

Lower Yolo Bypass Planning Forum

FINAL SUMMARY

June 10, 2010
Rio Vista Fire Department
Rio Vista, CA

Attendance

Forum Members

Kathy Barnes-Jones, Solano County
Tom Hester, Ryer Island
Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation
(YBF)
David Okita, Solano County Water
Agency (SCWA)
Melinda Terry, North Delta Water
Agency (NDWA)
Jan Vick, City of Rio Vista
Warren Westrup, Yolo County

Observers

Mitsuko Grube, Department of Fish and
Game (DFG)
Steve Rodriguez, DFG
Jennifer Ruffalo, California State Parks

Staff

Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative
Policy (CCP)
Sam Magill, CCP
Nicole Ugarte, CCP

ACTION/AGREEMENT ITEMS:

1. Planning Forum members will send updates on planning processes and related discussions they are involved in to Sam Magill (smagill@ccp.csus.edu) and Nicole Ugarte (nugarte@ccp.csus.edu) as they arise for discussion at future Planning Forum meetings.
2. Meeting participants approved the April 28th meeting summary.
3. CCP will review existing Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) documents and prepare a letter to the BDCP Steering Committee outlining the Planning Forum's concerns regarding the lack of a detailed finance plan for conservation projects in the Lower Yolo Bypass (Lower Bypass).
4. Robin Kulakow will send the west side conveyance modeling report to CCP for distribution to the Planning Forum the week of June 13th.

INTRODUCTIONS

Dave Ceppos, CCP, opened the meeting. He reminded participants that at the April 28th meeting, the Lower Yolo Bypass Planning Forum (Planning Forum) discussed the need for regular updates on other planning process affecting the Yolo Bypass. Whenever possible, Planning Forum members involved in these processes and related discussions

should provide regular updates to Sam Magill (smagill@ccp.csus.edu) and Nicole Ugarte (nugarte@ccp.csus.edu) for distribution to the Planning Forum and discussion at subsequent meetings (**see Action Item #1**)

After brief introductions, Mr. Ceppos asked participants to review the April 28, 2010 meeting summary. Planning Forum members present approved the summary (**see Action Item #2**). Mr. Ceppos noted that the Planning Forum's strategy for moving forward with the development of a management strategy for the Lower Bypass is outlined on page 4 of the summary. He reminded participants that the Planning Forum Goals discussed in this strategy are very important to determine if outside planning processes are consistent or inconsistent with the Planning Forum's perspective.

OTHER PLANNING ACTIVITIES UPDATE

BDCP Review

Melinda Terry, NDWA, delivered an update on recent developments with BDCP. BDCP made progress on a terrestrial species plan for the Delta, though it is still unclear how terrestrial species goals will interact with farming. The BDCP Steering Committee expects that farming will still be the predominant land use in much of the Delta. Additionally, BDCP developed a "logic chain" that maps out how the BDCP Conservation measures link back to BDCP goals. An independent science team is reviewing the chain.

Despite these recent advances, Ms. Terry explained that there are still a lot of problems developing reliable metrics for the BDCP goals. It is not clear how BDCP will interact with other planning processes and recent legislation. She suggested that participants go online to the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) website that shows how the Council expects to interact with BDCP. Finally, she noted that there are significant concerns from NDWA and other stakeholders regarding BDCP timelines and the lack of scientific modeling results for the Steering Committee to carry out its work.

Ms. Terry closed by discussing the Council's position that it has legal authority over the BDCP. They will be a responsible agency for the BDCP Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and several of the Council members have been very critical of BDCP timelines/presentations to date. It appears that the Council does not want to delay the development of its plan to restore the Delta as BDCP moves forward.

Discussion:

- Robin Kulakow remarked that affected stakeholders must be allowed to review modeling results, especially for hydraulics. Ms. Terry agreed, and said that there is a low level of confidence in what are being portrayed as "results" despite a lack of scientific facts. She commented that this is particularly true of the BDCP finance plan: BDCP currently says that water contractors will pay for improvements, but it is unclear to what extent they are expected to finance the entire plan. This is similar to problems that ultimately led to CALFED's failure.

- Mr. Ceppos asked if the Planning Forum should draft a letter to BDCP asking for additional details on the finance plan. Ms. Terry responded that it should draft a letter. CCP will review existing BDCP documents and prepare draft language for the Planning Forum's consideration at the next meeting (**see Action Item #3**).
- Ms. Kulakow asked if the BDCP conservation measures have been updated since July of 2009. Ms. Terry responded that they have not been changed.
- David Okita, SCWA, remarked that the reason there isn't more information on the BDCP finance plan is that no decision has been made on the type, operational constraints, or capacity of a new conveyance facility and that without a more specific sense of conveyance options, the BDCP potentially regulated entities are not prepared to define the costs of various projects.

Delta Conservancy Update

Ms. Kulakow delivered a brief updated on the Delta Conservancy (Conservancy). YBF is a non-voting member of the Conservancy. At the first Conservancy meeting, members focused on convening logistics and figuring out which planning activities should be reviewed. The legislation creating the Conservancy requires ongoing coordination with existing planning efforts.

Discussion:

- Warren Westrup, Yolo County, added that the Conservancy is actively seeking an executive director. Most of the staff is from CALFED. Cindy Messer is the acting director. Supervisor Mary Piepho (Contra Costa County) is the chair; Supervisor ?? Vogel (San Joaquin County) is the vice chair.

West Side Conveyance Option

Ms. Kulakow discussed the role that she and Dave Feliz, DFG, shared for the idea of bringing water down the west side of the Yolo Bypass for habitat purposes. Conversations with Metropolitan Water District (MWD) led to MWD providing funding for modeling runs of a west side conveyance option. The goal of this conveyance option is to utilize the existing topography and water infrastructure within the Yolo Bypass to avoid flooding large swaths in an uncontrolled fashion for habitat purposes. Initial modeling efforts seem to agree with the idea that a west side conveyance option could meet habitat restoration goals and maintain landowners existing land uses. The project applies more to juvenile salmonids than Delta smelt. Ms. Kulakow agreed to deliver the preliminary modeling report to the Planning Forum during the week of June 13th (**see Action Item #4**).

MWD Restoration Efforts in the Bypass

Mr. Ceppos reported that Tom Philp, MWD, offered to provide an update about Yolo Ranch at the next Planning Forum meeting.

Water Contractor Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Update

Mr. Okita delivered an update on JPA activities. Reclamation Districts (RD) 2068 and 2098 have been meeting with water contractors and DWR to discuss the local impacts of habitat projects on existing water/agricultural operations in and adjacent to the Yolo Bypass. Key questions for the JPA's consideration include:

- Will habitat projects cause issues for public and private diversions in the Cache Slough area?
- Will habitat projects affect agricultural discharge requirements?
- How will existing landowners and fee collectors (including local governments/agencies) be kept "whole" financially from impacts to their operations?

Discussion:

- Ms. Terry noted that the JPA will likely establish some activities such as local diversion and agricultural discharge as "covered activities". She continued by saying that she brought the Planning Forum-developed BDCP conservation measure to state and federal fisheries agencies. These agencies seemed supportive of the measure.

Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) Update

Kathy Barnes-Jones, Solano County, announced that the DCC hired Pete Kutras as the DCC coordinator. The DCC seeks to ensure public participation occurs in all Delta planning processes.

CONFIRMATION OF PLANNING FORUM GOALS

Sam Magill, CCP, reminded meeting participants of the genesis of the Planning Forum Goals (Goals). The Goals are a tool to assess / screen work products from outside planning activities for consistency with Lower Bypass interests, and a tool to guide the Planning Forum's own management strategy. He asked that participants consider how the Goals will be used, and asked for comments on the Goals. He noted that CCP will make revisions based on comments during the meeting, release them back to the full Planning Forum for confirmation, and release a final draft on Monday, June 21 (**see Action Item #4**). All comments on the Goals are reflected in the Planning Forum document entitled "Lower Yolo Bypass Planning Forum Management Recommendation Goals."

PLANNING ACTIVITY SCREENING EXERCISE- BDCP CONSERVATION MEASURES

Mr. Ceppos reported that the intent of the meeting had been to run through the screening exercise using the Goals discussed above. Given the low turnout for the meeting, he suggested that the meeting adjourn. Before concluding the meeting, he noted that CCP will request updates on outside planning process from all Planning Forum members. CCP

will run through an initial screening exercise and flag items of concern that may be in conflict with the Goals (see **Action Item #1**).