



**COUNTY OF LAKE
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

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I-053
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FLOOD AND LAKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS DIVISION

July 28, 1997

Ms. Kate Hansel
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: 1997 Category III
Ecosystem Restoration Projects and Programs**

Dear Ms. Hansel,

Enclosed are ten copies of each of the following documents:

- Middle Creek Marsh Restoration Project Application
- Upper Putah Creek Watershed Management Plan Inquiry Submittal

If you have any questions, please call me at (707)263-2341.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Smythe
Water Resources Engineer

TRS:trs

Enclosures

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**MIDDLETOWN AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY
UPPER PUTAH CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN
INQUIRY SUBMITTAL**

Applicant: Lake County Flood Control
and Water Conservation District
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453
(707)263-2341
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The Upper Putah Creek Watershed Management Plan (Plan) is an effort to reduce erosion and improve water yield in the Upper Putah Creek Watershed. The watershed is located upstream of Lake Berryessa, see attached location map. The majority of the watershed is in southern Lake County, with small portions in Napa County. Lake Berryessa has been identified in the Bay-Delta Phase I Study as a critical part of the upstream storage options for the Bay-Delta.

In March 1997, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began an expedited Reconnaissance Study (Study) to assess the concerns of Lake County residents and property owners in the Upper Putah Creek watershed. A public workshop will be held August 6, 1997, to obtain additional input from the public. The Study is scheduled to be completed in September 1997. The USACE will then begin to prepare a Project Study Plan, which serves as a scope of work for the next phase of the project, the Plan. The Plan will be prepared by the USACE. This inquiry is to determine the level of CALFED interest in participating in the Sponsor's share of the cost of developing the Plan. Future project phases may include property acquisition, riparian restoration, and implementation of watershed management practices to reduce flooding, enhance riparian habitats, reduce erosion and modify the Putah Creek hydrograph.

The Plan will identify and evaluate options to improve the health of the Upper Putah Creek Watershed. At this stage of the Study, it is difficult to determine the scope of the Plan, however, options available may include:

- Restoration of lost and or severely impacted riparian zones,
- Enhancement of riparian systems, including enhancement of instream aquatic habitat and shaded riverine aquatic habitat,
- Meadow and/or seasonal wetland restoration,
- Fuels management, including prescribed burning of brush lands, brush conversion, forest undergrowth thinning, etc, and
- Restoration of physically and hydrologically isolated floodplains,

The Plan will identify the best practices to improve watershed health. Benefits may include:

- Hydrograph modification, including reduced peak flows and increased base flows,
- Improved fisheries, including landlocked steelhead trout, rainbow trout and bass fisheries,
- Decreased threat of wildfire,
- Reduced bank erosion,
- Reduction of fine sediment replenishment,
- Reduction of nutrient input, and
- Improved storage characteristics in Lake Berryessa.

At this phase in the Study, it is difficult to estimate the cost of the Plan. The estimated cost is \$1,800,000. The USACE will provide half the costs, or \$900,000. A CALFED funding request of \$900,000 is anticipated. The Plan will take two years to complete, including NEPA and CEQA documentation. The total project cost, including all future phases, is unknown, depending on the alternatives selected in the Plan.

The District does not have the financial capability to complete the project without funding partners. CALFED was selected as a funding partner as this project is consistent with the CALFED goals of water supply improvement, habitat restoration and water quality improvement in Putah Creek. The District is currently developing partnerships with other agencies and organizations, however, commitments will be easier to obtain once the Plan is completed. At this time, the Eastlake Resource Conservation District, the Hidden Valley Community Service District, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the Guenoc Ranch have expressed interest in the project. Other interested parties may include the Solano Water Agency and Napa County, users of Lake Berryessa water.

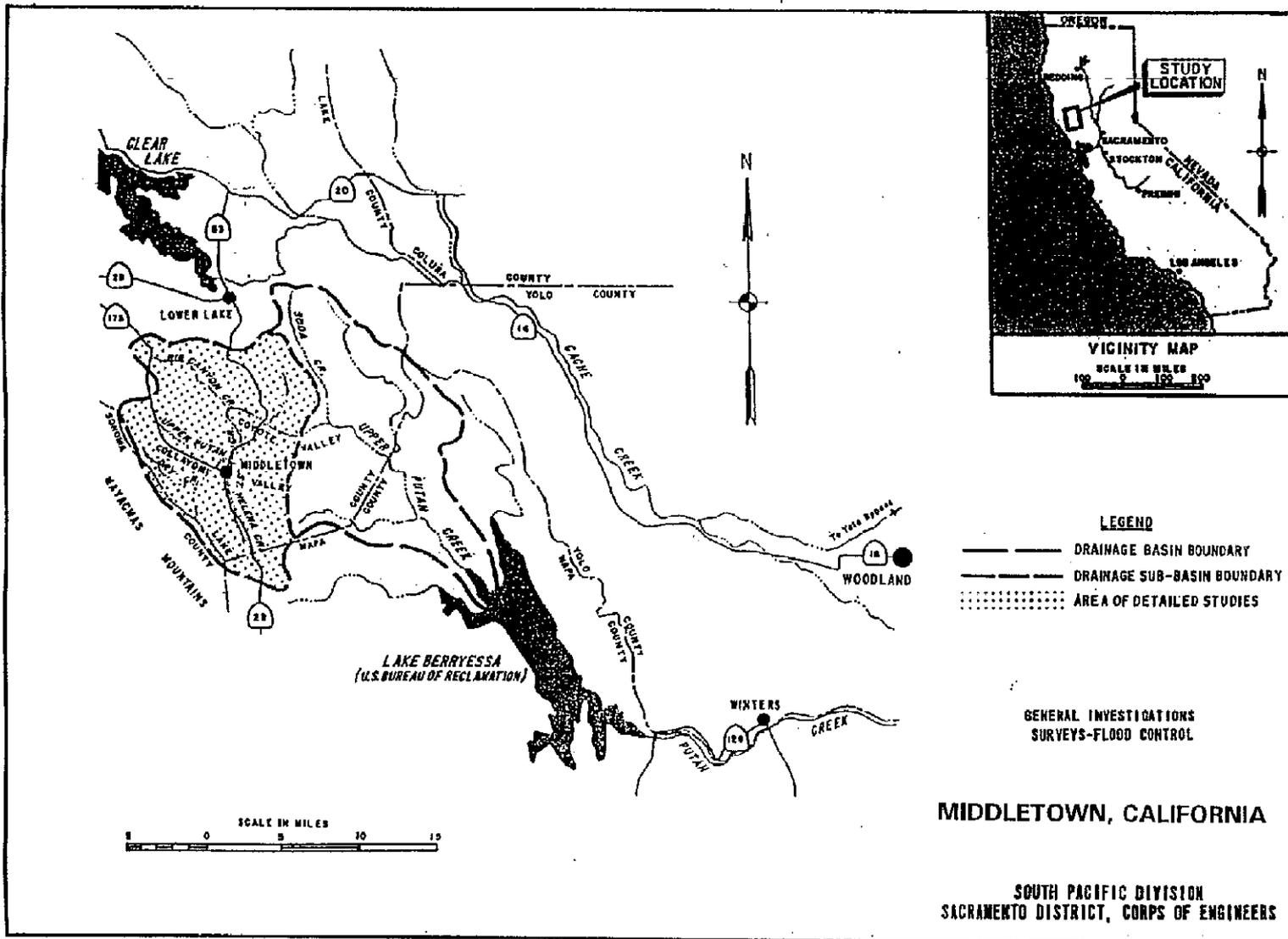
Third party impacts are unknown at this time. Appropriate mitigation for any third party impacts will be identified during the Feasibility Study.

The District is a division of the Lake County Department of Public Works, which administers hundreds of thousands of dollars of grants each year for infrastructure improvement. The District itself has a proven track record with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board with administering and completing grant projects. The USACE has a proven track record in environmental restoration projects in the Bay-Delta watershed, including the Yolo Wetlands project immediately upstream of the Bay-Delta.

The District has an ongoing watershed improvement program in the Clear Lake watershed, including watershed assessment and watershed management activities. The District is interested in facilitating a similar program in the Upper Putah Creek watershed. This Plan is an early step in the overall process of improving the health and water quality in the Putah Creek watershed.

At this time, there is limited data collection occurring in the Putah Creek watershed. It would be beneficial to reactivate the old U.S.G.S. Putah Creek near Guenoc stream gage to provide more current baseline streamflows for a majority of the Upper Putah Creek watershed. Additional upstream stream gages may also be warranted. Composite water quality sampling will also be added at critical locations in the watershed.

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