

San Joaquin River Restoration Program
Restoration Goal Technical Feedback Group Meeting
Tuesday, July 21, 2009
California State University, Stanislaus
Turlock, CA

MEETING NOTES

Attendees:

Chris Acree	Revive the San Joaquin
Jill Chomycia	MWH
Matt Cover	CSU – Stanislaus
Douglas DeFlitch	Reclamation
Dave Encinas	California Department of Water Resources
Kevin Faulkenberry	California Department of Water Resources
Ali Gasdick	Reclamation
Margaret Gidding	Reclamation
Jason Guignard	FISHBIO
Sarge Green	CWI – CSU Fresno
Steve Haze	Sierra RCD/ SJVWLF
TJ Kopschy	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Tom Lang	Aquarius Aquarium Institute
Bill Luce	Friant Water Users Authority
Sandi Matsumoto	The Nature Conservancy
Mari Martin	RMC
Jeff McLain	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Rod Meade	SJRRP Restoration Administrator
Dave Mooney	Reclamation
Bob Mussetter	TetraTech
Steve Ottemoeller	Friant Water Users Authority
Rhonda Reed	National Marine Fisheries Service
Julie Renter	River Partners
Paul Romero	California Department of Water Resources
Monty Schmitt	NRDC
Jay Simi	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Janet Thomson	Kearns & West
Peter Vorster	The Bay Institute
Sharon Weaver	San Joaquin River Parkway Trust
Carolyn Yale	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

MEETING SUMMARY

Introduction, Background, and Scope by Ali Gasdick (Reclamation)

Ali Gasdick welcomed the group to the kickoff meeting for the Restoration Goal Technical Feedback Group (TFG) and provided a history and overview of the Settlement. The scope of this TFG includes flow management (operations, analyses and assumptions, and monitoring),

channel improvement projects (alternatives development, analyses and assumptions, and impact assessments), and general San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP or Program) information and updates. The purpose of the Restoration Goal TFG is to provide technical information to stakeholders and the public and to seek feedback on that information.

The group noted the following:

- As described in the Settlement, the Restoration Administrator (RA) provides recommendations and consults with the Program Management Team on a variety of issues. The RA is supported by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of six voting members selected by and representing the Friant Water Users Authority and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Two non-voting members of the TAC represent the State (the Department of Water Resources [DWR] and the Department of Fish and Game [DFG]) and three Federal agency liaisons (Reclamation, National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS], and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]).

Channel Capacity Evaluations – Analytical Tools by Dave Mooney (Reclamation)

Dave Mooney presented the goal, objectives, indicators, and thresholds for the Interim and Restoration Flows, and reviewed the analytical tools available to conduct the evaluations. Those tools include historical experience and several models: HEC-RAS (for one-dimensional water surface elevation and inundation), SRH-2D (to test the one-dimensional parameters), and MOD-FLOW (to understand ground and surface water interactions). Based on a question, Dave noted that because the two-dimensional model takes time to use, the one-dimensional tool will be used to screen hypotheses and assumptions before selectively applying the two-dimensional model.

The group noted the following:

- The presentation should be clarified with respect to terminology for flows including the maximum non-damaging flows.

Channel Capacity Evaluations – Water Year 2010 Interim Flow by Bob Mussetter (TetraTech)

Bob Mussetter briefly described how the modeling analysis was to be conducted for three aspects of Interim Flows: infiltration parameters, hydraulic roughness, and storage effects. Based on a question, Bob noted that ground-truthing of the hydraulic roughness modeling estimates will primarily be conducted through aerial photography, in addition to on-the-river analysis. Additionally, the estimates of vegetation patterns reflect only future opportunistic changes caused by changing flows as opposed to active habitat restoration efforts. These patterns are expected to occur over several years to a few decades, and the analysis assumes that perturbation events would not substantially impact the vegetation patterns.

The group noted the following:

- The group noted interest in seeing the attenuation modeling results for 3-hour, 6-hour, 12-hour, and 24-hour pulses through the system.

Channel Capacity Evaluations by Dave Mooney (Reclamation)

Dave Mooney described how Reclamation and DWR developed the Interim Flows project description and the constraints placed on flows due to channel capacity and other operational conditions. Dave reviewed the options available for routing flows that meet these channel capacity and operational criteria.

The group noted the following:

- Further discussion should occur regarding what real-time monitoring will be occurring, how the public can assist with real-time monitoring, and how those activities will be integrated with Program activities and decisions.
- Reclamation and DWR should consult and communicate with operators prior to changes in flows.
- The various monitoring programs (sediment, water quality, fisheries, macroinvertebrates, vegetation) should be linked together.

Program Updates by Ali Gasdick (Reclamation)

Reclamation and DWR are working on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/R) that will include an analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of implementation of the Program. The Draft is anticipated to be released in late 2009.

The public comment period for the Water Year 2010 Interim Flows Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) concluded on July 20, 2009. The Final EA/IS will be released in mid-September, with Interim Flow releases scheduled to begin October 1, 2009.

For the Mendota Pool Bypass/Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project, the Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation (NOI/NOP) were released on July 13, 2009. Scoping meetings are scheduled for July 28 and 29, 2009 in Fresno and Firebaugh. Scoping comments are due on Monday, August 17, 2009.

The NOI/NOP are scheduled for release for the Reach 4B, Eastside Bypass and Mariposa Bypass Low Flow Channel and Structural Improvements Project in early September 2009.

The group noted the following:

- Suggestions for future group meeting topics include:
 - Vegetation, including both invasive vegetation management and channel capacity and vegetation
 - Water quality monitoring, including scope and how the information will be integrated into the Program
 - Detailed overview of the monitoring programs
 - Details on Interim Flow monitoring activities, including both fish passage issues and how the information will be integrated into the Program
 - Discussion of design concepts for the channel modification and structural improvement projects
 - Overview of the progress made on the Restoration Goal actions described in the Settlement
- It would be useful to have a meeting that includes all monitoring groups: fisheries, water quality, riparian, sediment, and restoration goals.