

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 27, 2002
Resources Building
Sacramento, California

Welcome and Introductions

Tim Ramirez announced that 12,000 salmon were confirmed killed at the mouth of the Klamath River. Ramirez suggested that a possible cause of the kill was gill rot was probably the killer. Water temperature in the Klamath River had been measured at 72 degrees Fahrenheit. The Sacramento Bee reported on Saturday, September 28, that there were at least 12,000 salmon confirmed dead so far. The dead fish are mostly Chinook salmon, but included at least 100 threatened coho salmon protected by the Endangered Species Act.

Ernie Taylor called attention to the notice included in the e-mail announcement. The group is being asked to submit their choice of receiving an e-mail mailer or the traditional mailer for the Advisory Council agenda and meeting highlights. Your reply will be greatly appreciated.

Action Team Report

Taylor reported on the Action Team meeting held August 19, in Modesto. Jacob McQuirk and Karen Enstrom, DWR, presented the Orestimba Creek Flood Damage Reduction Ecosystem Restoration project. The goal of the project is to reduce the flood damage to the City of Newman. Project alternatives include set back levees and downstream storage. Enstrom gave further background and asked the group for feedback. Some suggestions included looking at the downstream peak and how it relates to the ecosystem and to tie in the study to the Comprehensive Study for hydrology in the main river system. This project has brought to the attention of the group the need for SJRMP subcommittees like flood management and wildlife. Paula Landis and Ramirez would like to see the creation of adhoc subcommittees that are re-activated when needed.

Parry Klassen, Coalition for Urban/Rural Environmental Stewardship, presented his Orestimba Creek proposal to CalFed. The proposal is to develop a database to record pesticide loads and to use the database to reduce the pesticide loads to Orestimba Creek. The proposal is in the preliminary stages.

Andrea Fuller, S.P. Cramer & Associates, presented the Stanislaus River Weir project. The weir will be used to conduct fish counts on the Stanislaus River.

Ben Wallace, California Wilderness Coalition, presented the Protecting Habitat through Partnerships with Private Landowners concept paper. The goal is to protect habitat with the cooperation of farm owners. It will use 2002 Farm Bill funding for land to be used to enhance wildlife habitat. The proposal was recommended for funding under Proposition 13.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/Reclamation Board Comprehensive Study

Fraser Gensler, USACE, Kevin Elcock, DWR, and Pete Rabbon, Reclamation Board updated the group on the Comprehensive Study. Gensler discussed the draft report and comments received from the local level during public outreach meetings. They have responded to all comments received; about 300 verbal and 450 written comments. The comments will each be addressed and presented in a report to each individual who submitted a comment. In addition to the report they will also meet with any interested party to discuss the comment responses in detail. It was suggested during the meeting to include the report on the website, so it is available for the public to review. Some of the comments included property rights and water rights, relationship with ecosystem restoration and agriculture, and proposing or supporting doing water supply currently not in the plan.

The interim report will be finalized by December and will include all technical documentation to date. It will also include a new section based on the comment; "How do we get something started?" Pete Rabbon discussed this in more detail and related the answer to different topographical regions. They will include examples from existing projects like Hamilton City and the Enhanced Flood Response Project.

Revisit SJRMP MOU and Goals & Objectives

Landis began the discussion of the current SJRMP MOU and goals by suggesting that CALFED is looking for a regional forum and that SJRMP could be that forum. SJRMP could provide input for projects. Project participants could get acceptance to move projects forward. The MOU could be changed to reflect CALFED and local groups. CALFED is being reinvented and we need to figure out how SJRMP fits in. Rabbon mentioned that there is a real need to have a regional forum. SJRMP is still viewed as an agency member group and he suggested getting at least 2 people from the county level to participate in SJRMP. That way every region is represented. Landis reaffirmed that there is a need to bring in individuals that are not from agencies. They tried to do this by hiring a non-agency coordinator but money was cut. There was some discussion of how to get county and local representatives involved. One way that was discussed was to bring issues to SJRMP that would involve their participation.

In the past county or local representatives shared a fear that by bringing a project to SJRMP, SJRMP becomes the final authority and if it is not approved,

the project will not move forward. Ramirez thought that focusing on issues, like water quality and flood control, would bring projects to the group. It was decided that Landis and Ramirez will meet with some of the Reclamation Board members to discuss suggestions and options to increase landowner and county involvement. NRCS district staff may provide other ideas to get regional districts involved. Other suggestions include site visits and issue orientated meetings, sending agendas to other groups/agencies that do outreach, and meet no further north than Modesto rotating around the Valley.

Other Business

Ramirez announced that the Governor has signed the Bill for the Bay-Delta Authority. The Authority will be under the Resources Agency at this time there are 20 people on board.

The Proposition 13 SWRCB/CALFED Drinking Water Quality Program Projects 2002 proposals recommended for funding was issued to meeting attendants.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday, December 11, in Modesto.

**ATTENDEES AT
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
June 14, 2002**

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