



Meeting Summary

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

Tuesday, January 29 2013

Kings River Conservation District 4886 East Jensen Avenue, Fresno, CA 93725
FINAL

Attendees

Michelle Banonis, Reclamation
Robert Brewer, San Joaquin River Association
Kimberly Brown, Paramount Orchards
Roy Catania, Paramount Orchards
Jason Dean, Meyers Water Bank & Wildlife Project
Arlow Ekhard, Gill Ranch Storage
Ali Forsythe, Reclamation
Seth Gentzler, URS
Jose Guitierrez, Westlands Water District
Rain Healer, Reclamation
Reggie Hill, Lower San Joaquin Levee District
Randy Houk, Columbia Canal Company
Laura Jensen, The Nature Conservancy
Shannon Leonard, URS
Joe Loelhe, Terra Linda River Ranch
Clifton Loller, Kings River Water Association
Bill Luce, Friant Water Authority
Joe MacIlvaine, Paramount Orchards
John Mallyon, James Irrigation District

Rod Meade, Restoration Administrator
Jim Merrill, Farmers Water District
Erica Meyers, CA Department of Fish & Wildlife
Michael Mitchner, Reclamation
John Netto, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Don Peracchi, Farmers Water District
Bill Pipes, AMEC Environmental and Infrastructure
Andy Raabe, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Rhonda Reed, National Marine Fisheries Service
Paul Romero, CA Department of Water Resources
Monte Schmitt, Natural Resources Defense Council
Jonathan Schram, National Marine Fisheries Service
Steve Stadler, Kings River Conservation District
Mark Tompkins, Technical Advisory Committee
Danny M. Wade, Tranquility Irrigation District
Rodney Wade, Tranquility Irrigation District
Mike Widhelm, Paramount Farming Company
Craig Moyle, MWH Americas

On Phone

Margaret Gidding, Reclamation

Welcome and Introductions

Craig Moyle, the meeting facilitator, welcomed the meeting participants, and led introductions for on-site and on the phone.

Program & Reach 2B Project Update

Reclamation Reach 2B Project Manager Michael Mitchner provided an update on Program activities.

- Increase flows from Friant Dam
- Improve channel/structures to convey flows and improve habitat
- Reach specific projects moving forward:
 - Reach 2B – working on Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report
 - Reach 4B – working on Alternatives Evaluation & Project Description
 - Arroyo Canal/Sack Dam - Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study published in June 2012
- Fisheries Activities
 - NMFS public meetings 10(j) and 4(d) 29, 30 Jan and 5 Feb
 - Spring-run salmon broodstock activities underway
- Settlement requires 10 specific channel and structural improvement projects to address:
 - Channel capacity limitations



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- Fish habitat limitations
- Fish passage and entrainment issues
- Combined into 4 major projects:
 - Reach 2B, Reach 4B, Arroyo Canal and Sack Dam, Salt and Mud Slough Seasonal Barriers

Seth Gentzler, Project Manager to Reclamation for the Reach 2B Project consultant team, provided an update on Reach 2B Project activities. He began with an overview of the decisions needed for a Record of Decision (ROD):

1. Based on Project Objectives
2. Bypass Pool
 - a) New Channel (Compact Bypass Channel)
 - b) New Dam (Fresno Slough Dam)
3. Increase Capacity/Provide Habitat
 - a) Wide Setback Levees
 - b) Narrow Setback Levees
 - c) Specific parcel acquisition to construct levees
4. Make Deliveries to Pool
 - a) Bifurcation Structure
 - b) Short Canal
 - c) North/South Canal

Gentzler reviewed the timeline for recent and ongoing work in Reach 2B

- Alternatives Evaluation completed and Project Description Technical Memo published October 2012
- Impacts assessment for EIS/R on-going
- Public Draft EIS/R anticipated late 2013/early 2014

Approach to Reach 2B Consensus-based Recommended Alternative

Gentzler described the objectives of the Consensus-based Alternative process objectives.

- 1) Identify one alternative that is acceptable to all stakeholder parties
- 2) Provide a thorough understanding of project to stakeholders
- 3) Provide decision-makers with information on critical issues

The presentation delivered an overview of the stakeholder driven process, and described the support available from both Reclamation and the DWR Project team. Agency support could include technical support and analysis, as well as professional facilitation. Gentzler concluded with a discussion of the advantages & limitations of the stakeholder driven process towards a consensus based alternative. He noted that the process would remain adaptive, and could be modified as needed. Gentzler emphasized that the consensus based alternative process is about getting stakeholder input to the preferred alternative.



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Reach 2B – Project Alternatives in the Project Description

Gentzler provided an overview of the Project Alternatives in the Project Description. He shared a map of the project area, and detailed the requirements of the Settlement language.

He continued with detailed descriptions of four alternatives presented in the Reach 2B Project Description TM:

- 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
- Fresno Slough Dam with Wide Floodplain and North Canal

Discussion with meeting attendees followed the presentation:

On Floodplain habitat:

- The minimum floodplain habitat analysis, released November 2012, indicates the potential need for floodplain wider than that in the Project Description, which was released in October 2012. The Restoration Administrator would like to review further and recommend whether a floodplain wider than what is included in the Project Description is needed. For the consensus-based alternative, Reclamation asks stakeholders to review and consider the alternatives contained in the October 2012 Project Description Technical Memorandum for their development of a consensus-based alternative
- Reclamation does not anticipate making changes to the alternatives in light of the floodplain habitat needs. If the Technical Advisory Committee proposes changes, Reclamation will consider them. Reclamation does anticipate opportunities for floodplain in Reach 3 because of groundwater seepage issues. Reclamation is attempting to spread floodplain needs between reaches to the extent possible.
- The San Joaquin River Restoration Program and the Reach 2B project will coordinate with the Upper San Joaquin Regional Flood Management Planning Project (RFMP). The Upper San Joaquin RFMP is a year and a half behind the Reach 2B consensus alternative process. Funding and cost sharing will be considered. DWR is looking at programs to address flood risk in the Central Valley. Some may fit within the Reach 2B area and the San Joaquin River Restoration Program's needs and opportunities, but may be 5-10 years down the line. Actual funding is not currently known.

On Alternatives:

- In three of the alternatives, San Mateo crossing would be replaced with a box culvert crossing with a capacity of about 1,500 cubic feet per second, so the crossing would be



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passable up to that flow. The Project Description includes an alternative that would remove the crossing in order to evaluate those impacts. Reclamation and DWR are interested in a consensus approach on this crossing; whether it is needed or not.

- The Project needs approximately 1.5 million cubic yards (MCY) of soil for levees, and Reclamation anticipates having approximately 7 MCY available between the proposed levees (from floodplain grading, excavating floodplain connectivity channels, removing existing levees, and excavation for structures), but Reclamation needs more testing to be sure that the material is acceptable quality for levees. The potential borrow areas outside the proposed levees are in case there is not sufficient acceptable material between the levees. If the Reach 2B project needs borrow material from outside the levees, material may be available from the City of Mendota wastewater treatment plant expansion. If the Reach 2B project needs additional borrow materials, Reclamation anticipates about 150 acres of private land (350 acres total) could be needed for borrow.
- On acquisition of property along the river: Land below the low water line, as defined by the California State Lands Commission, is lands sovereign to the State of California. Property between the low and high water lines, as defined by the Commission, are private property, but is subject to the Commission oversight for improvements via an easement. Where Program activities affect lands between low and high water lines, the Program will purchase the easement lands as well as everything above the high water line within the Reach 2B project levees.
- DWR prepared a hydraulic model of Fresno Slough from Mendota Dam to more than 6,000 feet upstream of the proposed Fresno Slough Dam looking at the flow of record (5,500 cfs). The model showed that the original design concept (four 16-ft wide bays) would cause a rise in water surface elevation. The model showed that the design can be modified (eight 20-ft wide bays) so that the structure does not cause any rise in water surface. DWR is only at 5-10 percent design level. The model shows that a no-rise structure is hydraulically feasible. As the San Joaquin River Restoration Program moves forward, subsidence and sedimentation issues will be addressed.

Future Meetings

A follow-up meeting will be scheduled sometime in March.

For additional information contact Craig Moyle at 916-418-8248 or craig.moyle@mwhglobal.com

Meeting Adjourned

12:00 p.m.