

CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION BOARD

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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

Date: **October 23, 2015**

To: **Public Agencies and Interested Parties**

Project: **Sacramento River Flood Control Project General Reevaluation EIS/EIR**

Location

This general reevaluation of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP) will include an analysis of the SRFCP, which is located along the Sacramento River and its tributaries, from Elder Creek near Tehama to its confluence with the San Joaquin River in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta near Collinsville, as depicted in Attachment 1. System features are also located along tributaries, sloughs, and bypass channels, including the Feather River, American River, Sutter Bypass, and Yolo Bypass, also as depicted in Attachment 1.

Introduction and Background

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) are preparing a joint Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR) for the general reevaluation of the SRFCP. The CVFPB will serve as the state lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Corps will serve as the federal lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is a responsible agency cooperating with the Corps and CVFPB on this project.

The existing flood control project is a levee system that was designed and built in the early 1900's following engineering and design standards of that time. The system includes levees along mainstem rivers supplemented by overflow weirs and bypasses to convey excess flood flows. The levees were constructed close to the river to increase velocities which would flush out hydraulic mining debris that caused widespread deposition and disruption of economic uses of the river. In the mid 1900's reservoirs with dedicated flood storage were constructed on the major tributaries of the levee system to reduce peak

flows. The combination of levees and flood storage resulted in a substantial reduction in the probability of flooding in the Sacramento Valley.

As a result of the levee improvements, important ecosystem processes directly associated with riverine systems such as channel migration, meander cutoffs, and wetland habitats were reduced by near-channel levees, bank revetment, and water diversions. Reservoirs on the system reduced peak flows so they were contained by the levee system. However, this lengthened lower flows and further altered the river's natural geomorphic processes. Consequently, significant habitats and native species populations continue to decline.

In addition, it is now recognized through use of more modern engineering analysis and collection of additional historical data that flood risk in the Sacramento Valley may be higher than previously thought. The high velocities meant to flush out mining debris are eroding the levees. There is greater understanding of through- and under-seepage as geotechnical modes of levee failure at flows less than the design capacity. Also, analysis of more than a century of recorded flood flows has revised the probability calculations of exceeding the system's design capacity.

Since the SRFCP was completed in the 1950s, only localized improvements have been made. Most of the recent work consists of bank protection and seepage and stability fixes to correct localized problems within reaches. Over this same period, many areas have seen substantial urban development. This urbanization has dramatically increased the consequences of levee failure in these areas. Since levee improvements have not kept pace with the rate of urban development, overall flood risk has drastically increased since completion of the SRFCP system in the 1950s.

Purpose

The purpose of the SRFCP general reevaluation is to identify opportunities to restore ecosystem function along the Sacramento River and improve flood risk reduction capabilities of the flood conveyance system originally constructed in 1917. Changes or modifications to the SRFCP may include updates or revisions to the Operation and Maintenance manuals in affected areas. Eventual authorization and funding by Congress would allow for implementation of those opportunities.

Proposed Project Description and Alternatives

The Corps, in cooperation with the CVFPB and DWR (non-Federal sponsors), is reevaluating the design and operation of the SRFCP to identify opportunities to improve the function of the Sacramento River's

aquatic ecosystem as well as increase the project's flood risk reduction performance. Changes or modifications to the SRFCP may include updates or revisions to the Operations and Maintenance manuals in affected areas. The general reevaluation is authorized pursuant to the Flood Control Act, Pub. L. 64-367, §2, 39 Stat. 948 (1917) as amended and modified by subsequent Acts of Congress and as modified by Flood Control Act, Pub. L. 86-654, § 203, 74 Stat. 498 (1960), as supplemented by the River Basin Monetary Authorization Act, Pub. L. 93-252, § 202 , 88 Stat. 49 (1974), and the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, Pub. L. 97-377, § 140, 96 Stat. 1916 (1982), and the Water Resources Development Act, Pub. L. 110-114, §3031, 121 Stat. 1113 (2007). This general reevaluation of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP) will include an analysis of the SRFCP, which is located along the Sacramento River and its tributaries, from Elder Creek near Tehama to its confluence with the San Joaquin River in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta near Collinsville, as depicted in Attachment 1. System features are also located along tributaries, sloughs, and bypass channels, including the Feather River, American River, Sutter Bypass, and Yolo Bypass, also as depicted in Attachment 1.

The general reevaluation will assess a combination of one or more ecosystem restoration and flood risk management measures including widening existing bypasses, modifying existing weirs, optimizing weir operations, constructing setback levees, developing floodplain management plans, restoring riverine aquatic and riparian habitat, removing barriers to fish passage, and restoring natural geomorphic processes, among others. In addition, a no project alternative will be assessed. Mitigation measures for any significant adverse effects on environmental resources will be identified and incorporated into the alternatives in compliance with various Federal and State statutes.

On the basis of preliminary evaluation, the CVFPB has determined the proposed alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR could have potentially significant environmental effects on the following resource areas:

- Hydrology
- Water Quality
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

- Recreation
- Transportation
- Noise
- Aesthetics
- Land Use and Planning
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Utilities and Service Systems and
- Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Corps will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service to comply with the Endangered Species Act, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. The Corps will also consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act and coordinate with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs to establish consultation requirements with tribes having trust assets and tribal interests that could be affected by the general reevaluation's outcome. The CVFPB will consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to comply with the California Endangered Species Act. The CVFPB will also consult with Native American tribes having an interest in the project as prescribed by AB 52.

The Draft EIS/EIR will make Mandatory Findings of Significance and also evaluate cumulative effects of the proposed action and alternatives when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, including other Corps, CVFPB, and DWR projects.

Scoping and Public Involvement Process

Pursuant to Section 15083, Title 14, Chapter 3, California Code of Regulations, public scoping meetings will be conducted on November 3, 2015 and November 9, 2015 to solicit public input.

The purpose of the scoping meetings is to present information about the proposed action and alternatives, the Corps and CVFPB's decision-making processes, and to listen to the views of the public on the range of issues relevant to the scope and content of the Draft EIS/EIR. An overview of the study and NEPA and CEQA processes will be presented, and an opportunity will be afforded to all interested parties to provide comments regarding the scope of the draft general reevaluation and EIS/EIR analysis as well as potential alternatives.

The scoping meeting dates, and times and locations are as follows:

November 3, 2015

3:00 p.m. to 7:00p.m.

City of West Sacramento

1110 W Capitol Avenue

West Sacramento, CA 95691

November 9, 2015

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Yuba County Board of Supervisors

915 Eighth Street

Marysville, CA95901

For questions about the proposed action, alternatives, and the Draft EIS/EIR or to receive a copy of the notice, please contact Shelly Amrhein at 916-574-1415 or rochelle.amrhein@water.ca.gov . This notice is also available to view and download on the CVFPB's website at

<http://www.cvfpb.ca.gov/PublicNotices/>

Due to the time limits mandated by state law, written comments and suggestions concerning the proposed action and alternatives must be received or postmarked by November 23, 2015. Please submit comments at the earliest possible date to:

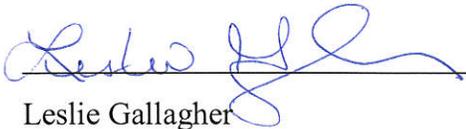
Attn: Shelly Amrhein

Central Valley Flood Protection Board

3464 El Camino Ave, Room 150, Sacramento CA 95821

Or by email to Rochelle.amrhein@water.ca.gov

The Draft EIS/EIR is scheduled to be available for public review and comment in spring 2017. A 45-day public review period will be provided for individuals, interested parties, and agencies to review and comment on the Draft EIS/EIR. All interested parties are encouraged to respond to this notice and provide a current address if they wish to be notified of the Draft EIS/EIR circulation.



Leslie Gallagher

Executive Officer

Central Valley Flood Protection Board

Date: 10.20.15

Attachment 1 – Project Location Map