

CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Office Memorandum

Date: September 26, 1995

To: CALFED Staff

From: Michael Norris

Subject: Telephone call with John Pulver with the San Joaquin County Department of Public Works regarding flood control issues and pending Flood Insurance Rate Maps in Stockton and unincorporated San Joaquin County

A CALFED Bay Delta Program Public Meeting is scheduled for tonight in Stockton. It is anticipated that questions may be directed at us during the meeting related to the city and county possibly receiving new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) in the near future that will put large areas in the city and smaller areas in the county in the floodplain. We may receive those type of questions even though the CALFED Bay Delta Program had nothing to do with the dispute between the city/county and FEMA (the agency that administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and meets with communities to deliver the new FIRMs) over the "new" FIRMs. To summarize, most of the city and county is not presently mapped as being in the floodplain. However, a restudy was initiated in 1990 and the consulting firm of Schaff and Wheeler out of San Jose (under contract with FEMA) has remapped most of the City of Stockton and portions of the unincorporated county as being in the floodplain. The areas being brought back into the floodplain include areas which the city and county diligently removed from the "old" floodplain through the Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) process. LOMRs have taken many years to process at considerable cost and involved preventing flooding from the west to the east through expensive levee improvement projects. These areas include some delta islands which have been widely developed with commercial development such as Sargent Barnhart. Unfortunately, the new flood hazard issue involves flooding from the east to the west, a condition not previously recognized as being able to occur with the levees to the east being designed to prevent that from occurring. However, the levees to the east are no longer recognized by the Corps of Engineers as providing a "100-year" level of protection and the Corps of Engineers removed their "certification" of those levee systems which initiated the whole problem with the "new" FIRMs. The implications of the "new" FIRMs are that flood insurance would be required on most existing mortgages and it would be very hard to proceed with new development in the floodplain. A set of workmaps preceding issuance of the preliminary FIRMs has been distributed to the city and county for comments. In anticipation of possible comments we may receive tonight regarding this issue, I contacted John Pulver with the County Department of Public Works at (209) 468-3089 to get some background information from him. I also contacted Ruth Dudley from DWR Flood Loss Reduction and Dave Lawson from DWR Central District and had them send me summarization information on the issue.

Pulver says the problem is inadequate levees. A new joint powers agency was set up to handle the problem and act on behalf of the city and county. The agency is similar to our own Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) and is appropriately called the San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFCA). Pulver says the City Manager is the Executive Director of SJAFCA. A project was proposed to solve the problem in three phases. Phase 1 will develop a plan whereas phase 2 will design the project and phase 3 will construct it. Phase 1 is complete and identified a project that will cost \$50 million. More expensive projects costing up to \$200 million have been discussed in the newspapers but those projects included water supply and carryover storage elements with them. Because of the necessity of completing a flood control project by 1998, SJAFCA eliminated the more expensive alternatives from further consideration and the project will only raise the inadequate levee systems. The city and county expect that FEMA will issue the "new" FIRMs anyway in 1996 even as the work proceeds on their flood control project.

Pulver doesn't think we will receive questions regarding the flood control project and the pending FIRMs. He believes most lay people know that our program is not responsible for that. However, he noted that the word on the street is that our agency will be pushing for a "peripheral canal" of some sort and that form of project is not liked by Stockton area residents at all. He says we should anticipate questions of that sort. If we do get questions regarding the flood control project and/or FIRMs issues, we should inform the person asking the question that SJAFCA is the one to direct that question to. However, Pulver is planning on attending the meeting and he wouldn't mind taking that question if it arises. More importantly, we may receive a question on what the CALFED Bay Delta Program can do to complement the flood control project such as provide for water/carryover storage since that element has been eliminated from the proposed flood control project. If there is something that the CALFED Bay Delta Program can do to complement the flood control project down the road, we may want to consider ways to answer that question according to Pulver.

For further background, please review the fax transmittals from Dudley, Lawson, and Pulver that I left with Victor Pacheco.

sanjoaq.mn