



SAN JOAQUIN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

MEETING TODAY'S CHALLENGES / PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

September 29, 2006

Mr. Ralph Svetich
Delta Risk Management Strategy
Department of Water Resources
901 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-3515

RE: Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) Comments

Dear Mr. Svetich,

The San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots agricultural organization representing farmers and ranchers in San Joaquin County. Many of our members live and work in the Delta and many have been intimately involved with making sure that this important resource is viable for all Californians.

We believe that it would be very desirable for the Delta community to be consulted on a list of conceptual measures that could be analyzed to reduce various aspects of damages or risks. We believe that the following concepts should be considered:

1) *Measures to reduce the brief peak flows at Vernalis and possibly other sites as well.*

Large, but brief, peak flows along the San Joaquin River are a major cause of levee failure. The synchronization of peak flow releases from the reservoirs on the various rivers (San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced and Tuolumne) can minimize the effects of peak flows on the lower lands in the valley and at the confluences of the rivers.

Flood operation criteria also need to be updated to take advantage of forecasting technology that will allow for earlier releases under certain circumstances. This has already been achieved at Folsom Dam.

Overflow onto existing dedicated wetlands in the San Joaquin Valley and dry dams on the Westside streams should also be considered as feasible measures that can be achieved at far less cost than emergency repairs to levees.

2) *The installation of the "Dutch Gates" tidal flow restriction devices in the Sacramento River near Chipps Island in the Carquinez Straits.*

The Netherlands has been active for over 1000 years in restricting tides and storm waters. If a catastrophic event happened in the Delta that led to the failures of multiple levees, how would our states' fresh water supply be protected from saltwater intrusion? The "Dutch Gates" are one concept worth studying.

3) *Levee alterations to reduce the risk of complete failure during an earthquake.*

Of the approximately 1100 miles of levees in the Delta, only a fraction would have to be enforced to substantially protect against saline intrusion due to levee failures. Where necessary, backup levees on solid foundations can be built on the landward side of existing levees. Prevention of damage from beaver and rodent activity will help to decrease the incidence of failure in a catastrophic event.

4) *Strengthening of walls along the waterside edge of levees that are exposed to large waves.*

Wave protection has been done in some areas of the north Delta, but there is definitely an opportunity to do more. For levees that are most exposed to wave overtopping, walls along the waterside can aid in the prevention of waves flowing over levees and eroding the landward sides of the levees. This would also help to maintain access during high winds.

5) *The creation of reservoirs on the San Joaquin River at Temperance Flat and on the American River at Auburn.*

Normally, Folsom Lake on the American River must release flood flows of 1.7 Million acre-feet. Sacramento would be better protected with the ability to store more runoff at a larger facility on the American River – such as Auburn. This provides flood protection, addresses environmental concerns, creates recreational opportunities, provides water for agricultural uses and provides another source for power generation.

The San Joaquin River is increasingly being tapped as a water source for the same reasons. Court rulings will dedicate a greater amount of water from Millerton Lake in the near future. The Temperance Flat site offers an opportunity to capture substantially more floodwater to satisfy the needs of multiple agencies. This would greatly reduce flood flows on the San Joaquin River while conserving that water to meet flow and water quality needs along the river and in the South Delta.

6) *Salinity reduction measures at Frank's Tract in the Delta.*

We recommend studying the salinity control measures that have been identified by the Contra Costa Water District and through the CALFED process.

By providing measures that are feasible, policy and decision makers will have viable options to use that could reduce any potential problems, while at the same time realizing what may be the consequences of continued inaction.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Delta Risk Management Strategy. We look forward to working with you more in the future.

Sincerely,



Mike Robinson
President