

**CVFMP Upper Sacramento Regional Forum Summary
Chico, CA – June 3, 2009**

OVERVIEW

The FloodSAFE program of Department of Water Resources (DWR) is introducing the Central Valley Flood Management Planning (CVFMP) programs with five (5) regional Forums throughout the Central Valley – in Chico, Modesto, Walnut Grove, Las Banos, and West Sacramento. The Forums will present the same information and provide the same discussion opportunities at each location.

Each Forum consists of an initial presentation describing the key elements of FloodSAFE and the CVFMP program. The remainder of the time was dedicated to breakout sessions relating to four CVMFP topic areas. The first Regional Forum was held on June 3, 2009 in Chico, CA for the Upper Sacramento Region. Copies of the Forum presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the CVFMP website at www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp.

A brief recap of the presentations is provided in the following paragraphs and the remainder of this document provides a summary of the small group discussions. Flip charts and worksheets were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the recorded results are incorporated into the summary.

Gary Hester, CVFMP Program Manager, welcomed Regional Forum participants and reviewed the agenda before introducing Ken Kirby (title). Ken provided an overview of FloodSAFE, which is an initiative to (1) improve flood management systems and (2) operations and maintenance, as well as (3) inform and assist the public in flood awareness and (4) improve emergency response. The CVFMP program is a significant FloodSAFE component and Mr. Kirby described the goals, study area, and major products for the CVFMP.

Important CVFMP activities will be to identify and assess the current status of the flood protection system and then develop the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) to improve integrated flood management - for those areas protected by facilities of the State-Federal flood protection system in the Central Valley. The CVFPP will be developed through a broad outreach and engagement process. Options for participating in the CVFPP process include:

- Regional and Valley-wide **Forums** for information sharing and high-level discussions
- Regional and Topic-based **Work Groups** to help develop content for the Plan
- **Outreach, Briefings, and Coordination** with partners, interest groups, and related project, programs, and plans.

After a short question-and-answer period, participants were invited to join a breakout session. The first concurrent sessions addressed either the Regional Conditions Summary Report or the Planning and Engagement Process. The second concurrent sessions focused on Environmental Stewardship or Non-Urban Levee Evaluations.

A summary of the breakout session presentations follows:

- Regional Conditions Summary Report: Gary Hester outlined this report which will describe regional resource conditions. These conditions include: current regional conditions and challenges; flood management needs; and ecosystem conditions. This report will also define goals and objectives for the CVFPP. Content for the report will be developed through a work group, relying on existing information.

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- **Planning and Engagement Approach:** Chris McCready, FloodSAFE Communication Lead, described the proposed CVFMP outreach approach. This involves the Forums, Work Groups, and Outreach, Briefings, and Coordination mentioned in the initial presentation. Another component will be development of the CVFMP website and distribution of information and updates through email and other communication options.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Dale Hoffman-Floerke, Office Chief for Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resources, provided a working definition for the concept of Environmental Stewardship along with goals for a stewardship approach. A work group will be convened to help identify how Environmental Stewardship will be incorporated into the Regional Conditions Summary Report, the CVFPP itself, and the multi-species and floodplain conservation strategy (a CVFPP component).
- **Non-Urban Levee Evaluation:** Mike Inamine, Office Chief for Levee Repairs and Floodplain Management, described the proposal and timeline for conducting physical levee inspections for non-urban levees. The next activities, for 2009, would consist of crest explorations for project (and associated non-project) levees that protect communities of 5,000 people or more. In 2010, crest and toe borings (where needed) would be undertaken on the remaining levees that protect communities of 1,000 or more people. Additional exploration locations would be identified on the basis of criteria – for example, levees that protect critical infrastructure or small legacy communities, or levees with damage sites.

After the breakout sessions concluded, participants reconvened to hear next steps and closing remarks. Those who are interested in serving on either a regional or topic-based workgroup were encouraged to contact (provide contact information here).

Following the dinner break, the initial presentation was repeated during an evening session – to maximize participation opportunities for those who could not attend the afternoon session.

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OVERVIEW PRESENTATION (AFTERNOON SESSION) – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: You mentioned that one of the goals of the Plan is to be “broadly supported.” Can you define “broadly supported” – are you referring to the state at large or just the protected area?

A: Looking for broad support from all folks who affect or are affected by flood control. This includes major interests, agencies, and CVFPB’s constituents.

Q: What does “integrated flood management’ mean?

A: It includes 4 key areas:

1. Flood management is part of water management (it affects WQ, ecosystem, water supply, etc.)
2. Flood respects no boundaries. Solutions need to cross political and geographic boundaries
3. Need to look at flood from a system-wide perspective
4. Environmental stewardship is key to the plan

Q: How will DWR get the word out to interested parties of this project beyond just professional awareness of the issue?

A: Through a multi-pronged approach including this meeting, emails, newsletters, newspaper ads, website, public meetings, etc.

Q: How do you balance flood reduction with environmental stewardship? In some cases of restoration, you want areas to flood.

A: The goal is to reduce flooding where we would prefer that flooding not occur. It is a challenge and requires that collectively we are all clear about our objectives.

Q: One of the goals of the FloodSAFE is to support economic growth. Are you referring to the protected area or state-wide?

A: FloodSAFE pertains to the entire state of California; the CVFMP process will look at regionalized returns.

BREAKOUT DISCUSSION: REGIONAL CONDITIONS SUMMARY REPORT

Q: What is the role of DWR in this process today?

A: While we want to provide information, the main point is to hear your perspectives.

Q: Will there be a draft plan that people can see?

A: Yes, including the summary.

Q: Will there be support for members of the Work Groups?

A: DWR will likely be able to cover travel expenses, but will not be able to compensate for time. DWR understands that this is a big commitment for folks. The DWR and consultant team will provide technical support and resources.

Q: How large will regional groups be?

A: The desire is to have no more than 25 participants for each Regional Conditions Work Group in each region, providing broad representation. It becomes difficult to manage after 25 members.

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Q: What kind of expertise are you looking for?

A: There is a balance being sought across 12 topic categories. Knowledge of the flood system is valuable, as is a solid understanding of environmental stewardship as well.

Q: What are the boundaries for this region?

A: The Upper Sacramento to Fremont Weir (see map).

Q: How will economic sustainability be worked into the plans? Will you look at where regional economies are being affected by flood system?

A: A financing plan needs to be developed regarding shared costs, and an overall funding strategy.

Q: Will meetings be held in the region?

A: Yes, we want to make it possible for you to participate.

C: It's not clear what the Table of Contents matrix is for.

A: There are five different reports that will be generated as part of the CVFMP process. This matrix indicates which particular elements appear in each report. These are proposed outlines that will be developed.

Q: How will the Flood Control System Status Report feed into other reports?

A: The Flood Control System Status Report is due at the end of 2010. A preliminary report is currently developed and will be used to prepare the Regional Conditions Summary Report.

Q: How does existing information fit in?

A: There are a number of reports on the system, as most of you are probably aware of. That information is available and will be incorporated into the CFMP reports. There may be data gaps that we won't be able to address by 2012.

Q. Is there be some type of map product that will be available?

A. Yes, will be included in the Regional Conditions Summary Report

Thoughts and comments on the outline and Table of Contents

- There should be a separate section just to describe how the Regional Conditions report was developed – that should be in the document itself. There is a potential problem with information overload.
- Describe where the preliminary protection areas are located, as well as the proposed scope for how DWR will manage and maintain.
- During FEMA's public outreach meetings on new maps, people wanted to know who owns infrastructure as well as the original design of the infrastructure.
- Include future conditions, what land use will or might look like in future.
- Future conditions should talk about future development and the impact that changing flood zones has on future building
- Discuss whether this connects with FEMA rate map.

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Thoughts and comments on the proposed Scope of Work

- Will need to capture potential flood impacts and system impacts
- Identifying the communities and industries affected by flooding
- The first two items for the scope are too open ended; need to focus in on relevant goals (such as improving ecological function and reducing flood risk. What are the problems and opportunities in the region that are relevant to achieving the State’s goals? The objective for the CVFPP is a comprehensive statewide plan.
- The 3 scoping items are not discrete questions – either need to be reworded or made into one question.

Comment: The word “solutions” is missing - for accomplishing goals and objectives. We don’t need more regulation from Sacramento. We need to help keep the program whole to look for solutions and fix what is broken.

Response: The intent is to have work groups convene for a short amount of time, to focus on a particular aspect – then dissolve and a new work group forms. The first work groups will focus on identifying the problems; another work group will look at opportunities and solutions.

Comment: There is not a lot of time between now and November to get agreement on solutions.

Suggestion: DWR should develop an initial problem statement (physical and social problems) that can serve as a starting point. This would help frame goals and objectives for the region. The public could then comment on that and start to address the issues of competing interests. (There was support from others on this proposal.)

Response: DWR can develop an working staff report, but it is important to capture how problems are defined at the local level. Part of the process is to reflect the shared understanding of problems at the local level. DWR staff will use the best information available to start defining the problem. Information will be provided to the work group, and then back to the larger Forum.

Comment: As problems are defined, they can be translated over to other aspects – such as environmental sustainability. It will help identify what needs to happen in this region to have an integrated plan. Letting regional participants define what is wrong is important, but part of the process is to increase understanding.

BREAKOUT DISCUSSION: PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Q: DWR is stressing engagement. Who does DWR consider the public? Most of the audience today seems to be agency folks.

A: Anyone is a perspective partner and welcome to participate. DWR is trying to attract everyone with an interest in flood management. People need to be knowledgeable about flood management. It’s important to engage the public, but DWR will be focusing on flood management professionals first. In the future, DWR plans to make presentations available to community-based organizations. The plans include making the materials available in other languages also.

Q: Are organizations such as Nature Conservancy and River Partners considered “the public” or agencies?

A: They are interest-based partners.

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Q: There are a number of IRWMPs in the Valley with flood components in their plan. Will there be any special efforts by DWR to become aware of local IRWMPs and incorporate their flood components into the State Plan?

A: Integration is important. Locals need to get engaged in the process to represent local interests in the CVPPP. DWR intends to coordinate internally with IRWMPs on the CVFPP. There is a team developing a list of documents pertinent to flood management. The public will be asked to review the list and make sure all the documents listed are relevant and inclusive.

Comment: There should be a 2-way briefing with IRWMPs. DWR should brief locals; local should brief DWR.

Response: Agree. DWR sees that as interest-based briefings. Also, there will be formal briefing to the various Boards.

Q: The Corps feasibility study is in process. They have technical performance data to contribute. How does that data get incorporated?

A: That data should be brought in through the Work Groups, to bring data into the Plan.

Q: The Corps of Engineers has its own planning process. How will DWR coordinate with the Corps?

A: The Corps is a key partner. DWR has started quarterly executive level coordination meetings with the Corps.

Q: Does DWR see the Corps participating in the Regional Work Groups?

A: Yes. The Plan will include input from Federal, State, Tribal, local, and other entities.

Q: In the Existing Conditions report, how will DWR deal with differences in levee conditions reported by the locals and the State?

A: DWR will try to reconcile the differences. If they can't, DWR will make note of the differing opinions.

Comment: Options may be based on different assumptions. It will be important to state the assumptions so actual comparisons between options can be made.

Response: In the first document, the Regional Conditions Summary Report, the goal is to promote shared understanding that then informs the collection of detailed technical data.

Q: Has there been any attempt to contact local governments including flood control people and local electeds? There doesn't seem to be anyone here from north of Chico.

A: DWR has invited these interests and we understand they are busy. Briefings will be used to communicate with elected officials. Also, DWR has staff in the northern districts and they will be asked to assist in reaching out to local contacts. Outreach is not limited to Sacramento.

Q: Is the expectation that NGOs such as the Nature Conservancy and River Partners will request briefings, or will DWR contact the NGOs to set up briefings?

A: Both. DWR hopes that the NGOs will come to DWR, because that's easier. But if they don't, DWR will reach out. DWR hopes that NGOs will engage collaboratively as a group.

Comment: Promote activities to get people involved as an outreach tool. For example: levee tours, river walks, etc.

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Q. How can someone join a work group?

A. The Regional Conditions work groups will start first. Membership in all groups will be by application. Applications are available either on-line or hard copy. The work groups will be chartered, with a clear definition of the deliverable expected from each work group. DWR estimates the work groups will meet for a period of between 3 – 6 months.

Written comments received at the end of the breakout session:

Question 1: Are the key elements for planning and engagement covered from your perspective? If not, what other elements would you recommend?

- I understand that DWR is encouraging the public and private sectors to get involved and provide feedback/ideas in regards to the development of the Plan. From my past experiences, in order to have a successful outcome, DWR must involve participants throughout the process. We normally involve participants with the discussion, ideas, inputs, comments, etc., but not the participation of the preparation of the actual Plan. I recommend having local entities, PNP's, and private individuals be part of the team preparing the Plan!
- Planning and engagement process chart is very handy for agencies (e.g. Corps) to see how they might overlay the process.
- Specific contact with local agencies requesting information on flooding / levee stability.
- Outreach to local governments? Presentations to BOS / City Councils about specifics in their area. Recommend – set agenda items for local governments within the project area.
- Interest groups – how will they be engaged? Do they need to make the move to ask for information – call regularly - or once a connection is made, will someone from the process contact them and offer presentations and updates?
- Academically your plans for engagement are great. There are so many layers but I feel still, that total engagement of the public has not been accomplished. How about “twittering” and other such methods.
- Utilize existing citizen monitoring efforts to involve public in hands-on activities associated with flood management and ecosystem protection efforts.
- Utilize citizen monitoring data to evaluate local existing conditions.
- Develop opportunities for volunteers to participate in resource protection efforts and site evaluations.
- Utilize demonstration projects on willing landowner parcels to show how to do it better.
- Utilize local DWR / state Water Boards to facilitate public engagement through opportunities provided to existing watershed groups.

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- Good idea to simply array input initially. Will need to describe assumptions about how the system works, what capabilities exist, what desired outcomes are. When get to distilling options, there will be “winners and losers.” Should prepare for that. The process is not true interest-based approach – so people will bring and fight over positions. You need to anticipate those points and set ground rules to manage that part of the process.

I understand re-evaluating/modeling is not part of this iteration, but climate change implies larger flows in the future, so process should anticipate dealing with the hard question of a bigger system.

Question 2: Do you see an opportunity for you to be engaged in this process?

- Will be engaged as a consultant to the Corps, maybe. Looks like at different levels, 2-way flow of info, process, decisions.
- Not sure – not really clear as to who will collect or compile information.
- Opportunity to be engaged – SRCAF.
- Yes – I am engaged for many reasons and not just because of an agency involvement.

BREAKOUT DISCUSSION: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Discussion on definition of Environmental Stewardship

Q: Is the multiple species conservation strategy (MSCS) different than a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)? Is it thought that the conservation strategy will be the full consideration of all Endangered Species Act requirements?

A: The MSCS is along the same lines as an HCP.

Q: We're in the Upper Sacramento region looking at a scope for the Environmental Stewardship work group. Is this scope going to be specific to the Upper Sacramento region?

A: No, the work group is topic-based and will be looking at Environmental Stewardship on a Valley-wide basis (not regionally specific). The resulting suggestions won't apply to all regions.

Q: How will this be integrated into other work groups? How does timing fit with overall schedule?

A: The work group proposals are being developed with your input and the relationships between work groups is still coming together. We do know that the technical team of DWR staff and consultants will be sharing information from all the work groups

Q: The CVFMP program will have to incorporate environmental resources, will cultural resources also be incorporated? Cultural and tribal should be considered on their own (not within environmental resources).

A: Yes, cultural resources will be incorporated – probably through the environmental stewardship process.

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Discussion on scope of work for Environmental Stewardship

- Issues that come up in connection with environmental stewardship include: loss of property taxes, bad neighbors, and flood system performance. The definition should include mitigation for 3rd party public safety impacts. It is essential to get people on the work group who have opposed restoration.

Comment: The work group should try to find a balance between flood plain health and protection. Will we be using existing scientific studies and proposals? There are good materials out there. Please, don't reinvent the wheel and do work that's already been done.

Response: Yes, we will take a look at previous studies. There is neither the time nor budget to re-do studies. We will need to take an inventory of the studies.

Comment: Let use student interns to scan these documents, so they aren't lost. We need to make concentrated effort to think about what studies have been done and share them.

Suggestion: It would be helpful for staff to develop list of key studies and topics and then bring that to the work group. That would be more efficient. A bibliography would be a good start.

- Funding issues in Environmental Stewardship include the need for broad public benefit. How you translate the broad action? If there is some way to address this it might save time in the long run.
- The words "commitment of responsibility: are unnecessary. Just want to see them done.
- There is likely to be some challenges with integrating principles and goals, in order to guide plan development and support plan goals.
- Are measures of successes different than performance measures? The wording seems like it's looking at success in terms of how the plan is written, rather than implemented.
- Some believe that environmental stewardship and flood protection are contradictory. As we move forward, how can this work group bring Environmental Stewardship back to flood protection? What kind of compromises can be made?
- For second bullet, it would be helpful if the work group has a sense of minimal amounts of characteristic needed to be preserved for sustainability to be successful. If there is a clear metric, it needs to be articulated.
- Those metrics may not exist, but coming up with a number would help the planning function. The same thing may be true of bird habitats. There is an interplay between human and natural environments.
- The objective is to protect and manage nature's systems to ensure that they are available for future generations.
- Given that ecosystems along river exist in change, natural processes are essential to long-term sustainability.
- Since this feeds into the Regional Conditions report, an environmental status report won't be needed to fill in that part of the picture.

Comment: This group that cover all five regions. There are a lot of differences in ecosystems – we may come up with broad principles and goals that don't relate to regions.

Response: The thought is that initial work groups will not get into high levels of detail – rather that they would begin with discussions on overall principles that need to apply to all aspects of the plan. Additional detail would be developed in subsequent work groups.

- Some good points were made. The definition of environmental stewardship should include flood benefits, and making floods compatible with humans.
- Early on, we need to identify if there are other DWR (or other) activities where making environmental stewardship commitments are being made. If so, how does that all fit in?

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BREAKOUT DISCUSSION: NON-URBAN LEVEE EVALUATION

Q: Will levees with “no obvious deficiencies” be certified?

A: No – this program is an evaluation program only; it is not a certification program.

Q: Are seismic factors being taken into account?

A: There is a separate study to look at seismic risk. DWR is putting out criteria for Early Implementation Projects with seismic risk. We are looking for a “no-regret” seismic policy in the interim levee criteria.

Q: If using the 1957 design profile, what if the interior of the levee has changed (for example, is now filled in with vegetation)?

A: DWR will look at levees in terms of levee profile. Unless the levee is decommissioned, DWR will be looking at channel conveyance and asking if the levee can meet its intended design.

Q: Will you be looking at levee fragility curves?

A: The levee evaluations program will not look at levee fragility. The characterization of levee failure will be part of the CVFPP.

Q: Will the DWR levee analysis be sufficient to use for FEMA certification and accreditation?

A: No, although some of the technical data might be used in an application for FEMA certification.

Q: I have a question about Sycamore Flood issues...

A: DWR is familiar with the issues and needs to meet with local experts to discuss those issues.

Thoughts and comments on scope of work for Non-Urban Levee Evaluation

Q: Is there a list of “local experts” who will be contacted?

A: Yes, there is a list; it is mostly regional coordinators. DWR can provide the names.

Q: If the levee is protecting 5,000 or more people, why call it non-urban?

A: The legislature defines “urban” as 10,000 or more people.

Comment: Red and green lines should not be used on maps. Color-blind people cannot see them. Recommend using dotted and dashed lines.

Q: What defines a legacy community?

A: A historic community of national interest (e.g. Locke)

Q: The geotechnical data report was valuable from the urban levee evaluation program. You mentioned it will not be available for non-urban levees until the end of Phase 2. Can it be available any sooner?

A: No, that data will not be available until later in the process.

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Written comments received at the end of the breakout session:

- It is not clear from the exhibit maps which levees will be included in the Phase 2 data analysis. Should clarify that levee failures that ultimately impacts larger populations is being considered in the system.
- Is there a list of local experts? Need to clarify how levees will be evaluated when one side of the system is urban and the other bank is non-urban.

OVERVIEW PRESENTATION (EVENING SESSION) – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What is the sense for cost-share?

A: It is hard to set a firm percentage. Expenditures of state funds need to leverage Federal funds, local fund, or both. The best description regarding cost-share considerations is for Early Implementation Projects.

Q: For the Non-Urban Levee Evaluation program, does that cover a levee that protects system levees (it was regarding a forebay or afterbay). Will that levee be evaluated?

A: (Mike Inamine) That's a good question, I know which levee you're talking about.

Q: The California Water Code says that protection needs to extend up to Big Chico Creek, and this is south of Big Chico Creek.

A: (Mike): Yes, I think that we'll have to evaluate that.

Q: What is the level of flood protection that non-urban levees need to provide?

A: They are evaluated for their ability to meet original design flows. These are the 1955 or 1957 profiles and flows. So, the first question is "Do they meet original design?" The second question is "Should that level of protection be improved?" Those are the factors we'll be looking at.

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ATTENDANCE

Thomas Adams, HDR
Beverly Anderson, Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum
Ryan Bonea, Sutter RCD
Richard Burgi, City of Chico
John Cain, Natural Heritage Institute
Robert Capriola, Westervelt
Colleen Cecil, Butte County Farm Bureau
Stacy Cepello, DWR
Kim Davidson, Senator Aanestad's Office
Mike DeSpain, Mechoopda Indian Tribe
Lady Bug Doherty, CVFPB
John Carlon, River Partners
Stuart Edell, Butte County
Regina Ellena, local resident
Kevin Foerster, USFWS
Doug Fogel, Butte County Environmental Health
Brint Foster, Mechoopda Indian Tribe
Wes Gilbert, Lumos and Associates
Tom Griggs, River Partners
Timmerie Hammill, Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
Monty Hanson, Butte County
Les Heringer, M&T Ranch
Todd Hillaire, DWR
Butch Hodgkins, CVFPB
Philo Hunt, Butte County
Ashley Indrieri, Family Water Alliance
Chris Jones, DWR
Steve Lambert, Butte County
Curtis Lee, DWR
Stefan Lorenzato, DWR,
Jay Lowe, North Star Engineering
Ryan Luster, The Nature Conservancy
Duncan McCowan, retired
John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust
Dan Peterson, Sutter County
Dave Peterson, PBI/San Joaquin Co./SRFCA
Mark Rabo, DWR
Scott Rutherford, Butte County
Steven Schuman, Butte County
Emma Suarez, CVFPB
Dave Sullivan, Lumos and Associates
Ward Tabor, DWR
Steve Thompson, Assemblyman Logue's Office
Rachelle Valverde, GCID
Jean Wald
Gregg Werner, The Nature Conservancy