land use changes on their properties. In order to maintain the confidentiality of those interviewed, no names of interviewees were given; however, the majority of those interviewed to date have been affiliated with agriculture. Many of the land use changes discussed were short term, interchangeable changes as opposed to long term, in perpetuity changes. Some interview participants closer to the Tule Canal were interested in creating temporary shallow flooded habitat for fish.

The next round of interviews may be with the local Duck Clubs in the Southern Bypass. Chadd Santerre and Ducks Unlimited will be assisting with those interviews.

Participant Question: Please remind the Working Group of the goals and the geographic scope of the interviews.

Mr. Ceppos: The purpose of the interviews is to see if landowners in the Bypass have an interest in land use changes. The basis of these potential changes was previously determined and memorialized by the Working Group in the Management Strategy document. The interviews and any potential changes are based totally on willing landowners. The geographic scope of the interviews includes Fremont Weir to the bottom of Liberty Island.

Update on the Regional Water Quality Control Board Agriculture Waiver

John Currey, Dixon RCD

John Currey gave a brief summary of where the Dixon RCD has been and where it is currently going in regards to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Agricultural Waiver.

On December 5, 2003 agricultural landowners will need to decide whether to apply to the RWQCB Agricultural Waiver as a group or as an individual. The agricultural waiver requires that drains and the flow direction of water on the property be listed. Monitoring under the agricultural waiver will be implemented by 2005.

In April a staff report was submitted to RWQCB that looked at historical water quality issues, identified problems and where work can begin. Based on the staff report a proposed resolution would have made a regulatory approach directing watershed groups and individuals to report *by* June 2004. The proposed resolution was rejected and the December 5th date was reaffirmed. However, the resolution has been held over until July for a revote. Therefore, the bad news is that these proposed steps and rules may change. The good news is there are many entities and individuals to help landowners continue figuring out and complying with the process. There will be additional issues that will have to be dealt with in regards to water discharge from agricultural properties.

The Dixon RCD wants to represent landowners in its district as a group. Currently, Dixon RCD has been putting together information and materials for landowners. In April, Dixon RCD had a meeting and sent a survey to land owners in its district. Approximately 50% of the surveys were completed. Of the completed surveys, 25% of the landowners would like to help with a watershed group and 25% would like to meet with the Dixon RCD. The overall consensus was to have Dixon RCD form a watershed group to represent landowners. In order to avoid duplication and redundancy, John Currey will be on the Sacramento Valley Watershed Coalition steering committee. The steering committee is trying to submit a report to RWQCB by June 30th to cover watershed users in the Bypass among others.

The Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition has divided the larger watershed into ten sub-watersheds. Yolo and Solano are considered one sub-watershed. Yolo RCD, Dixon RCD and the Farm Bureau have submitted plans to try to defer the costs of monitoring and currently are waiting for information from the RWQCB. Yolo and Solano are working hard to develop a program to allow landowners to farm and manage wetlands in a manner that has minimal disruption to operations; however the RWQCB will be directing groups on the nature of monitoring over the next 12 months. Therefore, landowners should look at their properties for potential threats to the watershed.

In summary, the Dixon RCD is unsure of what RWQCB will decide in July 2003 but will continue to monitor the situation and report back to the Working Group.

Participant Question: Are urban discharges listed?

Mr. Currey: Not under the agricultural waiver; however the urban areas are monitored heavily under other regulations.

Participant Question: Are there any feelings for what the RWQCB will be looking for during the water quality monitoring?

Mr. Currey: In April, the RWQCB was requiring everything including salinity and organic carbons but the final constituents remains to be determined.

Participant Question: Temperature also?

Mr. Currey: Yes and flow.

Participant Question: What does a landowner need to do in the near future?

Mr. Currey: Landowners should watch for information from their local agencies, because at some point sub-watersheds will need to do informational outreach letting land owners know about necessary actions. Ultimately, under the December 5th ruling, landowners have to be part of a watershed group or comply as an individual.

Robin Kulakow 6/26/03 11:20 PM
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Participant Question: Does this include Duck Clubs? Will they be monitored for discharge into the toe drain?

Mr. Currey: All water from all landowners would be monitored; but not as individuals. The sub-watersheds want to see changes in the general area that result in an overall positive effect at the end as opposed to monitoring individual landowners.

Mr. Ceppos: What can the Working Group do to keep everyone in the loop? Will land owners prefer to get the information from their local RCDs or do they want to give the information to YBF to give to the RCDs or should YBF keep land owners linked on the website?

Mr. Currey: The problem is the situation is so fluid with the RWQCB and there are 10,000 individual landowners. It would be almost impossible to keep everyone abreast of all the constant changes. The RCDs are currently paralyzed and there aren't any definitive guidelines on what landowners need to do. As soon as the Dixon RCD knows something definitive they would like to participate in outreach to the local landowners.

Participant Question: Is there someone providing guidance to land owners about the difference associated with what is going to occur in July and advocacy?

Mr. Currey: There has not been a great public outreach effort to all the various landowners however; Dixon RCD has sent it out extensive information to those landowners who want to be part of the political process. General information has been sent to all landowners.

If anyone would like to become more involved, another point of contact is the North Delta Water Agency.

Participant Question: Is the Water Quality Coalition going to cover all the monitoring?

Mr. Currey: An assessment of what is already being monitored needs to be conducted, but most of the monitoring will likely occur at the sub-watershed level. In April the RWQCB wanted monitoring points in not more than 5,000 acres, which would be a huge amount of monitoring points. However, this number could change by the July meeting.

Participant Question: Any sense about what the board is going to do in regards to low flow periods?

Mr. Currey: The RWQCB is not familiar with the local topography, that's where the local agencies will step in to define the watershed so monitoring plans can be designed.

At this point the RWQCB doesn't know what the problems are or how to approach them. The RWQCB would like something done.

City of Woodland CALFED Grant to Develop a Yolo Bypass Water Quality Planning Process
Armand Ruby, Larry Walker Associates

The Yolo Bypass Water Quality Planning Project is funded through CALFED for a total sum of \$288,081. The lead agency is the City of Woodland; however the City of Davis and UC Davis are also participants of the grant.

How the Project Came to Be:

The City of Woodland and others were under increased regulation especially in regards to wastewater and urban runoff. Some of the new regulations are monetarily prohibitive and the increased costs would be passed onto city individuals. Some of the new regulations would require wastewater plant improvements to reduce salt content to allow for salt sensitive plants, such as strawberries, to be grown in the area. The potential impact to the Bypass is loss of water for irrigation and wetland management.

The overall goal of the project is production of a comprehensive plan for improvement of water quality within the Yolo Bypass. Such a plan will account for the diverse interests in and uses of the Bypass, and will aim to make the best and most reasonable use of funds available for that purpose.

The objectives of the Yolo Bypass Water Quality Planning Project are:

- 1) Identify specific Pollutants of Concern (POCs) currently impacting the beneficial uses of surface waters in the Bypass and downstream Bay-Delta
- 2) Identify effective, implementable controls for the high priority POCs;
- 3) Develop a comprehensive management plan to improve water quality in the Bypass.

The overall approach is as follows:

- 1) Form an advisory group of Yolo Bypass stakeholders to participate in collaborative process of developing the water quality management plan;
- 2) Compile and evaluate existing water quality, flow, and land use information;
- 3) Conduct a surface water quality assessment and monitoring program to identify the current POCs for the Bypass;
- 4) Quantify the POCs and their apparent sources with the Bypass;
- 5) Assess whether the measured levels of POCs are causing impairment of beneficial uses of the Bypass;
- 6) Identify and evaluate alternative controls to reduce significant sources of POCs, including where appropriate POTWs, urban runoff, and agriculture.
- 7) For those POCs for which effective controls appear technically or economically infeasible, investigate the applicability of current water quality objectives for these POCs and suggest site-specific objectives, pollutant trading, or other alternative approaches, as appropriate;
- 8) Provide public education and obtain public input regarding potential methods for improving water quality in the Bypass, as well reducing loads on the Bay-Delta; and
- 9) Produce a Water Quality Management Plan report containing a recommended program of implementation to reduce POCs that are degrading beneficial uses of surface water.

The monitoring program is intended to supplement other available information. There will be four sites and four quarterly monitoring events a year. The monitoring data will be supplemented wherever possible with data from other programs.

Participant Question: Will the management plan include the possibility of discharging water into the Toe Drain?

Mr. Ruby: Water discharged into the Tule Canal and Toe Drain from urban and agricultural uses is considered effluent.

Participant Question: Is the primary focus urban runoff and the effect on the Bypass, or is agricultural water also being monitored for water quality in Bypass?

Mr. Ruby: All water sources are being looked at including agricultural water.

Participant Question: Is this grant and monitoring plan going to overlap with the agricultural waiver?

Mr. Ruby: The monitoring program is limited to four sites and four events. The monitoring results will be useful to those affected by the agricultural waiver as background information in regards to what is discharging into and leaving the Bypass. It can be used as baseline information of water quality.

Participant Question: Will information also be collected regarding the discharge sources at the monitoring location?

Mr. Ruby: Yes.

Participant: Cities are considered to be point source polluters. Agriculture, duck clubs and wetlands are considered non-point source polluters; therefore cities are heavily regulated.

Participant: In the summer, flow in the Bypass is upstream. Sampling in the summer should be about monitoring the downstream impacts, not the upstream impacts.

Participant Question: Where does the City of Davis and UC Davis discharge?

The City of Davis discharges to their treatment plant near the Willow Slough Bypass, which then is treated and released into the Bypass. UC Davis discharges into Putah Creek.

Larry Walker Associates is already contacting people but would like to contact a few participants from this Working Group.

**Presentation of May 3, 2003 Yolo Bypass Flood Event
(Butch Hodgkins, Tim Washburn, SAFCA)**

Mr. Hodgkins was originally going to present aerial photographs of the Bypass from the May 3rd flood; however, the aerial photos were not conducted as requested of the photographer. Therefore, Mr. Hodgkins brought contact aerial prints from early March 2003 to show a background of the Bypass. The aerial photograph prints are 1 inch to 1,000 feet scale.

Mr. Hodgkins had a meeting with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to estimate the cost of maintaining flood control structures and waterways. DWR controls vegetation in the Bypass in order to prevent flow impedance. In the northern Bypass near the Fremont Weir, DWR spends \$500/acre/year to control vegetation. This information drove home to Mr. Hodgkins how agriculture results in good stewardship of the land and why agriculture is a great benefit to flood control.

Over the next year SAFCA will be meeting with land owners, stake holders, etc. to obtain information for SAFCA's proposed Lower Sacramento River regional flood management project and to help get the proposal through Congress. Farming in the Bypass is a significant cost savings because of the intensive maintenance associated with the agricultural process. SAFCA would like to develop an Agricultural Viability Element within the project. SAFCA would like to begin focused discussions with agricultural interests in June.

There are many approaches SAFCA would like to look at to reduce the impact to the Bypass during flood events including:

- Can anything be done to prevent late spring floods?
- Can anything be done to Cache and Putah Creek, Willow Slough and the Ridge cut to prevent broad scale local nuisance flooding?
- Look at 5-day forecast for flood control estimates to improve estimates of Fremont Weir spillage.

- Is there a drainage plan that could involve significant portions of the Bypass so when Fremont Weir spillage occurs in spring, it can be estimated where the water will go?
- How much compensation could flood control easements contribute on an annual basis to help make farming viable in Bypass in order to prevent farmers from selling off their land?

SAFCA needs the help of landowners in the Bypass to answer these questions and to help design the project.

Regarding recent legislative efforts by SAFCA, they had noticed that the water bonds from the Proposition 13 program have typically given large amounts of money to conservancies for waterways. SAFCA thought it would be a good idea to create a conservancy along the Sacramento and American Rivers. SAFCA introduced a spot bill (ABA 95) to the state legislature. The spot bill was intended to be a placeholder and was therefore, very vague. Legislators asked for the spot bill to be more specific. The changes to the spot bill included SAFCA proposing the funding of staff and creating a conservancy. SAFCA forgot to tell the Yolo County Board of Supervisors, and unfortunately this was perceived as an effort to create something without telling Yolo County.

Participant Question: There is no one on SAFCA's board from Yolo, how will that be addressed in the future?

Mr. Hodgkins: If there is ultimately a regional project representation on the board will be expanded to include Yolo County with a seat strictly for project-related issues.

Participant Question: Is there any component of the plan that looks at existing duck clubs or wetlands that could benefit from the flooding?

Mr. Hodgkins: The plan includes duck clubs and the Wildlife Area.

**Presentation of Current SAFCA Engineering Study of Internal Bypass Flood Management Features
(Ken Rood, Northwest Hydraulic Consulting Engineers)**

Northwest Hydraulic Consulting Engineers (NHC) is identifying management strategies for spring floods in the Bypass that benefit agriculture in combination with ecological or environmental measures.

NHCs approach includes:

- Hydrologic analysis
- Site Inspections (May Floods)
- Interviews
- Identify management strategies or physical works that benefit agriculture.

Project constraints include:

- Focus on West Side Tributaries
- Lack of gage records
- Lack of hydraulic models
- Coordination with other Lower Sacramento Regional River Project components

NHC conducted:

- Hydrologic Analyses
- Historic Records (1968 to 2002) searches for April, May, and June
- Historic information regarding durations of floods

April is the month most likely to have high flows that will result in overtopping of the riverbanks. In May the flows slow significantly and in June flows rarely overtop banks.

Participant Question: How are the numbers created for the hydrologic analyses created?

Mr. Rood: The numbers were created through modeling; estimation with some actual flow data.

Overall plan strategies are different for each tributary as well as for properties along the Tule Canal and Toe Drain.

Flood Management Tools:

- Flood forecasting on tributaries
- Channel Maintenance
- Channel Capacity Increases
- Channel Modification or Re-alignment
- Other Major Works (i.e. levies, large structures)

NHC would like to talk to more people including duck clubs. NHC is unsure of the timeframe; however NHC will be coordinating with Dave Ceppos and the ongoing interviews he is conducting.

**Group Discussion of Recent Flood Event Impacts
(All Participants)**

Participant Question: How can dam releases and unregulated flow be monitored in Putah Creek?

Mr. Rood: NHC is looking at what can be done in the Bypass and not so much in Putah Creek.

Dave Feliz: It may be possible to create wetlands and divert spillage into the lowlands to diminish the impact on the Bypass.

Dave Ceppos: Mr. Rood would like to know how the Bypass is configured, such as grading, vegetation elevation etc.

Participant Question: What about expanding the toe drain by dredging out the berm next to the deep-water channel levee?

Mr. Rood: That could be an option that is combined with other projects.

Participant Question: If the toe drain were widened wouldn't it just fill with tidal water?

That is possible. How about an inflatable weir at Lisbon?

Participant Question: How about upstream changes such as an increase in storage capacity? Can tertiary treatment stations be designed to absorb additional water during times of increased flow?

Answer: The west side tributaries might be able to do some re-operations with Clear Lake. However; this may not be feasible. Attempting to get water out of the lower half of the Bypass seems more important than dealing with the west side tributaries.

Are the spring events that periodically cause impacts just an expected cost of doing work in the Bypass?

Participant: We understand the Bypass will flood; however, when it floods April through June it creates an economic hardship. Frequencies seem to be increasing or at least in the mid-late 1990s.

Participant Question: Are there places, such as Knights Landing where enlarging the irrigation channels could be a benefit to get water to the Tule Canal? Is that feasible?

An increase of flow to the Tule Canal will affect downstream properties. Some options that are being considered are using wetlands as holding ponds.

Participant: It's not the west side flows that are creating the problem but the releases out of Bullard's Bar that result in the Bypass being flooded for two days and out of business for three weeks. Overtopping of the Fremont Weir is the significant problem.

A better forecasting scenario would enable farmers to plan plantings. West side flooding is pretty rare; however attention should be focused on the Sacramento River flows. These events are impacted by large amounts of water being dumped out of the reservoir. They far exceed natural runoff.

**Group Discussion of Creating Bypass-specific Agricultural Subgroup
(All Participants)**

SAFCA is looking for people who want to participate in a brain storming exercise to come up with ideas that would be directed towards agriculture to make it more viable in a flood management scenario. How can those in the urban sector contribute in some way to make agriculture viable in the Bypass? Who would like to sit down with SAFCA and NHC consultants to brainstorm ideas for agriculture viability? Participants will be meeting frequently to come up with material to work with.

Yolo Bypass Working Group Participants:

- Chuck Dudley
- Ken Martin
- John Currey
- Casey Walsh
- Pat Fitzmorris
- Tom Moore
- Chris Fulster (or Dick Goodell)
- A representative from Wildlands

Meeting was adjourned. Next meeting scheduled for July 10, 2003.