

**REPORT FOR THE MEETING OF  
THE ADVISORY WATER COMMISSION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL  
AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
March 17, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Advisory Water Commission of the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District was held on Wednesday, March 17, 2010, beginning at 1:00 p.m., at Public Health Services, 1601 E. Hazelton Avenue, Stockton, California.

**Roll Call**

Present were Commissioners Nomellini, Roberts, Herrick, Edwards, Alternates Conarro and Holbrook, Secretary Lytle, Vice Chair Price and Chairman McGurk. Others present are listed on the Attendance Sheet. The Commission had a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes for the Meeting(s) of February 17, 2010.**

Motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes of February 17, 2010 with correction to page 3. (Holbrook/Edwards).

**SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**I. Discussion Items:**

- A. *Presentation on the San Joaquin County Urban Flood Protection Governance Study and SJAFCA Activities – Mark Connelly and Roger Churchwell*

Mark Connelly, County Flood Management Division introduced Mr. Daniel Iacofano and Mr. David Dickson from MIG Consulting. Mr. Iacofano gave a presentation on the San Joaquin County Urban Flood Protection Governance Study to offer organizational alternatives and proposed evaluation criteria. A substantial amount of information was acquired regarding flood protection organizations around the state and the country. This study was undertaken as a response to recent changes in the flood control landscape, FEMA map modernization along with new requirements from the Army Corps of Engineers regarding flood plain and levee design standards, state mandates and increased liability and risk. Organizational models were studied and their applicability to San Joaquin County, but no recommendations are being made at this time for any type of model. The evaluation criteria of alternatives and comments from the commission will help develop the next steps.

The existing system is very unique, hydrologically speaking. Water is obtained from the north, south, east and west. Being placed squarely in the middle allows full protection delivered by nearly 60 local agencies, such as, the Flood Control and Water Conservation District of San Joaquin County, Zones 9 and 10, SJAFCA and various reclamation districts. The functions and operations are described for these different agencies whether in a lead or support position. Only the cities and counties have land use authority, subject to discussion is the flood plain management between the cities and the Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Everyone agreed better communication is needed among the jurisdictions. The RD 17 financing model is very effective. Sources of revenue must be found to reach the new standards and requirements, at the same time, there is a need for a more unified approach towards policy and funding advocacy. Six different organizations considered to be models are King County in the Seattle area, Napa County, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Truckee River, Three Rivers, and Sacramento. The organizational alternatives for San Joaquin County should meet the following criteria: System Integrity and Reliability (SIR), Technical Expertise and Capacity (TEC), Policy and Decision Making (PDM), Financial Stewardship (FST), Flood Fight Effectiveness (FFE), Equitable Representation of Stakeholder Interests (ERS), and Political Feasibility (POF).

Commissioner Nomellini asked how financing would be improved. Mr. Dickson stated fundraising for projects is limited to the jurisdiction of all entities. To expand it to a zone of benefit approach would require some combination of an organization at the top level being consolidated for purposes of defining benefits outside of existing jurisdictions.

*B. Discussion and Possible Action on 5-Delta Counties Coalition and other Delta Activities – Tom Flinn, Mel Lytle and Terry Dermody*

Dr. Lytle updated the commission regarding the 5-Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) and other Delta activities. Two letters of communication developed by the DCC are attached in the packet. The first letter discussed the joint oversight hearing held on March 9<sup>th</sup> regarding funding and implementation of the 2009 Delta legislation. It was stated in this letter the BDCP process is proceeding much faster than the establishment of the Delta governance structure enacted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. The assignment of staff to these agencies, and preparation of consultant contracts, deprives the governing Delta bodies of the ability to fashion a new and fresh perspective on Delta issues. If a close collaborative relationship between the DCC and the Delta governing bodies can be established, meaningful progress can be achieved in restoring the Delta. The DCC continues to be interested in the legislative actions, as well as, how the various committees such as the Stewardship Council, the Delta Conservancy and the revised Delta Protection Commission will be developed in the future. The second letter addressed to Senator Dianne Feinstein discusses the priorities for the Delta as discussed during the December 2009 visit to D.C. The Delta Priorities White Paper describes priorities regarding water rights, water quality, flood protection and other issues. This document was requested by Senator Feinstein to assist efforts as she develops Delta legislation. Commissioner Nomellini stated the DCC should take a stronger position against the state; he also stated the state has no business with the Stewardship Council controlling our land use. Dr. Lytle recommended this should be communicated from the independent Delta agencies to the DCC.

**II. Action Items:**

*A. Discussion and Possible Action on Independent Panel Review of the Vernalis Adaptive Management Plan – Mel Lytle*

Dr. Lytle attended the Independent Panel Review of the Vernalis Adaptive Management Plan workshop. The VAMP is a 12-year science study, currently in the 10<sup>th</sup> year, which evaluates the survival of migrating juvenile salmon (smolts) through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), and how they overcome the impacts of pumping. Financing for this study is provided by both state and federal monies. The basic principle of the VAMP is to alter the flow regime of the San Joaquin River based on increased flows during a particular time of the year. As the smolts move out during migration, the idea is to increase the flow out to the river to push the salmon out into the ocean. The survival rate of the smolts will be monitored regarding higher vs. lower flows. Unfortunately, over the length of this study they haven't been able to obtain many of the higher flows for measurement. There has been a series of problems with this study, such as, the unavailability of range of flows, insufficient number of smolts, and the Head of Old River Barrier being installed or not. Most recently, acoustic tagging has replaced the coded wire tag. These acoustic tags were surgically placed into approximately 900 fish. The fish are released by date and day/night time periods. Receivers track the smolt as they move out to the Delta; findings show a 6% survival rate. Tracking on the Columbia River shows a 60% survival rate. There have been a number of problems with receivers such as, receivers overheating, installation sights being too noisy, smolt traveling in different channels, and high predation rates. The smolts traveling down Old River never made it through.

Another study was performed using a non-physical bubble barrier consisting of a strobe light, bubble curtain, and a noise device. This barrier was installed where Old River diverges with the main stem of the San Joaquin River. The barrier was proven to be 80-85% effective in keeping the fish from traveling down Old River and staying in the main stem of the San Joaquin River. Unfortunately, predator species stratified themselves next to the barrier to use it as a way to prey on the smolts as they went by.

No action was required by the Commission.

**III. Communications:**

- A. Letter to League of California Cities from City of Stockton on the Final Draft 2009 Water Policy Guidelines
- B. Westlands Water District Letter to Association of California Water Agencies on Membership
- C. Letter to Senator Dianne Feinstein from the Delta Members of Congress on Proposed Emergency Amendment

D. Letter to National Academy of Sciences from Congressman Jerry McNerney on Scientific Integrity

**Public Comment:**

Gary Prost from Congressman Jerry McNerney's office was introduced. He commented on the letter sent by Congressman McNerney to the National Academy of Sciences in support of preserving the Delta as a water source and a place. Congressman McNerney wants to ensure that science should be based on solid assumptions. He also stated, negotiations are continuing between stakeholders in California and are not undercut by legislation.

**Possible Future Agenda Items:** None

**Adjournment:** 2:45 pm

**Next Regular Meeting:** April 21, 2010, 1:00 p.m.  
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