



# Meeting Summary

## Upper San Joaquin Regional Conditions Work Group Meeting #6

**November 20, 2009, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm**

**Location: CSUF Center for Irrigation Technology  
5370 N. Chestnut Avenue  
Fresno, California 93740-0018**

### WORK GROUP ATTENDANCE:

Name	Organization	Status
Margit Aramburu	University of the Pacific, Natural Resources Institute	Member
Leo Capuchino	City of Mendota	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
Bill Luce	Friant Water Authority	Member
Mari Martin	Resource Management Coalition	Member
Gary Hester	California Department of Water Resources (DWR)	CVFMP* Program Manager
Brian Smith	DWR	DWR Lead
Roger Lee	DWR	CVFPO**
Jim Eto	DWR	CVFPO**
Eric Clyde	MWH	Technical Lead
Alexa La Plante	MWH	Team
Pam Jones	Kearns & West	Team, Facilitator
Ben Gettleman	Kearns & West	Facilitation Support

\* Central Valley Flood Management Planning

\*\*Central Valley Flood Planning Office

### Absent:

Randall Anthony	Merced Irrigation District	Member
Julia Berry	Madera Farm Bureau	Member
Sarge Green	CA Water Institute, CSU Fresno	Member
Richard Harmon	Landowner/Grower, Dos Palos, Calif.	Member
Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo	Merced County Farm Bureau	Member
Jose Ramirez	City of Firebaugh	Member
Paul Romero	DWR, Flood Plain Management Division	Member
John Shelton	CA Department of Fish and Game	Member
Monty Schmitt	Natural Resources Defense Council	Member

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John Slater	County of Madera, Resource Management Agency	Member
David van Rijn	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Member
Douglas Welch	Chowchilla Water District	Member

### Observers:

Vince Roos	Office of Congressman Jim Costa
Keith Seligman	Kings River Conservation District
Steve Stadler	Kings River Conservation District

### WORK GROUP HOMEWORK/ACTION ITEMS

- Review the draft State Plan for Flood Control (SPFC) Descriptive Document and provide comments by Dec 1, 2009.

Homework assignments should be sent to DWR lead Brian Smith, [besmith@water.ca.gov](mailto:besmith@water.ca.gov) with a copy to MWH lead Eric Clyde, [Eric.S.Clyde@us.mwhglobal.com](mailto:Eric.S.Clyde@us.mwhglobal.com).

### ACTION ITEMS: PROGRAM TEAM

1. Roger Lee will inform Upper San Joaquin Regional Conditions Work Group (Work Group) members when the O&M manual DVD is ready, and how to access it.
2. Gary Hester will work with DWR and Fresno to revise the planning area map to accurately reflect the southern boundary.

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

The Work Group of the Central Valley Flood Management Program (CVFMP) continued its work on November 20, 2009 with the following actions:

- Reviewed and provided comments on revised Problems and Opportunities statements.
- Reviewed and provided comments on revised Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) Goals.
- Continued to develop CVFPP Objective statements.

The purpose of the Work Group is to contribute to the development of content for the Regional Conditions Report (RCR), which is a key component for developing the 2012 CVFPP. The RCR will identify resources, conditions within the Central Valley, flood management and related problems and opportunities, and goals and objectives for use in preparing the CVFPP. The Work Group is one of five regional work groups for the CVFMP.

### MEETING GOALS

1. Review roadmap for remainder of 2009 and early 2010 (Schedule for Document Review)
2. Provide overview of the outline for the Regional Conditions Summary (RCS) Report
3. Review comments received and status of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the RCR
4. Continue development of Goals, Principles and Objectives (Chapter 4 of RCR)
5. Discuss next steps

### SUMMARY

#### Welcome and Greetings

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

#### Opening Remarks

Gary Hester, CVFMP Program Manager, welcomed the Work Group and provided opening remarks. Mr. Hester's remarks included the following updates:

- The planning team is starting the Interim Levee Design Criteria Topic Work Group, which will have its first meeting on December 8, 2009. The input from this group will be used to comment on and refine Draft #4 of the Interim Levee Design Criteria.
- DWR held a meeting with the Mayor of the City of Fresno concerning the southern boundary of the planning area. DWR has agreed that the southern boundary should be moved to be consistent with the Bulletin 160 (or Bulletin 118) boundary. Mr. Hester added that DWR is committed to working cooperatively with local representatives on legislation to clarify the definition of the southern boundary.
- DWR has been making presentations to local jurisdictions concerning land use requirements that will result from general plan alignments with the CVFPP. The presentation included the following points:
  - If there is a proposed development in the 200-year flood plain in an urban or urbanizing area, the development must provide 200-year level protection by 2025 or the local jurisdiction must show that adequate progress is being made to meet the criteria starting 3 years after the adoption of the CVFPP.
  - After the CVFPP is adopted, amendments to the general plans of local jurisdictions would be required within two years after that, and changes to zoning ordinances within one additional year.

Q: Is there a map that shows the new southern boundary of the planning area?

A: The correct boundary can be found via a Google search for "Tulare Lake Basin" The southern bluff line of the San Joaquin River is the correct boundary.

#### Review of Meeting #5 Action Items

Roger Lee, DWR, reviewed the list of action items from Meeting #5 and provided updates:

1. Gary Hester will verify the source of the 200-year state levee criteria (i.e. which legislation the criteria come from).  
**Status:** Completed – The language in the legislation was verified and it was noted that it came from Government Code Section 65865.5. The 2007 California Flood Legislative Summary Document will be revised to be consistent with the legislation.
2. Ben Gettleman will follow up with Margit Aramburu concerning Action Item #4 from Meeting #4 – develop criteria for data collection.  
**Status:** Completed.
3. Roger Lee will send Work Group members the document that defines the road map/language in the legislation defining the State Plan of Flood of Control.  
**Status:** Completed.
4. Eric Clyde will add a question and response to the *Responses to Questions from Meeting #5* document concerning how "area" is defined in categorizing urbanized and urbanizing areas.  
**Status:** There are definitions for "urbanizing area" and "developing area" in the glossary. The planning team will continue to update the glossary as needed.

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5. Alexa La Plante will follow up with Diana Pedrozo Westmoreland on responding to her comments on the RCR.  
**Status:** Completed.
6. Eric Clyde will send Work Group members the draft Objectives statements that were created during Meeting #5 for review and additional comment.  
**Status:** Completed.
7. Alexa La Plante will confirm what DWR is doing to notify the public of the Valley-wide Forum in February.  
**Status:** Completed. Roger Lee noted that the main objective of the Valley-wide Forum is to bring Work Group members together with their constituents. Outreach for the Forum will mainly rely on Work Group members notifying their constituents and outreach by DWR to its list of interested persons.

### Roadmap for Remainder of 2009 and Early 2010

Eric Clyde, MWH, presented the CVFPP development timeline and identified where the group is in the plan development process. Mr. Clyde noted that a half-day Meeting #8 had been added to the Work Group process to provide an adequate opportunity to review and comment on the finalizing documents.

Q: What is the date of the Valley-Wide Forum?

A: The date is currently set for February 3, 2010, but this could be modified.

Q: Is there a date for the January meeting (Meeting #8)?

A: A date has not been set yet; the planning team has tentatively identified the week of January 21-27, 2010, as the week to hold meeting #8.

### Outline of Regional Conditions Summary

Eric Clyde presented the outline and layout of the RCS. Roger Lee added that there will be four summary documents (RCS, Management Actions Summary, Evaluation Methods Summary, and Management Solutions Summary) included in the CVFPP. Mr. Lee stated that having the entire report (i.e. the RCR) for each round in the development of the plan would lead to a very large CVFPP document. Providing summaries instead will make it more accessible.

Q: Will roles and responsibilities be covered in the RCS?

A: This will be covered later in the plan process during management actions. This approach will be described in the Next Steps section of the RCS.

### Review of Comments Received and Status of RCR Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Eric Clyde gave an overview of Revised Draft Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the RCR, including:

- Organization of Chapters 1 and 2.
  - Some sections were rearranged in response to comments.
- Summary of comments received for Chapters 1, 2 and 3.
  - Key themes from comments included: provide details on local issues, update outdated info, provide quantitative descriptions of habitat resources and economics, and include future conditions for climate change.
- Schedule for document review.
  - Chapter 4 will be sent to the Work Group by December 7, 2009. Comments will be due on December 21, 2009.
  - A back-check review on the RCR will be completed by January 4, 2010.
  - A draft review of the RCR will be due January 13, 2010.
  - Meeting #8 is tentatively proposed for the week of January 21-27, 2010.

Q: Are the resource conditions in Chapter 2 broken down into specific regions, or do they give an overview of the region?

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A: Some resource conditions are region specific, and others are broadly applicable.

Q: What quantitative data is available on climate change?

A: There is a Climate Change Scope Definition Work Group (CCSDWG) that has been focusing on this. Coming up with data on climate change is challenging since so much is undetermined.

Comment: The state has developed a paper on climate change which includes a range of projections. This should be used to develop the CVFPP.

Comment: The result of climate change will be that water-related events and trends will become more unpredictable in California.

Reply: The discussions of the CCSDWG support this unpredictability.

### Review Revised Goals and Problems Statements

Eric Clyde presented the revised Goals and Problems statements, including a review of planning definitions. Mr. Clyde introduced the *Revised Problems and Opportunities, and Goals* handout, and invited comments from the Work Group.

Comments from the Work Group on goals included:

#### Facilitate and Streamline Operation and Maintenance of the Flood Management System

- The corresponding Problems statement mentions costs, but the Goal statement does not. The Goals statement should reflect costs and the affordability of projects needs to be taken into consideration; it will be financially difficult for some regions to get to the 200-year flood protection goal.

#### Restore Ecosystem Functions in the Flood Management System

- Instead of “restore” we should consider using “manage” or “enhance”. We should not forget about agriculture, or that improving flood management is the top priority.  
Response: “Where feasible” is intended to acknowledge that improving the flood management system is the first priority.
- There are many ways of addressing flood management; it can be done in a way that benefits the ecosystem.
- The Westlands Water District in Fresno County is retiring farmland. To keep the land from going back to natural habitat, the District has harrowed the retired farmland every other year to keep the Russian thistle and Yellow Star thistle and many other weeds from growing out of control. The District has taken the position of keeping lands available for dry farming.
- There are other uses besides habitat that retired land could be used for and benefit the public, such as solar energy. There are a number of options for retired agricultural land in addition to habitat restoration.

#### Improve Institutional Support

- This speaks to the institutional side, but not the policy side of the Problems statement. The development of the plan is an important part of the policy aspect.

#### Promote Multi-benefit Projects

- Q: Can more examples be provided of multi-benefit projects?  
A: There were so many examples suggested that it would have created a very long list, so the planning team has left them out of this handout. The examples are discussed further in the text of the document.
- Multi-benefit is usually linked to funding sources.
- It is difficult to gain support for a project based on a single 200-year event; this is why the multi-benefit aspect is important. Perhaps some language should be inserted on improving public acceptance by having a more frequent benefit, such as a park, than just the flood protection aspect.

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### Review Revised Principles

Eric Clyde presented the revised Principles statements and introduced the *Draft CVFPP Principles* handout. Mr. Clyde invited Work Group members to review and provide comments on the draft principles.

### Revised Draft Principles

#### Approach flood risk management on a system-wide basis and avoid (where possible) or mitigate adverse impacts

- "...and avoid (where possible) or mitigate adverse impacts" seems obvious.  
Response: The underlying principle is that actions taken for one area should not negatively impact other areas. The intent is to address flood risk management on a system-wide basis.

#### Protect and restore natural floodplain processes and promote environmental stewardship

- It is not clear what "environmental stewardship" means.  
Response: Opportunities to restore flood plain processes within the improvement to the floodplain processes should be leveraged.
- Replace "protect and restore" with "utilize and incorporate."
- Environmental stewardship should be a separate statement since it is not explicitly related to floodplain processes. This should be its own principle.

#### Construct flood protection infrastructure to minimize unexpected failures within design parameters

- Q: What does this principle mean?  
A: This principle is intended to communicate the need for design parameters to minimize the possibility of failure.
- There are already statewide standards, and it is everyone's intention to build infrastructure that does not fail. This principle misses the point or is not needed.  
Response: There are very few levees that meet today's standards.

### Suggested New Principles:

#### Long-term, system-wide goals for improving flood protection should include consideration of post-flood recovery.

- Q: What does "include consideration of post-flood recovery" mean?  
A: Many Work Group members have said that recovery is not a high priority in the planning process, but that it should be.
- In the Agriculture Subcommittee, it was mentioned that there are no plans for recovery at the local level. Local jurisdictions are left responsible for post-flood recovery.
- Ad-hoc planning is common on the post-flood recovery side. This principle refers to the need to have systems in place for after the event has happened.
- This needs to be coordinated on the federal level because the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is very specific about what they will reimburse on recovery-related actions.

### Proposed New Principle:

- "Recognize need for sustained operation and maintenance of facilities."

### Continued Discussion of Objectives

Eric Clyde presented the refinement of CVFPP objectives, noting that the development of objectives will be an iterative process. Mr. Clyde then introduced *Worksheet 10 – Draft CVFPP Objectives*, and the Work Group members were divided into two groups to do the following:

1. Review synthesized objectives and determine if/how they can be refined to better reflect the Upper San Joaquin region.
2. Develop additional objectives.

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Work Group members received the document *Draft Objectives Work Group Comments (as of 11/12/2009)*, which included draft objectives that were developed during meeting #5. Work Group members were instructed to review the draft objectives developed by Work Group in the last meeting. Many of the draft statements were actually determined to be management actions, so the Work Group members were asked to refine the statements to make them objectives as opposed to management actions.

The two groups came back together and shared their comments on Worksheet 10 and the new objectives they had developed. The following table summarizes the Work Group outcomes:

Potential Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
<p><b>Flood Risk</b></p> <p>Provide 200-year (or greater) level of flood protection to all urban and urbanizing areas in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Valley by December 31, 2025, and - provide interim 100-year protection by 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This statement is ok.</li> </ul>
<p>Provide 100-year (or greater) level of flood protection to all rural and agricultural areas in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Valley by December 31, 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised language: “Provide 100-year (or greater) level of flood protection for rural communities (greater than 1,000 and less than 10,000 people) in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Valley by December 31, 2025.”</li> <li>• The existing system was built for 50-year protection of agricultural lands.</li> <li>• We don't want this statement to specify protection only for agricultural land. Provide 100-yr. or greater for rural communities (of greater than 1,000, less than 10,000 people).</li> <li>• We may want a separate statement dedicated to agricultural areas. Agricultural lands should at least be protected from floods to protect the economic viability of the area.</li> <li>• If the state is responsible for a certain level of flow at one point, it should be responsible to follow the flows for the entire system.</li> <li>• It will be difficult to make farmers give up property for setback levees, and what funds would be available?</li> <li>• There is a question whether this objective is achievable.</li> </ul>

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Potential Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
<b>Ecosystem Restoration</b>	
<p>Increase the floodplain and shaded riverine aquatic habitat within the flood management system by XXX acres, with a focus on areas of habitat discontinuity and where wetlands can be restored by 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The acreage needs to be quantified.</li> <li>• When developing the associated management action, the responsible party will need to be identified.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase the area (by TBD acres) and frequency of inundated floodplain habitat within the flood management system that provides conditions suitable for spawning and rearing native fish by 20XX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A scientist should address whether a specific floodplain can be used for rearing and/or spawning.</li> <li>• The question “why” should be addressed. Is it worth taking out xx acres of farmland for this?</li> <li>• There are other factors that negatively impact the ecosystem, such as ammonia polluting rivers and streams.</li> </ul>
<b>Streamlined Permitting</b>	
<p>Establish a system-wide/streamlined permitting process to reduce the cost and duration of obtaining permits for flood planning, maintenance, preparedness, response, and recovery by 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does “system-wide” refer to the CVFPP or also outside of the focus area?</li> </ul>
<b>Flood Preparedness and Response</b>	
<p>Implement an emergency preparedness plan for Central Valley communities with greater than 1,000 people that includes elements to address flood risk, warning and notification, and hazard communication elements by 20XX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some communities already have their own emergency preparedness plans. They should not be required to have two plans.</li> <li>• Areas with an approved FEMA local hazard mitigation plan should be exempted.</li> <li>• “Implement” should be changed to “assure.” This change is intended to recognize that some communities already have a FEMA plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Operation and Maintenance</b>	
<p>Achieve a 90% annual “pass rate” for urban levee standards” in the Central Valley when inspected according to Federal and State levee standards (e.g., maintenance, encroachment, etc.) by 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State inspects levees on a monthly basis using guidelines.</li> <li>• The timing for inspection often makes it difficult to pass certain O&amp;M criteria because certain O&amp;M activities occur during specific times of the year and the inspections could miss it. There should be a provision in the inspection practices that recognizes that things are done during certain times of the year.</li> </ul>

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Potential Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
<p>Improve the annual “pass rate” for non-urban project levees in the Central Valley by 30% when inspected according to Federal and State levee standards (e.g., maintenance, encroachment, etc.) by 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change beginning to “Achieve a xx% annual pass rate...”</li> <li>• Guidance from inspectors will be needed to identify an achievable pass rate. The baseline isn’t currently known.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education and Outreach</b></p>	
<p>Implement a focused outreach program to educate public on potential flood risk, and support local agencies on revising their General Plans by 2014.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does this refer to educating the public or the property owners? The property owners are the public.</li> <li>• These are two different objectives separated by an “and.” These should be separated because the management actions required to achieve them are different.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Groundwater Recharge</b></p>	
<p>Use XXX acre-feet per year (average annual) flood flows to provide groundwater recharge benefits by 2050.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised language: “Increase groundwater recharge by [xx date] through use of flood flows.”</li> <li>• Does the xxx acre-feet provide for the 215 groundwater already occurring?</li> <li>• If there were modeling, you could develop a number for annual average flood flow.</li> <li>• This could be paired with a conjunctive design objective – while another project such as ecosystem restoration is being developed, groundwater recharge could be incorporated at the same time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding</b></p>	
<p>Establish guidance, standards, policies, and procedures for the funding and implementation of projects and activities that contribute to a system-wide approach to integrated flood management by 20XX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The responsible agency and sources of funding need to be identified when developing the associated management action.</li> <li>• Should this occur with the 2012 CVFPP?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land Use</b></p>	
<p>Develop consistent guidelines for land management within floodplains and floodways by 20XX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date – 2015.</li> <li>• Insert “in conforming to policies specified in the CVFPP” between “guidelines” and “for.”</li> </ul>
<p>Contribute to the maintenance of a viable agricultural industry and acknowledge the environmental value of agricultural lands by preserving XX acres of agricultural lands within the flood management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It seems that agriculture is the objective here, not flood management.</li> <li>• The first part of sentence should be removed, and it should read “Acknowledge the value of agricultural lands and their compatibility within</li> </ul>

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Potential Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
system.	the flood management system, by preserving XX acres of agricultural lands.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a similar objective replacing agriculture with the environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Potential Objectives to Explore</b>	
Implement a long-term conservation strategy by 2017 that provides effective and efficient environmental mitigation for flood management activities on a system-wide basis and results in lasting environmental benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects already come with mitigation requirements; the O&amp;M manual outlines the requirements. Having two mitigations for one project doesn't make sense.</li> <li>• This is already required by state and federal agencies, depending on the environmental document.</li> <li>• Perhaps the environmental stewardship topic group should reword this objective to clarify an overall framework that captures mitigation on a holistic, system-wide, coordinated basis.</li> </ul>
<b>New Objectives</b>	
<b>Other Potential Objectives to Explore: Multiple Use</b> Implement X acres of flood management projects that incorporate the protection of agriculture and improvement of ecosystem functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, setback levees could be used to maintain some vegetation.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Potential Objectives to Explore: Multiple Use</b> Promote multi-use projects (e.g., habitat, recreation and flood control) in the upland watershed areas.	
<b>Flood Risk:</b> Develop incentives for agricultural lands used for flood overflow with the understanding that agricultural land owners would receive compensation for flood easements and/or restrictions on allowable crop use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is related to bullet above in which the 100-yr. protection was removed for agricultural land. Corresponds to the following management action: Include development of policies that require annual crops in floodplain areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Streamlined Permitting:</b> Align agency objectives and regulations to prioritize the protection of people, property, endangered species and valuable agricultural lands.	
<b>Funding:</b> Fund the 200-year flood protection requirement.	

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Potential Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
<b>Funding:</b> Ensure adequate funding required for O&M.	

### SPFC Descriptive Document

Eric Clyde presented the SPFC Descriptive Document, noting that comments on the document are due December 1, 2009.

Q: What O&M manuals does DWR currently have?

A: Todd Hillaire, DWR, is compiling the list and can answer that question. The O&M manuals are also being scanned and compiled into a DVD which will be available in the future.

### Discussion Valley-Wide Forum

Eric Clyde presented information on the Valley-wide Forum (Forum), noting that the main goals of the Forum are to:

- Provide an opportunity for discussions among the members of the Regional Conditions Work Groups and the Topic Work Groups.
- Provide an opportunity for engagement in the CVFPP by other FloodSAFE programs and projects, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-related programs and projects.
- Foster a high level of engagement by partners and interested parties in the development of the CVFPP.

Mr. Clyde added that the Forum was mainly intended to provide an opportunity for Work Group members to interact and share experiences, and less for the general public. Pam Jones informed the Work Group that Reggie Hill had been chosen to represent the Upper San Joaquin Work Group at the Forum. The group gave its unanimous support for Mr. Hill as the representative.

### Next Steps, Meeting Recap

Pam Jones reviewed the meeting goals and confirmed that they were achieved during the meeting. Gary Hester thanked the Work Group members for their participation and recognized their important contributions to the content and process of the CVFPP development.

Meeting #7 will be December 10, location TBD. A half-day Meeting #8 will be scheduled toward the end of January 2010.

