

Environmental Report – April 2007
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CBDA Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee (ERP)

Prioritization Model – During the ERP Subcommittee meeting in Sacramento on March 21, CalTrout and PG&E representatives made a presentation titled “Overview and Status of CalTrout and PG&E Steelhead and Salmon Recovery Assessment.” The Assessment presented was on a prioritization model which ranks potential recovery actions for winter run, spring run Chinook salmon, and steelhead. The model attempts to rate deficiencies and benefits (abundance, population growth rates, diversity) that restoration actions are intended to address. The model is being developed in collaboration with state and federal resource agencies. The model relies on professional judgment of experts in salmon and steelhead recovery and incorporates social and political considerations.

The CVP Water Association will monitor and review the progress and development of this model as it was suggested by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that some of the recommendations resulting from the model may be adopted in future recovery plans to insure that high priority recovery opportunities are identified, including actions which are complimentary to ongoing recovery efforts.

Battle Creek Restoration Project – A status report on the Battle Creek Restoration Project was made by representatives of the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Reclamation. CDFG reported that an additional \$67 million dollars of Proposition 50 funds has been approved to continue this Restoration Project. Reclamation noted that additional funding for the Restoration Project was also secured from the Iron Mountain Mine Fund (\$6 million) and from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) (\$3.36 million). Mary Marshall (Reclamation) reported that the ROD for the Restoration Project is expected to be finalized in June and that the FERC relicensing component is expected to be finalized in November. The Restoration Project will begin construction in January-February 2008, if the outstanding mitigation issues (such as for private fishing clubs) have been settled.

The CVP Water Association will continue monitoring the Restoration Project to insure that appropriate funding sources are being obligated and that mitigation components of the project are reasonable.

Stage 2 Performance Measures – FWS staff made a presentation titled “Programmatic Approach to Ecosystem Restoration Stage 2 Performance Measures.” This presentation centered on a framework which identifies priority and core indicators linked to quantifiable metrics and system drivers. For example, the highest priority indicator would be linked to a recovery species such as winter run Chinook salmon with a quantifiable metric such as minimum viable population with risk of extinction that does not exceed 5 % chance over 100 years. The driver indicators for this action would include

activities with specific management restorations identified through the NOAA Fisheries Recovery Plan. Staff also described specific performance indicators that would be used within the adaptive management framework and can be employed to factor risk assessment of ERP actions.

The CVP Water Association will continue to participate in the Select Group of the ERP Subcommittee and the Performance and Finance Committee to ensure consistency is used in evaluating ecosystem and fish and wildlife restoration actions.

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

The BDCP meeting on March 9 indicated that considerable progress is being made, most notably with the identification of key conservation “stressors” and the formation of a biological team which is reviewing the basis for themes and stressors. BDCP participants are identifying criteria for evaluating conservation goals, planning goals and economic considerations of the BDCP. Examples of key conservation themes include (a) the improvement of habitat through fluctuating salinity, and (b) Reduction of mortality associated with entrainment.

Seven Conservation Strategy Alternatives (CSA’s) have been identified. The Conservation Strategy Subgroup is tasked to compare CSA’s to conservation goals, stressors, and covered species benefits. The Subgroup is also initiating discussions of potential screening criteria.

The BDCP is also developing a process to establish an independent science review of the BDCP.

The CVP Water Association will continue to monitor the BDCP process.

Trinity Adaptive Management Work Group (TAMWG)

At the TAMWG meeting on March 20-21 in Weaverville, the Hoopa Valley Tribe made a presentation on proposed legislation they have initiated to secure long-term funding for the Trinity River Restoration Program. The proposed legislation was drafted with assistance from the Department of Interior (DOI) and Reclamation as a result of a request from Senator Feinstein. Representatives from Reclamation noted that while the Tribe and DOI were approaching agreement as to funding requirements for the Restoration Program, the current proposed legislation was not endorsed by DOI. There was ongoing discussion by TAMWG members and members of the audience on the proposed legislation. It was noted that Congressman Thompson was sponsoring a public meeting on March 27 in Eureka on the proposed legislation. Byron Leydecker recommended everyone interested in this issue should attend that meeting.

Trinity River Restoration Program – Hoopa Valley Tribe Legislative Proposal – Public Meeting – Eureka, California

At this March 27 facilitated meeting, I introduced myself as the CVP Water Association Environmental Director and noted that while there had been insufficient time to poll all of our membership, I was able to discuss the proposed legislation with the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (Authority) and was prepared to represent their interests during the discussions.

The Authority is in favor of securing a new funding authorization and authority for the Trinity River Restoration Program, provided the Authority is a participant in drafting the required legislation, that there is no linkage to the CVPIA Restoration Fund, funding is non-reimbursable, and the legislation incorporates elements to guarantee accountability for program performance and funding.

The proposed legislation is a product of the Hoopa Valley Tribe with drafting assistance by the DOI and Reclamation. At the meeting, the Hoopa Valley Tribe attempted to represent the legislation as a collaborative effort with DOI endorsement. Brian Person, Area Manager of the Northern California Area Office, the senior Reclamation official at the meeting, clarified DOI's position relative to the various sections contained in the proposed legislation. On several occasions, he identified differences with what the Hoopa Valley Tribe had previously identified as consensus positions. Brian also was very helpful in clarifying the proposed budget. He reported that DOI and the Hoopa Valley Tribe were getting close to recommending funding requirements, that the DOI amounts included contingency provisions, and that the budget numbers were generous.

The proposed budget was presented in the form of ranges that reflected the recommendations of the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the DOI. The proposed budget is intended to make up for past under-funding of the Restoration Program and to provide full funding of the 2000 ROD, which includes \$2 million annually for watersheds and full funding for wildlife components. The proposed budget would also provide full funding for the Hoopa Valley Tribe to implement hatchery marking, hatchery evaluation, and harvest management assessment.

Using the upper ranges of the proposed budget the Restoration Program funding request would total \$290.8 million as follows:

- Fiscal years 2008-2012, \$16.4 million a year, or a total of \$82.0 million.
- Fiscal years 2013-2014, \$11.6 million a year or a total of \$23.2 million.
- Fiscal year 2015- 2030, \$11.6 million year or \$ 185.6 million

Danny Jordan of the Hoopa Valley Tribe stated that additional funding would be required beyond 2030 and additional legislation would be promoted at that time. The Hoopa Valley Tribe has stated that Trinity River Restoration will not be completed until fishery stock is at levels sufficient to sustain commercial, recreational and Tribal fishery needs of

the North Coast. They have also stated that fish population levels must reach pre-dam levels.

Eight participants were designated as voting representatives on various issues presented at the workshop. Participants discussed provisions contained in the proposed legislation and designated voting representative then attempted to reach consensus on the various proposed Sections of the legislation.

Liz Murguia, with Congressman Thompson's office, stated that the meeting conclusions will be summarized and sent to the meeting participants for review in the near future.

The CVP Water Association will continue monitoring and participating in the Trinity River Restoration Program funding legislation activities to ensure that the legislation does not inappropriately impact CVP water users and that future funding of Trinity activities are not reimbursable.

CVPWA Environmental Affairs Committee (EAC)

The EAC met in Sacramento on March 28. The meeting was attended by Jim Snow, Joe Miyamoto, Marcia Wolfe, Bob Stackhouse, Al Zepp, Frank Michny, Russ Harrington and Serge Birk.

Al Zepp, Russ Harrington and Serge Birk reported on the public meeting sponsored by Congressman Thompson on proposed legislation to provide long-term funding for the Trinity River Restoration Program. (See earlier discussion on this meeting).

Marcia Wolfe updated participants relative to the status of the San Joaquin River Settlement Agreement.

Frank Michny reported that there were no changes to OCAP or SDIP from last month. Frank noted that the CVPIA Annual Work Plan meeting will be held on April 10, 2007 at the cafeteria conference rooms at 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento. The agenda will include an update on the CVPIA Program Activity Review (CPAR) and Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART).

Upcoming Meetings

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| Apr 4 | Bay-Delta Science Seminar at UC Davis |
| 9 | CALFED Independent Science Board Meeting in Sacramento |
| 10 | CVP Water Association BOD Conference Call Meeting |
| | CVPIA Annual Work Plan Meeting in Sacramento |
| 18 | CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program Meeting in Sacramento |
| 20 | Bay-Delta Conservation Plan Meeting in Sacramento |
| 24 | San Joaquin River Restoration Forum in Fresno |
| 25 | CALFED Water Operations Group Meeting in Sacramento |