

Environmental Water Program

Update Number 5

October 21, 2004

The following is the fifth installment of the EWP Update. These updates are intended to be brief overviews of significant actions and notification of upcoming meetings and significant dates. For background information on the EWP, please visit our web site at <http://www.calfedewp.org/>. If you would like more detailed information or have questions, please contact Campbell Ingram at (916) 414-6727 or campbell_ingram@fws.gov.

Programmatic Update

- Participated in the EWA Workshop and the CBDA Independent Science Board meetings to discuss coordination of the EWP with the ERP and other water management programs.
- Will provide an update to the Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee, Restoration Subcommittee on October 21, 2004.
- The next Core Team meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 15, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. Location to be determined.

Priority Stream Update

Clear Creek

- EWP, working with local stakeholders, has developed a large-scale adaptive management experiment designed to release flows of sufficient magnitude, duration and frequency, to reactivate fluvial geomorphic processes. These processes are fundamental to re-create and maintain the diverse mosaic of habitats required in the Clear Creek ecosystem to support and recover aquatic and riparian species, particularly anadromous salmonids and native floodplain vegetation. The target flows are in the range of 4,000 to 6,000 cfs for duration of 2 to 3 days, 3 times over the next 10 years. A conceptual proposal has been prepared and has just completed independent peer review and a review by staff of related water management programs. Reviewers unanimously recommended that the Program move forward with the development of a full proposal. The ERP Selection Panel is scheduled to recommend whether or not to move forward with the development of a full proposal on October 28, 2004. A full proposal would include more detailed descriptions of the work to be completed, statements of who will be responsible for each element of work, projected costs for each element of work, a science and adaptive management plan, a project management plan and a water acquisition plan.
- Once a recommendation is received from the Selection Panel, a 30-day public comment period will begin. During the comment period, we will notify local participants and interested parties of the recommendation, will post the concept proposal and comments from reviewers on the EWP web site, and will hold a public workshop in the watershed (expected to occur in mid November).
- EWP staff participated in a meeting with the Clear Creek Team on October 20, 2004, to coordinate system-wide monitoring between the proposed EWP project, the ERP monitoring PSP, and the Science Program PSP.

Mill Creek

- No change since last update.

Deer Creek

- The EWP is attempting to combine the expansion of an existing groundwater substitution program, an agricultural water use efficiency effort, and a water lease program (including an adaptive management and monitoring component) to achieve fish passage flow objectives at no additional water cost to users. The two irrigation operations on the stream, Stanford Vina Ranch Irrigation Company (SVRIC) and Deer Creek Irrigation District (DCID), have agreed to work together to achieve the stream-wide benefits and have agreed, as a first step, to pursue a grant through the Water Use Efficiency Proposal Solicitation Process (WUE-PSP) currently underway. The WUE-PSP grant application is being prepared by an independent consultant and is not using EWP funds.
- The EWP staff is working with the group of local stakeholders to prepare a conceptual proposal for the lease of the conserved and exchanged water. The proposal should be ready for peer and related program review by late Fall 2004.
- The EWP has funded, through a US Fish and Wildlife Service grant agreement, a review of the SVRIC by-laws and articles of incorporation to determine if they are eligible to participate in a flow bypass program.
- The next meeting, to comment on elements of the WUE proposal, is scheduled for November 9, 2004 at 7:00 pm. at the Vina Community Center.

Butte Creek

- Previously, the Local Team participants agreed that recent expenditures to improve fish passage in the lower reach (from just above Chico to the Sutter Bypass) coupled with the agreement to provide a 40 cfs base flow have largely addressed the need for increased flow within that reach. Two open questions remain: whether further increases in flow can provide temperature benefits in the upper reach (from Quartz Bowl to just above Chico), and whether dry years may result in an inability to deliver the 40 cfs base flow.
- PG&E, as part of their FERC re-licensing process, is conducting some temperature modeling to better understand temperature interactions within the upper reach prior to flow experimentation.
- EWP is preparing a report to analyze the affect of dry years on the delivery of the 40 cfs base flow. This report is expected to be complete by early November 2004.
- PG&E has filed their Notice of Intent and Pre-Application Document to re-license their project on Butte Creek. The document describes the temperature modeling study within the upper reach that will be conducted as part of the re-licensing process.
- The next meeting will be scheduled once the dry year analysis report has been completed.

Tuolumne River

- The EWP is currently compiling a list of existing flow recommendations for the Tuolumne River. Once compiled, agency biologists will review the recommendations to see what might be a reasonable flow recommendation to propose to TID and MID as an experiment.
- A meeting will be scheduled in the near future with Wilton Fryer of TID to discuss a flow experiment and the infiltration gallery at Special Run Pool #9.