

CHAPTER 6 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, REVIEW AND CONSULTATION

6.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

Public outreach and involvement in the Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Study began under the Comprehensive Study. Public involvement for the Comprehensive Study had two main functions: to inform the stakeholders about the Comprehensive Study and to generate comments, identify concerns, and potential solutions on key issues for flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration.

One result of the early phase of the public outreach and involvement program was the identification of several potential Initial Projects (IP's). IP's were developed as small-in-scope, site-specific projects. IP's were required to meet or be consistent with both objectives of flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration, be vigorously supported by a non-Federal sponsor and other local and regional interests, and be complete projects, not dependent on other future actions. One IP identified for further study was the Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project.

Scoping and public involvement activities were conducted under the original Notice of Intent (NOI) issued for the Comprehensive Study. A series of scoping and outreach meetings, including meetings held in Chico, California, were held in February through May 1998, November through December 1998, February 1999, June 1999, October through November 2001, and August through September 2002. Initially, development of an EIS/EIR for the Comprehensive Study was intended to be at a programmatic level with the site-specific evaluation for the Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Study packaged as an attachment to the main programmatic document. When it became apparent that there would not be an EIR/EIS developed for the overall Comprehensive Study, a separate NOI to support the Feasibility Report and EIS/EIR for Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration study was submitted on December 13, 2002. The Hamilton City NOI invited the public to comment on the results of the preliminary analysis conducted during the Comprehensive Study and to provide input to the Hamilton City Feasibility Study, including the scoping of the environmental issues that should be addressed throughout the Feasibility Study. The notice announced a public workshop, which was held on January 9, 2003, in the Hamilton Union High School Cafeteria, Hamilton City, California. The workshop was an opportunity for the study team to discuss the problems, opportunities, significant resources, and potential measures and alternatives with residents and other interested parties. The purpose of the workshop was to provide local residents and interested parties with information about the Hamilton City Feasibility Study and to provide a forum for public comment and input concerning the study.

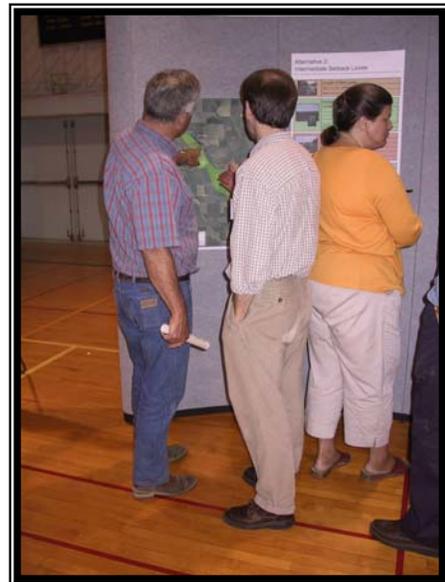
Concerns expressed at the public scoping meeting were:

- 1) Water Treatment Facility
 - Protection of the water treatment facility
 - Do not relocate water treatment facility near homes or schools

- 2) Hydraulic Impacts
 - Avoid negative impacts to Mud and Chico Creeks
 - Avoid flooding Highway 32
 - Don't increase flows to Butte Basin
- 3) New Levee
 - Concern that a "ring levee" would constrain growth
 - Must rock any new levee
- 4) Agriculture
 - Conversion of agriculture to native habitat restoration would result in a direct loss of money to the community
 - Agricultural flooding south of Department of Fish and Game (DFG) property
 - Agriculture needs protection from higher velocity flows from the north
 - Prior to Department of Fish and Game acquisition of the property, agricultural lands flooded primarily from backwater only
 - A levee was constructed to protect the agricultural lands, but it was overtopped
 - Landowners not allowed to obtain equivalent (past) protection
- 5) Other
 - Why should a government agency and a conservation organization have the right to decide to let the river meander in such a manner that it is destroying private property and homes?

The study has evaluated potential adverse effects that could result from the alternative plans evaluated. The study considered both relocation and protection of the water treatment facility and ultimately determined that it could be protected as part of the potential project. The study has investigated potential hydraulic effects of potential projects to ensure that there is no adverse effect to these and other areas. Construction of a new levee has been considered as part of this study. Evaluation and comparison of alternative plans took into consideration this concern expressed by many in the community. Similarly, rock protection requirements of possible new levees were identified. The study has included an evaluation of potential effects to agriculture from a potential project.

Another public meeting was held Thursday, June 12, 2003, at the Hamilton Union High School Gymnasium, Hamilton City, California (Figure 6-1). The meeting was held to present alternative plans for flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration in the Hamilton City area; update the Feasibility Study progress; and collect public comments to further refine the study and answer questions.



**Figure 6-1: Public Workshop
June 12, 2003**

Throughout the stakeholder coordination process, and at all public workshops a bilingual translator was present to ensure the entire audience was informed about study information. A bilingual project fact sheet was additionally made available to the public. The study team also had a booth at the local "Levee Festival" in which approximately 95 percent of the attendees were minority groups (Figure 6-2). The announcements were given in both English and Spanish and all of the handouts for the Hamilton City project were in both English and Spanish. The levee festivals alone help represent the Community Cohesion that has been enhanced by the development of this project.



Figure 6-2: Hamilton City Levee Festival, October 19, 2003

In addition to the public workshops, a series of plan formulation meetings were held from December 2002 through January 2003 to discuss the problems, opportunities, significant resources, and potential measures and alternatives. The meetings included study team members and representatives from the local community and interested agencies and organizations. Participants in the meetings included:

- Local Landowners and Residents
- Hamilton City Community Services District
- Glenn County Public Works Department
- Butte County Public Works Department
- Glenn Colusa Irrigation District
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- NOAA Fisheries
- The Nature Conservancy
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Sacramento River Partners
- Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum
- Sacramento River Preservation Trust
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Department of Parks and Recreation

A final public meeting was held May 6, 2004 in Hamilton City at the local high school upon the release of the draft Feasibility Report/EIR/EIS to present the findings of the feasibility study and to provide the public an opportunity to express their views on the results and recommendations of the Hamilton City Feasibility Study. Comments received both at the

public meeting and during the 45-day comment period, as well as responses, are presented in Appendix F, Comments and Responses.

6.2 INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

6.2.1 Study Team

The Hamilton City Feasibility study team is a joint State/Federal interdisciplinary team. Study team activities include developing study scope, gathering and sharing data, formulating measures and alternative plans, and developing criteria for evaluating measures and plans. Project managers from the Corps and DWR provide direction to the study team.

6.2.2 Agency Participation

The study team hosts routine meetings to facilitate agency coordination by engaging other agencies that may be affected by the potential project and its implementation. Executive level direction is provided by the Executive Committee which was originally established as a part of the Comprehensive Study. The Executive Committee provides policy oversight and project managers lead the study team to ensure project execution. The Executive Committee is co-chaired by the Corps and the Reclamation Board. The role of the committee is to: 1) provide broad study direction and scope; 2) ensure adequate resources are available to the study team; 3) assist in resolving emerging policy issues; 4) ensure that evolving study results and policies are consistent and coordinated; and 5) review the comprehensive reports that the study team produces. Table 6-1 shows the Executive Committee agencies:

TABLE 6-1: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

State Agencies	Federal Agencies
California Resources Agency	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
California Department of Transportation	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
California State Water Resources Control Board	U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service
California Department of Water Resources	U.S. Forest Service
California Office of Emergency Services	U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
California Department of Parks and Recreation	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
California Department of Boating and Waterways	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
California State Lands Commission	U.S. Geological Survey
California Department of Fish and Game	Federal Emergency Management Agency
The Reclamation Board of California	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
California Department of Food and Agriculture	
California Bay-Delta Authority	

During the feasibility study, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was conducted in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. The USFWS provided the Corps with a draft/final Coordination Act Report that includes their views on the tentatively selected plan. All USFWS recommendations were given full consideration. The USFWS coordinated their report with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

6.2.3 Local and Regional Interests

Members of the study team regularly attended Hamilton City Workgroup meetings to report on the progress of the study, solicit feedback from the workgroup, and answer questions. These meetings were held at the Hamilton City Fire Hall approximately every two months over the course of the study. The Hamilton City Community Services District led the meetings and the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum helped with meeting facilitation. The purpose of the meetings was to provide a forum to discuss and coordinate water resources related studies, projects, and other issues affecting the Hamilton City area. Local landowners and residents, representatives of local, State, and Federal agencies, representatives from State and Federal elected officials, representatives from non-profit organizations, and others attended the meetings. Information provided by the local and regional interest groups and individuals guided the identification of resources problems and helped formulate the alternative plans to address the problems and identification of the tentatively selected plan. The Hamilton City Feasibility Study has also periodically been discussed at the SRCAF Board meetings.

6.3 INFORMATION MATERIALS

Available documents, announcements of upcoming meetings, meeting summaries, and other information is posted on the Comprehensive Study website (<http://www.compstudy.org>).

A database mailing list gleaned from past Federal and State project lists, Federal, State and local elected officials and agency staff is periodically updated by deleting and adding names to ensure a current broad-based list. The public can add themselves to the mailing list at this website.

6.4 PUBLIC VIEWS AND RESPONSES

A complete list of public comments and a discussion on how the Hamilton City Feasibility Study has been changed to address those comments is included in the final Feasibility Report/EIR/EIS.