

San Joaquin River Management Program Advisory Council Meeting

Thursday, September 29, 2005

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

DRAFT AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions – Tim Ramirez, Chair
- 9:15 a.m. Report on State 2005-2006 Budget – Paula Landis, DWR
- 9:30 a.m. San Joaquin River Conceptual Restoration Plan – Carolyn Yale, EPA
- 10:00 a.m. Update San Joaquin River Water Quality Management Group Plan – Byron Buck, MWD
- 10:45 a.m. Upstream DO monitoring - Will Stringfellow, University of the Pacific
- 11:30 a.m. Update on PL108-361 (CalFed Authorization) Program to Meet Standards - Sue Fry, USBR
- 12:00 a.m. Other Business
- 12:15 p.m. Adjourn

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

DRAFT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, September 29, 2005
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 Landis, Department of Water Resources (DWR), opened the meeting with announcements and introductions. Landis informed the group that Tim Ramirez, SJRMP Chair, has left the Bay-Delta Authority to assume a new job with San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. Landis requested suggestions as to who should assume the Advisory Council Chair and added that she had offered the Chair to Mark Cowin, DWR, but he declined. Meeting attendants suggested that Landis assume the Chair until a permanent position is secured.

San Joaquin River Conceptual Restoration Plan

Carolyn Yale, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), announced the final draft of the San Joaquin River Conceptual Restoration Plan. The EPA funded the study to allow the San Joaquin River Resource Management Coalition to develop their perspective of feasible restoration for the upper San Joaquin River (SJR), from Friant Dam to the Merced River. The effort was completed in two phases: Phase I of this study included a report prepared in 2003 that compiled existing conditions and desired future conditions. Issues that were identified included: flood control, water supply, water quality, groundwater, land ownership, land use, recreation, aquatic resources, and riparian, wetland and terrestrial resources. Assumptions on water needs and water resource constraints were assessed. For the purpose of this study, it was decided that any additional water needs would be met with "new" water, i.e. from additional storage capacity and time/flow management opportunities. Phase II will be completed in five stages of technical memoranda to assess restoration needs and cold-water/warm-water fisheries. The final draft is scheduled to be completed in December 2005 and will be released for review and comment for a period of 30 days. The draft is expected to be made available either through CD or electronically. Yale has a list of people who will receive a copy and will make copies available for interested SJRMP members. There was an open discussion of how this report fits into other current restoration planning efforts.

Update San Joaquin River Water Quality Management Group Plan

The final draft of the Recommendations of the San Joaquin Water Quality Management Group was presented by Byron Buck, consultant for the Metropolitan Water District. The group's intention was to prepare and implement a plan to meet the water quality objectives for Salt and Boron at Vernalis and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) at the Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel (DWSC) in coordination with CALFED Stage I objectives. The current salinity and dissolved oxygen standards were analyzed and a plan for achieving the standards was evaluated. Potential flow and load related solutions, as well as other actions were discussed. Some of those actions included recirculation, coordination, management of urban wastewater flows, South Delta Improvement projects, refuge operations, load reduction, accretion flow diversion, Franks Tract modifications, Dissolved Oxygen Aerator project, Stockton Water Waste Treatment Plant (WWTP) control, and additional real-time monitoring. These actions were then entered into the SANMAN model to predict salinity at Vernalis. SANMAN does not model DO, but can model flow, which can serve as a surrogate for DO compliance.

The recommended actions of the group include three for salinity control and five for DO control. The salinity control recommendations include: 1) fully implement the West Side Regional Drainage Plan; 2) further evaluate and pursue managed wetland drainage management; 3) develop a real-time water quality management coordination group. The San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority submitted an application for Proposition 50 funding for implementation of the Drainage Plan.

The SJRMP water quality subcommittee devised a real-time water quality model to show a two week forecast of salinity at Vernalis. DWR, San Joaquin District, operates the program and reports the forecast weekly. The forecast is posted online at <http://www.sjd.water.ca.gov/waterquality/forecast/>. DWR will continue to support this effort with drainage funding.

The Dissolved Oxygen recommendations include: 1) additional use of the Head of Old River Barrier to augment flows in the lower SJR and the DWSC; 2) support continued implementation of the City of Stockton's ammonia removal project at the Stockton WWTP; 3) implement the aeration project in the DWSC and continue the upstream monitoring efforts to understand DO load producing discharges; 4) evaluation of these actions for DO compliance at the DWSC and establish a forum to evaluate ongoing changes in the water quality baseline; 5) suggest further management actions to continue progress on water quality improvement.

The ammonia removal project at the Stockton WWTP and the DWSC aerator should be installed by next summer. Lowell Ploss has volunteered to reorganize the SJRMP water quality subcommittee group to start coordinating actions, discuss implementation progress, and to continue monitoring and modeling efforts.

Up-Stream Dissolved Oxygen Total Maximum Daily Limit (DO TMDL) Project

Will Stringfellow, University of the Pacific, presented the current upstream DO TMDL monitoring and research effort of the University. The California Bay-Delta Authority is funding the project to provide a scientific basis for the allocation of responsibility under the proposed DO TMDL. Project objectives are to provide a comprehensive understanding of the sources and fate of oxygen demand and nutrients in the watershed and the growth and decay of algae in the SJR. Project tasks include comprehensive monitoring and data gathering program, developing a comprehensive model for nutrients and algae in the SJR, close data gaps using directed scientific studies, and understand algal growth and decay in the SJR. The project area is the SJR just above Vernalis through the Stockton DWSC down to Franks Track. The Regional Water Quality Control Board is proposing to establish the TMDL for DO at 5 mg/L for most of the year and 6 mg/L during the months of September, October, and November. The results of the monitoring and modeling will help determine if the proposed TMDLs are feasible.

Current monitoring includes 20 sites along the upper and lower SJR and its tributaries. Grab samples are taken every two weeks and all stations are sampled on the same day. Bi-weekly sampling has been conducted since March and will continue through November. After November, samples will be taken once a month. Samples are analyzed for a host of parameters including chlorophyll, Biological Oxygen Demand and nutrients. The monitoring plan also calls for upgrading a number of existing stations to collect Electrical Conductivity and flow data. The data will be used to determine algae biokinetics and nutrient interactions. Isotope analysis will be used to identify sources of carbon and nutrients. The monitoring data will also be integrated into existing DWR models.

The proposed allocation of responsibilities for low DO include: the Stockton DWSC, diversions, the Stockton WWTP, and algal load from up-stream on the SJR. Factors identified as contributing to low DO include: temperature, channel geometry, flow, point source discharges and non-point source discharges. The focus of the algae study will be based on two hypotheses: algae growth is unlimited and algae growth is limited. The consequences of the two hypotheses are significant. If the algae growth is unlimited, then algae growth in the SJR is constant with light, not nutrients, being the only limiting factor. Controlling incoming nutrients will not control algae growth and removing sediments from the river will serve to stimulate algae production. If algae growth is limited, then the nutrients are a limiting factor and control will affect algae growth. Control of algae inoculum, from San Luis Drain or Salt Slough, would also limit algae growth.

Update on PL108-361 Program to Meet Standards

Sue Fry, US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), provided an update on their efforts to present a report on how the USBR intends to comply with the requirements on PL108-31. PL108-31 requires USBR to develop a plan to determine how to meet

water quality standards at Vernalis. Four actions identified to consider for achieving this goal include: recirculation, wetland management, water acquisitions, and New Melones operations. A revision to the Interim Plan to Operate New Melones is currently being drafted. The document being developed will lay out these and other efforts such as those developed by the San Joaquin Water Quality Management Group. It was expected that this document would be completed by October 25, 2005, however USBR is about 30 days behind. Sue requested that SJRMP provide an avenue for public access to the document when the draft copy is released for review.

Other Business

Landis reported that CALFED's budget and operations were currently being reevaluated. To be more "Delta Centered", CALFED will be focusing on projects that are only related to the Delta.

The Next Advisory Council Meeting: is scheduled on Wednesday, February 15, 2005 at 9:00 am at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center, Room HI.

**ATTENDEES AT
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
September 29, 2005**

No.	Name	Company	Office	Email
1	Eric Berntsen	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	916-464-4658	eberntsen@waterboards.ca.gov
2	Tom Boardman	San Luis & Delta Mendota Water Authority		hydrobro@ix.netcom.com
3	Susan Fry	US Bureau of Reclamation	916-978-5191	sfry@mp.usbr.gov
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5	Karna Harrington	Herum Crabtree Brown	209-472-7700	kharrigfeld@herumcrabtree.com
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16	Lowell Ploss	San Joaquin River Group Authority	916-788-7206	lowellploss@aol.com
17	Jim Snow	Westlands Water District	916-321-4519	jsnow@hmtg.com
18	William Stringfellow	University of The Pacific	510-528-7159	wstringfellow@lbl.gov
19	Joe Tapia	DWR, San Joaquin District	559-230-3365	jtapia@water.ca.gov
20	Carolyn Yale, Ph.D.	Environmental Protection Agency, WTR-3	415-972-3482	yale.carolyn@epa.gov