

# CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION BOARD

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

### June 23, 2023



---

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND LAND MANAGEMENT DIVISION

### Status Report and Work Activities

### Environmental Services Section

#### 1.0 Delta Levee Habitat Advisory Committee (DLHAC) Meeting

Staff attended the monthly DLHAC meeting held on June 2, 2023, via online conferencing. A summary of the meeting is provided below:

##### 2017 LiDAR data:

Prior to the 5-year assessments by the Reclamation Districts (RD) were completed, DLHAC members discussed whether a reassessment of levee conditions from the 2017 LiDAR data was needed. DWR suggested that there isn't a need to continue to process the 2017 data since they came up with approximately the same results as the 5-year plans. DWR would like to continue LiDAR surveys at a more regular interval, because it is an important data source with ground truthing investigations needed. Future funding would still be required. RD engineers are skeptical as to the accuracy and validity of LiDAR surveys due to its reflective nature when surveying vegetation which could lead to erroneous assumptions and cause errors on levee rehabilitation projects.

##### Delta Levee MOU Working Group:

The Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) staff are focusing their efforts to the Delta Adapts program. There have been promising results from their query of assessing if all levee improvement projects were implemented from the 2022 Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Update, what cost benefits savings would that have under climate change for the Delta. Preliminary results suggest that there would be an approximately \$1B savings. DSC staff are proposing to present these findings at this year's Floodplain Management Association Conference. RD engineers are cautious about the results presented and would like further discussion with DSC to better understand the modeling input.

##### Delta Stewardship Council (DSC):

A Delta Adapts Stakeholder Work Group meeting was held on June 6<sup>th</sup> where DSC staff presented their adaptation strategies, as well as solicited feedback from stakeholders.

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy:

The Delta Conservancy Board awarded funding at their May Board meeting to the Metropolitan Water District to transform Webb Tract to managed wetland and rice fields to better address subsidence issues in the area. There will be a research component to study habitat and food web benefits to adjacent waterways.

Department of Water Resources (DWR) Delta Emergency Operations:

DWR staff are coordinating with grantees to develop agreements for Round 3 of the Delta Flood Emergency Response Grant Program. They expect to have agreements executed in the near future.

DWR Delta Levees Program (DLP):

A discussion regarding future funding of the Subventions Program occurred in light of the new bond measure in the Legislature. With SB638 (Eggman) Bond passing the Senate and possibly going before the voters in 2024, there is \$250M budgeted for the DWR Subventions Program and \$250M to Special Projects. Bridge funding would still be needed for the interim fiscal year until those voters approved funds are appropriated and accessible.

An additional \$500k amendment for Fiscal Year (FY) 22/23 and approval of the FY23/24 Subventions Program budget was requested by DWR staff and is expected to be considered at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Flood Board meeting.

DWR staff are continuing to process invoicing for both the Subventions Program and Special Projects claims. The 2023 Multi-benefit PSP will close for applications on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. DWR Delta Ecosystem Enhancement (DEE) staff will be reviewing applications received.

DEE staff are continuing to work on advanced programmatic mitigation. They are meeting with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff to potentially use the Grizzly Slough Restoration project for mitigation. Mitigation credits are being purchased as they become available.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife:

CDFW staff are working to re-establish Bradford and Medford island's mitigation sites after a fire, and to establish a new AB360 program for waterside mitigation sites. The Grizzly Slough Phase 2 is still in the process of obtaining a conservation easement and finding an endowment. The Twitchell Island Mitigation and Enhancement Site (TIMES) is still in development.

Invasive nutria investigations and surveying is on-going at Sherman Island, and an individual nutria specimen was captured at the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area.

### District Engineers' Update

KSN engineers are preparing for summer levee projects after nesting bird season. There are still flood fighting activities occurring in the south Delta. KSN has requested to meet with DWR management to discuss southern State reservoirs capacity in preparation of potential El Niño conditions.

RD engineers are having issues recuperating reimbursement funding in a timely fashion from FEMA for flood fighting activities from the past winter storms.

## **2.0 USACE/Board Sponsored Flood Risk Reduction Projects**

Staff met with DWR's Flood Projects Branch environmental staff via MS Teams on June 7, 2023. In addition to the meeting, the following activities occurred during the reporting period:

### American River Watershed Common Features, Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (ARCF 2016) Project

- *Urrutia Pond Alternative Analysis Letter from DWR to USACE* - DWR Flood Projects Branch environmental staff is preparing a letter to the USACE requesting analysis of an Alternative (Alternative 7) in the Comprehensive Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Supplemental EIS/EIR) currently under development by the USACE and DWR on behalf of the Board. Alternative 7 includes utilizing the Urrutia Pond site as mitigation for Biological Resources impacts discussed in the overall ARCF2016 Project. The request was made in response to public comments and local agency interest in an alternative that includes a pond for mitigation and wildlife habitat. Specifically, the Sacramento County Regional Parks Department's (Regional Parks) has requested, in a formal comment letter submitted during the Notice of Intent scoping period, that the SEIS/SEIR consider Alternative 7 or a similar alternative that retains a significant portion of the existing pond at Urrutia, citing reduced impacts to air quality, noise and traffic impacts, while meeting most of the project objectives. DWR Flood Projects Branch staff recommends inclusion of Alternative 7 pursuant to CEQA California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15126.6. The USACE rejected the inclusion of Alternative 7 initially because it would not provide the amount of salmonid mitigation required to meet all of the project objectives.

Board staff coordinated with DWR Flood Projects Branch staff on the letter to the USACE. DWR Flood Projects Branch Staff will submit the letter to USACE for consideration.

### 3.0 Encroachment Permitting Assistance: Pre-Application Meetings

Staff attended three pre-application meetings during this reporting period. The meetings are summarized below.

- On May 16, 2023, staff attended a pre-application meeting for the Brannan-Andrus Georgiana Slough Erosion Project (PAM2023048). The project proposes waterside erosion control and habitat restoration and enhancements along Georgiana Slough east of Rio Vista. The proposed work involves moving waterside material to the landside of the levee and the placement of rip-rap on the waterside slope of the levee to the wetland bench. Board staff recommended that the Applicant show how the project impacts real estate since the project abuts SSJDD land. In addition, the following analyses/reports were recommended for completion: (1) seepage analysis; (2) geotechnical recommendation report; (3) peak flows analysis on a 1-1½ slope; (4) construction methodology report; (5) compaction specifications report; and (6) a full rip rap disclosure report. In addition to environmental documentation, it was noted that a Biological and Cultural Assessment would be required by USACE. Environmental documentation should be inclusive and include all actions to be taken, including investigative borings. Board staff noted that processing time for an application for geotechnical borings is currently approximately 12 months.
- On June 7, 2023, staff attended a pre-application meeting for the SMUD Utility Pole 1117A Replacement Project (PAM2023085) in Sacramento County. SMUD proposes to replace the existing pole with an improved hybrid pole composed of steel upper sections and concrete base sections. The new pole would be located within 10-feet of the existing pole and construction is expected to take two days. The project area is within a seasonal wetland. Upon consultation with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), they have selected an alternative access route to reduce impacts to the wetland area. USACE noted they will require a Biological Assessment, Cultural Report, and blockage calculation for the project. In addition, USACE staff requested that the staging area be included in the figures for identification.
- On June 7, 2023, staff attended a pre-application meeting for the Bees Lake Habitat Restoration Project (PAM2023083). The City of West Sacramento proposes implementing ecosystem, water quality, and recreational improvements at the Bees Lake site. The project will be situated between the remnant levee and the new federal levee that was built as part of the Southport Sacramento River Early Implementation Project. Project components include invasive species removal, riparian restoration plantings, installing submerged or floating aeration diffusion devices, installation of artificial floating wetland islands, and recreational trails and amenities. Environmental permitting will include applications for a CDFW Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement, Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and Endangered Species Act coverage via concurrence with the Yolo

Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan, and potentially a USACE Regulatory Section 404 permit. USACE indicated that a Cultural Resources Report and a report demonstrating their no impact assessment to the new federal levee will be required. Construction is anticipated for the Spring or Summer of 2024.

#### **4.0 CEQA Compliance**

- Five Notices of Exemption (NOEs) and Two Notices of Determination (NODs) were filed with the State Clearinghouse (SCH) for encroachment permit issuance.
- One NOE was filed with the SCH as the Lead Agency for Dissolution of a State Maintenance Area.
- One No Project finding was made related to a Final Statement of No Objection.

**Land Management Section**  
**Sacramento and San Joaquin Drainage District (SSJDD)**

**1.0 Flood Risk Reduction Projects**

**Urban Flood Risk Reduction Program**

- *TRLIA 200-Year Goldfields Levee Project:* DWR Real Estate staff, on behalf of the Board, approved two (2) Final Accounting Packages submitted by the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority approving capital outlay costs for the acquisition of SSJDD Parcel Nos. 14096 and 14106 owned by private landowners in Yuba County.

**Marysville Ring Levee Project - Yuba River Basin California Project**

- *Highway 70 Project:* DWR Real Estate staff, on behalf of the Board, executed a Real Estate Certification Package to allow the United States Army Corps of Engineers to commence construction work on the Highway 70 segment of the Yuba River Basin in Yuba County.

**2023 PL84-99 Emergency Levee Rehabilitation**

- *Repair Sites 0561-03 and 0561-04:* DWR Real Estate Staff, on behalf of the Board, executed a License Agreement between the Board and Reclamation District 108 for the purpose of repairing the existing levee and installing appurtenances in Yolo County.

**2024 PL84-99 Emergency Levee Rehabilitation**

- *Repair Sites 0561-03 and 04:* DWR Real Estate Staff, on behalf of the Board, executed a License Agreement between the Board and private landowners (Owners) for access to Owner's property for the purposes of staging and use of a haul route in Yolo County.

**Flood System Repair Project-Setback Levee at Bear River Levee Mile 2.6R**

- DWR Real Estate staff, on behalf of the Board, approved four (4) Final Accounting Packages submitted by Reclamation District 817 approving capital outlay costs for the acquisition of SSJDD Parcel Nos. 14777, 14778, 14779, and 14780 owned by private landowners in Yuba County.