

Summary
Management Actions Workshop
Floodplain Management

July 28, 2010, 1:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Center for Collaborative Policy
815 S Street, First Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811

Participants: 24

Name	Organization
Booth, George	Sacramento County
Carsell, Kim	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<i>Cepello, Stacy</i>	<i>DWR*</i>
<i>Encinas, Maria</i>	<i>City of Patterson</i>
Faghih, Jafar	MWH*
<i>High, John</i>	<i>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>
Hollister, Nekane	DWR*
Jones, Pam	Kearns & West (facilitator)*
<i>Kohl, Steve</i>	<i>San Joaquin County</i>
Lasko, Gena	California Department of Fish and Game
Ly, Hoa	DWR*
Lorenzo, Maria	DWR*
McDowell, Ray	DWR*
McGinnis, Shelley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<i>Patterson, Elizabeth</i>	<i>DWR*</i>
Perlea, Mary	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rice, Merritt	DWR*
Shively, Kari	MWH*
<i>Stevens, Anne</i>	<i>California Department of Education</i>
Stork, Ron	Friends of the River
Tatayon, Susan	The Nature Conservancy
Thomson, Janet	Kearns & West (facilitation team)*
<i>VanRijn, Dave</i>	<i>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>
Yamanaka, Dan	DWR*

*Workshop team

Italic = Attended via webinar

This summary only includes comments made during the workshop. Written comments submitted after the workshop will be available at <http://www.water.ca.gov/cvfm>.

Comments and Questions on Draft Initial Management Actions

MA-025: Acquire floodplain property that can contribute to flood management system efficiency.

Description/Methodology:

- Consider modifying the title to “identify and acquire floodplain property that can contribute to flood management system efficiency and flood damage reduction.”
- The methodology should include a wider number of potential mechanisms beyond voluntary flood easements, such as eminent domain.

Summary: Floodplain Management Workshop

Economic Considerations:

- The high cost stated in the economic considerations should be phrased in terms of cost/benefit considerations.
- Consider removing the parenthetical comment about “flood management” in the potential for cost sharing, since there also may be cost sharing for ecosystem restoration or other purposes.

Environmental Considerations:

- Consider the environmental implications about the mobilization of hazardous materials in the floodplain.
- There may be entrainment issues if the floodplain is not operating properly.

Social Considerations:

- For likelihood of implementation, rephrase to state that implementation is highly variable due to location and the geographical extent of land acquisition.
- Note that the likelihood of implementation would increase if eminent domain could be used.
- There may be land use standards that affect the feasibility of implementing this measure, so consider adding “notwithstanding additional standards” to the likelihood of implementation.
- Note that the cost is relative because considering the cost of flood damage over a period of decades will change the equation.

Integration with Other Programs:

- FEMA has some floodplain acquisition programs.
- There are some Sustainability Growth Council programs that are being funded that could include the provision for floodplain management within those programs.
- DWR and the Corps should consider seeking congressional authorization to change existing Corps programs that may provide support.

MA-026: Manage municipal stormwater to provide regional or systemwide flood benefits

CVFPP Goals:

- This management action will likely promote ecosystem functions.

Economic Considerations:

- Annual costs will depend on how this is implemented at the municipal level.
- Cost sharing is likely to be on the local or state level.

MA-028: Coordinate and streamline floodplain mapping to improve consistency of floodplain delineation and assessment of flood risk

Description/Methodology:

- Because floodplain maps are developed for various purposes, it seems unlikely to have a single map that works for all purposes.
- It is critical that we develop maps that show projected flood depths in three dimensions, above and beyond existing FEMA special flood hazard zone maps, in order to allow communities and residents to plan for community development, emergency response, and evacuation. The local floodplain manager should be the keeper of this flood data because local communities have very local, site-specific knowledge that may not be reflected in other data.
- Including FEMA in this management action description is confusing because this managing action is focusing on a type of map very different from those that FEMA produces.

Advantages/Disadvantages:

- A potential disadvantage is that clear and specific floodplain mapping is often considered detrimental to community development and property values.

Economic Considerations:

- There is a large cost to conducting this mapping effort at the level of detail (e.g. at 1-foot precision) that is needed.
- There will be an additional cost in providing the infrastructure to maintain all the necessary databases to hold and maintain the data.

Environmental Considerations:

- The environmental impacts may be quite profound, if they occur, but they would be indirect.

Summary: Floodplain Management Workshop

MA-074: Increase flood risk awareness through outreach

Description/Methodology:

- Another desired outcome should be that residents are more likely to buy flood insurance due to their understanding of flood risks.
- Note that this management action is linked to MA-077 about the Community Rating System (CRS). If all the cities and counties in the Central Valley were members of the CRS there would likely not be a need for this management action.

Advantages/Disadvantages:

- A potential disadvantage is that this management action has the potential to produce a significant degree of public panic.
- Although high cost for schools is mentioned as a disadvantage, there are some outstanding existing programs (e.g. those from the Water Education Foundation) that can be used that would lessen the cost.

Integration with Other Programs:

- Cal EMA, the Corps, FEMA, and NOAA's National Weather Service might be partners.
- Note that a similar management action was discussed under the Flood Fighting Workshop and that other relevant programs may have been identified during that workshop.

MA-075: Provide technical assistance to local agencies for compliance and grant application assistance

Description/Methodology:

- The title should explain that the grant application and assistance is related to hazard mitigation grants.

Integration with Other Programs:

- Cal EMA would be an appropriate partner.

MA-076: Assist in development of local flood management plan updates

Description/Methodology:

- Clarify that this management action is intended to provide support to local entities in their development of flood management plans. The management action is not to imply that DWR is developing the local flood management plans. The support could take the form of information about planning requirements, technical assistance, or other support.
- Local governments have limited resources, so methodology could include a workshop to several local entities simultaneously that describes available options and resources.

Environmental Considerations:

- An indirect effect of this management action is that updating general plans triggers CEQA.

Integration with Other Programs:

- Cal EMA requires communities to do local hazard mitigation plans. Their model, in which they do workshops and show examples of compliant plans, is one worth considering.
- The County of Governments has a program for affordable housing in which they convene entities, explain the state requirements, and clarify what can and cannot be done under the program. The program is delivered to elected officials and staff. This is another useful model.

MA-077: Improve awareness of Community Rating System insurance-rate adjusting program

Description/Methodology:

- The management action should be changed to "improve awareness of *and increase participation in* Community Rating System insurance-rate adjusting program."
- Including incentives to local entities for participation might be useful.

Advantages/Disadvantages:

- A disadvantage is that there is a cost to running the program that may be prohibitive for smaller city or counties.
- Another disadvantage is that in creating amendments to general plans or zoning changes, CEQA is triggered which carries an additional cost to cities and counties.

Integration with Other Programs

- The Sustainability Growth Council could potentially have funds.
- DWR is hoping to develop a CRS users' group.

Summary: Floodplain Management Workshop

MA-078: Develop mandatory flood insurance programs that are consistent with the risk of flooding

Advantages/Disadvantages:

- Edit the advantages to reflect the fact that buying insurance will not increase public safety.
- An advantage is that this would increase public awareness, and might reduce loss if floodplain mapping leads to a change in building practices or locations.
- A disadvantage could be that the detailed data (e.g. FEMA-level mapping of the floodplains) must be undertaken.

Environmental Considerations:

- Any environmental considerations would be indirect, although they could be significant if this

Social Considerations:

- This management action is not likely to result in improvements to public safety.

References:

- Ron Stork will provide the National Academy of Sciences recommendation, related review panel reports, and other relevant white papers.

MA-079: Increase public understanding of FEMA maps and policies

Description/Methodology:

- If cities and counties joined the CRS program, much of this additional information could be provided to them through that program.

Integration with Other Programs:

- The CRS program should be included.
- This is linked to the Stafford Act.

MA-080: Eliminate subsidies for structures that are repetitively damaged

Description/Methodology:

- This may not be the right mechanism for this management action; other mechanisms should be explored.
- DWR may be able to use this opportunity to suggest changes in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program that could be complementary to California plans that are developed.
- Consider re-focusing the title to changing the operation of flood insurance programs to reduce repetitive loss properties.

Advantages/Disadvantages:

- FEMA activities are not under the State's control.

Economic Considerations:

- Under "damage to critical public infrastructure," DWR will need to survey counties and cities to find out how widespread repetitive loss properties are.

Integration with Other Programs

- Cal EMA provides disaster assistance.

Suggestions for New Management Actions

New Management Action #1:

- Title: Use floodproofing measures
- Description: There are different flood mitigation measures such as relocating structures, elevating structures, dry floodproofing (keeping water from entering a structure), or wet floodproofing (allowing water to enter the building with minimal interior damage).
- CVFPP Goals: Improve flood risk management
- Advantages/disadvantages: Techniques are well known and readily available; but cost may be prohibitive if needed for multiple structures.

New Management Action #2:

- Title: Acquire additional land and property for purposes of flood damage reduction.

Summary: Floodplain Management Workshop

New Management Action #3:

- Title: Conduct flood threat mapping to include depth, velocity, fill rates, flow paths, and evacuation routes (note link to MA-028)
- Description: This information is useful to communities undertaking community development and land use planning, emergency response planning, flood proofing, evacuation planning, and development of insurance programs.

New Management Action #4:

- Title: Increase efforts to raise public awareness about the value of floodplains, not just the flood threat, using educational curricula as one mechanism.
- Description: Information should include the range, magnitude, and mechanisms by which floods may occur. There are existing K-12 curricula regarding the importance of floodplain management and ecosystem restoration. This could focus less on flood risk and more on the benefits of natural floodplain processes.

New Management Action #5:

- Title: Design floodplain management programs for flood prone urban areas (identifying high grounds in cities) protected by levees or with dams that have an exceedence, outside of traditional NFIP areas
- Description: This management action could include guidance, best management practices, evacuation plans, and different building standards, among other possible methodologies.

New Management Action #6:

- Title: Discourage development within the floodplain so that contemplated flood management elements (e.g., setback levees) can be constructed in the future. (note the link to MA-049, encouraging compatible land uses)
- Description: This management action informs local land use entities and landowners about anticipated flood management strategies and structures, potentially reducing future land use conflict. Note that the 2007 legislation required communities and DWR to identify lands necessary for Central Valley flood control systems. This management action could be framed as a way to inform communities about future avoided costs by recognizing anticipated flood system corridors and floodplain areas.
- Advantage: Avoids the high cost of flood damages.
- Disadvantage: This may engender resentment regarding state or non-local use of properties.

New Management Action #7:

- Title: Customize the Community Rating System insurance-rate adjusting program to meet California's unique needs
- Description: This management action seeks to provide increased benefit via the CRS program to levee-protected communities in California.