

San Joaquin River Management Program Advisory Council Meeting

Thursday, August 17, 2006

Stanislaus County Agricultural Center
Rooms H&I in the Stanislaus Building
3800 Cornucopia Way
Modesto, California

AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions – Paula J. Landis, Chair
- 9:15 a.m. Hetch Hetchy Restoration Study – Dale Hoffman-Floerke, DWR
- 10:00 a.m. Salt Management in the Central Valley - Karl Longley, California Water Institute
- 10:30 a.m. Proposition 84 update - Landis
- 11:00 a.m. Other Business
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

DRAFT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, August 17, 2006
Stanislaus County Agricultural Center
Modesto, California

Welcome and Introductions

The San Joaquin River Management Program (SJRMP) Advisory Council met at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center in Modesto, California. Paula J. Landis, Department of Water Resources (DWR), opened the meeting with announcements and introductions.

Hetch Hetchy Restoration Study

Dale Hoffman-Floerke, DWR, summarized the recently released Hetch Hetchy Restoration Study. A hardcopy of the study with CD was provided to meeting participants. The study can be accessed online at http://hetchhetchy.water.ca.gov/docs/Hetch_Hetchy_Restoration_Study_Report.pdf. The Resources Agency of the State of California tasked the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to evaluate potential Hetch Hetchy Valley restoration based on studies produced during the past two decades. Assembly Members Lois Wolk and Joe Canciamilla requested a State study, so Resources Agency Secretary Mike Chrisman directed DWR and DPR to review existing information and prepare a report. The study was developed to provide an informed dialogue about this issue. The study does not include any formal recommendation.

Studies in the review include:

PAST STUDIES

US Bureau of Reclamation/ National Park Service – 1988
US Department of Energy - 1988
California State Assembly Office of Research – 1988
Department of Water Resources – 1990

RECENT STUDIES

Environmental Defense – 2004
University of California, Berkeley – 2004
University of California, Davis – 2004
Restore Hetch Hetchy – 2005
San Francisco Public Utility Commission (SFPUC) - 2005

Public outreach was conducted during the review and included SFPUC and its retailers, Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts, Native American tribes, the National Park Service, affected stakeholders downstream of Hetch Hetchy, and environmental interest groups. A public workshop was conducted on July 14, 2005 in Sacramento and was presented live on the internet via Webcast. Public comment was requested by August 14, 2005. Appendix J of the report addresses the public comments received.

The study found that most of the previous studies addressed specific or narrow aspects of restoring Hetch Hetchy Valley. Major data gaps were identified. The study evaluation includes: removal of O'Shaughnessy Dam, increased water treatment requirements, ecosystem restoration scenarios, potential public use opportunities, water and power replacement options and impacts, restoration costs range, and potential next steps towards restoration.

Existing studies provide initial conceptual information on Hetch Hetchy Valley restoration, but do not contain enough detail to reach conclusions about the feasibility or acceptability of restoration. Federal government participation is required since the Valley is located in a national park. Federal authorization may be needed to initiate this federal role. The State concluded that the existing body of work is insufficient to support sound public policy decision-making at this time. Most of the previous work is not at the "concept level". The State's final report estimates the cost to continue investigations is about \$65 million.

Salt Management in the Central Valley

Dr. Karl Longley, Member & Vice Chair Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), discussed the current salinity work in the Central Valley, the Salinity Plan and future recommendations. In January 2006, the State Water Resources Control Board and Central Valley Water Board held a joint workshop to receive information on salinity in the Central Valley. At the end of the workshop, the State Water Board chair asked Dr. Karl Longley to develop recommendations on how to proceed. The report and other documentation can be downloaded at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/available_documents/basin_plans/SalinityPlanDevelopment.html#overview.

The purpose of the report was to provide general background information about salinity issues in the Central Valley. The source and movement of salts and other related constituents was described. A preliminary evaluation of salt migration to groundwater in the San Joaquin Valley estimated that over 400 thousand tons of salt per year were being added to the confined aquifer in the San Joaquin Basin. The water quality impacts of salt depend on the specific types of salts and their concentrations, and what the water is being used for. Agricultural, municipal and industrial wastes are the three classes of salt containing discharges that are regulated by major regulatory programs of the CVRWQCB. For agricultural irrigation, increasing salt concentrations can stress plants, slowing growth,

reducing harvest, and eventually killing the plants. Some plants, such as strawberries and beans, are very sensitive to salts. Other plants, such as corn and cotton, can be successfully grown with much higher concentrations of salt in the irrigation water. Salt can also change the physical and chemical properties of soils. For municipal and domestic use, salts impart taste to water, cause corrosion, increase soap usage and can cause staining.

The movement of the salt in the Central Valley was described on the micro scale with a figure that showed the movement of salts in and out of the valley from water imports and exports and the human induced salts related to the soil column, groundwater, and surface water. A preliminary evaluation of salt migration to groundwater in the San Joaquin Valley estimated that over 400 thousand tons of salt per year were being added to the confined aquifer in the San Joaquin Basin.

The recommendations that were determined by the study include: 1. Establish a Salinity Study Task Force to obtain funding for and provide oversight, supervision, and approval of a study to evaluate the impact of salinity on water resources and to develop a viable salinity management plan; 2. Sponsor follow-up joint State Board/Regional Board Salinity Workshops to receive comments on the report and potential information/data gaps, to discuss recommendations, and to receive input and directions for future steps; 3. Conduct facilitated meetings to gather more public input and information for the process; 4. Contract for the preparation of an economic study of salinity impacts and the social and economic consequence of not implementing a viable salinity management program; 5. Sponsor focused, scientific conferences that will highlight the major salinity-related issues and their statewide impacts.

Proposition 84

The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 will be on the November ballot as Proposition 84. Landis described how this Prop would affect the San Joaquin River Basin and Valley if it is passed by the voting public. The total Bond amount is for \$5.388 billion.

A total of \$1.525 billion would be allocated for Chapter 2 Safe Drinking Water and Water Quality Projects that include: one billion dollars for grants for projects that assist local public agencies to meet the long term water needs of the state including the delivery of safe drinking water and protection of water quality and the environment. The funding is divided by hydrologic region so the San Joaquin River has \$57 million allocated for projects. Other funding includes \$130 million for grants to implement Delta water quality improvement projects that protect drinking water supplies. Specifically mentioned are projects that reduce or eliminate discharges of salt, dissolved organic carbon, pesticides, pathogens and other pollutants to the San Joaquin River. Not less than \$40 million for projects

to reduce or eliminate discharges of subsurface agricultural drain water from the west side of the San Joaquin Valley for the purpose of improving water quality in the San Joaquin River and the Delta.

Another \$800 million in Chapter 3 for Flood Control, \$65 million Chapter 4 in Statewide Water Planning and Design, \$928 million in Chapter 5 for Protection of Rivers, Lakes and Streams that includes: \$36 million for river parkway project to the San Joaquin River Conservancy and \$100 million for the Secretary of Resources Agency for the purpose of implementing a court settlement to restore flows and naturally-reproducing and self-sustaining populations of salmon to the SJR between Friant Dam and the Merced River. These funds shall be available for channel and structural improvements, and related research pursuant to the court settlement.

In addition, \$450 million in Chapter 6 for Forest and Wildlife Conservation, \$540 million in Chapter 7 for Protection of Beaches, Bays and Coastal Waters, \$500 million in Chapter 8 for Parks and Nature Education Facilities, and \$580 million in Chapter 9 for Sustainable communities and Climate Change Reduction.

Other Business

The USGS is going to have a two day show-and-tell on November 15 and 16 at the Stanislaus County Ag Center in Modesto. It will begin at 1:00 pm on the 15 following the next SJRMP meeting and will end at 6:00 pm. The schedule will be made available to SJRMP members via email and will be posted on the SJRMP website. Some of the items that are going to be presented include the SJR National Water Quality Program, groundwater monitoring projects, GAMA program studies (ambient groundwater monitoring), RASA2 (groundwater modeling and ag impacts of surface and groundwater), etc.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 15 from 9:00 am to 11:30 am at the Stanislaus County Ag Center in Modesto in the main conference room H and I.

**ATTENDEES AT
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
August 17, 2006**

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