CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROGRAM

FloodSAFE CALIFORNIA

Central Valley Flood Protection Plan

Meeting Summary
Community Applications Workshop
Urban Areas

September 2, 2010, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
MWH
3321 Power Inn Road Suite 300, Sacramento, CA

Participants: 8

Name	Organization
Jeremy Arrich*	Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Ken Cumming	National Marine Fisheries Service
Jim Giottonini	San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency/City of Stockton
Nekane Hollister*	DWR Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP)
Elizabeth Hubert*	DWR
Mike Inamine*	DWR
Ken Kirby*	Kirby Consulting Group
Christal Love*	Center for Collaborative Policy
Noel Lerner*	DWR
Nahideh Madankar*	DWR Division of Flood Management (DFM)
Rod Mayer*	DWR
Ray McDowell*	DWR
Eric McGrath*	DWR
Erin Mullin*	DWR Central Valley Flood Planning Office (CVFPO)
Vanessa Nishikawa*	MWH
Elizabeth Patterson*	DWR
James Sandner	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sameer Sharideh	San Joaquin County
Dave Shpak	City of West Sacramento
Bert Snopes	Rancho Cordova
Jan Vick	City of Rio Vista
Terri Wegener*	DWR
Doug Weinrich	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Scott Woodland*	DWR

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This summary only includes comments made during the workshop. For more information on the workshop or to view written comments submitted after the workshop, please visit http://www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp.

Opening Comments and Summary Explanation

Urban Areas Management Application Workshop participants met to discuss categories and subcategories of Management Actions (MAs) for the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) as they apply to urban areas throughout the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. The following summary outlines comments made on each category/subcategory and divides each into five sections: compatibilities with urban areas, conditions within urban areas that support a given

category, implementation challenges associated with that category, ways to alleviate those challenges, and general comments. If a particular section does not appear for a category, participants did not provide specific input in this area.

Comments on the Applicability of MA Categories and Subcategories to Urban Areas

Flood Protection System Modification - Bypass, Setback Levees, Levees

Flood Protection System Modification Compatibilities

- Flood protection system modifications provide opportunities for improved access to open space, recreation.
- Ring levees (or partially enclosed "J" levees) are compatible with some urban areas, but the decision to build them should be on a site-by-site basis.
- Setback levees enable build out of planned, contiguous compact, efficient development in urban areas.
- Weirs reduce impacts on urban levees.

Conditions Supporting Flood Protection System Modification

- The ability to obtain substantial financial resources and/or the ability to attach to a funding stream.
- Regional management and partnerships can provide regional benefits greater than those from a single project.
- A local Land Use plan that supports flood protection.
- Political will to prioritize rebuilding and building new flood protection infrastructure.
- Benefits support the costs.

Flood Protection System Modification Implementation Challenges

- Cannot spend money on things other than flood control projects. Other things do not qualify for flood control. Need a little more flexibility. Should have some flexibility on how we implement the project.
- The hydrologic impacts of system modification can stymie implementation.
- Lack of a clear implementation method.
- High cost and resistance to land acquisition.
- Jurisdictional boundaries.
- Need to change "costs may be high" to "costs will be high" (global comment).
- Geographical and jurisdictional issues.
- Honeycombing.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- The modification of a weir could reduce the impact on levees.
- Regional partnerships

- Less resistance with more benefits
- Land use planning

General Comments on Flood Protection System Modification

- DWR should create a list the urban communities that are not already incorporated in this flood control system.
- Need a common definition for 'easements' and 'safe harbor agreement'.

Floodplain Management- Acquisitions and Buyouts

Acquisition and Buyout Compatibilities

- Acquisitions and buyouts have limited use in protected areas.
- Flood protection can be a direct result to acquisition and buyouts.

Conditions that Support Acquisitions and Buyouts

- Public understanding of the economic flood risks.
- Most effective when used in conjunction with other floodplain management strategies.
- Cost sharing with other local, state and federal entities.
- Very highly constrained geographically for structured improvements.

Acquisition and Buyout Implementation Challenges

- Local planning departments are underfunded in comparison to public works departments.
- Widespread public opposition to property taking.
- Cost will be relatively high.
- Limited utility due to limited opportunities.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- Use a strategy similar to the one used along the Napa River.
- State and local governments take advantage of the depressed housing market by buying foreclosed homes.
- Potential cost savings with a combined approach (avoided costs).

General Comments on Acquisitions and Buyouts

- MAs 74, 76, and 78 are disaster preparation, not linked to flood plain management.

Floodplain Management- Floodproofing

Floodproofing Compatibilities

- Clarity is needed on whether floodproofing standards apply to new or existing land uses.

Conditions Supporting Floodproofing

- Partnerships between urban and rural areas would support floodproofing implementation.

Floodproofing Implementation Challenges

- There are no floodproofing stipulations in the current building code.
- Levees will eventually fail.
- Floodproofing has a limited application in urban areas.
- There will also be developer resistance to floodproofing requirements due to increased development costs.
- Relatively limited application.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- The State could partner with FEMA and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to require mandatory flood insurance.
- It is reasonable to assume that proactive floodproofing could be less costly than cleanup and recovery costs after a major flood event. An economic analysis should be done to support the veracity of this assertion.
- Examples of local partnerships between urban/urbanizing areas and rural communities exist to improve flood protection for all. Urban areas could subsidize the flood protection cost for nearby rural communities. Use term 'incentives' rather than subsidies. Incentives should be made available for individual homeowners and developers.

General Comments on Floodproofing

- Clarification is needed on whether floodproofing measures are designed for 200 or 100 year protection.

Additional Floodplain & Reservoir Storage – Reservoir Storage

Reservoir Storage Compatibilities

- Desired water quality and temperature levels are compatible with reservoir storage.
- Reservoir storage increases access to open spaces, recreation and water supply.
- Public safety increases with reservoir storage.
- Reservoir storage provides substantial opportunities for hydropower.

Conditions Supporting Reservoir Storage

- Replace "minimal" with "no" ("Areas with minimal community development").

Reservoir Storage Implementation Challenges

- Nearly impossible to build new dams, especially where existing homes are located.
- Very expensive to implement.
- Remove "urban" from first bullet.
- Reality of today's political environment.
- Regulatory issues.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- The creation of in stream storage could help reduce the need for additional reservoir storage.
- Integration of energy generation.
- Cost of water needs to internalize the cost of water infrastructure development. The economics of water delivery need to align with the cost of water delivery.
- Opportunities for offstream storage.

Additional Floodplain and Reservoir Storage- Transitory Storage

Transitory Storage Compatibilities

- Urban areas benefit from the preservation the existing transitory storage.
- The urban areas could provide incentives to rural areas to not develop certain areas, thereby creating transitory storage opportunities.
- If mandatory flood insurance is required, the funds could be used to subsidize the rural areas.

Conditions Supporting Transitory Storage

- Need to develop recovery plans in the rural areas to guide response and recovery during Katrina type floods.
- Urban areas should be financially responsible for conveyance improvements through the Yolo bypass.
- System-wide plan and implementation.
- Reciprocity.

Transitory Storage Implementation Challenges

- Buying flood easements can affect land values.
- Structure of FEMA mapping, and flood insurance cost assessments.
- Downstream hydrologic impacts.
- Clarify bullet #2.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- System wide approach.

Storage Operations- Objective Releases and Flood Storage Allocation

Storage Operations Compatibilities

- The hydrologic component would need to be taken into account and improvements made downstream.
- Better release structures provide flood benefit by smoothing out peak water flows.
- Altering storage operations based on weather forecasts increases the risk of unnecessarily decreasing water supply.
- Altering storage operations can create water supply delivery benefits.
- Improved adaptability of the multipurpose flood control system.
- Better control also helps protect in-stream habitat.

Conditions that Support Storage Operations

- Coordinating partnership can reduce storage operations concerns.
- Coordinating the use existing empty space similar to what is currently done at the Folsom reservoir would improve storage operations.
- System approval of operational changes and downstream channel conditions.
- Altering storage operations is useful during a big flood event.

Storage Operations Implementation Challenges

- Coordinated storage operations should be written down and publicly shared.
- Some reservoirs are not equipped to change their storage operations.
- Shifts risks downstream by increasing frequency of higher water elevations on channeled levees.
- Increased demands for water supply, storage and hydropower.
- Potentially incompatible for multipurpose projects.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- Better coordination

General Comments on Storage Operations

- Objective release is the maximum release that can be made on purpose before it spills. Changing the objective release level would require a large alteration and modification of the infrastructure.
- Need a common definition for “objective releases”.

Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning

Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning Compatibilities

- Water basins of limited size have great disaster preparedness utility.

Conditions that Support Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning

- Need a disaster warning system to get information out very quickly.
- Integrate communication practices across media and amongst agencies.
- Access to media in private, public, and economic enterprises.
- People need to be evacuated at the first sign of levee trouble. The current response capability predicts a 3-5 day response.
- Need to think beyond the flood warning communication system and move toward educating the public.

Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning Implementation Challenges

- Floods in California are almost like flash floods compared to the speed of flooding in the Midwest.
- It is difficult to get the general public to pay attention to the danger of flood risk.

General Comments on Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning

- Need to clarify what MA 68 means.
- What is the definition of “early”?

Flood Fighting, Emergency Response, and Flood Recovery

Conditions that Support Flood Fighting, Emergency Response, and Flood Recovery

- Need clear technical, resource and procedural coordination and communication between the various levels of government (state and local).
- Regulatory streamlining for flood recovery.

Flood Fighting, Emergency Response, and Flood Recovery Implementation Challenges

- Need to develop creative ways to communicate preparedness and the flood fight.
- Communication between local governing entities and the state needs to get better.
- Regulatory constraints.
- Scale and complexity of urban communities.
- Lack of technical support for local flood fighting and evacuation plans.
- The number of potentially affected people and magnitude of potential damages.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- Partnerships and mentoring**.**

Ecosystem Restoration

Ecosystem Restoration Compatibilities

- Potential to increase quality and quantity of passive recreation.
- Compensate for loss of vegetation caused by vegetation management ETL.
- Potential improvements in flood risk reduction.
- Reduce levee system operation and maintenance costs.
- Multiple functions.
- Benefits in smaller tributaries.

Conditions that Support Ecosystem Restoration

- System-wide set of implementation goals.
- System-wide inventory of habitats by type, location, and ecosystem benefits.
- System-wide understanding of geomorphology related to flood protection infrastructure design, and development.

Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Challenges

- The State must be able to evaluate the EIP plans received.
- Downstream hydrologic impacts of setback levees.
- Vegetation on Levees ETL

Finance and Revenue

Finance and Revenue Compatibilities

- Evaluation plans that consider a number of scenarios (see MA-71).
- Regional rather than project-by-project development.

Conditions that Support Finance and Revenue

- Ability to identify federal interest.

Finance and Revenue Implementation Challenges

- The State must be able to evaluate the EIP plans received.
- Need more discussion and clarification regarding vegetation levee management policies.
- A resource conflict exists where the water meets the levee. Flood management is not typically in conflict with the Endangered Species Act.
- There is a greater need for federal investment then existing federal resources can provide.
- Extreme financial demand currently being placed on the system.
- Completing legislative requirements by 2012.
- Complexity and cost of funding process.
- Local systems often depend on development.

- Don't know what 200-year level of protection means.

Policy and Regulations

Policy and Regulations Compatibilities

- Participants generally agreed that the state should have negotiated for mandatory flood insurance.
- Need a policy specifically dealing with hydrologic impacts.

Policy and Regulation Implementation Challenges

- Enforcing policy changes at the state and federal level could be a challenge.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- NFIP as it related to varying levels of risk and rates – expand the pool
- Policy on hydraulic impacts needed

Operations and Maintenance- Vegetation Management, Dredging/Clearing, Administration of Encroachments, and Inspections

Operations and Maintenance Implementation Challenges

- Need a strong operations and maintenance policy to manage the legacy and urban encroachment problems. Urban areas have not made wise infrastructure and land use planning decisions.

Ways to Alleviate those Challenges

- There are laws in place that allow the use of non-structural alternatives such as flood bypasses or transitory storage to meet the requirements for PL84-99 funding. These types of projects provide both an ecosystem and flood protection benefit.
- Partnerships could be formed between small communities and their urban neighbors to provide system wide habitat benefits.

General Comments on Operations and Maintenance

- Add a MA aimed at improving operation and maintenance security.

General Comments

One participant expressed concern about workshop process thus far. The main issues expressed were:

- Availability of non-metered parking.
- Conduct of small group exercises (organization, facilitation, DWR perspectives).

Management Action Categories/Subcategory Prioritization

As discussed above, workshop participants discussed a basic prioritization structure for management action categories/subcategories as they apply to urban areas. The following issues were identified as high/low priority:

High Priority

- Flood protection system modification
- Policy and Finance issue specific to urban areas
- Disaster Preparedness and Flood Warning
- O&M

Lower Priority

- Permitting
- Policy and Regulations