

Floodplains Reimagined Advisory Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting

April 8, 2022, 1 pm – 3 pm

Virtual Meeting, Zoom platform

The Floodplains Reimagined Program is comprised of a select group of stakeholders who have volunteered to assist with leading efforts to voluntarily and collaboratively develop actions that reactivate floodplains on the East and West sides of the Sacramento River in the Sutter, Butte, and Colusa basins.

The meeting objectives were:

- To develop a shared understanding for the Approach for Evaluating Actions and Scenarios and suggested improvements
- To develop a shared understanding of the key outcomes from the Ad Hoc Groups

Action Items

- Interested Committee members should RSVP for the April 21 Hydrodynamics Model Ad Hoc Group meeting. [Complete]
- K&W and Ducks Unlimited will coordinate on designing landowner Ad hoc Groups to address recreational hunting club interests.
- K&W and cbec to clearly define 'baseline' and objectives for the purpose of this modeling effort.
 - Include in the Hydrodynamics Model agenda
 - cbec to create matrix of baseline components of status of environmental review, operations, definition of long-term future

Welcome and Introductions

Julie Leimbach (Leimbach), Senior Director and Facilitator at Kearns & West, welcomed all attendees.

Leimbach reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives.

Approach for Scenario Development

O'Regan recommended that Committee members consider three primary physical connections in relation to the actions to be presented:

- River connections - Actions that reconnect rivers to their historical floodplains.
- Floodplain Conveyance – Actions which improve or create flow conveyance infrastructure to move water onto different parts of the floodplains
- Field level management – Optional activities for each landowner that could optimize the benefits of inundation.

Campbell presented on scenario development. He described the general actions to be included in the following scenarios:

- A) Baseline condition
- B) Colusa
- C) Sutter Bypass
- D) Butte Basin

He noted that actions that make up each scenario could be combined to develop different subregional scenarios.

The group made the following suggestions and comments on development of the baseline scenario:

- Clarify the objectives of the baseline to this modeling evaluation. This is not a baseline for environmental review.
 - [Campbell response] A baseline is intended to give a basis of comparison for all scenarios. It's intended to act as a frame of reference to accrue benefits or impacts for scenarios to be evaluated.
 - [O'Regan response] Noting that this is not an environmental assessment baseline. We are looking at a feasibility level assessment and potential actions to take. We would have to go through a standard environmental review process and modify what's in the landscape at that time.
- Develop a detailed description and table of projects included in the baseline scenario including:
 - Time-step for existing, near-term and long-term implementation of projects
 - Status and timing of construction
 - Operations
- Describe how baseline will address physical changes in the system.
- Include the following projects in baseline
 - Tisdale Weir
 - Fremont Weir Big Notch
 - National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) was involved in the Section 7 consultations. There are some aspects that have been analyzed and some, like the adaptive management model, which have not been fully vetted.
- Describe how the baseline scenario will address physical changes in the system.
- Include description of a range of assumed operations
 - Operations for Tisdale Notch and Fremont Big Notch operations need to be included in the baseline. Request to make the operations available because they are new and not familiar to people.
 - [Campbell response] For those two projects, there are described operations in the environmental documents with information about the timing of opening the gates, the flow rates, and other relevant details. For example, with Fremont Big Notch, the gates remain open until the river level drops too low. 'Baseline' implies the adoption of those planned operations.

- Provide rationale for inclusion of incomplete projects in the baseline. Describe how baseline will address physical changes in the system.

Group members commented on the list of Management Action Opportunities for Landowners:

- As long as the actions remain voluntary and are not mandated, the opportunities are fine. It's what the landowners are already doing.

Representative Potential Actions

Campbell provided some examples of potential actions to be combined into scenarios. The potential actions represent different ways to spread water through the system. Campbell noted that there will be more basin-specific opportunities and constraints for consideration. This will depend on whether landowners are opting in.

Campbell outlined types of actions that will be combined for scenario development:

- Modify the existing weirs so that they can overtop during the winter season.
- Modify transport of water via a canal or delivery system to convey the water to inundate a different portion in the interior during the winter season.
- Raise the water level to inundate a broader part of the landscape during the winter season.

Committee members made the following comments:

- [Rice Commission] To clarify, the Rice Commission and UCD are in a research, pilot phase with developing the standard practice for rice field barriers and inundation. We have not finalized the standard and will not be applying the standard to projects until we finalize the practice and all parties have approved.

Campbell added that the Advisory Committee will have the chance to become familiar with the model and have opportunities to give input on scenario development.

Approach for Scenario Evaluation

Leimbach and Campbell presented on the proposed Evaluation Approach. See Evaluation Approach Diagram meeting materials.

Cowan reiterated the importance of the baseline conditions. As modeling continues and initial results are reviewed, the Program Team will engage landowners for their feedback and provide an opportunity for a preliminary view of the results. Landowners and land managers can identify areas of concern and provide input to the technical team as they make adjustments.

Proposed Metrics for Evaluating Scenarios Against Objectives

Campbell presented the updated Objectives and Metrics and rationale for updates and related them to the Evaluation Approach steps. Campbell described the Technical Team's proposed

revisions to the objectives in order to align more closely with the metrics. Leimbach solicited feedback on the metrics and updated objectives. The AC members had no comments at this time.

The Ad hoc Group meetings will provide additional opportunity to further examine and discuss the potential outputs.

Steve Zeug, Cramer Fish Sciences, and Kristy Dybala, Point Blue, invited AC members to email them with questions regarding the Salmon Benefits Model and bird models, respectively.

- Steve Zeug: stevez@fishsciences.net
- Kristy Dybala: kdybala@pointblue.org

Ad Hoc Groups Update

Leimbach reviewed the upcoming schedule for the various Ad hoc Groups and encouraged Committee members to RSVP. [We have updated this schedule with current updates as of April 29, 2022.]

- April 21 – Hydrodynamics Model
- May 5 – Habitat Metrics Model
- May 19 – Salmon Benefits Model
- June 16, July 14 – Bird Model
- July – Landowner Ad hoc Group (in-person)

Committee members made the following comments:

- Suggestion to make sure to include and address recreation and hunting land uses in the Ad hoc Groups.
 - Kearns & West and Ducks Unlimited will talk about which Ad hoc Group will address recreation, hunting, and wetland preserve land uses in relation to the potential inundation scenarios.

Adjourn

Leimbach thanked attendees for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Attendees

The following people were in attendance:

1. Alison Whipple
2. Ally Bosworth
3. Andy Duffey
4. Baker Holden
5. Barry O'Regan
6. Bethany Taylor
7. Bjarni Serup
8. Bronwen Stanford
9. Chris Campbell
10. Craig Isola
11. Curt McCasland
12. Dan Fehring
13. Debie Rasmussen

14. Eric Nagy
15. Felix Yeung
16. Hans Herkert
17. Holly Dawley
18. Jesus Esparza
19. John Stofleth
20. Jon Munger
21. Julie Leimbach
22. Julie Rentner
23. Kayla Kelly-Slatten
24. Kelly Iknayan
25. Kristin Sesser
26. Kristy Dybala
27. Lewis Bair
28. Lori Price
29. Mark Cowan
30. Mike Healey
31. Paul Buttner
32. Rene Henery
33. Rodd Kelsey
34. Roger Swanson
35. Ryan Luster
36. Samantha Arthur
37. Scott Wright
38. Steve Zeug
39. Ted Trimble
40. Todd Manley
41. Virginia Getz
42. Anjanette WCWD
43. Socorro Reyes-Gutierrez