

**MINUTES**

**TOUR/MEETING OF THE RECLAMATION BOARD  
October 18, 2007**

The first day of the Reclamation Board's two-day October Board meeting was a tour of the flood management facilities in Northern California located in Yuba, Sutter, Butte, and Colusa counties.

Participants in the tour from the Reclamation Board and Department of Water Resources were:

Ben Carter, Board President

Butch Hodgkins, Board Vice President

Lady Bug Doherty, Board Secretary

Rose Marie Burroughs, Board member

John Brown, new Board member

Jay Punia, General Manager

Dan Fua, Supervising Engineer

Eric Butler, Senior Engineer

Lorraine Pendlebury, Staff Assistant to the Board

Nancy Finch, Board Counsel

Steve Dawson, DWR

Ward Tabor, DWR

Rod Mayer, DWR

George Qualley, DWR

Keith Swanson, DWR

Dave Lane, DWR

Eric Koch, DWR

The first, second and third facilities visited were Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority (TRLIA) projects. At the Bear River setback levee in Yuba County. Larry Dacus, Paul Brunner from TRLIA, and Dan from GEI gave us an overview of the project and said that \$147 million

had been spent to date, that their future focus is the 13 miles along the Feather River, and that the total cost of levee work on their projects will be approximately \$360 million. They also said that FEMA certification is 100 year protection. However, TRLIA's projects are designed and built for 200 year protection. George Qualley mentioned that DWR's Early Implementation Project Program is awarding \$138.5 million to TRLIA.

We also saw remnants of the old Bear River levee and the restoration project which will be planted for a year, go back to riparian habitat, and be maintained in the future by the State or Reclamation District 784. Dan, from GEI, described the Bear River setback levee as having 30-70 feet of cutoff slurry wall. Relief wells are added as an additional measure of safety. Detention basins will provide material for half of the levee, and the balance of material from the degraded levee. Stability berms with drains will provide embankment settlement. At Star Bend in Yuba County, Paul Brunner showed where TRLIA was acquiring properties for the six miles of levee and said that 5 schedules for design were finalized and would be awarded in the next week. The tour also stopped to view the Feather River setback alignment site.

The next stop of the tour was at Star Bend in Sutter County, where Mr. Jeff Twitchell and others from Levee District 1 provided an overview of the seepage problems that the setback levee and the 40-50 feet of slurry cutoff wall would eliminate. The project would also improve the hydraulics in the area. The tour participants viewed the proposed alignment for the setback levee and the restoration site. Mr. Twitchell said that they're ready to go, were negotiating with a landowner on 40 of the 50 acres needed, and just need Reclamation Board approval. Board members then asked questions about the alignment, impact to landowners, erosion, and the Sutter Feasibility Study. Mr. Rod Mayer and Mr. George Qualley from DWR suggested that the quickest way to get things moving is to talk to the locals, get Yuba City participation, and not wait for the Corps - it would take too long for them to do the Feasibility Study.

Lunch was eaten in the vans on the way to the M&T Overflow Structure and Phelan Levee in Butte County. Mr. Les Heringer, of M&T Ranch, provided an overview of the three overflow structures in the area (M&T, 3 Bs and Goose Lake). His main concern is the Phelan Levee, which he says is badly eroded, has lost several hundred feet, and has blown through several times. He said the State has mitigated this in the past and should continue to do so because these structures, which take the overflow away from the Butte Basin, were part of an agreement with the State which made the State responsible for fixing the eroding levees.

Mr. Keith Swanson, of DWR, provided information on the Butte Basin Study of the 1970s and another report from the 1980s which resulted in the State funding some work after that report. He said they lost Road 29 in the 1995 flood, which prompted the Ayres Study. The Ayres Study did a lot of hydraulic modeling and came up with the unpopular conclusion that the waterflow will balance out and the river is not likely to enter the Butte Basin and reroute itself. Mr. Swanson

said that the dilemma is the Ayres Report was likely never finalized, even though there seems to be a final copy. However, the Corps is agreeing with its findings.

Board President Carter summed up the discussion by saying that there are several questions to be answered:

- a) is the Phelan Levee part of the project?
- b) if it blows out, what is the impact on public safety?
- c) if water flowing over land where it never flowed before, is it considered a "taking" ?
- d) does the Board have an interest in the erosion of the Phelan Levee?

The tour then followed Mr. Heringer to check out where he says the river is moving.

The last stop of the day was to view the Moulton Weir in Colusa County. This is the northernmost weir in the Central Valley Flood Control system and was built in 1931. Board President Carter stated that the anticipated capacity is 40,000 cfs but this well-functioning weir has accommodated much higher flows. Mr. Carter grazes his cattle here and plants beans and safflower when water is not flowing. When water is flowing, his cattle graze in the training levees.

A closed session followed and the tour/meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

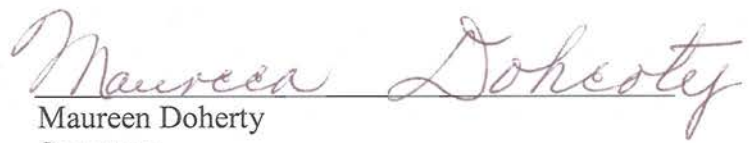
**Friday morning, October 19, 2007:**

The tour continued this morning with a stop at Garmire Bridge at Tisdale Weir in Sutter County. Board member Emma Suarez met the rest of the tour at this stop. We were also joined by people from Reclamation District 108, Westside Levee District, and Sutter County PW. Tour members viewed the work being done by DWR to clear the Tisdale Wier. Mr. Keith Swanson said that DWR was looking into the possibility of grazing the Bypass but that Fish and Game owns most of it. Mr. Swanson told the group what new equipment had been purchased for the maintenance project, which included removing a huge amount of sediment. There are also monitors in the area that alert DWR when there is a buildup of sediment. Tisdale Wier is an area that DWR looks at every year. General Manager Jay Punia finished up with an overview of how well the weirs and bypass systems work together to help control flooding in the Central Valley.

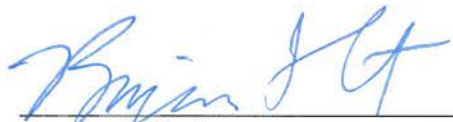
On the way to the Board Meeting, taking place at the Yuba County Government Center in Marysville, the tour stopped by the Sutter Bypass to check out the overgrowth of vegetation that was reportedly growing there.

The Reclamation Board Meeting began at 10 a.m. at the Yuba County Government Center in Marysville.

Dated: MARCH 17, 2008

  
Maureen Doherty  
Secretary

The foregoing minutes were approved:

  
Benjamin F. Carter  
President