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**Summary of Meeting**  
**CALFED Bay-Delta Program Levee and Channel Technical Team**  
**September 10, 1996**

***Key Discussion Items***

- A draft Programmatic EIR is scheduled to be published by CALFED in May of 1997.
- Curt is considering having a public workshop for the Levee and Channel Technical Team.
- Each sub-team of the Levee and Channel Technical Team gave an update on their progress since the last meeting.

***Action Items***

- Two new "sub-teams" may be added to the previous list of five. The "Delta In-Channel Island Workgroup", which has already met three times, is considering becoming a sub-team of the Levee and Channel Technical Team. The possibility of forming a "levee-associated recreation sub-team" was put forth for consideration.
- The levee-associated habitat, land subsidence, and seismic susceptibility sub-teams have already started some work and reported on their progress.
- The work relating to the seismic susceptibility sub-team is part of an interagency agreement with UC Davis and a preliminary report could be ready in December of 1996.
- The draft Flood Control Project Program Priority List was revealed for the near future and 10 islands were considered for higher funding of flood control improvements as part of the Delta Long-Term Levee Improvement Plan. Levee-associated habitat improvements will likely be done Delta-wide as part of the Special Flood Control Projects element of the Delta Long-Term Levee Improvement Plan.

Draft Meeting Notes  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program Levee and Channel Technical Team  
September 10, 1996 at 1:00 pm in room 1601 of the Resources Building

Attendance List:

**Technical Team:**

Curt Schmutte (chair), DWR  
Gilbert Cosio, MBK consultants  
Marnie Kagan, Delta Protection Commission  
Margit Aramburu, Delta Protection Commission  
Alex Hildebrand, South Delta Water Agency  
Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta Water Agency  
Chris Neudeck, KSN consultants  
Ed Littrell, Fish and Game  
Steve Deverel, private consultant to DWR  
AnnMarie Parkin, DWR  
Bill Forsythe, DWR  
Ralph Torres, DWR  
Kent Nelson, DWR  
Dave Lawson, DWR  
Matt Vandenberg, USFWS  
Mike Fris, USFWS  
Pat Brantley, Fish and Game  
Bruce Herbold, EPA  
Karl Winkler, DWR  
Lynn O'Leary, Corps of Engineers  
Jim Monroe, Corps of Engineers  
Karen Schaffer, Corps of Engineers  
John Winther, Delta Wetlands

**CALFED Staff/Consulting Team:**

Victor Pacheco  
Michael Norris (minutes)  
Marco Bell  
Niall McCarten, Jones and Stokes  
Don Wagenet, Tetra Tech  
Loren Bottorff, CH2MHill  
Steve Chainey, Jones and Stokes  
Greg Sutter, Jones and Stokes  
Ken Casaday, Jones and Stokes  
Peter Standish-Lee, Woodward Clyde

**Guests:**

Bill Betchart, private consultant

Curt convened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves since there were some new faces.

The only comment on the minutes for the 8-8-96 Levee and Channel Technical Team meeting was from Ray McDowell who could not attend but forwarded his comments. Regarding the comment in the minutes about his participation in levee failure probability work, Ray stated that the sentence would have been more correct to state that he is aware of written comments discussing how CALFED should analyze levee failure probability as part of Phase II Impact Analysis.

Curt stated there seems to be additional energy and momentum associated with the CALFED process and is proud to be a part of it. A draft Programmatic EIR/EIS is due around May of 1997. Curt discussed the possibility of conducting a public workshop for the Levee and Channel Technical Team.

Curt discussed the CALFED press briefing that occurred on 9-3-96. Curt has a presentation that he will be making to the BDAC council on 9-20-96.

Two new sub-teams may be formed as follows:

1. The Delta In-Channel Island workgroup, organized by the San Francisco Estuary Project, is considering becoming part of the CALFED process. The group will coordinate with work being done by Dick Daniel's ecosystem teams.
2. A levee-associated recreation sub-team is being considered for formation under the direction of Margit Aramburu.

Niall McCarten led a discussion on the progress of the levee-associated habitat sub-team. Niall has developed a classification scheme as part of his work for the CALFED ecosystem team and he is using that classification scheme to determine levee types that will support certain types of habitat as cross-coordination with his work for the Levee and Channel Technical Team. Using previous work that was done under the Bay-Delta Oversight Council (BDOC) process, Niall has classified Type 1 to Type 9 levee habitat types. Gilbert Cosio identified about 10 constraints to habitat such as wave fetch, winds, potential scour areas, depositional zones, etc and he and Niall have done some preliminary mapping. Curt is interested in the workmap assisting in a prioritization process for Phase 1 adaptive management.

Ed Litrell has a progress report paper for the levee-associated habitat sub-team that is about 30-pages long. It will be refined and then given to the group.

Steve Deverel led a discussion on the progress of the subsidence sub-team. He will develop a "map" and "menu" and wants to develop a GIS system that will show subsidence rates for the Delta. Steve is developing data for the Delta by comparing 1908 topographic maps with 1978 maps and then accounting for error to determine subsidence rates. He will also input "organic matter" and "depth of peat". Steve will use the GIS database to develop a prioritization scheme

for the Delta islands for sites suitable for subsidence control measures.

Curt mentioned to the group that the Natural Heritage Institute (NHI) wants to take about 350,000 acres in the Delta and turn it into wetlands and one of the deep subsidence islands in the Delta could be ideal for the project. NHI thinks that they can "grow peat" on the islands by the process of accumulation of tules and continuous shallow flooding.

Margit Aramburu asked about rates of accretion and Steve said a test plots on Twitchell Island have shown an accretion rate, under permanently shallow flooded conditions, of 2 tons of carbon per acre per year which translated into about 6-inches of vegetative mat. Alex Hildebrand wondered how that level of accretion could result in a 6-inch mat. Gilbert asked about other concepts being looked at and Steve mentioned concepts such as reverse flooding, capping of the soil, and the use of dredge material. In response to Alex's question about the depth of cap, Steve said it was about two feet.

Curt led a brief discussion on the progress of the beneficial reuse sub-team. The group has not met as of yet but a workplan is being developed by Bill Coyle from the Regional Water Quality Control Board and Steve Goldbeck from BCDC.

Ralph Torres led a discussion on the progress of the seismic susceptibility sub-team. A handout was given to the group. Ralph said that dynamic properties testing of peat soils on Sherman Island is presently being performed by UC Davis through an Interagency Agreement. The first series of tests should be completed by December of 1996. Tom Zuckerman asked about the voluminous data from old gas logs but Ralph said his experience with gas/oil logs has shown that those companies aren't interested in the first 300 or so foot depth of soil and don't waste their time logging it. Consequently, the gas/oil logs would not be of great value because the seismic susceptibility sub-team needs soil logging for the first several hundred feet. Ralph will go back and review the old data to be sure his conclusion is correct. Ralph says draft seismic susceptibility maps should be ready in the fall.

John Winther asked if it is possible to do a world-wide search of information on peat since it doesn't only occur in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Ralph said his group has sought to gather all known information on peat.

Margit Aramburu led a discussion on the possibility of forming a levee-associated recreation sub-team. Margit said there is expertise related to recreation in the Department of Water Resources, Department of Boating and Waterways, and Department of Parks and Recreation and those agencies are working with the Delta Protection Commission. Margit said that anyone interested in joining the levee-associated recreation sub-team should contact Curt.

Curt led a discussion on the development of a draft Flood Control Project Program Priority List. Under the proposed levee Plan, the Delta Levees Subventions element would continue with its present practice of reimbursements for Delta-wide levee maintenance costs but a priority system

would be set up for flood control improvements under the Special Flood Control Projects element. Curt wondered about the level of effort the group should direct at this prioritization process and he made the analogy of “measuring it with a micrometer”, “marking it with a chisel”, and then the system comes along and “cuts it with an ax”. Curt presented a very preliminary prioritization for flood control improvements to the group as a basis on which to facilitate discussion. The islands that Curt identified included Sherman, Twitchell, Webb, Holland, Hotchkiss, Bethel, Jersey, Bradford, Brannan-Andrus, and Bouldin Islands for a total of 10 islands. Chris Neudeck wondered why Brannan-Andrus and Bouldin Islands were added to the list and discussed that he is uncomfortable with any form of prioritization because it means that the rest of the islands are left out. Alex Hildebrand discussed that the prioritization presented by Curt meant that the flooding problems in the north Delta along the Mokelumne River due to insufficient channel capacity wouldn’t be addressed. Karl Winkler discussed that the “long-term” solution as presented by Curt and the “funds on the table” don’t match up because, even if Proposition 204 is approved by the voters, there will be insufficient funding to do these activities. Curt agreed and noted the 10 islands were selected because both infrastructure and the protection of water quality made those islands the most important for the funding of flood control improvements whereas the old SB34 process picked the eight western islands for the primary purpose of protecting water quality and did not consider infrastructure.

Bruce Herbold asked if it was true that newly proposed levee-associated habitat improvements could be done Delta-wide under the Special Flood Control Projects element even though flood control improvements would only be done on the 10 islands and Curt said yes that was true.

Alex and Chris Neudeck questioned the methodology for prioritization and felt that North Delta flood control issues should be a high priority. Curt reiterated that his proposal was a draft one and agreed that North Delta flood control issues should be given high consideration. Ken Casaday said we should have some defensible documentation for whatever selection we make for the flood control improvements and Curt said he would bring that back to the group.

Karl Winkler said we will be restrained by draft Assembly Bill (AB) 360 regarding what we can do. The draft bill is on the governor’s desk awaiting signature and Karl thinks it is unlikely it will change now. Karl said we need to work around the way the bill is written regarding what we can do.

Margit felt that all this discussion on funding should result in someone putting together a paper of funding sources including possible matching federal funds. Lynn O’Leary discussed types of projects that might be possible for funding from the Corps of Engineers.

Margit wondered whether islands added to the list of the eight western islands might be contingent on local cost-sharing and Curt said one should look at how the existing program is implemented. Margit also wondered about the “pluses and minuses” of a reclamation district participating in the program and thought that this issue should be flushed out.

Curt picked Tuesday afternoons on November 12 and December 10 as the next series of Levee and Channel Technical Team meetings for the remainder of 1996.

Guest Bill Betchart finished the meeting by asking if it was true that the work being done by the Levee and Channel Technical Team was not for the purpose of finalizing the selection of the preferred CALFED alternatives from the remaining list of three. Curt said that, although that was true, the work being done by the Levee and Channel Technical Team would serve to enhance any alternative CALFED selects.

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