



Central Valley Flood Protection Plan

Meeting Summary

Lower San Joaquin Regional Management Actions Work Group Meeting #2

Time: September 22, 2010, 9:00am-1:00pm
Location: San Joaquin Farm Bureau
 3290 N Ad Art Road
 Stockton, CA 95215

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Present:

Name	Organization
<i>Carolyn Lott</i>	Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)
<i>Marti Kie</i>	Department of Water Resources (DWR)
<i>Laura Jensen</i>	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
<i>Mary Matella</i>	American Rivers
<i>Doug Edwards</i>	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
<i>Jennifer Hobbs</i>	US Fish and Wildlife Agency (FWS)
<i>Jeremy Arrich</i>	DWR
<i>Ken Kirby</i>	Kirby Consulting
<i>Sarah McIlroy</i>	Stantec, Inc.
<i>Mary Hildebrand</i>	San Joaquin Farm Bureau/South Delta Water Agency
<i>Roger Putty</i>	MWH
<i>Julie Rentner</i>	River Partners
<i>Tom Gau</i>	San Joaquin County Public Works
<i>Cait Plantaric</i>	DWR
<i>Dave Peterson</i>	San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFCA)
<i>Noel Lerner</i>	DWR
<i>Sam Magill</i>	CCP

Absent:

<i>Roger Churchwell</i>	SJAFCA
<i>Susan Dell'Osso</i>	River Partners
<i>Maria Encinas</i>	City of Patterson
<i>Jim Giottonini</i>	SJAFCA
<i>Kevin Kauffman</i>	Stockton East Water District
<i>Sandi Matsumoto</i>	TNC
<i>Jesse Roseman</i>	Tuolumne River Trust
<i>John Shelton</i>	California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)

WORK GROUP ACTION ITEMS/HOMEWORK

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Sam Magill will distribute the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) to Lower San Joaquin Regional Management Action Work Group (RMAWG) members as soon as it is released.
2. Sam Magill will provide RMAWG members with information on where to find the Round 1 and Round 2 CVFPP management actions workshop summaries as needed.
3. Staff will examine the Flood Conveyance Plan for specific examples of dredging opportunities within the Lower San Joaquin region.
4. RMAWG members will provide any additional comments on regional applicability of management actions to Roger Putty by September 30.
5. Tom Gau will contact Ron Baldwin from the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services to develop a list of critical infrastructure pieces at risk from flood within San Joaquin County.
6. Sam Magill will provide the Stanislaus County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan to Mr. Putty for review.
7. Staff will work with California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA) to develop a list of important infrastructure within the Lower San Joaquin region.
8. RMAWG participants will submit any additional suggestions on critical infrastructure pieces to Mr. Putty as soon as possible.
9. Staff will contact RMAWG subcommittee members immediately regarding subcommittee participation, planning, and next steps.

GROUP RECAP: (meeting highlights for use by Work Group partners in their communications)

The RMAWG convened for its second meeting to discuss management actions for the Phase 2 CVFPP.

The Work Group's purpose is the development of content for the Management Actions Report (Report), a key component for developing the 2012 CVFPP. The Report will identify specific management actions for use in preparing the CVFPP. In subsequent phases of the CVFPP, these management actions will be combined to form regional and systemwide solution sets to address problems surrounding the State Plan of Flood Control (SPFC) and adjacent areas. The Work Group is one of five regional work groups in the Systemwide Planning Area.

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MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Review outcomes of Management Actions Workshops and process for revising Management Actions.
2. Introduce the process and logic for building solution sets.
3. Discuss regional applicability of Management Actions.
4. Initiate discussion of “regional objectives,” and organize subcommittee to continue development of regional objectives (to take place between Meetings 2 and 3).

SUMMARY:

****ALL PRESENTATIONS AND MATERIALS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp****

Opening Remarks

Noel Lerner opened the meeting and thanked participants for attending. He reviewed the CVFPP process to date, and reminded RMAWG management actions from Phase 2 of the CVFPP will be used to develop regional and systemwide solution sets in Phases 3 and 4. Comments on RMAWG or other CVFPP work products should be directed to Joe Bartlett.

After introductory remarks, Jeremy Arrich reviewed the overall CVFPP process. The 2012 CVFPP is designed to identify regional and systemwide solutions to a variety of flood threats, but will not identify project/feasibility-level specifics. “Sub-areas” within each region will be identified, and staff/RMAWG members will determine how management actions can apply to those areas. Information from each of the regions will then be combined to form systemwide solution sets.

Mr. Lerner then reviewed specific work products associated with Phase 2 of the CVFPP. These include the State Plan of Flood Control Descriptive Document (SPFCDD), the Flood Control System Status Report (FCSSR), and the Interim Progress Summary No. 2 (IPS2). Also under development in Phase 2 are a CVFPP progress report to the legislature and the NOP for the CVFPP PEIR. Concurrent with document/work product development, DWR staff is also working to complete key early implementation projects (EIP) within the SPFC. Finally, DWR staff is working on responses to specific questions raised by RMAWG members, particularly in regards to state responsibility for floods. SJAFCA has a number of specific questions on this and other subjects at RMAWG Meeting 1; DWR hopes to provide specific responses during Meeting 3.

Discussion:

- A participant asked if the NOP will be sent to RMAWG members. Sam Magill offered to distribute it as soon as it's released (**see Action Item #1**).

Outcomes of Phase 2 Workshops and Roadmap for Phase 2

Joe Bartlett provided background information from two series of management action workshops in Phase 2. Much of feedback received from DWR on the management actions has been qualitative in nature. All management actions were evaluated using the same criteria to create a level playing field. As the CVFPP process progresses, staff will start doing more of a quantitative analysis using cost/benefit ratios.

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The first round of workshops focused on topic-specific sets of management actions and had significant participation from RMAWG members and the general public. Over 800 comments were received, new management actions were developed, and 5 actions were either deleted or combined. Round 2 management action “application” and “integration” workshops had fewer participants, but still generated substantial amounts of comments. Roger Putty noted that all workshop summaries are available online at the website listed above, and asked participants to contact him or Mr. Magill with any questions (**see Action Item #2**).

After an overview of the workshops, Mr. Arrich provided a review of the Phase 2 schedule. The Management Action Report, FCSSR, and progress report to the Legislature are due at the end of the year, and will be packaged together for review. Additionally, a report on CVFPP activities is being developed for the Governor’s office. Depending on what the Administration’s response is, these other work products could be delayed. Staff will figure out a way to release information on the Management Action Report to the RMAWG for review if a delay is expected.

Process and Logic for Building Regional Solution Sets

Mr. Putty gave an overview of the process and logic for building regional solution sets. Phase 2 of the CVFPP focuses on management action development; RMAWG Meeting 2 begins to look at where certain actions apply within a region. Four conceptual regional solution sets were presented outlining a range of possible options for the Lower San Joaquin region.

Mr. Putty reminded RMAWG members that these sets are a conceptual representation only; additional detail will be developed as the CVFPP process moves forward. Each solution set was presented as a bar on a graph. The height of the bar indicates the relative level of investment; the width of each complete solution set indicates the approximate level of time/effort to implement the solution. The width of individual bars within each solution represents the opportunity of each element (critical public safety, environmental benefits, etc.) to contribute to CVFPP goals. The four sets include:

- A basic approach to regional solutions designed to address deficiencies of the State Plan of Flood Control facilities identified in the FCSSR by restoring them to original design standards; legislative requirements of Senate Bill 5 (SB5) required this approach be evaluated.
- A critical public safety approach which has the focus of reducing flood risk to protect public health and safety;
- A solution designed to focus on floodplain management, which emphasizes managing flood risk primarily through non-structural actions; and
- A “multi-benefits” approach which is the most comprehensive and is designed to address all goals (primary and secondary) of the CVFPP as described in Phase 1.

After the presentation, the following discussion was recorded:

- A participant asked if the four sets include a “locally preferred approach” to the CVFPP- such an approach would represent local interests’ preferred complete solution set. Mr. Putty responded that in addition to the four sets, there are also a number of EIP in the Lower San Joaquin region to address specific, short-term deficiencies.
- One member asked where the legislative mandate for 200-year protection in SB5 was captured in the solution sets. Ken Kirby responded that it would be captured in all of the solution sets, but would fall primarily in the “critical public safety” element.
- Another participant commented that as represented, the solution sets could be interpreted as a “cookie cutter approach” to flood risk management that does not take into account the unique regional conditions in each are, and could create an arbitrary restriction on how management actions are combined. Mr. Putty responded that the four sets are designed to provide a range of potential solutions, but that the actual solution would likely be a combination of all available

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options. The participant noted that as written, the entire list of management actions already provides a good range of what could happen in a region; sticking them together into solution sets might not be as useful as picking specific actions to solve specific problems. Mr. Kirby reiterated that the 2012 CVFPP will not be able to get to the feasibility study level of specificity. Because DWR can't do an unlimited number of studies throughout the flood management system, a range of options must be developed to determine which issues should be examined in greater detail.

- Carolyn Lott asked if the solution sets are being developed as alternatives for the PEIR. Mr. Kirby responded that they are not – the CVFPP is driving the environmental analysis, not the other way around.
- Several participants noted that the solution sets as currently represented could be polarizing and set up a structural vs. non-structural debate as to the best way to fix the flood management system. They noted that as represented, the solution sets also appear to set up a qualitative assumption of “good, better, best” approaches. Mr. Kirby responded that each set places a different emphasis on the flood management solution (but is not mutually exclusive of structural or non-structural approaches). Additionally, instead of “good, better, best,” the sets are actually arranged according to level of investment from least expensive to most expensive.
- A participant commented that the “restore design approach” solution description should be revised to apply to “currently authorized projects.” He also noted that the CVFPP should not be constrained by availability of state funds, as federal and local agencies will also provide some funding. Finally, he suggested that designing three multi-benefit approaches, each with a different emphasis, may be more appropriate than only one multi-benefit approach. Mr. Arrich responded that there are elements of a multi-benefit approach in all four solution sets. Mr. Kirby added that DWR is not limited to looking at only state funding.
- Members noted that instead of characterizing some EIP as “low-hanging fruit,” there should be a category or discussion of required improvements. For example, in the Bear Creek area in Stockton, the only way to get to 200-year protection is to build floodwalls and raise levees. These will not be easy improvements, but will be required.
- Participants commented that in addition to structural fixes to flood management problems, there will also be institutional fixes required. Mr. Kirby agreed, and noted that there are some facility repairs or operational changes that can't happen without a corresponding institutional improvement.
- One person asked whether upstream solutions should be included in the Lower San Joaquin regional solution set or given to the Upper San Joaquin RMAWG. Mr. Kirby responded that it should be listed in the Lower San Joaquin set and also be taken to the Upper San Joaquin RMAWG for consideration.

Discussion of Regional Applicability of Management Actions

Mr. Putty provided a presentation on the regional applicability of management actions, and asked participants to familiarize themselves with the overall list of actions. After reviewing the list, Ms. Lott led the group in a discussion of regional applicability of management actions. The exercise was designed to look at whether or not a particular category of actions applies to the Lower San Joaquin region. Mr. Putty and Ms. Lott asked participants to first think of categories that don't apply to the region at all. The following discussion was recorded (listed by management action category).

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General Comments:

- Participants felt that all categories apply to the Lower San Joaquin region in one way or another.
- One participant asked if rather than looking at whether a category applies to the region as a whole, it might be easier to look at specific flood sources within the region. Mr. Putty and Mr. Arrich agreed this is one approach that could be used.
- Participants asked if identifying specific areas where management actions may or may not apply is too specific for the 2012 CVFPP. Mr. Arrich and Mr. Kirby noted that although the 2012 CVFPP will not have specific projects, it will need to identify specific *types* of actions. From an analysis point of view, this is done most easily by identifying specific areas. Scott Woodland noted that by identifying specific problems in the region, it will be easy to come back to for the 2017 CVFPP when DWR is ready to identify specific projects.

Transitory Storage:

- Members noted there may be limited opportunities within the region for transitory storage. A few identified areas include near Los Banos, at French Camp Slough between Highways 99 and I-5, and east of Highway 99. The area east of 99 is not flat, and could drain too quickly to provide meaningful transitory storage unless something like a dry dam was constructed (there is a dry dam near Farmington that successfully reduces peak flows downstream).
- Controlled release structures at the confluence of the Tuolumne River and below New Don Pedro Reservoir at Dry Creek could be useful in reducing downstream peak flows.

Increased Reservoir Storage:

- Reservoir storage opportunities exist on the Calaveras River at New Hogan reservoir and the MORE WATER Project.
- Farmington Reservoir in the French Camp system could be expanded for flood control benefits.
- Increasing storage above Friant could create significant benefits from a flood control and fisheries point of view.
- Participants noted that all reservoir expansion projects will be faced with their own unique opportunities and constraints.

Reservoir Storage Operations:

- Participants noted that coordinated reservoir operations with the Upper San Joaquin region are critical for the Lower San Joaquin region. A study by MBK Engineers showed that if releases started sooner in the 1997 flood, flood peaks would have been cut in half.
- Changing operations at New Hogan Reservoir could have flood management benefits downstream.
- One member noted that in order to anything with New Don Pedro Reservoir, something must be done to attenuate flows from Dry Creek downstream. Dry Creek flows regulate how much can be released from New Don Pedro Dam.
- Mr. Woodland noted that there are opportunities to implement forecast based operations on the San Joaquin system. A study of Oroville Reservoir is being expanded to include the San Joaquin system.

Flow Constrictions:

- Participants commented that reducing in-channel vegetation (especially of invasive species like *arundo*) could be useful in reducing flow constrictions in the region.
- On the Stanislaus River near the San Joaquin River confluence, there may have been modifications for earthquake protection that now create a flow constriction.
- A number of railroad trestles over rivers create flow constrictions throughout the region.

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- Siltation issues are a major concern in many areas within the region. The San Joaquin River is eight feet shallower now than it was when the system was built. This creates sandbars where trees and brush grow. During flood events, this raises overall stage faster than it otherwise would.
- A stretch of the Tuolumne River downstream of Dry Creek has a very narrow channel that may create a restriction.

Bypasses:

- At Paradise Cut a project is underway in partnership with River Island. The levees will be re-sloped and the weir will be improved to create a better flood bypass. Before work can be carried out though, the channels must be dredged.
- An existing bypass on Mormon Channel off the Calaveras River could be restored and improved.

Existing Levees (Raise, Restore, Improve):

- A participant noted that the South Delta Flood Improvement Plan recommended a number of improvements to every levee in San Joaquin County. The improvements were less of a height issue and more concerned with re-sloping of levees.
- A number of levees throughout the Stockton area must be improved at Bear Creek and Mosher Slough, on the Calaveras River, in French Camp, and along the Delta.
- Closures should be constructed on Mosher Slough, 14-Mile Slough, and Smith Canal.
- In addition to height and slope issues, there are a number of seepage problems where levees were built on sandy soils.
- A participant noted that while CVFPP requirements for rural areas should be attainable, reaching 200-year protection for urban areas could prove very difficult.
- Staff confirmed that this category does include flood walls for urban areas.

Setback and New Levees:

- A number of new levees could be built in the French Camp system.
- Reclamation District (RD) 17 was looking at creating a setback levee.
- River Islands is doing a setback levee on Paradise Cut.
- In many cases, constructing new levees could impact development or agricultural operations. In most cases there are already enough structures; existing levees just need to be improved.
- Setback levees are extremely difficult (if not impossible) to build in urban areas. The lower reach of the Calaveras River is an example: The channel is too constrained by development to do a setback.
- Setback levees must be constructed such a way that they do not create “pinch points” downstream.

Ring Levees:

- Ring levees could be most useful on Delta islands. In most cases, this is more an issue of improving existing levees than constructing new ones.
- There is some opportunity for a ring levee around the Stockton wastewater treatment plant.

Dredging:

- The Flood Conveyance Plan identifies a number of areas within the region that need dredging, including upstream, downstream, and within Paradise Cut. Mr. Woodland noted that staff already has a copy of this plan, and will look into specific examples of dredging opportunities (**see Action Item #3**).

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Vegetation Management:

- Participants noted that in many cases, vegetation management is a regulatory struggle above all else, especially in regards to vegetation on levees. Regulatory clarity for what's allowed and what's not allowed to grow on levees, as well as determining who is responsible for in-channel vegetation management, is very important within the region.

Bank Stabilization:

- The state is responsible for bank stabilization in the Sacramento River system, but it is unclear who is responsible on the San Joaquin River system. Regulatory clarity on this issue would be useful. Additionally, permits and costs for bank stabilization efforts are a major issue.
- Although there is a push to manage flows within channels instead of the wholesale removal of vegetation, there is often an inherent conflict between ecosystem requirements and bank stabilization requirements.
- In the Corral Hollow Creek area, vegetation and bank stabilization are both major issues. Due to environmental conflicts, San Joaquin County has been unable to remove vegetation or stabilize levee slopes.
- Encroachment management is an issue for bank stabilization projects and should be included in this category.

Floodproofing:

- Staff noted that floodproofing is specific to structures. The two types – wet and dry floodproofing – can be combined with something like raising the elevation of a development for added protection. The basic assumption in floodproofing is that water will be up against a structure.
- Although it is appropriate and applicable everywhere, participants noted that cost is a major issue for floodproofing. Although it is very feasible for new developments, retrofitting existing structures can be cost prohibitive.

Ecosystem Restoration:

- Ecosystem restoration opportunities exist along the Lower Tuolumne River, Paradise Cut, Mormon Channel, and Stanislaus River.
- One member noted a major problem/constraint with ecosystem restoration in the Lower San Joaquin region is the issue of landowner distrust. There are institutional issues that need to be resolved to get private landowners on board with ecosystem projects: If you're going to have willing participants, landowners must be treated as partners as opposed to a regulated community. Landowners must be given assurances that they won't get into trouble for leaving habitat on their land.

Closing Discussion of Regional Applicability:

Mr. Putty commented that the planning team will take information provided during the meeting to create the Management Action Report. He asked RMAWG members to review this report upon its release to ensure that their input was properly captured. Finally, he asked meeting participants to provide any additional input on regional applicability of management actions to him by September 30 (**see Action Item #4**).

Development of Regional Objectives

Mr. Putty led participants in a brief discussion of regional objectives, acknowledging that a more focused discussion on objectives would take place during RMAWG Meeting 3 and in a series of "subcommittee" meetings in October. For the purposes of developing regional objectives, he asked participants to focus

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on the primary CVFPP goal of improving flood risk management. He asked participants to think about what the most important areas/pieces of critical infrastructure within the Lower San Joaquin region are and consider:

- What objective will help protect those areas?
- What metrics are needed for success?

A map of potential flood depths throughout the region was presented to begin the discussion. The following discussion was recorded:

- One participant asked how these flood depths were determined. Mr. Putty responded that they are based on past work, primarily from the Comprehensive Study. Depths are also based on the Levee Flood Protection Zone (LFPZ) effort underway. The LFPZ effort identifies what flood depths would be under a wide scale levee breach scenario (essentially a worst-case scenario).
- One participant noted that the densely populated areas within the region are the most important thing to protect.
- Participants noted that the RMAWG might not have the expertise needed to identify all critical infrastructure pieces in the region. Tom Gau agreed to work with Ron Baldwin from San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services to provide data on critical infrastructure to Mr. Putty (**see Action Item #5**). Sam Magill will provide the Stanislaus County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan to Mr. Putty for review (**see Action Item #6**).
- Ms. Lott noted that statewide, the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA) might be a good place to start. Staff will work with CalEMA to develop a list of important infrastructure (**see Action Item #7**).
- Mr. Putty asked participants to submit any additional suggestions on critical infrastructure pieces and other things that are important to protect from flood as soon as possible (**see Action Item #8**).

Recruitment of Subcommittee Members

To continue the identification of important areas/critical infrastructure to protect within the region and begin the discussion of regional objectives, Ms. Lott noted that a subcommittee of RMAWG members will be formed. The subcommittee will meet one or two times between Meetings 2 and 3 to continue this discussion. Potential members suggested for the subcommittee include the following:

- Julie Rentner, River Partners
- Mary Hildebrand, South Delta Water Agency
- Sandi Matsumoto, The Nature Conservancy
- Mary Matella, American Rivers
- One participant from SJAFCA
- Maria Encinas, City of Patterson

Staff will contact members regarding their participation and next steps as soon as possible (**see Action Item #9**). Participants noted that their preference would be for all meetings to occur via conference call or webinar. Subcommittee discussions should focus on identifying unique characteristics within the region as much as possible, but members will determine their own preferred level of specificity when discussing critical infrastructure. Any questions about whether or not the subcommittee is delivering useable work products will be directed to the technical team and DWR.

Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Staff thanked participants for attending, and asked that any questions be directed to Mr. Putty, Mr. Magill, or Mr. Bartlett. Management Action Report chapters will be released in the coming month for RMAWG review. The chapters will be the main focus of discussion at the third and final RMAWG meeting on November 9.