

Truckee Meadows Flood Control Project

February 2005 Newsletter



US Army Corps
of Engineers



F4 Study Milestone Conference Held

The Corps held its F4 milestone conference at its District headquarters in Sacramento on January 26, 2005.

Planning Division
Chief Mark Charlton
and District Support
Team member Clark

**F4 Milestone:
evaluation of
current
alternatives**

Frentzen headed the conference to determine the progress of the project.

Four policy issues were raised including issues of Section 104 crediting (regarding locally implemented portions of the project), conflicts with existing operations and maintenance manuals and project purposes. Division headquarters provided guidance on all the policy issues and none had an adverse effect on the project's progress.

Potential local sponsors Washoe County, City of Reno and City of Sparks provided their views on the project and gave a written statement for inclusion in the record. All three entities stated that they were in support of the effort to address flood problems in the area.

The team briefed those in attendance on progress since the F3 milestone conference and explained that a selected alternative was still a few months away. In addition, the team talked about additional efforts that are underway to refine existing alternatives and evaluate other levels of performance other than the 100-year event. This will result in additional alternatives that address concerns expressed by both

**F3 Milestone:
evaluation of
existing
conditions and
problems**

downstream landowners and the independent technical review team.

The next milestone is the Alternatives Formulation Briefing (AFB). It is at this milestone that a tentatively selected plan will be identified. The AFB, as it is known, will likely take place in June 2005.

What's Happening!?!

Quite a lot, actually! Since the F4 conference, the team has been hard at work responding to review comments and performing additional analysis on a number of features for possible inclusion in alternatives.

To start, the team has evaluated a number of possible solutions for addressing the induced flows downstream of Vista as discussed during our workshops at Rainbow Bend. We should be able to present them at our next meeting likely in late March.

The team is also refining existing project features for alternatives in the Meadows to maximize the project's effectiveness at capturing the additional flows before they get past Vista. These include expansion of the detention facilities at Huffaker Hills and UNR Farms. We are also considering the elimination of the Mustang Ranch detention facility.

Ecosystem restoration in both the Meadows and downstream reaches is continuing to be refined. Our ongoing coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is yielding some helpful guidance on the significance of the natural habitat in the downstream reach, especially for the endangered Lahontan cutthroat trout and the cui-ui. Our reevaluation of habitat outputs for

restoration will reflect this emphasis on the significance of the resources in the lower river.

The Corps Planning Process Explained – Part 2

Step 4 Evaluate Effects of Alternative Plans

Last month we started our discussion on the Six Step Corps Planning Process by describing step three, *Formulating Alternative Plans*. This month we are discussing the fourth step, *Evaluating Effects of Alternative Plans*. The evaluation step tells us what difference each proposed alternative can make. This difference is quantified by comparing without project and with-project conditions to identify the effects of the alternative plans. The purpose of the evaluation step is to determine whether or not a plan we have formulated is worthy of further consideration. It is a qualifying step where each alternative plan is held up to a situation-specific set of criteria and then decide whether it deserves further consideration or not.

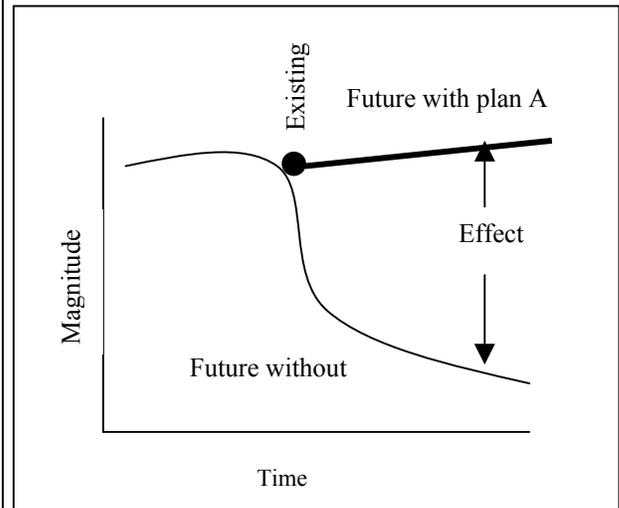
How do we evaluate? Evaluation consists of four general tasks.

1). Forecast the most likely with-project condition expected under each alternative plan.

2) Compare each with-project condition to the without- project condition. Do the comparisons reveal any differences between the two futures? The differences in magnitude that occur between with- and without-project conditions are an alternative plan's **effects** (see Chart) Effects are often called impacts.

3) Characterize the effects. Assess and describe the differences between the two conditions - Common effect characteristics are:

- Magnitude – how much or how many are affected?
- Location – where, at what site and over what area, is the effect?
- Timing and Duration – when will the effect start? How long will it last? Will it occur again?
- Appraisal – Is the effect beneficial or adverse, good or bad, desirable or not? Because such appraisals are subjective, we explain any legal, scientific or public interest basis for them.



4) Appraise the alternative plan's effects and qualify plans for further consideration. This is the pass/fail test that asks, "Are any affects so significant that they would violate some minimum standards?" If not, the plan should be considered further. If so, the plan should be dropped from further consideration or reformulated to lessen the effect. Some common qualifying criteria are:

- *Completeness* – Does the plan include all the necessary parts and actions to produce the desired results?
- *Effectiveness* – Does the plan meet the objectives to some degree? How does it stack up against constraints?
- *Efficiency* – Does the plan minimize costs? Is it cost effective?
- *Acceptability* – Is the plan acceptable and compatible with laws and policies?

What types of effects are evaluated?

Evaluation covers a full range of effects and tends to be conducted in a number of technically specialized analyses. Some common types of evaluation include:

- *Cost estimating*, in which the first and annual dollar costs of implementing and then operating, maintaining, monitoring, and otherwise managing a project are estimated.
- *Real estate appraisals*, which estimate the dollar costs of any necessary real property interests.
- *Economic benefit evaluations*, where dollars are assigned to the values of reduced flood damages, transportation costs savings and other benefits;
- *Environmental evaluations and impact assessments*, which include analyses of effects on fish and wildlife habitat, endangered species, ecosystems, historic sites and other cultural resources, water and air quality and scenic beauty. Many of these analyses are required by law; and
- *Social impact assessments*, which evaluate effects on population, health, safety, and other considerations important to affected communities.

These and other types of evaluations provide the information needed to screen and qualify plans. Information about different types of effects will help you to judge whether a plan is complete; how it will meet the objectives and address the constraints; how its costs stack up against its benefits; and its acceptability among

interests. Plans that pass these tests move on to the next step of comparison. This comparison of Alternative Plans step will be discussed in the March newsletter.

Upcoming Meetings

March 29, 2005 Public Workshop at Rainbow Bend Community Center Clubhouse, 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Discussion and follow-up on the flood control measures developed during previous workshops and currently being evaluated for the Truckee River below Vista.

Making Contact

Visit our website at:

www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/truckeemeadows

Your questions and comments on the contents of this newsletter are welcome. Please contact us at the following e-mail address:

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