

**San Joaquin River Restoration Program
Fishery Management Work Group
Technical Feedback Group Meeting**

**Tuesday, August 12, 2008
California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, California**

Meeting Summary

Attendees

Chris Acree	Revive the San Joaquin
Matt Cover	California State University, Stanislaus
Ron Forbes	Interested Party
Charles Gardiner	CirclePoint
Jason Guignard	FISHBIO
Abimael Leon	CA Department of Water Resources
Bill Luce	Friant Water Users Authority
Zoltan Matica	CA Department of Water Resources
Scott McBain	McBain & Trush
Jeff McLain	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Carl Mesick	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Doug Obegi	Natural Resources Defense Council
Steve Ottemoeller	Friant Water Users Authority
Jason Phillips	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Kim Webb	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Bill Swanson	MWH
Stephanie Theis	MWH
Ali Gasdick	CH2M HILL

Introductions and Meeting Purpose – Ali Gasdick, Jason Phillips, Jeff McLain

Ali Gasdick welcomed the meeting attendees and led introductions of those present (see list above). The Technical Feedback Meetings are intended to provide a forum to share information and allow for feedback from stakeholders and the public on the development of the Fish Management Plan (FMP). Jeff McLain noted that the purpose of today's meeting was to review the reach-by-reach objectives, provide an overview of the development of the reach-by-reach limiting factors, and begin the discussion of potential floodplain widths and associated floodplain habitat.

Review Progress to Date – Jeff McLain

Jeff McLain reviewed progress to date on the reach-by-reach objectives including available documents and an overview of the conceptual models presented at the last Technical Feedback Meeting. Based on a question from an attendee, Jeff noted that the limiting factors in the conceptual models assume that the Settlement actions are in place. (Note - this assumption is different for the reach-by-reach limiting factors discussed below.)

Current Topics, Reach-by-Reach Limiting Factors – Jeff McLain

Jeff McLain reviewed progress on the reach-by-reach limiting factors. The conceptual models are general representations of system-wide factors. However a reach-by-reach assessment is needed because not every reach has the same limiting factors and a process will be needed in the future to identify and prioritize limiting factors. Jeff presented the Fishery Management Work Group's (FWMG) initial assessment of limiting factors by reach for adult migration, adult holding, spawning and incubation, fry/juvenile rearing, and smolt migration. These reach-by-reach factors were assessed based on their expected impact on abundance, whereby primary priority factors could impact abundance to the extent that the Restoration Goal may not be met and secondary factors are anticipated to have a low or negligible impact on abundance. The limiting factors assume that the Settlement actions are not in place (not implemented). (Note - this assumption is different for the reach-by-reach objectives discussed above.)

The following feedback was provided by attendees with regard to the reach-by-reach limiting factors:

- Urban development in Reach 1 has the potential to impact fish management actions through increased diversions, discharge of wastewater, and poor water quality (possibly including increased presence of pharmaceuticals in this reach and downstream). A variety of urban development projects have either been approved in this reach or are currently being considered by local land use agencies. Urban development may also result in secondary impacts, such as increased noise and light, potentially increasing stress on fish.
- Some of the limiting factor categories are unclear and additional explanation may be needed to clarify.
- Exports/Diversions may be more appropriate as a PP (Primary Priority) in Reaches 2, 3, and 5 in the Adult Migration Limiting Factors table because of possible false migration pathways in these reaches (diversions at Mendota Pool, Arroyo Canal, and Mud and Salt sloughs).
- Recirculation has a specific meaning in the Settlement, but is being used to refer to the introduction of foreign or non-San Joaquin River water in the tables. "Foreign Water" may be a more appropriate term to use for the purposes of the tables.
- Differentiating between sub-yearlings and yearlings in the Smolt Migration Limiting Factors table may be useful.

Current Topics, Reach-by-Reach Objective, Juvenile Rearing Habitat, and Floodplain Concepts – Jeff McLain

Jeff McLain reviewed the draft fry/juvenile floodplain rearing objectives and floodplain design concepts. Floodplain design, and particularly, the amount of riparian vegetation and channel characteristics are a critical aspect of the program as they form the basis of the overall channel design, including channel width and the need for setback levees.

The following feedback was provided by attendees:

- The "maximize" terminology in the objectives implies value and is not consistent with the rest of the objectives terminology. "Emphasis" may be a better, non-value-laden term to use.
- Objectives for each sub-reach may be needed.

- Butte Creek provides a possible “downstream rearing” example for the San Joaquin River. Downstream rearing may contribute to overall individual fitness and survival. However, an attendee also noted flows may not be sufficient in lower reaches under the Settlement for downstream rearing. Existing or new structures could be used to raise water surface elevations and inundate floodplain areas.
- Definitions of some terminology such as floodplain, channel, wetlands, and similar terms would be useful to add clarity and understanding.
- Possible floodplain widths could include two tree canopy-widths that may provide microclimate benefits, or a meander belt width that would allow for some natural movement or migration of the river channel over time.
- Cost information would be useful to better understand and prioritize different floodplain widths and the extent of riparian vegetation on the floodplain.
- Both short-term and long-term floodplain habitat options could be useful. Riparian vegetation may take years to mature; short-term options could provide ecological benefits while the remainder of the created floodplain habitat areas matures.

Discussion and Wrap-Up – Jeff McLain, Ali Gasdick

Jeff McLain and Ali Gasdick thanked the meeting attendees for their participation and valuable feedback. The next meeting will be on September 8 at Cal State Stanislaus. Ali Gasdick noted that the meeting location and length are flexible and other locations or longer meetings could be considered if attendees found these useful. Input from attendees on possible future meeting topics is also useful and the group noted the following potential future meeting topics:

- Update on the floodplain width analysis.
- Relationship to and coordination efforts with the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation.
- Potential impacts of land use changes and urban development in the Reach 1 area on water quality and flows.
- Update on the results of the temperature modeling.

The meeting presentation and related project materials will be posted on the project website (www.restoresjr.com).