

Draft Meeting Notes CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Suisun Marsh Levee Investigation Team
June 15, 2000 at 9:00 am in Room 133 of the Resources Building

Attendance List:

Dan Chapin, Suisun Resource Conservation District
Steve Chappell, Suisun Resource Conservation District
Rob Cooke, CALFED
Gil Cosio, MBK Engineers
Kamyar Guivetchi, DWR Environmental Services Office
Gwen Knittweis, CALFED (chair)
Arnold Lenk, Suisun Resource Conservation District and RD 2127
Michael Norris, DWR Central District (minutes)
Dave Showers, DWR Central District
Bruce Wickland, Suisun Resource Conservation District

Gwen Knittweis convened the meeting. There were no comments on the previous 6-1-2000 meeting minutes. The focus of this meeting will be on the Investigation Report scheduled to go out 6-23-2000.

The first agenda item dealt with a review of the Action Items from the previous meeting including the following:

- Posting of Chris Enright's modeling section on the web site – This has been done.
- Incorporation of SRC'D's regional estimates for habitat types – This has been incorporated into the document.
- Obtaining the original electronic version of the Reconciliation of Modeling report for incorporation into the document – Still waiting for this.

Kamyar asked at this point if we are considering 0.2' or 0.5' for vertical control for planning purposes since there is such a disparity for costs. Gwen advised considering and costing out a range of accuracies.

The next agenda item dealt with a review of the Investigation Report Progress. One discussion item had to do with the areas that had the best water quality benefits and the areas that had the best habitat benefits. It was suggested that this be dealt with under Regional Recommendations. Steve suggested noting it as a fact rather than a recommendation. As an example, Gwen discussed that it can be stated that levees on active channels should be maintained and that could be put forward as a Regional Recommendation for levees. Steve discussed that there are different goals and objectives and that means that different areas of the marsh will achieve one of those objectives over another. As an example, if you're shooting for Clapper Rail, the western option of the marsh is what'll interest you and if you're shooting for tidal wetland plants, then the central or northeast options are what'll interest you. We can't identify outright the areas we're shooting for because it depends on your objective.

Kamyar had comments on page 2 of the Investigation Report where it was noted that 22,000 acres were flooded in 1998. Kamyar said that DWR lands and private lands were flooded too and that would make the number even higher.

Gwen asked Kamyar about the best way to present the modeling section to the public. Kamyar liked the idea of making a CD available and showing only a few examples in the hard copy that could be passed out. Michael Norris advised double siding the report to make it slimmer.

Dan Chapin noted that the flyer summarizing the comments from the public appears to indicate that the public was more interested in land conversion as opposed to discussions related to levees. Rob noted the flyer summarized what was said at the meeting. Steve thought the next workshop might pick up comments related to levees.

Kamyar thought it was important to note the different ways they tried to get public outreach. It wasn't just one public workshop.

Gil passed out a write-up for his section. Gil noted that at some point it might be necessary to draw lines where we note that these levees are recommended for this type of survey and these levees are recommended for the next level of survey and so on. In addition, we'll have to tell the public that this is the first cut. Gil discussed that they are taking the worst areas and using them as their template. One problem is determining how deep the organic soils are. This is known in some areas but not in others.

Rob discussed that an "adaptive management" approach might be applicable where we acknowledge that we're not sure what will work but we're going to try different things. Gil discussed the Delta where a "trial and error" approach was initially used in some cases where they went after what they regarded as the worst areas first. Gil discussed an example for the "splash cap" that is being used on Van Sickle Island. Arnold discussed a "parapet" method of repair. Also, barges anchored together have worked during emergencies for wave breaks in some cases. Gwen wondered if the Cost Estimate section of the report was the best place to present these examples. Steve thought an "Early Implementation Plan" section was appropriate for the discussion.

Gil suggested using the Delta Levees Program as a sample model for the marsh. The financial aspect of the Delta Levees Program is important because the standard 75/25 percent State/Local split that has been used throughout the Delta might not work for the Marsh where the lands are not the economic producers that the Delta are. In this case, the locals may not be able to afford the 25 percent cost-share. However, the Delta model could be used as a basis of developing a model for the Marsh.

It was suggested to attempt to "categorize" certain levees. Category 1 would shoot for this level of funding and Category 2 would shoot for this level and so on. As Arnold put it, it needs to be stressed to the locals that "it's not just vanilla and there's more than one flavor".

Bruce discussed how the 2.5' NGVD elevation was used to put together the summarization table for tidal/shallow water habitat/upland/existing tidal on page 41 of the Investigation Report. Gwen said it should be noted that there would be more detailed surveys to get more specific.

Steve suggested deleting the reference to the "Sunrise Club" for breached levees that were observed and just say "areas in the Suisun Marsh". Also, the numbers are specific to properties. Further, it needs to be noted that the numbers are not necessarily very accurate without more detailed surveying.

There were more comments on the tables. Some people will get out their calculators and note the numbers don't add up to 100 percent. It needs to be noted there is no "gross" column for the numbers and the numbers are rounded to the nearest 50 acres.

Bruce wondered if we want to take out the reference to the "Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report". We should just say we used "tidal datum" and we should consider not including Figure 2.3, which was a separate handout.

Under Conclusions and Staff Recommendations on page 42, it was recommended we consider "interim structural measures" until the program gets going. Steve debated the wording a bit. Kamyar suggested wave wash protection measures as part of the wording.

Gwen discussed the public workshop mailing that will be going out. Steve suggested the meeting notice and the SRCD notice be put one on top of the other in the mailing.

There was discussion of the mailing list. Arnold noted there are 158 on their mailing list. However, the leadperson in the clubs is often rotated so sometimes a mailing will go to the person who has just been rotated out. We need to have wording in there stressing that the mailing needs to find its way to the right person if the recipient is no longer the club president. Dan suggested adding wording directing the clubs to "talk to your neighboring club" as a way of getting the word out.

There was discussion of the recent Suisun Marsh Field Day celebration. Rob thought it was successful. Rob, Bruce, Steve, Arnold, and Kamyar were attendees. It was estimated there were a thousand attendees. Contributions were up 20 percent even though attendance was down a bit from previous years.

The Public Outreach agenda was discussed. The Conclusions and Staff Recommendations was suggested as a good summary for a public handout.

Action Items include taking comments until 6-23-2000, adding a section on input to Fish and Game, determining private losses and DFG losses from the 1998 flood, and finalizing report comments.

The next meeting of the sub-team will be on July 11, 2000. This meeting will concentrate on finalizing the document.

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