

September 1, 2011

Mr. Chuck Bonham
Director, Department of Fish and Game
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Bonham;

The California Department of Fish and Game has invited comments on the Ecosystem Restoration Program's July 2011 Draft Conservation Strategy for Restoration of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Ecological Management Zone and the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley Regions. This letter transmits Sacramento District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) comments on this document.

The missions of USACE include Flood Risk Management, Ecosystem Restoration, Navigation, Environmental Protection, and Emergency Preparedness and Response. The Draft Conservation Strategy directly or indirectly touches each of these mission areas. Our programs in, or affecting, the Delta include Planning, Operation and Maintenance, and Regulatory. USACE and our non-Federal partners have many active studies and projects throughout the Central Valley and the Delta. Program and study descriptions for USACE efforts within the legal Delta and Suisun Marsh are provided in the attachment to this email.

USACE is responsible for flood management operations for dams and reservoirs throughout the system, including coordinating and managing channel flows and releases from 31 USACE facilities and 20 Section 7 dams in the State. USACE also has regulatory jurisdiction, primarily under the following three authorities: (1) Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States (33 USC 1201 et seq.) (Section 404); (2) Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act for working in navigable waters (33 USC 403) (Section 10); and (3) Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 408) for the alternation of a Federal project (to include sea wall, jetty, dike, levee, wharf, pier, or other work) (Section 408).

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the July 2011 Draft Ecosystem Restoration Program Conservation Strategy for Restoration of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Ecological Management Zone and the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley Regions.

FOR THE COMMANDER

Sincerely,

Paul J Robershotte
Special Advisor, Integrated Water Resources

September 1, 2011

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Active Planning Studies in the Delta**

Central Valley Integrated Flood Management Study

Partners: DWR and Central Valley Flood Protection Board, USACE Sacramento District

Description: In response to legislation signed by the Governor on 10 October 2007, the State of California, through the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Central Valley Flood Protection Board, initiated development of the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP). This effort will culminate in a comprehensive analysis of flood management and related conditions in the Central Valley watershed as a system. The State is required to complete the first report of the CVFPP by 2012. This document is to be updated every 5 years thereafter. The State has requested Federal participation in preparing the CVFPP. This participation will be through the Central Valley Integrated Flood Management Study (CVIFMS). The CVIFMS is a continuation of the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins, California Comprehensive Study (Comp Study), which was authorized by Congress by section 209 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (P.L. 87-874).

The CVIFMS will be developed within an integrated water resource management context and will complement the CVFPP system-level planning strategy, with an emphasis on moving toward a Federal/State flood risk management implementation process including possible immediate feasibility study implementation recommendations. The study will include two major efforts: (1) programmatic implementation framework documents and (3) programmatic feasibility study.

Website: n/a

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Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study

Partners: California Department of Water Resources (DWR), USACE Sacramento District

Description: This feasibility study is USACE's mechanism to participate in a cost-shared solution to address ecosystem restoration needs, flood risk management problems, and related water resources in the Delta and Suisun Marsh area. A Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA) was executed on May 26, 2006 with the DWR, the non-Federal sponsor. The USACE-DWR study team meets regularly to

move the study forward and holds periodic Agency Coordination Meetings with associated Federal, State, and local agencies. The study will culminate in a feasibility report that will make recommendations on construction projects and/or additional studies for authorization by Congress.

Tools in Development. The study team is developing representative hydrodynamic, sediment transport, water quality, and ecosystem models that will enable the USACE and others to understand the system-wide impact of natural and purposeful changes to the Delta and allow proactive management of this vital water resource.

Website: <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/Delta/News.html>

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CALFED Levee Stability Program

Partners: DWR and up to 40 Reclamation Districts, USACE Sacramento District

Description: The CALFED Act (PL 108-361) directed the USACE to deliver a report that identified and prioritized potential levee stability projects in the Delta that could be carried out with the authorized \$90 million in Federal funds. An additional \$106 million was authorized to be appropriated by Section 3015 of WRDA 2007. To quickly identify critically needed projects with active non-Federal support, the USACE invited Delta stakeholders to submit project proposals with letters stating their willingness to participate as cost-sharing sponsors. In response, Delta Reclamation Districts and flood management agencies submitted 68 project proposals totaling more than \$1 billion in estimated costs. USACE evaluated proposals and prioritized potential projects according to how well they met USACE environmental, economic, and other implementation criteria. The USACE short-term strategy is to move quickly to construction on high priority levee reconstruction projects identified in that report. The authorized \$196 million of Federal funds, plus the required non-Federal funds, would be an important first step to address Delta-wide levee system needs. The long-term strategy will be developed through the Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study process. The project delivery process includes: PMP/FCSA development, Project Implementation Report (PIR); SPD approval; Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) execution; design & construct; and operate and maintain.

Individual Projects:

McCormack-Williamson Tract. The USACE team is moving forward with this project and meeting with The Nature Conservancy/RD 2110 in order to finalize and sign the FCSA for the project. The FCSA package has been sent to the USACE South Pacific Division office for review and approval.

Bacon Island, Walnut Grove, River Junction. The USACE team has completed draft Project Management Plans (PMPs) for these three additional LSP projects. Final review and certification of PMPs and negotiation of Feasibility Cost Share Agreements (FCSAs) with non-Federal sponsors is ongoing. A Program Management Plan (PgMP) has been developed to capture program processes and procedures. The PgMP also includes templates for PMPs and FCSAs developed for projects in the LSP.

Bethel Island Project. On July 13th, the FCSA for Bethel Island – Horseshoe Bend was signed by the Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District (BIMD) and the USACEs. The final geotechnical analysis report has been submitted by the sponsor and is under review by USACE staff. Preliminary engineering designs and cost estimates are underway.

Emergency Response Planning: A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed between USACE and DWR, allowing the USACE-DWR to initiate Phase 1 of GIS Flood Contingency Mapping and Emergency Response Planning for the Delta region. The team met with Delta counties in August to get input on concepts for the GIS products, response report, and related data. A 65% product review meeting was held on June 13th to present the 65% complete product, provide instruction for commenting on the map book online, and gather additional information from County and RD representatives.

Tools in Development. The final products for Phase 1 of the Emergency Response Planning will be completed by December 2011 and will include:

- Standardized GIS database of Emergency Management data
- Flood Contingency Map Books and large scale wall maps of the Delta region, and
- An accompanying report documenting the existing framework, existing data, and any potential data gaps.

Websites: <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/Delta/News.html>;
www.deltafloodemergencyplan.org

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Lower San Joaquin Feasibility Study

Partners: Central Valley Flood Protection Board, San Joaquin Area Flood Control Association and USACE Sacramento District.

Description: The purpose of this feasibility study is to determine if there is a Federal interest in providing flood risk management and ecosystem restoration improvements along the Lower (northern) San Joaquin River. The Lower San Joaquin River study area includes the San Joaquin River from the Mariposa Bypass downstream to, and including, the city of Stockton. The study area also includes the channels of the San Joaquin River in the southernmost reaches of the Delta: Paradise Cut and Old River as far north as Tracy Boulevard and Middle River as far north as Victoria Canal. The floodplains of the lower San Joaquin River and its tributaries are also included in the study area. The Central Valley Flood Protection Board and USACE signed a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement on June 25, 2010.

Website: <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/Delta/News.html>

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Delta Dredged Sediment Long Term Management Strategy (Pinole Shoal Management Study)

Partners: USACE San Francisco and Sacramento Districts, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of water Resources, California Bay Delta Authority, and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

Description: The Delta Long-Term Management Strategy (Delta LTMS) is a cooperative planning effort to coordinate, plan, and implement beneficial reuse of sediments in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Delta (Delta). Five agencies (USACE, USEPA, DWR, California Bay-Delta Authority, and CVRWQCB, and other stakeholders have begun to examine Delta dredging, reuse, and disposal needs. The Delta LTMS will explore ways to coordinate and manage dredging, planning, regulatory approval, and implementation to protect and enhance Delta functions, ecosystem, and water quality. The goals of the LTMS are to manage dredging activities to:

- Support and maintain Delta channel functions for navigation, flood control, water conveyance, and recreation
- Maintain and stabilize Delta levees that protect land-based activities, water conveyance, and terrestrial ecosystems
- Protect and enhance water quality for Delta water supply and ecosystem function

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Website: <http://www.deltatms.com>

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Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel Project

Partners: Port of West Sacramento and USACE San Francisco District

Description: The Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel Project (SRDWSC) is a Congressionally-authorized project being implemented by USACE and the Port of West Sacramento. Currently, USACE and the Port are conducting a Limited Reevaluation Study to recommend navigation improvements for Federal funding and preparing a joint SEIS/SEIR to evaluate the action of resuming construction of navigational improvements to the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel. The draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Report (Draft SEIS/R) was published 25 February 2011. The public hearing was held on 21 March 2011. The public comment period closed 18 April 2011. The revised Draft SEIS/R is scheduled to be published in March 2012 with a public comment period in March/April 2012. The Record of Decision (ROD) is scheduled to be signed in September 2012 with award of the first construction contract (for mitigation) also in September 2012.

Website: <http://www.sacramentoshipchannel.org>

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San Francisco Bay to Stockton Navigation Improvement Project

Partners: Port of Stockton and the Contra Costa County Water Agency and USACE San Francisco District.

Description: The SF Bay to Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel Project is a Congressionally-authorized project. A General Reevaluation Report is being prepared to determine the feasibility of modifying the current dimensions of the West Richmond, Pinole Shoal, Suisun Bay, and Stockton Ship Channels, which are currently maintained to -35 feet MLLW and provide access to oil terminals, industry in Pittsburg, and the Port of Stockton. Current technical studies include hydrodynamic, salinity and dissolved oxygen modeling, and beneficial reuse survey to identify additional dredged material placement sites in the project area.

Website: <http://www.sfbaytostockton.org>

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Sacramento River Bank Protection Project

Partners: Central Valley Flood Protection Board and USACE Sacramento District

Description: The Sacramento River Bank Protection Project (SRBPP) is a Congressionally-authorized project being implemented by USACE and the Division of Water Resources (DWR) as the representative of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board. Currently, USACE and DWR are preparing a Post Authorization Change Report to document implementation of an additional 80,000 linear feet of repairs authorized in WRDA 2007, and preparing a joint EIS/EIR to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of that implementation. The USACE-DWR and consultants meet regularly to move the documents forward and hold monthly Interagency Working Group meetings with associated Federal and State agencies. Work has also been initiated for scoping and preparation of a Project Management Plan for a General Reevaluation Report that will potentially determine future implementation of the SRBPP and the Sacramento River Flood Control Project.

The SRBPP efforts also include studies on green sturgeon, Chinook salmon, sediment transport modeling and identification of potential sites for setback levees within the project area.

Website: n/a

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