



Program Update

May 2011

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) is a comprehensive long-term effort to restore flows to the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River and restore a self-sustaining Chinook salmon fishery in the river while reducing or avoiding adverse water supply impacts from restoration flows.

Juvenile Salmon Survival and Migration Study

On April 21st, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game released 1,200 juvenile fall run Chinook salmon from the Feather River Hatchery into the San Joaquin River. All fish were marked with coded-wire tags and 200 fish were fitted with acoustic tags. The purpose of the release is to collect data on juvenile salmon survival, migration, and potential sources of mortality. For more information on the Study, visit the Field Activities web page at: www.restoresjr.net/activities/field/index.html.

DRAFT Program Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report Available for Review and Comment

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Draft PEIS/R) is now available for public review and comment. The release of the Draft PEIS/R on April 22, 2011, opened the 60-day comment period. The comment period closes June 21, 2011. To view the Draft PEIS/R please visit www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=2940 or www.restoresjr.net.

The Draft PEIS/R may be reviewed during normal business hours (from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at several agency offices and public libraries. For a complete listing of where the document can be accessed, visit the web site. Here are some agency locations:

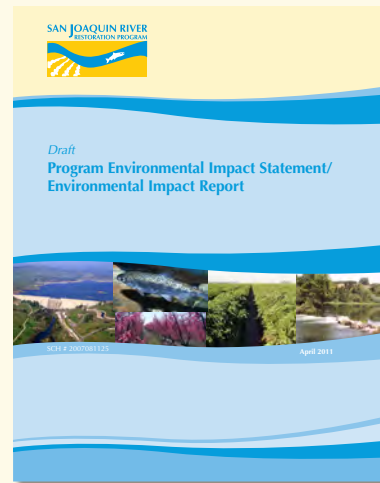
- ▶ Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, MP -170, Sacramento, CA 95825
- ▶ Reclamation's South-Central California Area Office, 1243 N Street, Fresno, CA 93721
- ▶ DWR South Central Region Office, 3374 E. Shields Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726

If you wish to receive an executive summary and/or an electronic version of the document on disc, please contact Margaret Gidding at mgidding@usbr.gov or 916-978-5461.

Comments

During the formal comment period, responsible and trustee agencies and other interested parties, including the general public are asked to review and provide comments on the Draft PEIS/R. Anyone wishing to comment on the document must submit their comments in writing prior to the end of the formal public comment period or provide oral comments during the public hearings:

Visalia	Fresno	Los Banos	Sacramento
Tuesday, May 24	Tuesday, May 24	Wednesday, May 25	Thursday, May 26
10:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m.	6 - 8:30 p.m.	6 - 8:30 p.m.	1:30 - 4 p.m.
Lamp Liter Inn	Piccadilly Inn –	Merced County	Holiday Inn
3300 West Mineral King	University	Fairgrounds	Capitol Plaza
Avenue	4961 North Cedar Ave	Germino Room	John Q. Ballroom
		403 "F" Street	300 J Street



California State Lands Commission Update

The California State Lands Commission (CSLC) has completed boundary surveys and research of historical records in Reach 2B of the San Joaquin River. Compilation Plats of Reach 2B showing current and historical survey and mapping data collected were presented at a March 24 public meeting with Reach 2B landowners. The data appears to indicate that the river channel has largely stayed within its historic footprint. If confirmed through further study of the historical record, the State of California's sovereign lands and the public trust easement in this reach would generally follow the current edge of the river.

The next step for Reach 2B will be for the CSLC to produce Administrative Maps that depict the low and high water lines indicating the State sovereign lands and public trust easement for the reach. CSLC staff asked the landowners to provide any additional information that would be useful to assist in the development of the maps. The Reach 2B Administrative maps are scheduled to be released in summer 2011. The CSLC is also continuing their field data collection and research activities for Reaches 3 and 4. Compilation Plats are expected to be out this summer for Reach 3.

DRAFT PEIS/R Available for Review and Comment (cont.)

Oral comments provided at the hearings will be recorded. You can submit comments via email to peisrcomments@restoresjr.net or by mail. Please send all comments to either of the addresses below:

Ms. Michelle Banonis
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Department of Water Resources
South Central Region Office
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Document Purpose

The Draft PEIS/R analyzes and discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of implementing the Stipulation of Settlement (Settlement) in *NRDC, et al., v. Rodgers, et al.*, consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft PEIS/R identifies feasible mitigation measures to reduce, minimize, or avoid significant adverse impacts.

The Draft PEIS/R includes both a "program level" analysis and a "project level" analysis. The program level actions, in general, include future construction actions (Settlement Paragraph 11 and 12 actions), fish reintroduction (Paragraph 14), some recapture actions (Paragraph 16), and recirculation actions (Paragraph 16). All actions evaluated at a program level will require additional analysis under NEPA and/or CEQA at a project level of detail once more information on the actions is known. This approach provides broad direction for a wide range of possible future actions while allowing the opportunity for flexibility to respond to changing needs and conditions. The program level analysis also provides a framework, including an assessment of cumulative impacts for the future NEPA and/or CEQA documents.

The project-level actions include: release and recapture of Interim and Restoration flows; actions to minimize increases in flood risk; implementing the Physical Monitoring and Management Plan; and implementing the Conservation Strategy.

The project-level actions will support Reclamation's request to the State Water Resources Control Board for a permanent change in water rights necessary to implement the Settlement. Project-level actions would not require additional NEPA and/or CEQA compliance for implementation.

Decision Making and Next Steps

The Final PEIS/R will contain responses to the comments received and the preferred alternative for implementation based on the information presented in the Draft PEIS/R and in consideration of the comments received. A Final PEIS/R and a signed Record of Decision and Notice of Determination are expected in 2012.

Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project Update

One of the site-specific projects underway in support of the SJRRP is focused on a reach of the river from the Chowchilla Bifurcation Structure to Mendota Dam (referred to as Reach 2B). This project includes consideration and evaluation of expanding the Reach 2B channel to



Technical Feedback Group Meetings Update

Several public Technical Feedback Group (TFG) meetings have been held in 2011 to present information and solicit input on many aspects of the SJRRP.

The Water Management TFG held meetings in January, March, and April, and the Seepage and Conveyance TFG held meetings in January, February (two meetings), March, and April. A summary of the discussion topics from the recent TFG meetings is outlined below. The complete TFG meeting schedule, in addition to agendas, meeting summaries, and meeting presentations, are all available on the Program website: www.restoresjr.net/group_activities/index.html.

Water Management TFG Meetings:

- ▶ January 21, March 4, and April 15: Discussed and updated the group on Interim Flow releases, restoration flow guidelines, the Recapture and Recirculation Plan, the Friant-Kern and Madera Canal Capacity Restoration Projects, and the Friant-Kern Canal Reverse-Flow Pump-Back Facilities Project.

Seepage and Conveyance TFG Meetings:

- ▶ January 14: Discussed monitoring improvements and the initial thresholds approach for 2011.

- ▶ February 10: Discussed 2011 operating procedures, criteria, and forms and reviewed the types of information collected during high flows.
- ▶ February 22: Discussed the draft Seepage Management Plan that was updated based on comments and prior meetings discussions.
- ▶ March 23: Discussed draft seepage project locations, revisions made to the draft Seepage Management Plan, and 2011 Interim Flows and flow scheduling.
- ▶ April 29: Discussed the site evaluation process, data needs and data collection, and the suitability of different types of projects that could help with seepage issues.

Restoration Goals TFG Meeting:

- ▶ April 21: Several updates and presentations were given at this meeting held at CSU-Stanislaus in Turlock, including: juvenile salmonid survival and migration study under way by the US Fish and Wildlife Service; the Annual Technical Report status for monitoring and analyses planning

for Interim Flows and an update on groundwater monitoring by Reclamation; Fisheries Habitat Monitoring by the Dept. of Fish and Game; Fish Passage Evaluation and Sand Storage Assessment by the Dept. of Water Resources; and sediment monitoring by the US Geological Survey.

Upcoming Key Meetings, Events, and Document Releases

Technical feedback group meetings are a key venue for substantive input into SJRRP activities and they are open to the public. Please visit the Program website for detailed information regarding meetings and milestones: www.restoresjr.net/group_activities/index.html.

- ▶ Fisheries Management TFG Meeting May 17 (Sacramento)
- ▶ Draft PEIS/R Public Hearings May 24 (Visalia and Fresno), 25 (Los Banos), and 26 (Sacramento)
- ▶ Water Management TFG Meeting June 17 (Fresno)

Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project Update (cont.)

convey up to 4,500 cubic feet per second with riparian habitat and a bypass channel around Mendota Pool. The project team has developed five proposed floodplain initial alternative designs and three initial alternative alignments for the Mendota Pool bypass channel. Each initial alternative was developed to restore a healthy Chinook salmon population and maintain water deliveries to the Mendota Pool.

As part of the analytical and evaluation support to prepare the Reach 2B site-specific Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) documents, the team has been conducting scientific, economic, environmental, engineering,

technical, cultural, and social impact investigations and analyses for each of the proposed initial alternatives. The results of these evaluations will be available in a Technical Memoranda expected to be posted on the project website www.restoresjr.net sometime in the fall.

Part of the evaluation process has involved ongoing outreach and communications efforts with stakeholders, particularly with the landowners adjacent to the project area. On March 24, 2011, a workshop was held with landowners in the area to discuss the initial alternatives.

Held at the Fresno office of the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the half-day meeting was attended by 16 landowners. Topics presented at the session included: the CSLC update (provided in the side bar); an overview of the real estate acquisition processes for DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation; an update on the status of the Water Year 2011 Interim Flows; and a presentation of updated maps and analytical tools of the various setback levees and bypass alignments under consideration for Reach 2B.

Additional landowner meetings are anticipated for summer 2011.

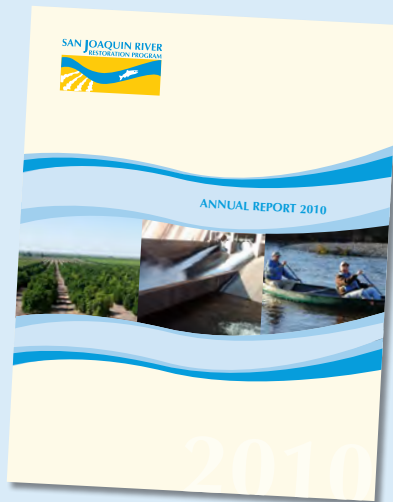


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2010 Annual Report Released

The 2010 SJRRP Annual Report was released and made available on the program website in April 2011. The report includes 2010 progress and accomplishments and 2011 anticipated Program activities.

To view the complete report, please visit the following link on the Program website: www.restoresjr.net/program_library/01-General_Outreach/index.html



Water Education Foundation Tour



The Water Education Foundation will conduct a San Joaquin River Restoration Tour November 2 and 3, 2011

For more information, please visit www.watereducation.org/tours.

- ▶ Juvenile Salmon Survival and Migration Study
- ▶ DRAFT Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report Available for Review and Comment
- ▶ California State Lands Commission Update
- ▶ Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project Update
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Recorded SJRRP information available on Reclamation's Grapevine at 800-742-9474; select option 2 for a list of projects, and select option 4 for the SJRRP activities and updates.