

**Lower Feather River Corridor Management Plan
Public Outreach Meetings
Yuba County Board of Supervisors
Yuba County Government Centre
Board Chambers
915 8th St., Marysville, CA**

9:30 a.m.

Questions following Earl Nelson's Presentation of the LFR CMP:

Supervisor Abe: What is the level of protection on this stretch of the river? 100 year, etc?

Earl Nelson: At a minimum, DWR has to maintain the levels specified by the USACE. Because of the recent levee improvements, there is presently 200-year coverage in TRLIA area which is well above the USACE minimum requirement, SBFCA is working to improve their level of protection to 100-year in south and 200 year in north. That's being done through the EIP grant program – The CMP planning effort is focused on management, rather than attainment – while making sure that nothing we do places any area with less freeboard than the minimum standard required by the USACE.

Supervisor Abe: County has historically been interested in level of protection rather than maintenance?

Earl Nelson: Urban areas need to have 200 year protection, rural areas don't have a minimum standard but would need 100 year protection to avoid the requirement for flood insurance when a mortgage is applied for.

Supervisor Griego: CEQA streamlining. CEQA has more stringent requirements than NEPA – are there efforts underway to streamline environmental review by combining the CEQA and NEPA processes?

Earl Nelson: For this planning effort, we have to meet the requirements of both because we have both state and federal agencies involved. There is some efficiency in preparing joint documents. With CMP, we are attempting to define the activities that require permitting, and define mitigation, to the point that activities can be completed with a Mitigated Negative Declaration. If that's not possible, and EIR/EA or EIR/EIS will be needed.

Supervisor Abe: Can you give me an estimate of how you're balancing flood protection vs. ecological habitat? When they conflict, and ecological work negatively impacts flood management or ability to hold and transport flood water, which takes priority?

Earl Nelson: Public safety takes priority. We haven't seen anything in this corridor that will prevent us from doing both – no place where ecological restoration will reduce public safety below levels required by USACE. One of our goals is to ensure that public safety is preserved – maintain flow channels with conveyance capacity, minimize roughness (parallel strips rather than "clumps" of riparian forest, for instance). Public safety trumps everything.

Supervisor Nicoletti: Why was the Marysville Levee District not included? How was it determined who participates? Are there MOUs? Also, 30 foot vs. 50 foot maintenance terrace shown on figure.

Earl Nelson: No MOUs with the participants– participation is all informal, anyone showing up at the meeting can participate. Numbers for dimensions (widths) on the concept drawing, including for maintenance areas, are just conceptual – if there's a reason to have 50 feet, we can write that into the plan – we just need to know why it's important.

Supervisor Nicoletti: Refer to Paul Brunner for maintenance width. Also, when this rolls out, provide overlays over the top of districts for activities in the channel – who has the authority? We’re going to be giving the TRLIA lands back to the state (DFG) to be managed and overseen – how will that interface with this? Is it another layer?

Earl Nelson: Hopefully this will be a framework that will enable all of the participants to work together. Different participants have different jurisdictional authority, whether it’s land ownership, maintenance, encroachment permits – all have different roles to play. The goal of the plan is to paint a picture that ties it all together and shows how it can work together. Then, we’ll hope that all of the entities can work together to implement. Somebody can choose not to participate, but we’re hoping they won’t. We’re trying to find ways to make it compatible for everyone. We’re trying to anticipate and resolve conflicts before they occur.

Supervisor Abe: Have you approached the county water agency? They’ve dealt with DFG and DWR and had success avoiding “reinventing the wheel” The water agency has a history of playing well with others.

Earl Nelson: We do have DFG involved, and strategies designed to help with streamlining.

Supervisor Abe: Final question about elderberries and removal of elderberries based on Federal ESA requirements and efforts to delist VELB.

Earl Nelson: Just used as an example – DWR has the ability to maintain that area as a flood channel. We may have to go in and take elderberry plants out. If we have to take some out for flood flow improvements, we have the ability to do that because of the Biological Opinion and endangered species take authorization that was issued before they were planted.

Supervisor Abe: Given delisting efforts, why are we planting 4,000 bushes of a plant that can spread on its own?

Earl Nelson: We don’t know when FWS would complete that process. I would like to point out that the planting was not something that DWR did – was done by DFG. We only made sure that we have the right to manage those elderberries if we need to take them out. CVFPB was adamant that they not be planted without maintaining that authority for removal if necessary for public safety.

Supervisor Griego: This is a balancing act to achieve strategic goals. That’s what TRLIA has done – balancing flood control, recreation, and ecological. It can seem difficult, but it’s the best way to manage the system. Thanks for the work you’re doing out there. The documents describe the course that we have been taking.

Earl Nelson: We have been working closely with TRLIA for 10 years. We funded much of their levee improvements from the Proposition 13 bond act Yuba-Feather Program, and more recently have given them funds from the Proposition 1E Early Implementation Program.

Question from the public (Ray Moore): I like the idea, though I’m not sure who’s footing the bill. One good thing I didn’t hear is removing dams. Dams are important part of flood control. We need to keep everyone we have and build about 4 more. Management of the levee system – we should have levees from one end of the state to the other that don’t get overtop and get washed out. We shouldn’t be building homes in floodplains without a boat for each home. Who’s paying (DWR response: State of California).