



Meeting Summary

Upper San Joaquin Regional Management Actions Work Group Meeting #3

November 10, 2010, 9:00 am – 1:00pm

**Location: San Joaquin River and Parkway Trust
11605 Old Friant Road
Fresno, CA, 93730**

WORK GROUP ATTENDANCE:

Name	Organization	Status
Sarge Green	CA Water Institute, CSU Fresno	Member
Reggie Hill	Lower San Joaquin Levee District	Member
Kellie Jacobs	County of Merced	Member
Dave Koehler	San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust	Member
Jerry Lakeman	Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District	Member
Mari Martin	Resource Management Coalition	Member
Keith Seligman	Kings River Conservation District	Member
John Shelton	CA Department of Fish and Game	Member
Tyler Willsey	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Member
Mike Inamine	California Department of Water Resources (DWR)	DWR Executive Sponsor
Merritt Rice	DWR	CVFPO*
Jim Eto	DWR	CVFPO*
Elizabeth Hubert	DWR	FESSRO**
Brian Smith	DWR	DWR Lead
Ernie Taylor	DWR	DWR Regional Coordinator
Eric Clyde	MWH	Technical Lead
Pam Jones	Kearns & West	Team, Facilitator
Ben Gettleman	Kearns & West	Facilitation Support

* Central Valley Flood Planning Office

** FloodSAFE Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resources Office

Absent:

Randall Anthony	Merced Irrigation District	Member
Margit Aramburu	University of the Pacific, Natural Resources Institute	Member
John Cain	American Rivers	Member
S. Leo Capuchino	City of Mendota	Member
Bill Luce	Friant Water Authority	Member

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Paul Romero	DWR, Flood Plain Management Division	Member
Steve Stadler	Kings River Conservation District	Member
Erik Vink	Trust for Public Land	Member

Observers:

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WORK GROUP HOMEWORK/ACTION ITEMS

- Send comments on MAR and IPS2 to Eric Clyde (Eric.S.Clyde@us.mwhglobal.com) by Friday, November 12, 2010.

ACTION ITEMS: PROGRAM TEAM

1. Ben Gettleman, Kearns & West, will send a draft meeting summary to the work group.
2. Pam Jones, Kearns & West, will contact work group members for feedback on the CVFPP Phase 2 process.

MEETING GOALS

1. Discuss feedback on Draft Management Actions Report and Interim Progress Summary No. 2
2. Outline what the 2012 CVFPP will include
3. Develop list of proposed regional objectives building on Subcommittee initial draft
4. Describe Phase 3 process and opportunities for involvement

SUMMARY

Welcome and Greetings

Pam Jones, meeting facilitator, welcomed the Work Group participants and reviewed the meeting purpose, objectives, and agenda.

Opening Remarks

Mike Inamine, DWR Executive Sponsor, welcomed the meeting attendees and thanked them for their participation. Mr. Inamine noted that the meeting's discussion on regional objectives was significant because it would focus the group's discussion on management actions and solution sets, making the content of the discussion tangible. He added that the group would be discussing two important documents during the meeting: the Draft Management Actions Report (MAR) and Interim Progress Summary No. 2 (IPS2). He also reported that the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the CVFPP Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was released in late October 2010, and that scoping meetings would begin during the week of November 15, 2010.

Mr. Inamine provided an update on the 2012 CVFPP schedule, noting that the current schedule for completing the 2012 plan may not be practical, and that DWR is currently reassessing the schedule. He added that DWR senior staff are working with transitional governance staff to ensure the CVFPP remains a top priority in governor-elect Brown's administration.

Document Update

Jim Eto, DWR Central Valley Flood Planning Office, reported on the status of several CVFPP documents currently being developed: the final State Plan of Flood Control Descriptive Document will be available by the end of November 2010; the draft Flood Control System Status Report will be available in early 2011;

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the draft CVFPP Historical Document will be available in early 2011; and the CVFPP Progress Report will be available by the end of 2010.

Mr. Eto then reviewed the next steps in the management actions development process, noting that place-based management actions would be addressed in Phase 3, and non place-based management actions (policy, financing, etc.) will be addressed in Phase 4 since they are not region-specific.

Finally, Mr. Eto noted that the MAR and the IPS2 were sent to the Regional Management Actions Work Groups (RMAWGs) in early November 2010 for review, and that the deadline to submit comments on these documents is November 12, 2010. After providing an overview of the MAR and IPS2, Mr. Eto invited comments and clarifying questions from the group.

Comment: Integration with the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) is important. More specifically, the introduction of selenium into the San Joaquin River through Penoche Creek is a concern; this could have impacts on water quality. This is one of many coordination issues related to SJRRP.

Merritt Rice, DWR Central Valley Flood Planning Office, clarified that while the MAR and IPS2 will soon be finalized, comments on management actions will continue to be considered moving forward, and management actions will be added, revised and removed as appropriate.

Overview of 2012 CVFPP

Brian Smith, DWR Central Valley Flood Planning Office, provided an overview of the 2012 CVFPP, noting that the intent of the CVFPP is to coordinate the FloodSAFE program with DWR's other core flood management programs such as levee evaluations, critical repairs, and early implementation. Merritt Rice added that there were three key themes regarding the CVFPP schedule: 1) the CVFPP is the central element of FloodSAFE; 2) the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is conducting feasibility studies on nearly all of the major river systems in the study region, including the Delta, and the CVFPP will align with the Central Valley Integrated Flood Management Study towards a common vision; and 3) Phase 1 of FloodSAFE will expend the bond money that is currently available, and more funding will be needed to complete Phase 2 projects.

Q: In this process, DWR is requesting that work group members attend meetings to help develop its plan. Is there a time when FloodSAFE staff will attend meetings for other related projects and processes? Will outreach for FloodSAFE include staff participation in other programs?

A: Regional coordinators attend meetings and participate in other projects, and their job entails staying p to speed on these projects. There is a staffing challenge, however.

Comment: County planning processes and the Resource Management Coalition should be priority targets for coordination. SJRRP needs a champion to include a flood component in that program.

Comment: When the plan is in final form, that is a good time to conduct outreach and educate people about what you're doing.

Response: The technical flood control issues are being factored into the process later than DWR would like. DWR is working to coordinate FloodSAFE with other programs like BDCP, but the technical issues are being identified relatively late in the process.

Comment: The Strategic Growth Council and the HUD grant for smart growth in the San Joaquin Valley are processes that should be included in coordination efforts. A strategy needs to be mapped out to make the process of coordination as efficient as possible. The new administration is inheriting a complicated web of processes to coordinate.

Comment: The management plans of the San Luis Refuge Complex include a flood management component. This could be an opportunity for coordination.

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Comment: I attended a meeting for the San Luis Refuge Complex. While DWR clearly wanted to coordinate with other efforts, staff lacked the historical background and bandwidth to be up to speed. DWR is perceived negatively when its asking stakeholders the same questions that are processes are asking. Stakeholders often view all agencies as the “government” and they expect better coordination.

Comment: If the CVFPP includes concepts about breaching levees, the plan should include structures. Where is the money to fund these projects coming from?

Response: There is \$4.9 billion, and it needs to be spent by 2017. The core flood management programs are funded by a variety of sources, mainly the general fund. This source was depleted and the bond money helped DWR revamp its efforts. The long-term plan is to create a sustainable financing strategy so injections of bond funding won't be needed. This needs to be in place by 2017 when the bond money is used up.

Q: Is DWR pursuing federal funding?

A: Yes, it is.

Q: How is the Central Valley Flood System Conservation Strategy being incorporated?

A: The FloodSAFE Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resources Office (FESSRO) is utilizing the conservation strategy to coordinate a systemwide approach for environmental support, and help develop streamlined regulatory processes. FESSRO is working with other DWR offices to collaborate on permitting and other processes to incorporate conservation considerations. There will be a section in the 2012 Plan focusing on conservation planning, and more detail in the 2017 CVFPP.

Q: How are exotic and invasive species being considered by FESSRO?

A: There is not a specific policy, but it is intended that the topic of exotic and invasive species be integrated into FESSRO's projects.

Comment: Invasive species is an important topic for this region. For the Madera IRWM, almost all of the projects that are being proposed have an arundo eradication element. Once the San Joaquin River flows increase from the SJRRP, invasive species (wisteria, etc.) will be spread more widely. This needs to be addressed on a regional basis

Q: How is the cost sharing approach being developed, and what will this look like?

A: From a federal perspective, cost sharing is well defined. Cost sharing with state and local is still being shaped, and DWR would like influence how this is shaped.

Lastly, Merritt Rice presented on recommendations that the 2012 CVFPP will include. Mr. Rice reported that the 2012 CVFPP will include a set of common elements that will be implemented as part of the plan, and that DWR wants the plan to have some concreteness to it. He also noted that the Programmatic EIR will not include a set of alternatives, and there is an unresolved question as to how this will play out.

Overview of Phase 3 Regional Solution Sets

Eric Clyde, MWH technical lead, presented on developing regional and systemwide solution sets. Mr. Clyde clarified that the solution sets are made up of a combination of different approaches to flood management, and that while they are not alternatives from which a single recommended plan will be selected, the solution sets will reveal the tradeoffs of different approaches and this will help guide decision making. Mr. Clyde then reviewed the four solution sets (restore SPFC design capacity; protect high risk communities; manage consequences of large floods; modify flood system for enhanced benefit), noting that each solution set has an emphasis on different management actions.

Mr. Clyde also provided an overview of benefit areas, which are defined as subregions with common flood protection facilities and flooding mechanisms (also referred to as protection areas). The benefit areas will be use used to evaluate the local applicability of management actions, and to evaluate the contribution of flood improvement actions to local and/or systemwide benefits.

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Develop Regional Objectives

Jerry Lakeman, who participated in the Regional Objectives Subcommittee, reported back on the work of the Subcommittee, which met between RMAWG Meetings #2 and #3 to continue developing regional objectives for the Upper San Joaquin region. Following Mr. Lakeman's summary, Pam Jones requested feedback from the group on the draft regional objectives.

Draft Regional Objective 1: Provide reliable system performance and minimize the frequency of flooding to achieve the following level of protection...

Comments on Potential Metrics

- The economic output metric is pretty broad. This should be tied to system performance, and narrowed down to be specific to flood issues.
- It seems like economic output is related to how important the area is (i.e. is it worthwhile to protect it?).
- If you meet the objective, there will be a more stable economic output.
- There are dairies close to the river systems. When there is a flood there may be impacts that are an economic loss. But there are also other non flood factors that can impact dairies. This metric should be changed to economic output related to flooding to be more specific.
- The basic metric regarding economic damages is whether the area loses jobs if there is a flood.
- Economic damage is a difficult metric to measure. Having more distinct cause/effect relationships defined would be helpful.
- Land value increases when flood protection is higher; this could also be considered in economic output.
- Economic damages should be divided in to direct and indirect damages.

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- Question from DWR staff: Under the first bullet, second sentence, where would "where design conditions do not exist" be?
 - I believe this deals with private levees. Some communities are protected by private levees but there are no design criteria. They have a flood protection function but they are not necessarily designed for that.
 - I think this intends to gain an understanding of the expectations of the people who live behind private levees would be if there was not an original system design.
- DWR will need to look at non-project level facilities that influence the SPFC. The distinction should be made between the facilities that will influence the SPFC and those that will not.
- Once the bypasses reach their design capacity, does the water flow down the river?
 - Response: It depends on the perspective; the non-project levees dictate where the water flows. When the system is at capacity, it is managed as best as possible to fulfill the ultimate goal of the facility. Sometimes the design capacity will be exceeded to protect communities.

Draft Regional Objective 2: Minimize loss of life when flooding occurs.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- Add public health and safety to this regional objective.

Comments on Potential Metrics

- Consider measuring protected access to hospitals, and the number of injuries.

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- Under the first bullet, add "access to public health and safety facilities" to "protect evacuation routes."
- Add "coordinate with Cal Emergency Management Agency."

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- Volunteer coordination, services, and management

Draft Regional Objective 3: Reduce private property and equipment damages when flooding occurs.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- Remove “private.” This objective should be applied generally to include state, local and federal property as well.

Comments on Potential Metrics

- Add resiliency and time for recovery as potential metrics.

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- Add “maintain continued access to equipment that can contribute to flood protection and response.”
- There are mutual aid agreements on the Kings River; these should be considered. These agreements support the notion of regional self-sufficiency.
- Volunteer agreements – California Emergency Management Agency plays a role in this. For the Upper San Joaquin region in particular, a lot of people are going to be helping out during a flood event.
 - This could include volunteers and donation of goods.
- Another consideration is that if volunteers are not used effectively, it makes your agency look bad.
- Liability for volunteers needs to be considered.
- Volunteer coordination, services, and management

Draft Regional Objective 4: Reduce damage to critical and community facilities.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- Add “and capabilities” after “facilities.”

Draft Regional Objective 5: Minimize water quality contamination when flooding occurs.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- Does this refer to groundwater supplies, domestic water supplies, or drinkable water supplies?
 - Response: It refers generally to preventing facilities from putting harmful materials in the river after a flood event.
- Revised objective to “Minimize introduction of contaminants into the flood waters.”

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- There is an education component, especially around illegal drug production, that should be considered.
- Grasslands Water District and other similar operations have capabilities to take contaminated water; this can enhance system water quality.
- There are ways to clean up waters through effect flood facility design.

Draft Regional Objective 6: Maintain a reliable and functioning distributed flood protection system and ensure that the bypasses and channels and other facilities that make up the system are operated and maintained to a sustainable standard.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- What is the significance of having a “distributed flood protection system”? What is the added value?

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- Having the system be distributed is important because so many other components are functioning (canals, etc.) that are not technically part of the flood protection system, but are still important.
- This priority seems to be regionally unique; it is important that we are able to tell this story.
- This regional objective should remain broad.

Comments on Potential Metrics

- Add “areas of infested invasive and non-native species (vegetation management).”

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- The SPFC will consider areas outside of the designated study area to determine how those areas will impact the SPFC. DWR could potentially implement projects outside the area in order to positively impact the SFPC.
- Irrigation districts can help divert flood waters by opening their channels, but this is not recognized. This is informal and it is not mapped. Since the irrigation districts do not want to be regulated and inspected for this role they are providing, it remains informal and is not integrated into a more regional strategy. This is an important local strategy to manage flood risk though
- There is a component beyond “maintaining” a system. The ability to change and move things around (flexibility) to meet the realities of a situation or event also needs to be encouraged.
- This relates to IRWMs, which consider future capacity. Fresno Irrigation District and Fresno Consolidated want to help with water flow overdraft but they’re not yet well connected. The Tulare Water Basin can also take water during flood events. The wetlands are dry eight years out of nine, but if they were flooded more it would be beneficial to the wetlands.
- For the Friant-Kern Canal, part of settlement includes increasing capacity of the canal. Conjunctive use along the Friant-Kern Canal is also included, as is interconnecting with other systems.
- These efforts are actually coordinated but it is informal.
- Local input is essential because they are familiar with this informal coordination.

Draft Regional Objective 7: Improve overall system performance in the region by attenuating flood peak flows.

Comments on Draft Regional Objective

- Change to “attenuating flows within our region”
- Upstream reservoir operations also should be taken into account

Draft Regional Objective 8: Improve institutional support for flood management through improved regional coordination and support to local decision-making.

Comments on Potential Metrics

- Consider evidence of flood protection policies being incorporated into local land use plans.
- Measure response times.
- Measure agreements among parties (JPAs, MOUs) that would lead to institutional capacity
 - Could include percentage of land area that is covered through the multi-party agreements.
 - General Plans, etc that inform land use decisions.
- Funding opportunities exist that many people are not aware of. This should be measured.

Comments on Example Actions Discussed

- Take advantage of funding opportunities.

Draft Regional Objective 9: Implement multi-benefit flood management design strategies that support and leverage opportunities made possible by the San Joaquin River Restoration Program and the non-

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structural flood management goals of the San Luis Wildlife Refuge Complex in order to enhance ecosystem function.

Comments on Potential Metrics

- Measure the increase in areas that provide flood attenuation and ecosystem benefits.
- Measure volumes that accomplish ecosystem restoration and flood control in transitory storage areas.
- Measure the mileage of levees improved to serve both SJRRP goals and flood control goals.
- Measure the total land area protected by conservation easements.

Phase 2 Assessment Process and Feedback

Pam Jones informed the work group that program staff were seeking their feedback on Phase 2 through both a written questionnaire and follow-up phone calls. Work group members filled out the questionnaire during the meeting.

Closing Thoughts

Merritt Rice, Mike Inamine and Jim Eto thanked the work group members for their participation and helpful contributions to the process.