

Draft Meeting Notes
Suisun Marsh Levee Investigation Team Meeting
March 8, 1999 at 1:00 p.m. in room 1142 of the Resources Building

Attendance List:

Dennis Becker, DFG
Steven Chappell, Suisun Resource Conservation District
Rob Cooke, CALFED Levee Program
Gilbert Cosio, Murray, Burns, & Kienlen
Chris Enright, DWR Environmental Services Office
Kamyar Guivetchi, DWR Suisun Marsh Branch
Gwen Knittweis, CALFED Levee Program (Team Chair)
Arnold Lenk, Reclamation District 2127
Brian McFadin, DWR Suisun Marsh Planning
Terry Mills, CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program
Stan Soliday, CALFED Levee Program
Jim Starr, DFG

A meeting was held to review progress of the Suisun Marsh Levee Investigation.

Following the February 8 meeting, a sub-team met to develop habitat scenarios for modeling. Steve Chappell reported on the progress of the sub-team. He explained that the team looked at areas for shallow water habitat development, targeting property with elevations of 2' MLLW or lower. They also identified suitable upland sites. In developing acreage scenarios, they considered the following ERPP habitat goals:

Suisun Bay and Marsh Habitat Type	Acres
Tidal Perennial (Shallow Water Habitat)	1,500
Saline Emergent (Tidal Wetlands)	5,000-7,000 40,000-50,000

The Montezuma Wetlands project represents 1,800 acres of tidal wetlands.

There was concern that modeling with numerous small breeches on numerous isolated properties would not get good modeling results. Thus, the group looked at larger areas. The areas identified were from 1,000-2,500 acres and were sized for as much consistency as possible. The areas were not prioritized. The groupings were roughly regional to allow the model to look at an East-West gradient in analyzing water quality impacts. The modeling to be performed by the consultant for verification will correspond to these groupings. The upper portion of Grizzly Island was deep enough for shallow water habitat but would not economically create shallow water habitat because of the many levees required.

Chris Enright passed out a property acreage summary and node map for the scenarios. The group explained that they looked at Contra Costa County possibilities but there

wasn't enough available acreage (less than 500) to consider modeling. Realistically this area could be a good option and may be used, but it is difficult to run this small of an acreage in the model.

Scenarios for tidal wetlands were also presented. All of Grizzly Island was too deep for tidal marsh. The assumed inclusion of 1,800 acres for Montezuma wetlands in the estimate reduces the required amount of remaining areas to meet the ERPP goal. Steve C. suggests looking at areas and quantifying ecosystem benefits for each and maximizing benefits throughout the Marsh. There is difficulty in doing isolated districts in the modeling. Chris E. mentioned some of the challenges in doing modeling, including that on low tides the model may "dry out" and crash.

In total the group developed 6 scenarios for shallow water habitat and 5 for tidal marsh. Rob C. mentioned that we would need to publish a summary of the group's work eventually, likely in the LTLPP. Kamyar G. suggested putting it in the ERPP as well. Terry M. agreed that it belongs in a technical appendix. Many commented that publishing any maps could create an issue.

Arnold Lenk suggested focusing modeling on areas that have a high probability of being considered such as Van Sickle and problem areas without public support money.

Terry suggested that we look at general areas first and then at specific areas. We need to bring in locals once we know whether options are feasible or not feasible technically.

Steve C. mentioned that in our narrative we should highlight that, as part of conversion, dredge activities must be able to go ahead efficiently as maintenance and long-term management will be necessary -esp. for managed wetlands, which may need to be more intensively managed.

Arnold L. suggested that any CALFED Suisun efforts be tied in with Montezuma Wetlands' efforts- as Montezuma will be handling/rehandling approx. 17 million CY of material and the effort will be long-term.

Steve C. questioned whether we want the habitats open to the bay or just small breaches. Terry M. mentioned that we would try to do a variety of scenarios and practice adaptive management. (The ERPP does not specify this in the habitat goals). Kamyar G. will need the group to come up with the number of breaches for the modeling and requested that they be fairly consistent. One breach per thousand feet was suggested. Jim S. and Steve C. will provide this input to Kamyar G.

Gwen K. discussed administrative matters regarding the modeling contract. It was mentioned that, to meet the time schedule and because of the specialization of the work, a sole source contract may be preferred. (The RFP process takes a minimum of 6 months and the group needs to complete the investigation before the ROD at the very latest.) Chris E. explained that we need to verify the modeling results and identify mechanisms. RMA is the best-situated group to do the work. Chris mentioned that it is regrettable that

we will not have time to put it to bid in part to generate interest in gearing up for this kind of work. RMA is the only group with the entire Bay-Delta in their grid and very capable. Also, their model allows for wetting and drying boundaries. Chris mentioned that higher dimensional models are very labor intensive- 15 days of continuous modeling are needed to simulate one year. Chris suggested reducing the number of scenarios from 8 to 6 and from one year to three months. CALFED will check with other consultants including CH2M HILL and USGS to verify that the contract should be sole source. It is possible that IEP group may review candidates to see if a sole source is really necessary.

It was agreed that Kamyar's group will continue with the 1-D modeling and the consultant will perform verification modeling in parallel. Three tidal marsh scenarios were picked- 2,4,and 6 for consultant modeling. The group debated the choice of scenarios. It was mentioned, for instance, that area #5 has multiple fish screens that cost CALFED approx. \$2.5 million. The idea of "stepping" the contract was discussed (one scenario at a time and then deciding whether to proceed), but it was agreed that the consultant will need the three scenarios to develop trends. It was also remarked that we would need to watch the effects of the modeling to "X-2."

The group agreed that another meeting would not be meaningful until additional modeling results are available. The group agreed to keep in touch over E-mail. Chris E. will update the group on ESO's modeling efforts and will let the group know when it is appropriate to have the next meeting. Gwen K. will set up the next meeting.