Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way, MP-170
Sacramento, Calif. 95825-1898

Field Activity Advisory
Reach 3 and 4A Hydraulic Conductivity Analyses
August 26, 2015 (Revised 11/6/2015)

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program plans to extend into December the final set of hydraulic conductivity tests on farmland as part of seepage management measures. Initiated in late summer, the studies were intended to end on or about Oct. 31, 2015, but have been extended due, in part, to weather, equipment availability and site conditions. The studies are data collection actions needed to inform the design of seepage projects described the Program's Seepage Management Plan (SMP), an effort aimed to protect farmland from river seepage associated with Restoration Flows.

Who: Bureau of Reclamation and CDM Smith

What: The SMP is an adaptive plan with two primary functions: 1) to guide and inform Program actions to monitor and operate Restoration Flows to avoid material adverse impacts to crop land from elevated groundwater levels, and 2) to prioritize and implement seepage projects in areas where potential adverse impacts have been identified. Completion of a seepage project serves to increase channel capacity for conveyance of Restoration Flows.

The remaining hydrologic conductivity tests occur along a section of Reach 3 in coordination with the landowner. Two prior sets – one each in Reaches 3 and 4A – have been completed. An additional survey in Reach 4A was postponed following consultation with the landowner. Survey equipment includes track-mounted and truck-mounted hollow-stem auger drill rigs and/or hand augers. Tests consist of pump-in or pump-out tests. Data collected include soil profile, shallow groundwater depth and elevation, electrical conductivity, and soil hydraulic conductivity. Topographic and elevation surveys will also be conducted. To avoid disturbance of burrowing animals such as the San Joaquin Kit Fox, a small mammal biological survey is planned in order to ensure sites are not adjacent to sensitive species.

The tests are performed by a crew of up to five people. Field engineers will access the site by vehicle, drill rig, or on foot. All bore holes will be backfilled with bentonite chips.

When: Studies started August 24 and may continue through mid-December depending on weather and other site conditions. Surveys are conducted between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Where: Reach 3 extends from Mendota Dam to Sack Dam. Reach 4A extends from Sack Dam to the Reach 4B1 head gates at Sand Slough/Washington Road. All sites will be accessed in coordination with landowners.

If you have questions, please contact the SJRRP Landowner Coordinator, Craig Moyle. Craig's contact information is provided below.

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To review the Seepage Management Plan or for more information, please visit the SJRRP Web site at www.restoresjr.net.