



Meeting Summary

Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements
Project Stakeholder Meeting

Wednesday October 15, 2014

*Alfred Firebaugh Community Center, 1655 13th Street, Firebaugh, CA
FINAL*

Attendees:

Marisa Arnedariz, Proteus, Inc.
Jon Basila, Farmers Water District
Robert Brewer, San Joaquin River Association
Steve Brueggemann, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
Roy Catania, Paramount Farming Company
Steve Chedester, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority
Cameron Coronado, Watershed Stewards Program
Matt Flood, City of Mendota
Seth Gentzler, URS
Blair Greimann, Reclamation
Katrina Harrison, Reclamation
Reggie Hill, Lower San Joaquin Levee District
Steve Haugen, Kings River Water Agency
Julia Hernandez, Proteus Inc.
Randy Houk, Columbia Canal Company
Christopher Huitt, California State Lands Commission
Caitlin Jetter, Watershed Stewards Program
Rebecca Kallio, Reclamation
Janie Logoluso, Frank A. Logoluso Farms, Inc.
Bill Luce, Friant Water Authority
Virginia Madueno, ImagenPR

Ed Manning, Gravelly Ford Ranch
Pat Manning, Gravelly Ford Ranch
Len Marino, Central Valley Flood Protection Board
Erica Meyers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Adam Nickels, Reclamation
Don Peracchi, DJP Farms
Joe Perry, landowner
Pat Perry, landowner
Alexis Phillips-Dowell, California Department of Water Resources
Andy Raabe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Frank Saviez, Saviez Farms LLC
Steve Stadler, Kings River Conservation District
Jim Stillwell, Frank A. Logoluso Farms, Inc.
Finn Telles, San Joaquin River Parkway
Emily Thomas, Reclamation
Becky Victorine, Reclamation
Chris White, Central California Irrigation District
Mike Widhalm, Paramount Farming Co.
Lisa Zaffran, Reclamation
Craig Moyle, MWH Americas

On Phone:

Margaret Gidding, Reclamation
Erin Strange, National Marine Fisheries Service

Welcome and introductions

Craig Moyle, the meeting facilitator, welcomed the meeting attendees, reviewed the meeting agenda, and led introductions for attendees and presenters. A webinar was established for remote participants to view and follow along. During the meeting, Christopher Huitt of the California State Lands Commission was introduced as the State's Reach 2B Project Manager for California Environmental Quality Act compliance. The CSLC assumed responsibility as the state CEQA lead as the actions proposed by the Program affect riverbed lands that are sovereign to the State of California.

SJRRP Program Manager's Update

Reclamation Reach 2B Project Manager Katrina Harrison provided a review of the SJRRP Status of 2014 activities and a preview of activities planned for 2015. She noted that the National Marine Fisheries Service completed its experimental population rule-making process for spring-run Chinook salmon release (e.g. 10j and 4d) in 2014; Reclamation awarded \$14.3 million for



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groundwater banking projects; and the Program halted Restoration Flows in mid-February in response to the drought. This reduction provided Reclamation the opportunity to provide additional water to a portion of the Friant Division for health and safety and some permanent crops. She then reviewed the pending 2015 activities, including the restart of the Reach 4B Project and introduced Reclamation's Becky Victorine as the Reach 4B Project Manager. Other 2015 actions include a possible temporary fish barrier at Arroyo Canal and pending public meetings for the Long-term Recapture and Recirculation Environmental Impact Statement/Report.

Mendota Pool Bypass/Reach 2B - Project Report

Seth Gentzler, URS project manager for the Reach 2B Project, provided an overview of the project's status, including the planned March 2015 release of the Public Draft EIS/R. Available for a 60-day public comment period, the document will include a preferred alternative which has been drawn from the four Program proposed alternatives and the proposed consensus-based alternative. He then provided an overview of the four Program alternatives including the Compact Bypass with Narrow Floodplain and South Canal; Compact Bypass with Wide Floodplain and Bifurcation Structure; Fresno Slough Dam with Narrow Floodplain and Short Canal; and the Fresno Slough Dam with Wide Floodplain and North Canal.

Harrison then provided a presentation of the Project's Preferred Alternative. She said the alternative was developed based on the consensus based alternative developed by various Reach 2B landowners and landowner representatives. The starting point for the consensus based alternative was the Compact Bypass with Narrow Floodplain. She then presented a map of the preferred alternative and described how it was developed:

- Levee lines represent the feedback from individual landowners to their preferred needs.
- Levees were located to provide minimal effect on farmland where requested by landowners.
- Some levees were extended beyond the initial narrow floodplain alignment where landowners had fields they were willing to sell.
- Rather than locate canals in the south section of Reach 2B, taking lands out of production, facilities to manage deliveries and Restoration Flows were consolidated at the start of the compact bypass (with two control structures).
- The location of levees sought to find a balance between continuation of farming and providing an appropriate level of fish habitat.

Harrison said that through this approach, the total number of acres in the preferred alternative came to less than 20 acres smaller than the wide floodplain alternatives. When presenting the map of the preferred alternative, Harrison advised participants that levees would follow a gentle contour line rather than the sharp angles represented in the map. In response to an attendee question, Harrison said the amount of floodplain habitat in Reach 2B could be changed if floodplain habitat is acquired in Reach 3; however, the amount of Reach 2B floodplain habitat will not change in the Public Draft EIS/R in anticipation of such Reach 3 purchases.

An attendee asked about how the Reach 2B project would be funded. Harrison responded that Reach 2B will be funded through the San Joaquin River Restoration Fund and additional federal appropriations from Congress. She said Reclamation plans to start construction with the



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Compact Bypass in 2017 and complete in 2020. Improvements to the Reach 2B channel would begin in 2020. She noted that Reclamation plans to complete the purchase of all property planned for the project upfront.

Mendota Pool Bypass/Reach 2B - Design & Field Investigations

Geotechnical Field Investigation Update

Reclamation Geologist Lisa Zaffran presented a detailed review of the geotechnical field investigations implemented as part of the Reach 2B Project. She said the team completed 108 Cone Penetration Tests (CPT), 55 Standard Penetration Tests (SPT), and completed three SPTs as observation wells. She said the CPTs were bored every 1,000 feet, while the SPTs were completed every 5,000 feet. Several CPTs and SPTs were not conducted in the upstream and downstream sections of Reach 2B due to denial for access by landowners or landowner tenants. She said the soil samples and geologic data will assist engineers in the design of levees, bridges and bifurcation structures planned for the project. To an attendee's question, Zaffran said evaluations are pending to confirm whether soils present within the foot print of the preferred alternative is sufficient to build the project levees or if additional soil will need to be borrowed from other areas.

Hydraulic Connectivity Field Work Update

Reclamation Hydraulic Engineer Rebecca Kallio presented an update of hydraulic connectivity testing in the Reach 2B Project area. She said there were three types of hydraulic connectivity tests: double-ring infiltration to measure vertical conductivity; bail out or pump in testing to measure horizontal conductivity; and a hydraulic profiling tool (HPT), a drill rig mounted test that injects water as its moving into the soil profile. The HPT tests for soil salinity, pressure of the soil and it gives a profile of the hydraulic conductivity as you move down the soil profile. This data, along with soil salinity surveys currently underway, will be utilized for planning of re-vegetation of the Reach 2B channel after construction.

To a question from attendees, Kallio said the Reclamation is still evaluating where it will source water to irrigate native plants to be established in the project area after construction. The plan is to irrigate for two to five years until the plants are self-sustaining for those areas that are planted with seedlings. The water supply may be sourced via a groundwater well. The final amount of planted acres for this irrigation is under development. It is anticipated that most areas will be seeded and not irrigated.

Compact Bypass Grading

Reclamation Hydraulic Engineer Blair Greimann presented information regarding initial concepts for grading of the Compact Bypass. He noted two options: a Grade Control Profile, and a Natural Stream Profile. Both options include flow control structures at the head of the bypass to divert water to the pool. The major difference between the two approaches is that the Grade Control Profile contains more constructed structures to manage and control the flow of water from Reach 2B to Reach 3. The Natural Stream Profile provides fewer constructed features and would be intended to naturally erode over time and mirror a natural river channel. The Grade



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Control Profile is more expensive to construct and maintain over time. The Natural Stream Profile would be less costly to construct and operate over time. The potential challenge to the Natural Stream Profile is that it would allow slightly more transport of sediments into Reach 3 than with the Grade Control Profile. Initial studies indicate that the deposition would not affect channel conveyance in Reach 3 as Reach 3 is a degrading reach and water surface elevations actually decrease over time. If there is an effect, steps would be taken to mitigate the conveyance impacts, he said.

Two attendees were concerned over the additional sedimentation load in Reach 3 due to the Natural Stream Profile degrading hydraulics in Reach 3. They noted that the Kings River depends on a conveyance capacity of 4,500 cubic feet per second, a flow rate that the existing channel struggles to meet.

Next Steps for Outreach and Communication

Document Release Schedule

Harrison reviewed the roll-out schedule for the following milestones expected:

- March 2015 – Public Draft EIS/R released,
- April 2015 – Public Hearings
- Winter 2016 – Final ESI/R EIS.

Meeting Adjourned

4 p.m.