

Draft Public Meeting Notes

Friday, April 1, 2005

Delta Levees Habitat Advisory Committee

Bob Orcutt, Chair

1. Announcements

There were no special announcements.

2. Minutes from March 4, 2005

Minutes were approved with comments from Dr. Warner North.

3. Bay-Delta Levee Program Update on SB 34/AM 360 Program

California Department of Water Resources: The Department held its first meeting of the Scoping Team for the Delta Risk Management Strategy (formerly Comprehensive Program Evaluation). The study will take about two year to complete. The study will make efforts to consolidate all ongoing studies and will be a joint effort between DWR and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Suisun Marsh will be part of the study.

Regarding Assembly Bill 264 (Machado), the bill that provides extension of the Delta Flood Protection Fund through 2008, and SB-1665, the Department has not solidified its position on the bills yet. Therefore it is premature to report on the bills.

David Mraz (DWR) reported on the Levee Maintenance Subventions Program, Prospect Island, and the revision of Reclamation Board procedures on the Subvention Program.

Department of Water Resources' staff are on schedule to complete the review and payment process for Subventions claims in FY 2004-05. If you are having difficulty scheduling coordinated inspections please contact program staff for assistance.

Prospect Island is being offered by the US Bureau of Reclamation to anyone interested in purchasing the property. Program staff believe the property could be acquired at modest cost and that a habitat development project for enhancement could be pursued. Several years ago the Delta Levees Program contributed some funding to develop the parcel, however, that project did not take place. Some believe the funding may, still, be available for work on Prospect Island. Department of Water Resources' staff will investigate to determine if the program could benefit through acquisition and development of the project.

The Reclamation Board has received a request from Lisbon Tract, RD 307, to find the completion of deferred maintenance work on their 6.6 miles of project levee as the Reclamation Board's highest priority. If granted, this would have the effect of moving

work from an area with historically lower priority into a high priority category. The resulting shift of funds would have approximately 15 other reclamation districts receiving a reduction in reimbursement so Lisbon Tract could receive funding for their work. This item will be heard in the Delta Levee Subcommittee at the April 15, 2005 meeting of the board. We anticipate that it will take a vote of the full Reclamation Board to adopt a new "Reclamation Board Highest Priority".

The Reclamation Board's Delta Levee Subcommittee has expressed an interest in modifying the Procedures and Criteria that has been used to govern reimbursements under the Delta Levees Subventions Program. To date there have been no specific changes recommended to the Board, however, concepts have been discussed. Concepts include streamlining the application process, Board approval of individual RD grants, and targeting funds to address the greatest need.

California Department of Fish and Game: Bob Orcutt (DFG) reported that to ensure net habitat improvement, DFG performs habitat assessments, inspections of levee work, and assists DWR and reclamation districts with habitat enhancement projects. DFG has nearly finished this year's inspections of levee work.

The Decker Island enhancement project has been very successful, and there is broad interest in Decker Island for scientific studies.

Along with DWR staff, DFG is beginning to identify enhancement alternatives on slightly less than one mile of levee adjacent to the new Sherman Island setback levee on Mayberry Slough.

DFG is assisting DWR staff to extend a contract with the California State University, Chico, to continue to provide GIS maps for depicting the extent of habitat on reclamation districts in the AB 360 Program.

DFG is implementing mitigation plans on sites such as Bradford Island, Sherman Island (Parcel 11), and Grizzly Slough.

3. Franks Tract Cost Estimates

Cost estimates for Franks Tract will be available in May. No report provided.

California Bay-Delta Advisory Committee
Levees Subcommittee

Marci Coglianese and Thomas Zuckerman, Co-Chairs

1. BDPAC Levee Subcommittee Co-Chairs Report

Marci Coglianese provided a report on the June 6 Levees Workshop. Jim Holiday and Lester Snow are confirmed speakers. Funding continues to be a challenge. The subcommittee moved to request BDPAC to become a sponsor of the workshop.

2. Program Plan

Dave Mraz led the discussion for the Program Plan. The subcommittee moved in favor of deleting the first paragraph regarding the Delta Risk Management Strategy (formerly CPE). The US Army Corps of Engineers will participate in the DRMS process, and should be reflected in the plan. The Corps plans to use it as feasibility study for alternatives to move studies forward.

Regarding the table of potential Program funding, the group requested to insert a footnote clarifying the description and source of funding. This footnote should have relevant comments by locals.

DFG has submitted comments regarding the Suisun Marsh. Due to lack of time and staffing, these comments have not been incorporated in the version that was handed out at the meeting. DWR committed to incorporate the comments in the near future.

Sergio Guillen (CBDA) will send the electronic version of the Program Plan to the meeting participants.

3. Implementing Agencies Report

The report on Performance Measures will be provided after CBDA staff determines the level of detail necessary for this issue.

4. Public Comment

Roberta Goulart of Contra Costa County Water Agency briefed the group on their Long Term Management Strategy, and their concerns on funding for 2006. She encouraged the meeting participants to send letters of support for funding of the LTMS.

Margit Aramburu of the Delta Protection Commission stated that the Commission has already sent such a letter.

Action Items

1) Delta Levees and Habitat Advisory Committee Meeting:

- Send latest draft of draft DRMS scope of work to meeting participants

2) CALFED BDPAC Levee Program Subcommittee:

- Send electronic version of draft Levees Program Plan to meeting participants

Future topics of discussion

- Briefing on Conveyance Program Plan
- Delta Risk Management Strategy briefing