

DWR Responses to Comments Related to Levee Vegetation Strategy and Land Use/Floodplain Management (DRAFT) – 6/20/17

This table includes draft comment responses related to Levee Vegetation Strategy and Land Use/Floodplain Management.

Letter Code	Commenter	Affiliation	CVFPP Theme	Comment	Draft Response
G_FOR1-02	Ronald Stork	Friends of the River	Vegetation Management	<p>(2) VEGETATION ON LEVEES</p> <p>In the 2012 flood plan resolution, the Board raised concerns about the Corps of Engineers’ proposal to eliminate vegetation, other than annual grasses, on or near levees. It also modified DWR’s proposed vegetation policy and called for additional study and potential refinements of the state’s policies on this matter.</p> <p>DWR and the Board assisted Representative Matsui and Senator Boxer to insert language into the 2014 WRRDA to require the USACE to reconsider its proposal. The USACE has yet to put forth a new vegetation proposal.</p> <p>DWR has included a “when it dies, don’t replace it” vegetation-on-levees proposal in the Conservation Strategy appendix. It also appears to have incorporated its 2012 Flood Plan vegetation-on-or-near-levees proposal into its Urban Levee Design Criteria (ULDC).</p> <p>The state has already lost 95% of the riparian vegetation in the Central Valley. Much of what is left is on or near the levees or within the flood system.</p> <p>The Board should consider doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Don’t adopt the “when it dies, don’t replace it” policy in the Conservation Strategy until after the USACE releases its new vegetation plan and after DWR, the Board, and other state agencies have the opportunity to engage with the USACE. b. Require that DWR include a mitigation plan for the loss of vegetation and habitats. c. Undertake a consistency review of the 2012 CVFPP Board resolution and the policies being proposed in the 2017 proposed DWR CVFPP update. 	<p>The DWR levee vegetation management strategy (VMS) described in the Conservation Strategy is life cycle management, consistent with the 2012 CVFPP. As described in Appendix D, Section 2.2.3, “limited natural recruitment” is a concept that was articulated in Appendix D for consideration by DWR Flood Managers and resources agencies, but has not been fully developed or agreed to. DWR would mitigate for loss of vegetation and habitat to the extent required by law.</p> <p>The comment contains several incorrect factual assertions and assumptions, and legal conclusions drawn from those incorrect facts.</p> <p>Rather than relying on the Conservation Strategy, mitigation for the VMS was established in the 2012 CVFPP PEIR, specifically in mitigation measures BIO-A-2b (NTMA) and BIO-T-7b. Those measures are unchanged in the 2017 CVFPP SPEIR. With regard to the Conservation Strategy, Mitigation measure BIO-A-2b acknowledges that one of a variety of mechanisms for achieving the mitigation required by the measure <i>could be</i> implementation of the Conservation Strategy, but the mitigation required by the measure is not reliant on that mechanism being used.</p> <p>The Conservation Strategy is also intended to provide net environmental benefits independent of the need to compensate for the impacts of CVFPP actions, including the VMS.</p> <p>The comment also assumes that the vegetation management strategy is just now being “proposed.” To the contrary, the vegetation management strategy was adopted as an interim strategy as part of the 2012 CVFPP, and at this juncture, only refinements to the existing VMS are being proposed. Appendix D of the Conservation Strategy describes these refinements and includes the concept of “limited natural recruitment” which may be further explored in the future in conjunction with stakeholders, but would not be implemented at this time.</p> <p>The comment recites some of the history of the development of the VMS, which was in part a response to previous Corps policy generally requiring the removal of all vegetation from all levees. DWR strongly disagreed with the Corps’ extreme stance, and crafted the VMS as an approach – reflecting scientific research and risk prioritization -- that balances flood risk reduction system effectiveness with habitat values. DWR and the CVFPB continue to</p>

					<p>believe that the approach reflected in the VMS best accomplishes this balance. The fact that the 2014 WRRDA requires the Corps to reconsider its current policy does not alter this conclusion. From a CEQA perspective, the 2014 WRRDA does not reflect a material change in circumstances.</p> <p>The 2017 SPEIR has now quantified both the long-term loss of vegetation anticipated to result from the VMS (1300 acres) as well as the anticipated benefit from replacement activities (3500 acres). This supports the conclusion of the 2012 CVFPP PEIR that adequate feasible mitigation is available. Finally, as in 2012 with regard to the former Conservation Framework, the Conservation Strategy is an integral part of the CVFPP. The additional detail of the Conservation Strategy as compared to the Conservation Framework will help ensure its effectiveness.</p> <p>In addition to being supported in the current circumstance, since the 2012 CVFPP PEIR was unchallenged, it is now conclusively presumed adequate in the absence of material project changes, changed circumstances or significant new information, none of which have occurred.</p> <p>Regarding consistency with the 2012 CVFPP Board resolution, please see the CVFPB workshop materials from the 6/10/17 workshop, which largely address this comment.</p> <p>Regarding the ULDC, the document is consistent with and reiterates the VMS contained in the 2012 CVFPP, as it would apply to urban levees.</p>
G_MUSR1-02	Barry O'Regan	Mid and Upper Sacramento River Region	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>Section 1.1.1, Page 1-4: We suggest adding a discussion about how the CVFPP aligns with, and sets a framework for accommodating and facilitating California's projected population and economic growth within the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. The California Department of Finance is projecting 70% population growth (4 million plus additional people) within the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys over the next 50 years. Due to housing affordability issues in Coastal California, most of California's future growth is forecasted to occur inland, principally along the I-5 and Highway 99 corridors, in areas which receive flood protection from SPFC facilities. The State of California is investing billions of dollars in improving Central Valley infrastructure, (high speed rail, freeway expansions, etc.) to accommodate this anticipated growth, and the CVFPP Update should make the case that a similar level of investment is needed in SPFC facilities if this projected growth is to occur in a flood risk management responsible way.</p>	<p>Revised text:</p> <p>-Page 1-3: "Urban growth and development in areas protected by the SPFC have increased flood risk and have created the need for levels of protection higher than that provided by levees originally intended to protect rural-agricultural areas. This growth is expected to continue over the long-term future as population within the SPFC Planning Area is projected to increase by approximately 70% over the next 50 years (DWR, 2014)."</p> <p>Page 1-14: "Nevertheless, the risk has increased over time. With future population growth in the Central Valley and a lack of sufficient and sustained investments in the flood system, the risk to life and property will continue to increase."</p> <p>Section 3.21: "As population growth and urban development continues in the Central Valley's floodplains, cumulative flood damages and loss of life will likely increase over time. Population growth within the SPFC Planning area is projected to increase by approximately 70% over the next 50 years. Managing the increased flood risk associated with this future growth will require a wide variety of approaches. Structural flood improvements can never fully eliminate the risk of flooding and are costly to construct and maintain over the long-term. An important part of the strategy to reduce flood risk should be to avoid</p>

					<p>or minimize damages through wise land use and floodplain management policies and investments.”</p> <p>Also, 2067 condition flood risk estimates in the CVFPP Update account for future growth and population over the 50-year planning horizon based on California Water Plan projections.</p>
G_MUSR1-13	Barry O'Regan	Mid and Upper Sacramento River Region	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>Section 3.1.1, Page 3-3: Recommend removing the phrase “within specific boundaries without encouraging broader development” from the third bullet item (and all other instances where this occurs in the document). Small communities within the MUSR Region play a critical role in supporting the surrounding agricultural industry and they will need to accommodate some level of future growth in order to remain viable. Proposed levee and other infrastructure improvements should be focused on improving public safety and on reducing flood-related damages and liability.</p>	<p>DWR promotes investments that are consistent with the wise use of floodplains. As stated in Chapter 3, the State does not promote flood management improvements that would induce population growth in rural areas. Flood improvements can be made to small communities to accommodate some level of future growth while avoiding broader urban development that would lead to risk intensification and potential increases in aggregate economic and life safety risk.</p>
G_MUSR1-28	Barry O'Regan	Mid and Upper Sacramento River Region	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>Section 4.5.1, Page 4-26: The proposed policies regarding land use cause concern:</p> <p>a. For the Central Valley, ‘no growth’ within the floodplain is not a realistic policy position; see previous comments regarding central valley population and economic growth projections and forecasts.</p> <p>b. The proposed policies contained in the 2017 CVFPP Update do not provide guidance on how to reconcile flood risk management with other economic and social values.</p> <p>c. MUSR does not wish to “pursue administrative actions to ensure consistency of State floodplain management policies with federal policies”. The Sacramento River RFMPs have in fact convened a taskforce to do the opposite; we are trying to alleviate some of the issues federal floodplain management policies have created for our regions. Federal floodplain management policies (i.e., EO 11988, certain NFIP regulations) are problematic for the Central Valley, particularly when considering that the majority of the central valley is located within an historic floodplain.</p> <p>d. See previous comments regarding State policies encouraging and requiring intensification of development levels in existing urban areas.</p> <p>e. Provide a definition of “high-hazard areas”.</p>	<p>The 2017 CVFPP does not direct land use decisions on behalf of the State, which is the jurisdiction of local agencies. The 2017 CVFPP Update does apply the wise use of floodplains to prioritize State investment in actions that reduce aggregate flood risk, and discourages development in deep, rural floodplains. As stated in the 2012 CVFPP, the SSIA is intended to reduce flood risk in the areas protected by SPFC facilities while discouraging land use changes that promote growth in deep floodplains and increase State flood hazards. The policy is described on Page 3-41.</p> <p>-Wise use of floodplains does not stipulate “no growth” within the floodplain, but encourages responsible growth consistent with wise floodplain management. The 2017 CVFPP Update states that urban flood risk reduction investments will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety risks are hold constant or reduced over time. Past decisions to allow urban development in rural Central Valley floodplains have exposed lives and property to high levels of flood risk, especially in deep or quick-filling basins. If urban development continues in these floodplains, cumulative flood damages and loss of life will likely increase over time.</p> <p>-The recommendation “Pursue administrative actions to ensure consistency with federal floodplain management policies.” is ambiguous. This recommendation has been deleted.</p>
G_SRRFA1-09	Tom Fossum, Mike Inamine, Melinda Terry, Fritz Durst, Greg Fabun	Sac River Regions & Flood Association	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>E. Population Growth Issue Description: The State is predicting and planning for significant population growth in the Central Valley. The 2017 Update reaffirms a policy of development avoidance in the floodplain, which is inconsistent with published reports from other State agencies. We need to advance the discussion of how population growth, land use decision-making, and floodplain management are integrated into the development of State-wide policy, as is addressed in the 2017 Update, and beyond.</p> <p>Talking Points/Supporting Statements:- In January 2016, the California Department of Finance identified San Joaquin County as the fastest growing county in the state, closely followed by Yolo County.- The California Department of Finance is projecting that by 2060 there will be a 13.9 million increase in the total state population and 58% population growth (4.5 million plus additional people) within the Sacramento and San</p>	<p>See response to Comment G_MUSR1-02.</p>

				<p>Joaquin Valleys occurring over the next 50 years.- Due to housing affordability issues in Coastal California, most of California’s future growth is forecasted to occur inland, principally along the I-5 and Highway 99 corridors, in areas which receive flood protection from SPFC facilities.- The State of California is investing billions of dollars in improving Central Valley infrastructure, (high speed rail, freeway expansions, etc.) to accommodate this anticipated growth, and the 2017 Update should make the case that a similar level of investment is needed in SPFC facilities to maintain, or lower, long-term residual risk levels.</p> <p>Recommendations: We suggest adding a discussion about how the CVFPP recognizes the State’s projected population and economic growth within the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, and how long-term residual risk will be managed. This discussion should emphasize the importance of the 2017 Update to California’s long-term economic future. Pages 4-30 include a recommendation for the development of a Floodplain Management Strategic Implementation Plan to guide wise use of the floodplain in California. We recommend the formation of an advisory committee to help develop this plan, as well as other land use policy initiatives that result from implementation of the CVFPP’s recommendations.</p>	
L_COL2-14	Glenn Gebhardt	City of Lathrop	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>Page 4-30: Recommended Actions include: "Reaffirm and clarify the CVFPP land use policy to guide State Investments." This bullet states that "the SSIA is intended to reduce flood risk in the areas protected by State Plan of Flood Control facilities while avoiding land use changes that promote growth in deep floodplains and increase State flood hazards. The State encourages policies and actions that avoid, to the extent feasible, putting people and property at risk that are not presently at risk in flood hazard areas."</p> <p>Based upon analysis to date, it appears evident that the proposed Fix in Place plan to provide 200-year LOP to all of RD 17 will greatly reduce the currently anticipated economic and life loss, even when including the anticipated development that will fund the local share of the 200-year LOP. And yet, the recommended action noted above suggests a blanket restriction on any new development within the 200-year flood plain. The Draft 2017 CVFPP Update should include improvements to provide 200-year flood protection for all of RD 17, including the cities of Lathrop, Manteca and Stockton which have existing and planned development allowed in the secondary zone of the Delta pursuant to the Delta Plan. The CVFPP Update policies should address the provision of flood protection for the existing 46,500 residents and the future planned development in urban and urbanized areas in a manner consistent with the local land use agency General Plans which were found to be consistent with the Delta Plan and in accordance with the Central Valley Flood Protection Act of 2008.</p> <p>The City of Lathrop recently relinquished 2,200 acres from their Sphere of Influence in an effort to address the State's concerns regarding development in the deep part of the floodplain. The State should clarify the 2017 CVFPP Update land use policy to encourage urban levee improvements that provide flood protection for the entire region, including both existing and future development that is consistent with the Delta Plan and in accordance with the Central Valley Flood Protection Act of 2008.</p>	<p>The CVFPP is a broad level planning study directed by SB5 to evaluate a number of topics. Although the CVFPP is intended to guide future actions regarding the SPFC, the CVFPP is not a regulatory document in the nature of a local general plan or local coastal program. Specifically, there is no requirement that future actions in the planning area be consistent with the CVFPP. The CVFPP is also scheduled to be revised every five years. As a result, many comments overstate the CVFPP’s role going forward when they assume that the CVFPP will direct, control, or constrain future actions. Instead, the management actions ultimately proposed for implementation in the planning area may well differ from the options currently being considered, based on further evaluation and input from affected stakeholders. Moreover, most of the actions described in the CVFPP are currently unfunded, and would need to be analyzed at a project level, making their future implementation somewhat speculative.</p> <p>The 2017 CVFPP Update includes RD 17 urban improvements in the SSIA Portfolio, but describes them in general programmatic terms. The cost of the RD 17 improvements in the Draft 2017 CVFPP Update, which were included in Phase 1 investments, were derived from the San Joaquin River Basin-wide Feasibility Study. No specific RD 17 levee improvements are shown or recommended in the 2017 CVFPP Update and in any event would require project level analysis and refinement, leaving any specifics open-ended.</p> <p>The USACE Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study excluded RD 17 fix-in-place levee improvements from the National Economic Development Plan because they were deemed noncompliant with the Executive Order 11988 on the Wise Use of Floodplains. The State has also described its concerns about promoting urban development within rural, deep floodplains in the 2012 CVFPP and 2017 CVFPP Update. The 2017 CVFPP Update specifically states that SSIA improvements are designed to reduce the chance of flooding while discouraging population growth in rural floodplains, with the intention of</p>

					reducing aggregate flood risk. It further states that urban flood risk reduction investments under the SSIA will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety risks are hold constant or reduced over time.
L_COL2-34	Glenn Gebhardt	City of Lathrop	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	P. 3-41, Section 3.2.1 "Improved Land Use and Floodplain Management": The policy statement reads, in part that "Urban flood risk reduction investments under the SSIA will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety risks are held constant or reduced over time ... ". But, Figure 3-8 shows that life loss increases over time for the Sacramento River Basin. We'd suggest that the policy language be modified to "Urban flood risk reduction investments under the SSIA will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety risks are held constant or reduced compared to 2017Without-project conditions."	Increases in the life risk with 2017 refined SSIA Portfolio in the Sacramento River Basin is due in part to climate change and population growth in already urban areas, including infill development. The policy described on Page 3-41 is specific to discouraging growth in rural, deep floodplains.
L_COL2-40	Glenn Gebhardt	City of Lathrop	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	P. 4-30, "Recommendations for Land Use and Floodplain Management", 2nd bullet: The State should not take administrative actions just "to ensure consistency of State floodplain management policies with federal policies". State and local land use policies have been developed to accommodate a wide range of factors, which force a balancing of priorities.	Concur. Recommendation was deleted.
L_RD171-01	Dante Nomellini	Reclamation District 17	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	The Plan was represented to be for the purpose of establishing a high level view of a future path to provide flood protection of the Central Valley. Although the Plan does set forth the magnitude of the challenge both physically and in terms of potential cost it misses the mark in setting forth an achievable path forward. The effort to restrict land use through withholding flood risk reduction assistance and the imposition of the burden to achieve benefits other than for flood control are unwise impediments to achieving urgently needed increased flood protection for existing populations, critical infrastructure and billions of dollars of public and private investment.	See response to Comment L_COL2-14
L_RD171-03	Dante Nomellini	Reclamation District 17	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	Billions of dollars of public and private investments have been made and more than 46,000 people have located in RD 17 in reliance upon the State Plan of Flood Control System including Project levees. The CVFPP 2017 update appears to obstruct rather than facilitate increased flood protection for the RD 17 area in total disregard of the inadequacies of the SPFC Project levees and other failures of the SPFC. SB 5 was not intended to preclude development in areas protected by levees but rather to require that specific types of development be provided with 200 year protection by the year 2025. State assistance was contemplated in achieving such protection. To use the CVFPP 2017 update to restrict development which the CVFPP Project levees and Arkansas act of 1850 were intended to promote is inappropriate. The local land use agencies do not plan for much if not all of the development for which Plan seeks to preclude. The Delta Stewardship Plan imposes restrictions which even if not enforceable create a disincentive for development in the area of concern. The effort to obstruct rather than facilitate improvements of the Project levees certainly does not reduce State liability exposure and increases flood risk.	See response to Comment L_COL2-14
L_RD1081-07	Fritz Durst	Reclamation District 108	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	The CVFPP 2017 Update proposes land use policies which do not appear to be aligned with California's projected population and economic growth. The State of California is investing billions of dollars in improving Central Valley infrastructure (high speed rail, freeway expansions, etc.) to accommodate this anticipated growth, and the CVFPP Update should make the case to our citizens and our elected officials that similar levels of investment are needed in flood protection if California's projected growth is to occur in a flood risk management responsible way.	See Response to Comment G_MUSR1-02. As stated in the 2012 CVFPP, the SSIA is intended to reduce flood risk in the areas protected by SPFC facilities while discouraging land use changes that promote growth in deep floodplains and increase State flood hazards. The wise use of floodplains does not stipulate "no growth" within the floodplain, but encourages responsible growth consistent with wise floodplain management. The 2017 CVFPP Update states that urban flood risk reduction

					investments will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety risks are held constant or reduced over time. Past decisions to allow urban development in rural Central Valley floodplains have exposed lives and property to high levels of flood risk, especially in deep or quick-filling basins. If urban development continues in these floodplains, cumulative flood damages and loss of life will likely increase over time.
L_SJCPW1-01	SJCPW	San Joaquin County Public Works	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	Development within the City's General Plan boundaries is critical in order to provide tens of millions in developer funding for the local share of the RD 17 levee improvements. Without development to fund the local share, there is no local funding for levee improvements, including those described in the State Plan of Flood Control. Section 3.2.1, however, states that urban flood risk reduction investments under the SSIA will be structured to assure that the aggregate economic and life safety are held constant or reduced over time and will be limited to areas protected by SPFC facilities. However, the CVFPP Update does not include improvements to SPFC flood protection facilities that are needed in order to protect urbanizing and urbanized areas in RD17. This is inconsistent with SB 5.	See response to Comment L_COL2-14
L_SJRFCPA1-07	Reggie Hill	San Joaquin River Flood Control Project Agency	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	Land Use and Floodplain Management: This issue needs to include recognition of the value of preserving sustainable agriculture in the floodplain, not just limiting urban development.	As described in Section 2.3.2 for Perspectives on Land Use and Floodplain Management, one of the areas of agreement with stakeholders and DWR is that "Agricultural lands have economic, environmental, and cultural value, and impacts to farmland and local agricultural economies should be minimized."
S_DPC1-02	Skip Thomson	Delta Protection Commission	Land Use/ Floodplain Management	<p>Overall, both the 2012 CVFPP and draft 2017 CVFPP Update encourage land use planning practices that reduce the consequences of flooding. This is explained in Section 3.1.3 (The Urban Portfolio) and DWR's description of how "Limiting Flood Exposure Contributes to Greater Sustainability" (page 3-32). Not allowing new development in the statutory Delta's primary zone is consistent with LURMP Policies Levees P-1, Land Use P-1 and P-2, and Agriculture P-9 (see LURMP Policy table at end of letter for full text). It would be helpful to display the Primary and Secondary zones in Map 2-1 since Flood Management Planning in the statutory Delta will be needed to show consistency with the Land Use Resource Management Plan and Delta Plan. Such long-range and multi-county planning documents like these are not a part of the planning landscape in other parts of the SPFC.</p> <p>There is a delicate balancing to ensure that new flood protection does not result in the intensification of risk on lives and assets in the floodplain protected behind levees. On the same side, not having protection is placing a financial burden on the Delta's land owners. Non-structural measures (such as flood proofing buildings) may be viable options, but they have a direct financial impact on local property owners and small communities. Some owners are discouraged from making any investments in new buildings unless they obtain a higher level of flood protection to protect their investments. Grant programs such as the Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction Program should continue to be supportive of giving grants to small communities and rural areas of the Delta to support local Delta economies as well as cultural heritage and agritourism improvement efforts.</p>	<p>Map 2-1 focuses on the 6 RFMP locations. A map of the Primary and Secondary Zones of the Delta have been added to the text box "Collaboration with Delta Levee Investment Strategy" in Section 4.2.1.</p> <p>In addition, the CVFPP focuses on reducing flood risks on lands protected by the SPFC, including those in the Delta. Approximately one-third of the Delta's levee system is part of the SPFC and thus is included in the CVFPP. Responsibilities for flood management in Delta areas outside the SPFC reside with a variety of local agencies and are supported by various State, federal, and local efforts (e.g., the State's Delta Special Flood Projects Program and Delta Levees Maintenance Subventions Program, Delta Plan development).</p> <p>The CVFPP is one of many programs that could contribute to achievement of the management goals included in the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan. The goals of the CVFPP support the Delta Plan's goals of improving water supply reliability and restoring the Delta ecosystem. The Delta Plan is a management plan that will include policies and recommendations, but no specific projects. As part of the development and implementation of the CVFPP and future updates, the Board and DWR will continue to work collaboratively with local, State, and federal agencies, environmental interests, and other parties.</p>

S-DSC1-15	Cassandra Enos-Nobriga	Delta Stewardship Council	Vegetation Management	<p>Levee Vegetation Management Strategy (LVMS). The Council is encouraged to see refinements to the LVMS, including the concepts of early establishment of riparian forest corridors and managed recruitment. In the interest of improved clarity, the Council recommends including the LVMS in the CVFPP, or moving the (No Suggestions) Conservation Strategy and Appendices (Appendix D in this case) forward with the CVFPP for adoption. Currently there is a circular reference with the CVFPP stating, "DWR prepared an updated LVMS that is included as Appendix D to the CVFPP Conservation Strategy," while Appendix D of the Conservation Strategy states, "The 2017 update of the CVFPP is expected to include a more comprehensive levee vegetation management strategy." This ambiguity should be resolved.</p>	<p>The supporting documents that the Board selects to adopt as part of the 2017 CVFPP Update is at the discretion of the Board.</p> <p>The contradictory sentence noted in Appendix D of the Conservation Strategy by the commenter has been deleted.</p>
T_FOR1-08	Ronald Stork	Friends of the River	Vegetation Management	<p>Obviously, this -- the Department and this Board needs to take advantage of every -- sorry, moving on to the next point -- take advantage of every opportunity they can to have good habitat in the flood system itself. That certainly means adopting the Conservation Strategy. I think you've heard others from the study group to also advocate for that. Levee vegetation may be my last point. And that is the Corps has not reformulated its policy. We need to be careful about saying you're going to follow Corps policy when indeed you don't know what Corps policy will be in the future. Certainly, awkward for them to have not undertaken their responsibilities under WRDA and under a court order in an expeditious fashion. So you have that issue of making sure you're not making commitments that you don't know if they're really appropriate.</p> <p>And your plan and DWR's preference, both in the Urban Levee Design Criteria, as well as parts of your plan, say we'll follow the Department's policy, which right now is the life-cycle policy, which is a gradual reduction in woody vegetation in what areas might be considered to be non-conforming. Now, this may be part of my CEQA comments, and that is somewhere, somehow that's -- there are implications to that policy. It may be a slow removal of vegetation, but it's still a removal of vegetation that may -- that I don't believe the Department or the plan grapples with about mitigation. So that's an issue that I think still remains. The State and this Board and the Department, of course, need to continue to engage with the Corps to make sure that the Corps understands California's perspective, and its a considerable investment that it's made in understanding these issues. So that's kind of what I was -- wanted to talk to you about today. And again, I want to thank this Board for the thoughtful way in which it engages with members of the public, including knowledgeable members of the public. And I hope that these remarks are productive and add to your thoughts on how to approach the future.</p>	<p>Please see response to Comment G_FOR1-02</p>