

# **APPENDIX A**

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Public-Outreach Summary

## **A PUBLIC-OUTREACH SUMMARY**

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (Yolo Wildlife Area) Draft Land Management Plan (LMP) is the product of a planning process that included a substantial public outreach program. Materials that document and summarize this program and the public input that was received are incorporated in this Appendix A.

This Appendix includes the following materials:

- A-1 Public Outreach Program
- A-2 Announcements for the Public Scoping Meeting
- A-3 Agenda and Summary of the December 12, 2005 Public Scoping Meeting
- A-4 Summary of written comments received following the December 12, 2005 Public Scoping Meeting
- A-5 Preliminary Draft Public Outreach Update Including Announcement for Focus Group Meetings
- A-6 Focus Group Meeting Agendas and Summary Notes
- A-7 Agenda and Summary of the August 16, 2007 Public Comment Meeting
- A-8 Summary of written comments received following the release of the Draft LMP and Initial Study

It should be noted that the size of fonts and graphics in the original documents has been modified from their original format to conform to the format of this LMP. These adjustments result in some distortions, smaller print and modified graphics, from the original documents.

## A-1 PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

Consistent with other planning efforts for the Yolo Wildlife Area, this public outreach program is intended to ensure that the planning process for the Yolo Wildlife Area LMP incorporates the desires of the public in conjunction with the primary consideration of ecosystem management and the operational needs and resources of the landowner, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

Other recent planning efforts in the Wildlife Area have included the solicitation of public input regarding the use of conservation lands. Much information developed as part of those efforts is being incorporated into this project. Therefore, this public outreach program is directed to utilize existing information whenever possible, while providing for additional public input opportunities regarding the LMP.

The public outreach program incorporates the following components:

- ▶ six focus group meetings conducted before initiation of LMP development (2002);
- ▶ a total of 36 Yolo Bypass Working Group Meetings (1999 to present; updates on developments at the Yolo Wildlife Area have been a frequent topic of discussion);
- ▶ one advertised public meeting for initial input (December 12, 2005, in Davis, attended by 30 persons) to announce the beginning of the planning process for the Yolo Wildlife Area LMP, receive public input on issues relating to the use and management of the site and assess the scope of CEQA issues to be addressed in the project's environmental review document;
- ▶ interviews of DFG and Yolo Basin Foundation staff and other selected individuals, in early 2006, to provide insight on current operations, existing conditions, compatibility of multiple uses, and management goals/tasks as related to the following resource areas: fisheries, mercury, flood hydrology, public access/use/recreation, education, wildlife and wetlands, and agriculture;
- ▶ five additional focus group meetings to receive input on the Preliminary Draft LMP (March and April, 2006); and
- ▶ one advertised public meeting for input on the Draft LMP and Initial Study (August 16, 2007).

# A-2 ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

## Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan and Initial Study Public Scoping Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2005  
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is preparing a Land Management Plan (LMP) for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) and Initial Study (IS) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on preliminary analysis it is anticipated that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) would be the appropriate CEQA compliance document. The DFG encourages interested stakeholders to attend a public scoping meeting to comment on the issues to be addressed in the YBWA LMP and IS. The meeting will be held at the following time and location:

Davis Waste Removal Company  
2727 Second St.  
Davis, CA

Monday, December 12, 2005  
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

The meeting will be organized in an open house format, with a brief presentation scheduled to take place from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. During the meeting, you will be able to comment on the scope of the LMP and IS/MND. Written comment sheets will also be available for use as needed. Experts from DFG, Yolo Basin Foundation and the environmental consulting team will be

available during the meeting to answer questions about the LMP and the environmental review process.

In addition to the public scoping meeting, stakeholders may send written comments on the LMP and environmental review process to:

Mr. Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95616  
Fax: (530) 757-2518

Comments may also be submitted via e-mail to [dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov). If comments are sent via e-mail, please include the project title in the subject line, attach comments in MSWord format, and include the commentator's U.S. Postal Service mailing address.

Thank you for your interest in the planning process.  
We look forward to your input!



# A-3 AGENDA AND SUMMARY OF THE DECEMBER 12, 2005 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING



**Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
Land Management Plan  
Public Scoping Meeting  
6:30 p.m.  
December 12, 2005  
Davis Waste Removal Company  
2727 Second St., Davis CA**

## **Agenda**

Welcome to the Public Scoping Meeting for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) Land Management Plan (LMP) and Initial Study (IS). This meeting provides a forum for sharing of ideas, concerns, and suggestions for the development of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. Your time and commitment to participating in the meeting and working towards a positive, thoughtful and enduring vision for the future of Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area are greatly appreciated.

6:30 PM Welcome and Public Outreach Process	Chris Fitzer EDAW, Inc.
6:35 PM YBWA Introduction, Background, and Discussion of Primary LMP Topics and Issues	Dave Feliz DFG, Area Manager
6:55 PM CEQA Review Process	Petra Unger EDAW, Inc.
7:00 PM Open to comments	
9:00 PM Adjourn	Thank you!!!

Thank you for your input to the planning process. Your input is essential to the successful development of the LMP and environmental review.

## **Questions, Comments and Further Information**

- In addition to the public meeting, stakeholders may send written comments on the LMP and environmental review process to:

Mr. Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95616  
Fax: (530) 757-2518

- Comments may also be submitted via e-mail to [dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov). If comments are sent via e-mail, please include the project title in the subject line, attach comments in MSWord format, and include the commentor's U.S. Postal Service mailing address.
- In order to ensure that comments can be adequately addressed during the planning process, please submit them no later than January 6, 2006.

**Yolo Wildlife Area Land Management Plan/Initial Study**  
**Public Scoping Meeting Minutes**  
**December 12, 2005**  
**6:30 – 9:00 pm, Davis Waste Removal**

1. Welcome and Public Outreach Process - Chris Fitzer, EDAW

Chris welcomed the public, introduced members of the planning team, and gave a brief overview of the Land Management Plan (LMP) planning process and upcoming opportunities for public and stakeholder involvement.

All attendees gave personal introductions.

2. YBWA Introduction, Background and Discussion of Primary Topics and Issues to be addressed in the LMP – Dave Feliz, DFG, Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Manager

Dave provided a brief overview of the important management issues at the Yolo Wildlife Area including farming, flood control, biological resources, mercury methylation, public access and safety, recreation/hunting, mosquito management.

3. CEQA Review Process – Petra Unger, EDAW

Petra provided a brief overview of the environmental review process, including the anticipated environmental document (Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration) and anticipated timeline.

4. Public Comment (Ron Unger, EDAW, facilitator)

The following comments were recorded on an easel and laptop computer during the public comment period:

- Environmental review needs to consider impact on adjacent properties, i.e., hunting success declines due to wetlands located in WA – this, in return, impacts property values;
- Rice fields and infrastructure can be managed for a multitude of species – the value of agriculture for providing food for waterfowl needs to be recognized;
- Has consideration been given to establishing a website for LMP, so all the research will be available? Please make this information available for future docents, etc., on CD and on website;
- City of Davis – Pacific Flyway Center – how will it be considered in the LMP – particularly access and circulation issues?
- Yolo County – please address access from West Side as well;
- Consider current proposal for trail around the Delta and potential to link;
- Look at management plan for Delta Protection Act Primary Zone for consistency in management and to link with Delta Loop trail; whole plan should be reviewed for consistency;
- County Supervisor who has 80% of this land in district; LMP needs to address public access as well as public health and safety; i.e., fire issues, emergency response, etc.; also how to address in-lieu fees – ongoing debate that has not been resolved;
- Will management plan address what uses are allowed in certain areas or will it be more general?

- Duck club in immediate area will have concerns about hunting in immediate vicinity – will this be addressed?
- Make sure land uses are compatible with adjacent area land uses;
- Wildlife area has been open for a couple of years – LMP should have matrix of management actions/uses that are allowed now, as well as indicate uses, by locations, to be allowed in the future under the new plan; i.e., what would change? Please prepare a summary matrix for those who don't want to read the whole plan.
- Please let the public know ahead of time what they will be allowed to do at the Wildlife Area based on the time of year, etc., as part of public interpretation and outreach; this will help the public plan trips to the Wildlife Area;
- What areas are accessible to public at different times of the year, i.e., when the area is partially flooded; would like to see different habitats that provide for a variety of species;
- Fees for public agencies that use water should be addressed;
- [Yolo County] Board of Supervisors just took action on new open space plan for the county – look at that. From aspect of the City [Davis] – consider affect on other open space plans. Consider access for aquatic species and other wildlife species;
- In developing the wetland restoration and management objectives and the agriculture, consider several of the bird plans; i.e., shorebird conservation plan, North American Waterfowl Plan, etc.;
- What is the approval process for the Land Management Plan? Answer: generally LMPs go through review process with the Wildlife Area Manager and in the region, then to Department Director, then to State Clearinghouse;
- Lots of changes with flood management in the region – Sacramento River Floodway Management Plan will be certified shortly; this document includes guidelines for habitat restoration; also consider any new guidelines that come from the State; also echo comments on Yolo County Parks and Open Space plan and West Sacramento Access and Bike Plan; also look for management plan for waterfowl and fish passage enhancement – should be reviewed in preparation of LMP;
- State Park's Central Valley Vision process is going on – encourage cross checking with that process;
- What's the lifespan of the plan? The timeframe dictates the issues to be addressed. Ten years ago no one thought of the problem of mercury methylation. Answer: no specific time period is provided in guidelines; however, 5 to 20 years might be a reasonable timeframe, but longer timeframes may be appropriate for consideration of certain issues; updates are driven by funding availability and need.
- Hoping that in focus group meetings spatial planning issues will be discussed, rather than just abstract planning. Facilitator comment: maps are available around the room, please feel free to refer to those to make site-specific comments as well;
- Will alternatives be addressed? Answer: yes;
- Please address fishing opportunities and access; also upland bird habitat for pheasant and other species for hunting;

- Upland habitat and land outside the levee system – will this plan look at those areas as well? Answer: yes, the whole property is looked at; Gyberson Ranch is the only area outside the levee and it will be addressed; the Pacific Flyway Center site is outside the levee, too, but that area is being addressed under a separate process;
- Will inventory information be available during focus group meetings? Answer: Yes, existing information will be compiled for the LMP and CEQA. Please share any information sources you may know of;
- Thank you for having the meeting;
- Will there be charges for accessing the property? Hunters pay a lot; other users should also share part of the cost; it would be fair to spread the cost.

Adjourn. The public was invited to provide additional comments by mail or email to the address provided on the agenda.

**Attendees** (from sign-in sheet):

Bruce Boyd  
 Mike Bradford  
 Dennis Corcoran  
 John Currey, Dixon RCD  
 Jack DeWit  
 Judy Dexler, USGS  
 Robert Eddings, CWA  
 Cliff Fago  
 Linda Fiack, DPC  
 John Fritz, Sac/Yolo MVCD  
 Beth Gabor, Yolo County  
 Karen Gerhart  
 Greg Green, Ducks Unlimited  
 Marianne Kirkland, CDWR  
 Teresa LeBlanc, CDFG  
 John Legakis, Senator Outing  
 Petrea Marchand, Yolo County  
 Jake Messerli, CWA  
 Robert Moore, CBH/SAA  
 Jack Palmer, H Pond  
 John Reynolds  
 Mary Schiedt, Yolo Audubon, CA Native Plant Society  
 Don Stevens, Glide In Ranch  
 Mariko Yamada, Yolo County Supervisor, District 4



## **A-4 WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING AND FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER 12, 2005 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

During and following the public scoping meeting on December 12, 2005, individuals and organizations submitted letters for consideration in the development of the Yolo Wildlife Area LMP. The following individuals and organization submitted letters:

- ▶ Gabino Alonso
- ▶ Mark Cowin, Chief, Division of Planning and Local Assistance, Department of Water Resources
- ▶ Jack DeWit, Yolo Bypass Farmer
- ▶ Judy Drexler, U.S. Geological Survey
- ▶ Duck Clubs: Senator Outing, Bull Sprig, Glide In, Skyrakers, H Pond, and Channel Ranch
- ▶ Cliff Fago
- ▶ Linda Fiack, Delta Protection Commission
- ▶ John Fritz, Sacramento/Yolo Mosquito Vector and Control District
- ▶ Karen Gerhart
- ▶ Richard Goodell
- ▶ Greg Green, Ducks Unlimited
- ▶ Mark Hennelly, Deputy Director, California Waterfowl Association
- ▶ Josh Israel, president, Salmonid Restoration Federation
- ▶ Marianne Kirkland, Department of Water Resources
- ▶ Stefan Lorenzato
- ▶ Petra Marchand
- ▶ Barbara McDonnell, Chief, Division of Environmental Services, Department of Water Resources
- ▶ Robert Moore, California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association
- ▶ Peter B. Moyle, Fisheries Professor, University of California, Davis
- ▶ John Reynolds
- ▶ M. Scheidt, Yolo Audubon, Yolo Basin Foundation, CNPS Sac. Valley Chapter
- ▶ Bob Schneider, President, Tuleyome
- ▶ Walt Siefert, Executive Director, Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
- ▶ Bob Sommer
- ▶ Gus Yates

A wide range of comments was received, some of which conflict with each other, scientific information or DFG policy. Additionally, some comments were not within the scope of this LMP.

- ▶ The YBWA has a history of being creative in its management and in being held up as an example of how a managed floodplain can have enormous benefits beyond just flood protection.
- ▶ The LMP and IS/MND is expected to demonstrate an innovative management style to support multi-species objectives.
- ▶ Waterfowl habitat can be created fairly easily almost anywhere in the Central Valley; however, the bypass is one of the only large undeveloped functioning floodplains remaining in the Central Valley, and its value for fish habitat and migration is truly unique.
- ▶ Restoring the trophic relationship between fish and birds is a better measure of successful habitat restoration than is increasing the population of any individual species.
- ▶ The amount of land in the bypass managed for habitats is large enough to accommodate a diverse mosaic of habitat types: some better for birds, some better for fish, and all of it reasonably good for both.

- ▶ The YBWA LMP should focus on multi-species ecosystem management, including native fishes as well as waterfowl management.
- ▶ The YBWA LMP should support the improvement of fish passage over the Fremont Weir.
- ▶ YBWA should not be managed in isolation from the larger Yolo Basin floodplain.
- ▶ The YBWA LMP should mandate fish passage in Putah Creek.
- ▶ Please consider the possible use of portions of the YBWA for the development of shallow water fisheries research and possible program implementation. Please make sure that the CEQA analysis appropriately addresses and analyzes the potential for shallow water fishery enhancements.
- ▶ Consider restoring several hundred acres in the SE portion of the YBWA to wetland habitat and keep it closed to hunting. This will provide safer wildlife viewing, less motorist distraction on the causeway and better hunting for the clubs to the south.
- ▶ Open as much of the area as possible to public hunting and bird watching.
- ▶ Change the “pheasant only” area into a general hunting area that is open throughout the entire hunting season so hunters can hunt all legal species during their respective seasons.
- ▶ Island blind areas should be no greater than 100 square feet and just above water level to aid in the concealment of hunters.
- ▶ Vegetative cover should be placed in the hunting zone to provide concealment, particularly in free-roam hunted wetland areas.
- ▶ Initiate the hunting program on agricultural lands prior to their conversion to wildlife habitat.
- ▶ Give free-roam hunters equal access to the opportunities provide blind hunters in areas directly adjacent to the sanctuaries.
- ▶ Provide parking that will allow no-cost overnight stays for those traveling long distances and or multiple hunting days.
- ▶ Allow snipe hunting through the end of its respective season.
- ▶ Maintain boat-only access to the area, consistent with state and federal “navigable waters” statues and legal rulings, when the bypass floods.
- ▶ More hunters also translate into more dollars available for wildlife habitat protection through increased license and stamp revenues and associated Pittman-Robertson Act monies.
- ▶ Retain agricultural production on the Tule Ranch, but add more upland cover and public access.
- ▶ DFG must realize that their management practices may have severe impacts on the neighboring duck hunting clubs. The majority of waterfowl seem concentrated on a small area of the refuge. The LMP should include flooding, agriculture and hunting measures that would spread the ducks out over more of the wildlife area.
- ▶ Provide access for fishing opportunities, including bowfishing.
- ▶ Provide habitat and opportunities for upland bird hunting, including archery pheasant season.

- ▶ Provide access along the west side.
- ▶ The Tule Ranch is an excellent location to implement native grass restoration and can be compatible with cattle grazing.
- ▶ Concentrate intensive human activities in higher areas during the wet season to limit proactively the infringement of localized floodplain inundation on other management priorities, such as recreation and education.
- ▶ Please include in the LMP a ground-level Class I bicycle trail through the Yolo Bypass. Despite periodic flooding, it would be a much more desirable amenity for Davis-Sacramento bike commuters and recreational cyclists than the existing trail adjacent to the freeway.
- ▶ Please include a feasibility study of a ground-level bike path across the causeway that identifies the main obstacles for creating such a path and how they can be overcome.
- ▶ Wetlands must be managed consistent with the central Valley Joint Venture's "Technical Guide to Best Management Practices for Mosquito Control in Managed Wetlands."
- ▶ The Sacramento/Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District does not support rice production on the YBWA, especially organic varieties, because controlling mosquitoes on these fields entails significant costs to the district. Compensation for mosquito control costs in-lieu of legal abatement associated with organic rice will remain an issue.
- ▶ Incorporate research and monitoring into the LMP, including:
  - surveys of invasive flora and fauna
  - mercury methylation
  - colonization and spread of plant communities
  - status and trends of sensitive species.
- ▶ Balance uses of the YBWA, especially conservation/wildlife viewing and recreational uses.
- ▶ Provide free access to easily accessible viewing sites to facilitate college field trips.
- ▶ Develop the website to emphasize key educational points.
- ▶ Ensure consistency of YBWA LMP with:
  - Yolo County Parks and Open Space Plan
  - Sacramento River Floodway Management Plan
  - Yolo County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (scheduled for completion September 2006)
  - Delta Protection Commission's Land Use and Management Plan for the primary zone of the Delta
- ▶ Encourage local approval of the LMP before DFG adopts it.
- ▶ Does DFG contribute to costs for water use?
- ▶ What regulatory approvals are required? Should an entity other than DFG be the lead?
- ▶ Coordinate with State Parks' Central Valley Vision.
- ▶ Please consider ways to manage, and give the public access to, different areas at different times to support diverse habitats and species, including native fish in low-lying areas that flood easily anyway.

- ▶ Please provide more spatial detail where appropriate during focus group meetings. Plot out uses, nicknames for parts of the YBWA and provide handouts to take home.
- ▶ For the development of habitat restoration and management, as well as degree of agricultural management, please consider the following plans:
  - International Bird Conservation Plans
  - NAWMP
  - US Shorebird Conservation Plan
  - Riparian Bird Conservation Plan
- ▶ As appropriate, promote wildlife-friendly farming practices and crops.
- ▶ Continuing agricultural practices on the majority of the YBWA acreage is imperative.
- ▶ Rice farming is a valuable tool to be utilized, and represents the best use of YBWA resources to accomplish the complex goals of the LMP: Rice in production attracts thousands of ducks and geese; flooding the fields mid-summer provides excellent habitat for shorebirds; managing rice fields to promote growth of grasses and weeds will provide ideal habitat for nesting pheasants; maintaining existing farming practices controls the growth of willow and cattails, preserving the flood carrying capacity of the bypass; combining the attributes of the existing managed wetlands with the characteristics of existing rice fields provides different habitat types benefiting a large variety of species.
- ▶ Continuing rental of the land to farmers will generate substantial amounts of much needed income.

# A-5 PRELIMINARY DRAFT PUBLIC OUTREACH UPDATE INCLUDING ANNOUNCEMENT FOR FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS



## YOLO BYPASS WILDLIFE AREA LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN; PUBLIC OUTREACH UPDATE & FOCUS MEETING SCHEDULE

### Public Outreach Update

In August of 2001, the Wildlife Conservation Board acquired approximately 12,000 acres of land in the Yolo Bypass (Bypass) to expand the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA). This land is being managed by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

DFG made a commitment to gather input from a broad array of potential users and stakeholders with interests in the YBWA and its management in order to develop the YBWA Land Management Plan (LMP), including the expanded YBWA. In addition to regular Yolo Bypass Working Group meetings that have been conducted since 1999, DFG and Yolo Basin Foundation convened seven focus group meetings to obtain additional public input for development of the LMP.

Public outreach meetings intended to help develop the LMP that have been conducted to date included:

Working Group Meetings	ongoing (1999 to present)
Focus Group Meetings:	
Hunting and Fishing	September 11, 2002
Hydraulic Modeling/Flood Protection	September 18, 2002
Agriculture	October 2, 2002
Fisheries Resources	October 9, 2002
Wildlife Management	October 17, 2002
Wildlife Viewing/Environmental Education	November 4, 2002

A public scoping meeting to gather input on topics to be addressed in the environmental review process pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was conducted on December 12, 2005 (see “CEQA Process” below). Input from this meeting was also used to help develop the LMP.

### LMP Development Meetings

A Preliminary Draft of the Land Management Plan is currently under development and is expected to be available for stakeholder review and comment by March 20, 2006. A series of additional focus group meetings will be convened by the Yolo Basin Foundation to review the Preliminary Draft. Meetings will focus on specific topics such as Public Use (e.g., wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, etc.), Agriculture, Mercury (methylation), Flood Control, and Fisheries Resources. Input received during the focus group meetings will be incorporated as appropriate in the Public Draft Land Management Plan.

Future LMP development meetings schedule and Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan completion dates are as follows:

<b>Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan</b>	<b>March 20, 2006</b>	
<b>Focus Group Meetings Schedule:</b>		
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>March 27</b>	<b>9:00 AM to Noon</b>
<b>Mercury</b>	<b>March 30</b>	<b>9:00 AM to Noon</b>
<b>Fisheries Resources</b>	<b>April 3</b>	<b>9:00 AM to Noon</b>
<b>Public Use</b>	<b>April 4</b>	<b>6:30 PM to 9:00 PM</b>
<b>Flood Protection</b>	<b>April 7</b>	<b>9:00 AM to Noon</b>



## **CEQA Process**

Adoption and implementation of the LMP by DFG is subject to review under CEQA. DFG is preparing an Initial Study (IS) in accordance with CEQA in conjunction with development of the LMP. Based on preliminary analysis it is anticipated that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) would be the appropriate CEQA compliance document. Public input into the CEQA process was gathered at the scoping meeting conducted on December 12, 2005. It is currently anticipated that the Public Draft Land Management Plan/Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration is scheduled to be released on May 31, 2006 for a 30-day public review period. A public Notice of Intent to adopt the MND would be published to announce the review period. Completion of the Final Land Management Plan/IS/MND is anticipated for November 2006.

Future Land Management Plan/IS/MND completion dates are as follows:

<b>Public Draft Land Management Plan and IS/Proposed MND</b>	<b>May 31, 2006</b>
<b>Final Land Management Plan IS/MND</b>	<b>October 31, 2006</b>

### **All meetings will be held at the Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters**

Focus meeting dates will be announced through the Yolo Bypass Working Group list serve and mailing list. If you have any questions about the focus meetings please call Robin Kulakow at (530) 756-7248. Please do not use this number to convey comments on the LMP.

Interested Stakeholders and the public will be able to view the Preliminary Draft LMP on the Yolo Basin Foundation website: [www.yolobasin.org](http://www.yolobasin.org). A comment form will also be posted on the website. Yolo Basin Foundation will send out a message on the Yolo Bypass Working Group list serve and regular mail (as requested) when the draft is available. Drafts will also be available on disk for pick up at the Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters.

Comments can be sent to:

Mr. Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95616  
Fax: (530) 757-2518  
[dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov)

If comments are sent via e-mail please include the project title in the subject line, attach comments in MSWord format, and include the commentor's US Postal Service mailing address.

## A-6 FOCUS GROUP MEETING AGENDAS AND SUMMARY NOTES

### AGENDA

**California Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Wildlife Area Land Management Plan  
Agricultural Focus Meeting  
March 27, 2006  
9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Purpose:** To review the preliminary draft Land Management Plan (LMP) and receive focused input on agricultural topics.

**9:00 Introduction** (*Dave Feliz, Yolo Wildlife Area Manager, Chris Fitzer, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Purpose of meeting
- Discussion of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act analysis
- Project Schedule
- Questions and Answers

**9:20 Agricultural History and Existing Conditions on the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz, John Curry, Dixon Resource Conservation District*)

- Agricultural conditions at time of DFG purchase
- Changes to agricultural lands and infrastructure
- Current agricultural practices and plans (John Curry)
- Questions and Answers

**10:30 LMP Management Goals and Tasks**

- Review of LMP organization
- Role of agriculture in Yolo Wildlife Area long-term management
- Goals and Tasks
- Questions and Answers

**11:50 Next Steps**

**12:00 Adjourn**

**Yolo Wildlife Area  
Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan  
Agriculture Focus Meeting  
Flip Chart Notes  
March 27, 2006**

1. Given the yield, is agriculture worth the rent/costs?
  - It's dependent on yearly conditions. Rent reflects the productivity. As infrastructure improves, so do options.
2. Has tomato yield in the Bypass been consistent?
  - Generally yes but somewhat dependant on organic model.
3. Are tomato revenues break even?
  - Roughly given an organic model.
4. A big part of the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) is within Delta Primary zone. Encourage Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to refer to/be consistent with Delta Protection Commission (DPC) goals/policies.
5. The current Agricultural Plan can be appendicized to the Land Management Plan (LMP). Someone needs to be careful to protect proprietary information though.
6. Current thinking of management zones is not included in the preliminary draft LMP but can be in future versions.
7. How will goals be measured? What are the metrics? How will DFG measure success?
  - Ops and maintenance section will cover some metrics but some items are hard to apply numerics to.
8. Are there ways to measure agriculture's contribution to habitat in the Bypass and vice versa? Describe the setting?
  - Need to improve educational/interpretive presentations to improve public understanding. The YWA offers excellent opportunities for such educational presentations.
9. Re: measures of success. Refer in LMP to annual DFG Wildlife Management meetings/discussions.
  - Also reiterate monitoring actions discussed in LMP Re: Agriculture-Habitat relationship.
10. Re: Setting. It is important to describe the relationship of YWA to adjacent land uses and the need for appropriate buffers. Refer as well to DPC policies.
11. Original Wildlife Conservation Board action was California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exempt. Previous commitments always pledged to conduct CEQA on planning document.
12. How does the LMP address external conditions that affect the YWA?
  - LMP addresses flooding affects on land/water/agricultural management.
  - Dynamic nature of Bypass is difficult to memorialize with fixed conditions.
  - How do agricultural commodity changes affect the YWA.
  - How does watershed runoff/conditions affect the YWA.



13. Need to maintain the agricultural element in the future. Protect the partnerships.
  - Agricultural integration is an integral part of YWA Management, not merely a means of convenience for revenues.
  - Agricultural integration has been shown to be a productive, necessary component of YWA Management/efficiency.
14. It is important that agricultural land uses not be marginalized and located inappropriately. Agricultural land location needs the same level of analysis/planning as habitat. Market forces need to drive land management/habitat- agricultural acreage.
15. What is the current understanding of YWA impacts on localizing industry? What has been the response by local agricultural groups?
  - “On the ground” interaction with farmers remains active and positive.
  - “Higher level” feedback from agricultural advocacy groups and inclusion in local outreach/education events has been limited.
  - YWA not necessarily getting “credit”/acknowledgement.
16. Is YWA getting negative feedback from neighbors?
  - Need to be sensitive to herbicide uses. Waterfowl impacts do occur from foraging on fields.
  - YWA gets positive feedback from Resources Agency, the umbrella to several related departments.
17. Does the LMP have a separate policy section? Re: agricultural needs should be considered in a policy context to help focus and analyze use implications.
18. Re: local response. Many original concerns were about long-term relationship with tenants and future experience with State of California.
  - So far so good.
19. What has been interaction of LMP with Regional Water Quality Control Board Ag waiver program?
  - YWA has partnered in Sacramento Valley Coalition to address Ag waiver issues. Rice growers also involved through California Rice Commission.
20. Re: local response. There are limited numbers of farmers on the YWA currently. YWA model/experience could be pointed to by Farm Bureau if it proved to be a failure. Used as a negative example.
  - Conversely, agricultural industry could refer to it as a success by virtue of many opportunities of local education impacts to limited goal lands, etc.
21. Are innovative agricultural land models being incorporated elsewhere?
  - Slowly but it depends on the conditions of other lands. Bypass land uses do not always fit for other areas.
22. YWA offers opportunities to try riskier things. Re: lands/species management.
  - YWA offers broad research opportunities Re: many resources/land management (e.g., agriculture, mercury)
  - Could develop a research agenda/plan that prioritizes goals and actions for research. Already identified in Chapter 5 could be expanded on in operations/maintenance chapter.

Examples:

- Grazing regimes for vernal pools and native uplands community.
- Waterfowl species use.
- Interaction of agriculture/wildlife working models.
- Agricultural implications on subsidence. Potential use of wild rice.
- More methylation in agricultural lands.
- Integration with UCD cold weather rice lab.
- Carbon sequestration and measurement of other ecosystem services (e.g., groundwater recharge)
- Vector control.
- Bio-fuels crops/wildlife compatible. Delta Resource Conservation & Development Area-Brian Jenkinss – UCD.
- Sociological/population studies.
- Adjacency studies of agriculture and habitat. Re: agriculture./wildlife/public interaction. Policy conditions/require land use planning.
- Economic Management strategies for wildlife area viability.
- Exportation of Agriculture/Habitat management to private lands.
- Rodent Management.
- Fisheries/agricultural interaction.
- Rotation of crops and appropriateness with wildlife.
- Screening diversions/optimal management.
- Grazing and the use of native veg communities/grasses.
- Role of grasslands/grazing lands and the study of grasslands avian species.
- *Caveat-need to ensure that these ideas are applicable to Ag management outside of Bypass and need to be economically viable in Bypass.*
- Further experimentation on Organic farms.
- Patterns/management of invasive weeds and other invasive species.
- Rodent management.

23. Comments on potential re-route of Putah Creek.

- Could exacerbate localized flood conditions if not planned appropriately.
- Could affect tomato fields near Putah sink. Re: use of water pool in Putah Creek.

## AGENDA

**California Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Wildlife Area Land Management Plan  
Mercury Focus Meeting  
March 30, 2006  
9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Purpose:** To review the preliminary draft Land Management Plan (LMP) and receive focused input on mercury management and research topics.

**9:00 Introduction** (*Dave Feliz, Yolo Wildlife Area Manager, Chris Fitzer, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Purpose of meeting – *identify opportunities for partnership, set the stage for future lands management through a long-term adaptive management approach that is informed by the research findings of future studies*
- Discussion of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act analysis
- Project Schedule
- Questions and Answers

**9:20 Land Management Framework for the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz*) *general description of proposed management practices and existing conditions*

- Land use
- Water use
- Habitat goals

**9:40 Regulatory/Policy Framework for the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz*) *informative discussion of the regulatory/policy sideboards that inform and influence how water quality is and will be managed in the region, the role the Wildlife Area plays in that, and the commitments DFG has as a State agency*

- State requirements regarding water quality/mercury
- Federal requirements regarding water quality/mercury
- DFG Policies

**10:00 Mercury Research Goals and Opportunities**

- Categories of research
- Potential research projects within each category
- Prioritization of research projects

**11:50 Next Steps**

**12:00 Adjourn**

**Yolo Wildlife Area  
Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan  
Mercury Focus Meeting  
Flip Chart Notes  
March 30, 2006**

**Current Knowledge**

1. There are differences between Mercury (Hg) from Coast Range and Sierra sources.
  - These differences have implications to Methyl (Me) Hg production-reactivity.
2. Total Hg in sediment is not always a primary predictor of MeHg production.
3. Little is known about atmosphere sources of Hg. We need more studies and information.
4. Need to understand any differences in reactivity between ancestral and new total Hg sources.
5. No overall characterization of Yolo Bypass sediments exists.
6. Need to understand physical/chemical property changes in Hg prior to deposition in/near the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA). Understanding their properties at the source might not accurately reflect reactivity of current state due to physical modifications during transport.
7. Tidal conditions complicate the transport/sourcing of Yolo Bypass Hg for study purposes.
8. A Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) study has shown the highest concentration contribution of MeHg to the Delta estuary is coming from the Bypass.
9. Limiting total Hg contributions and transport could help limit MeHg production but total Hg is largely mobile already. Some large point sources still may exist (e.g., abandoned mines, wells, etc).
10. Other likely Hg sources are discharges from Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP).
  - There could be different beneficial consumptive (e.g., agricultural irrigation) uses of WWTP water but such uses could exacerbate Hg issues. This represents conflicting options.
11. Continue improvement of water management. The control of water sources helps to study conditions and impacts and isolates data to actual sources.
12. Need to understand the tidal influence on location and concentrate.
13. Studies are showing very high/highest concentrations of Hg & MeHg in juvenile resident fish in the region are those from the Yolo Bypass. Highest of all levels are in fish from in isolated ponds. Most common species is Inland Silversides. Studies on salmon smolts migrating through the Bypass are showing significantly lower Hg and MeHg levels.
14. What role are oxygen levels and/or anoxic conditions having on the Me process.
15. Suisun Marsh is showing a correlation between low dissolved oxygen and higher MeHg levels, consistent with seasonal fluctuations of water levels/flows. Me process could be happening in short seasonal conditions when it is not as readily available to biota. Need to study this more.

16. Need to understand the many factors influencing reactivity and the implications to YWA mngt.
17. What do we need to know about demethylation as a future management tool for YWA and related areas.

### **Current Project Ideas**

1. Current study is underway downstream of Fremont Weir assessing sedimentation rates including Hg.
2. Previous study through Moss Landing/RWQCB has been done on source reactivity (Tom Kimball).
3. Current study by Mark is comparing rates of Methylation in seasonal vs. permanent wetlands.
  - They are dosing sediment samples with different constituents to replicate Me processes (iron, acetate, etc.) in different conditions.
  - The study being replicated in the Cache Creek Settling Basin.
  - Pilot study right now. Could be expanded.
4. Current proposals are into CALFED to study MeHg production and biota uptake in YWA rice fields. Biota includes invertebrates, avian species, vegetation.

### **Proposed Project Ideas**

1. A full sediment characterization of the YWA specifically, and entire Bypass preferably – North to South, and East to West.
2. A synoptic characterization of sediments, water, and fish.
  - Including key controlling variables (e.g., hydrology, residence time, sulfate, etc.)
3. Habitat characteristic pilot studies for new, wetland features in controlled settings. Create duplicate habitats (i.e., identical habitat characteristics) in differing sediment bands (re; the different river/creek laminar flows down the Bypass to assess differences in MeHg production, etc.).
  - Such studies could be sequenced after baseline data exists from synoptic study.
4. Study differences in Me process in different percentages of emergent vegetative cover. Current restrictions are 5 percent. Is MeHg production changes if the emergent vegetative restrictions are adjusted to higher percentages?

#### Biota

1. Avian tissue sampling related to residence time in the Bypass/YWA
2. Local vs regional export of total Hg and MeHg via biota
3. Benthic invertebrate sampling
4. Trophic level studies (i.e., fish)
  - Impact to wetland type (e.g., permanent vs. seasonal)
  - Total biomass as a factor in MeHg export to the Delta

5. Small fish bio availability of Hg
6. Radio transmitter tracking of fish over species lifecycles to inform attribution of Hg levels from key sources
7. Human consumption of game birds
8. Need to develop institution relationships/partnerships (e.g., DFG and UCD, DFG and others) to ensure implementation of study list

### **Habitat Characteristics**

- ▶ Channels
- ▶ Slope/ponds and channels
- ▶ Vegetation
  - Type
  - Density
  - Species
  - Ag crops
  - Diversity
  - Mngt techniques
- ▶ Hydrology
  - Tidal
  - Non-tidal
  - Depth
  - Clarity/turbidity
  - Temporal application
  - Temperature
  - Chemistry
  - Residence Time
- ▶ Topography
  - Macro
  - Micro
- ▶ Soils
  - Structure
  - Chemistry
- ▶ Biota
  - Invert
  - Bacteria
  - Phytoplankton/zooplankton
  - Nutrient status
- ▶ Temporal scale/sequence of habitat acreage development
  - slow vs fast/less vs more

**AGENDA**  
**California Department of Fish and Game**  
**Yolo Wildlife Area Management Plan**  
**Fisheries Focus Meeting**  
**April 3, 2006**  
**9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Purpose:** To review the preliminary draft Land Management Plan (LMP) and receive focused input on fisheries management and opportunities on the Wildlife Area.

**9:00 Introduction** (*Dave Feliz, Yolo Wildlife Area Manager, Chris Fitzer, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Purpose of meeting
- Discussion of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act analysis
- Project Schedule
- Questions and Answers

**9:20 Land Management Framework for the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz*)

- Land use
- Water use
- Dependant/Co-equal uses of the Wildlife Area
  - Habitat
  - Agriculture
  - Recreation
  - Flood Management
  - Partnerships

**10:30 LMP Management Goals and Tasks**

- Review of LMP organization
- Role of fisheries in Yolo Wildlife Area long-term management
- Goals and Tasks –proposed fisheries projects/actions
- Opportunities not yet considered
- Questions and Answers

**12:00 Next Steps and Adjourn**

**Yolo Wildlife Area  
Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan  
Fisheries Resources Focus Meeting  
Flip Chart Notes  
April 3, 2006**

1. Sacramento Perch introduction will require an active persistent management program. The current introduction program is not necessarily intended near-term to create a sustainable population.
2. The original goal of a recent Putah Creek CALFED proposal included fish habitats. Further analysis has shown that habitat in the lower area of the proposed project requires significant mechanistics to make habitat development feasible.
3. There are opportunities to enhance/support food web production and conduct associated research, particularly as it relates to pelagic organism decline (POD). Such research would improve understanding of baseline conditions and understand transport mechanisms, particularly in low flow years. Managed wetlands could play a key role in dry years and months.
  - Such study would not focus so much on detritus production, but rather on zoo- and phyto plankton.
  - How does this web idea co-exist with Mercury (Hg) concerns?
4. Hg accumulation in salmon appears to be low. Resident species are showing higher levels.
5. Hg accumulation in salmon appears to be low. Resident species are showing higher levels.
6. How can the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) use more innovative ways to manage flooding for fish? We need to think of the Bypass as a whole. Not merely the YWA.
  - Enhance the location of uses apropos to the physical conditions. This can help minimize use conflicts
  - Frequent localized flooding impacts other lands and wildlife. Creates a nuisance for landowners and managers and we need to be aware of, and sensitive to this.
  - Can we implement structural system changes in the context of current hydrology that can enhance habitat opportunities, (e.g., setback levees on interior of toe drain. “a Bypass within the Bypass”, or an excavated shelf. Decreasing land elevations for small locations and short linear distances.)
  - Innovative ideas must accommodate operational costs/realities/future economics, YWA relies on agriculture revenue to survive.
  - Design pool/riffle features into Putah Creek, bank side points, etc. to minimize mechanical management. Replicate natural morphology/ecology in a redirected Putah Creek channel. Include special ponds (might need pumping) for split tail management.
  - Changes in tidally-related inundation of land upstream of the Lisbon Weir is more likely to impact agricultural land management and facilities that are in place.
  - Conversely, such lands could expand volumetric capacity of tidal flows upstream of the Lisbon Weir and could coexist with existing uses.
  - Need to assess/enhance agriculture/fish compatibility.



7. The YWA Land Management Plan (LMP) should establish a process to set land use/water use priorities and associated criteria to do so.
  - Priorities would require a broader, diverse group of stakeholders involved in such discussions.
8. Need to identify which projects fit best within the LMP and further identify other projects that are worth pursuing partnered resources for, albeit not necessarily a focus of the YWA.
9. Need to ensure that the LMP does not preclude the pursuit of future fisheries projects on and off the YWA. LMP should not be a barrier to the future.
  - The LMP allows for/supports an adaptive management process to accommodate changing conditions. It allows for periodic updates.
  - The LMP should acknowledge the need for changes in fisheries priorities and memorialize that such priorities could be key/required changes.
10. Timing is a key variable that could support a lack/minimization of conflict between fisheries goals and agricultural land management. (e.g., approximate December-March land and water uses)
11. Do not overlook adjustments to the Lisbon Weir that could benefit other migrating species (e.g., enhancing a corridor concept). Do not assume that a Putah realignment minimizes needs for Lisbon Weir improvements for other species.
  - DFG is reticent to address projects that enhance migration of species to an u/s barrier.
12. Use of Putah Creek as fish passage to upstream reaches is analogous to the use of Toe Drain for fish passage to the Fremont Weir and Cache Creek (and downstream as well). Putah Creek runs through the YWA, the Toe Drain runs along the eastern boundary, both connect with the YWA. This concept should be further memorialized in the LMP.
  - DFG does not believe these are analogous due to existing policy and jurisdictional conditions on Putah Creek (e.g., The Creek Accord). No similar policy or statute exists for the Toe Drain and upstream locations.
13. Need to consider creating a task force that better assesses and problem solves the agricultural and fish management interface.
14. Could the YWA be compensated for a potential loss of agricultural lands by CALFED ERP funds?
15. State budget shortfall tie DFG hands/makes them dependant on agricultural revenues.
16. The Fremont Weir barrier will likely undergo legal challenge in future. Some agency (e.g., USACE, DWR, DFG) will be held accountable to address and/or resolve this condition.
17. DWR goal/process right now is to address Fremont Weir options conceptually.
18. How would a Putah Creek realignment best operate hydrologically? Intermittent use of return flows, or perennial flows in the Creek?
  - Putah Creek was historically intermittent.
  - Operations and maintenance on adjacent water management canals would be impacted by perennial creek flows.
  - Intermittent flows could prohibit migration of non-native/predatory fishes.

19. The management of YWA has regional implications and offers regional benefits.
20. There should be a focused, public discussion about the Fremont Weir to problem solve its challenges. Someone would need to identify who would sponsor/convene such a discussion.
21. Fremont Weir modification advocates should consider how to bring forward more concrete ideas as a means to best facilitate weir-related discussions.
22. Fremont Weir modifications would potentially create nuisance flooding/impacts to landowners in return of uncertain fisheries benefits. Such changes would likely result in a lack of landowner support.

**AGENDA**  
**California Department of Fish and Game**  
**Yolo Wildlife Area Management Plan**  
**Public Uses Focus Meeting**  
**April 4, 2006**  
**6:30 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Purpose:** To review the preliminary draft Land Management Plan (LMP) and receive focused input on public use opportunities on the Wildlife Area.

**6:30 Introduction** (*Dave Feliz, Yolo Wildlife Area Manager, Chris Fitzer, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Purpose of meeting
- Discussion of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act analysis
- Project Schedule
- Questions and Answers

**6:45 Land Management Framework for the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz*)

- Land use
- Water use
- Dependant/Co-equal uses of the Wildlife Area
  - Habitat
  - Agriculture
  - Recreation
  - Flood Management
  - Partnerships

**7:30 LMP Management Goals and Tasks**

- Review of LMP organization
- Role of public uses in Yolo Wildlife Area long-term management
- Goals and Tasks –proposed public use projects/actions
- Opportunities not yet considered
- Questions and Answers

**9:00 Next Steps and Adjourn**

**Yolo Wildlife Area  
Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan  
Public Use Focus Meeting  
Flip Chart Notes  
April 4, 2006**

1. What is the basis for the proposed sanctuary areas on the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA)?
  - Avoid highway footprint
  - Provide refugia from hunting areas
  - Use previously undisturbed areas
  - Avoid moving sanctuary areas around over time.
2. Is there organic rice?
  - It is not supported by vector control district. Not economically feasible.
3. How will public uses be prioritized?
  - Funding availability will be needed for some uses.
  - Wildlife compatibility is required as per Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Fish and Game Commission.
4. Support construction of cross-bypass bike trail. A potential partner is the City of West Sacramento.
5. Can lead bike tours be created to teach cyclists how to work in a wildlife area?
6. Operations and maintenance on bike trails will be very costly. Interested parties will need to seek partners.
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of different potential land use distributions? Re: location of hunting and other uses. Does one configuration make more sense?
  - No obvious benefit so far.
8. Support the idea of a central closed area in concert with segregated uses.
9. What is known about previous hunt clubs that have closed?
10. Can hunting areas be opened for general public use on non-hunt days?
  - Generally not supported to allow birds to rest.
11. Is it feasible to construct a wildlife viewing tower?
  - Yes and likely. It is analogous to the existing pump towers.
  - Such projects could be earmarked for public contributions as a means to collect funding.
12. What is status of boat use during floods?
  - DFG does not want to be liable but would support responsible boat uses compatible with wildlife area.
13. Is it possible to provide access for kids to play/interact with mud, wetlands, water?
  - Yes as long as bank slopes are safe. That is the purpose of the existing demonstration wetlands.
14. How many acres of permanent ponds and could they be opened for fishing.

15. Has distribution of habitat types and acreage been decided, particularly re: flood control compatibility?
  - Not yet.
16. Improve public outreach tools to get public out to YWA more often.
17. Could Riparian habitat adjacent to Greens Lake be expanded?
  - Potentially yes.
18. Create targeted tour and trail routes to maximize species diversity observation.
19. With proper signage, cyclists can be expected to behave in a compatible manner with bird populations.  
Bicycles should be accommodated/supported to use YWA as a destination.
20. One potential idea is to segregate auto and bicycle use but provide positive wildlife viewing experience for all users.

**AGENDA**  
**California Department of Fish and Game**  
**Yolo Wildlife Area Management Plan**  
**Flood Management Focus Meeting**  
**April 7, 2006**  
**9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Purpose:** To review the preliminary draft Land Management Plan (LMP) and receive focused input on hydraulic modeling workplan and development of performance criteria.

**9:00 Introduction** (*Dave Feliz, Yolo Wildlife Area Manager, Chris Fitzer, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Purpose of meeting
- Discussion of the LMP and California Environmental Quality Act analysis
- Project Schedule
- Questions and Answers

**9:15 Land Management Framework for the Yolo Wildlife Area** (*Dave Feliz*)

- History and background
- Existing flood conveyance conditions of the YWA
- Bypass flow conveyance requirements/constraints
- Current Wetlands management in the Wildlife Area
  - Existing agreements
  - Operations and maintenance
- LMP restoration-specific goals and tasks
  - Seasonal and permanent wetlands
  - Riparian corridors
  - Putah Creek realignment

**9:30 Overview and Application of Two-Dimensional Hydraulic Model (RMA2 Yolo Bypass Model)**  
(*Chris Bowles and Chris Campbell, PWA*)

- Model overview
- Application of the model to the restoration design process at Yolo Wildlife Area
  - Guide design of future restoration projects
  - Confirm achievement of performance criteria

**9:45 Discussion on Application of the 2-D Model to the Yolo Wildlife Area**

- Development of Hydraulic Modeling Workplan
- Development of Performance Criteria
- Discussion on Model Update and Maintenance Requirements

**12:00 Next Steps and Adjourn**

**Yolo Wildlife Area  
Preliminary Draft Land Management Plan  
Flood Management Focus Meeting  
Flip Chart Notes  
April 7, 2006**

1. There is an upcoming study by UC Davis (Lev Kavvas) to assess roughness coefficients of native vegetation. The results should be coordinated with the 2 Dimensional (2D) model.
2. 1986 & 1997 flood events are believed to be 70 year +/- events. It is believed that we have not measured a 100-year event yet in the Bypass.
3. There is believed to be a disparity between baseline conditions (design surface) and project performance. They are not the same. The project does not perform as historically designed. Flood interests do not necessarily agree to a fixed baseline condition. There may be a need for flexibility in land conditions to accommodate current/future flows.
4. Current agricultural practices and management of small land features (berms, etc.) do not generally require a Reclamation Board Encroachment Permit. Such changes are not generally considered a Project.
5. What other permits are required for projects on the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA)? Who has jurisdiction?
  - Current sense is that most agencies/jurisdictions defer to the Rec. Board for flood convey.
6. There are potential ideas to expand the capacity of the Bypass structurally. Could such expansion allow greater flexibility to develop more vegetation/habitat?
  - This idea creates a debate over what is the appropriate “use” of expanded capacity. Flood conveyance or habitat?
7. Some habitat advocates believe it is important to be conservative in setting/pursuing habitat goals to ensure/protect partnerships with flood management interests.
8. Make sure that pursuit of future goals/actions does not threaten the basis of existence/current function of the YWA.
9. It is very important to assess/understand why the Bypass is believed not to function at design flow.
  - Is this due to physical conditions?
  - Does this reflect better assessment tools (models)?
10. The YWA Land Management Plan should have a flood control goal. It is not sufficient to only acknowledge DFG’s obligation to maintain flood conveyance.
11. The new, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2D model is expected to be complete in few weeks.
12. The Department of Water Resources has maintenance ideas to limit wave wash other impacts. These ideas could be mutually compatible with YWA management.
13. How will YWA management adjust to changing physical conditions (e.g., sea level rise)?
14. How will the lack of a maintenance plan for the new 2D model be addressed/resolved?
  - Can a maintenance fee be assessed on all parties filing to an Encroachment Permit in Bypass?
15. Can future habitat actions near levees use different, appropriate vegetation to minimize wave energy? Have different species been assessed for best/worst performance.

## A-7 AGENDA AND SUMMARY OF THE AUGUST 16, 2007 PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

### AGENDA California Department of Fish and Game Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan and Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration

August 16, 2007  
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

**Purpose:** To seek public comments on the Draft Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan (LMP) and Initial Study (IS)/Proposed Negative Declaration (ND)

**6:00 Welcome and Purpose of Meeting** (*Chris Fitzner, EDAW*)

- Participant introductions
- Agenda
- Purpose of meeting
- Project schedule

**6:05 LMP Development Process** (*Chris Fitzner, EDAW*)

**6:10 Overview of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area LMP and IS/ND**  
(*Dave Feliz, DFG and Chris Fitzner, EDAW*)

- History, purpose, and mission
- Property Description
- Management Setting
- Environmental Setting
- Compatible Resource Management and Public Use
- Management Goals
- Operations and Maintenance
- Future Revisions to the LMP
- Environmental Review
- Next Steps

**6:50 Public Comments** (*facilitated by Ron Unger, EDAW*)

**9:00 Adjourn**



**YOLO BYPASS WILDLIFE AREA LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**INITIAL STUDY/PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**  
**PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING**  
**SUMMARY MEETING NOTES**

DATE: August 16, 2007  
TIME: 6:00 pm  
LOCATION: Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters, Davis, CA

ATTENDEES:

Dave Feliz, California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)  
Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation (Foundation)  
Chris Fitzer, EDAW  
Bonnie Turner, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)  
Curtis Alling, EDAW  
Ron Unger, EDAW  
Teresa LeBlanc, DFG  
Dawn Calciano, Putah Creek Council  
Don Morrill, Foundation  
Mariko Yamada, Yolo County Board of Supervisors  
Melanie Pope, Foundation  
Dee Feliz, Foundation  
Spencer Larsen, DFG  
John Currey, Dixon Resource Conservation District (RCD)  
Mary Schiedt, DFG, Yolo Audubon, Sac Valley CNPS

SPEAKERS:

Bonnie Turner, WCB  
Spencer Larson, DFG  
Robin Kulakow, Foundation  
Mariko Yamada, Yolo County Board of Supervisors  
John Currey, Dixon RCD  
Mary Schiedt, DFG  
Dawn Calciano, Putah Creek Council

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR POINTS RAISED IN PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Description of Major Points:</b>
Bonnie Turner, WCB	1	Be sure to acknowledge Robin Kulakow’s participation in the plan preparation. It was essential for the plan’s success.
Spencer Larson, DFG	2	If there are changes to the plan, would they constitute a major revision that requires Regional Manager approval? Dave Feliz: If there were major changes, a public review process would be needed. Teresa LeBlanc: DFG regulations allow appropriate discretion on the part of the Regional Manager, which is part of the adaptive management approach of the plan. There is considerable flexibility built into the plan.
Spencer Larson, DFG	3	Chemical spraying in the Wildlife Area is a concern. It has become more of an issue because of the mosquito abatement. Will there be a policy to protect the public, such as closing trails or areas, when spraying is going on? The concern is for public safety of visitors and employees, because what is being sprayed is not known, unless one asks the farmer directly. Dave Feliz: The plan includes tasks related to management coordination. This can be used to help ensure the health and safety of employees and visitors.
Robin Kulakow	4	The Sac-Yolo Mosquito Abatement District receives the school visiting schedule to help the district avoid spraying when school visits are occurring.
John Currey	5	Spraying contractors can be made to secure permission before spraying. This can be included in lease agreements for agricultural tenants. DFG could consider prioritizing visitor use over other wildlife area activities/uses.
Mary Scheidt	6	Can we get greater control of the aerial spraying by neighboring landowners, as well, because sometimes planes fly right over staff and facilities, and it is not known what is being sprayed?
Mariko Yamada, Yolo County Board of Supervisors	7	Yolo County regulations for spraying are strict, so there are controls. Good communication and coordination are important, and it’s important to recognize the value of spraying in protection of public health (i.e., mosquitoes) and food.
John Currey	8	Communication is necessary with the few applicators in the region to be sure that pilots are made sensitive about the location of public facilities, so they can avoid sensitive areas. Dave Feliz: Sometimes people’s perception is worse than what is really happening, but we are still concerned about people’s concerns. We have and can continue to use agricultural leases as a means to ensure coordination occurs and that these issues are properly addressed.
Dawn Calciano, Putah Creek Council	9	A solid connection between the creek and toe drain should remain for purposes of anadromous fish passage and fishing recreation, including if a Putah Creek restoration project were proposed. The check dam boards should be allowed to be opened as needed. Any change in the toe drain, realigning Putah Creek, or otherwise restoring Putah Creek in the Yolo Bypass should take this connection into account and should ensure that the conditions of the Putah Creek Settlement Agreement [Putah Creek Accord as overseen by the LPCCC] continue to be met.
Robin Kulakow	10	DWR has looked at water flows between the toe drain and Putah Creek and is very attentive to maintaining agreements for a continued connection.
Dawn Calciano, Putah Creek Council	11	We support wetland restoration in the Yolo Bypass. What is happening with mercury and methylmercury in the Yolo Bypass? Dave Feliz: Initial data shows that water leaving a seasonal wetland had higher mercury levels than entering water, but water leaving permanent, deeper-water wetlands showed reduced mercury levels than entering waters (de-methylation). This gives us ideas to explore for controlling methylmercury by directing water through permanent wetlands after it flows through seasonal wetlands or rice fields; to reduce potential methylation. It needs to be studied and more research is continuing, but the problem does not appear to be so dire now that we have a better, more specific understanding of it. The placement of seasonal and permanent wetlands may become an important management strategy for controlling methylmercury. Bioaccumulation in the food chain is also being studied further. Chris Fitzer: The Yolo Bypass is an excellent living laboratory for finding ways to resolve high mercury levels and address the wetland/mercury methylation issue.
Robin Kulakow	12	She applauded DFG for the extensive public meeting process, including the early review of the preliminary plan. It was instrumental in the success of the plan.

## **A-8 SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE DRAFT LMP AND INITIAL STUDY**

During and following the public comment meeting on August 16, 2007, individuals and organizations submitted letters for consideration in the development of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area LMP and Initial Study. Following receipt of all public comments, some changes to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area LMP were made and responses to public comments were prepared. A description of changes and responses follows.

### **GENERAL RESPONSES**

The majority of the comment letters received on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area LMP expressed support, endorsement, and/or acknowledged appreciation for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and development of the LMP. A single general response to this type of comment is provided below.

#### **GENERAL RESPONSE—SUPPORT AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF APPRECIATION FOR THE YOLO BYPASS WILDLIFE AREA LMP**

Many commenters expressed support, endorsement, and/or acknowledged appreciation for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and development of the LMP. The DFG and Yolo Basin Foundation greatly appreciate this support and, in-turn, would like to acknowledge the many Wildlife Area partners, volunteers, and users, as well as the local civic leaders and other stakeholders that have made the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area a model for other areas throughout the state and nation. This on-going community support and appreciation has provided the basis for one of the nation's most exciting developments in wetland conservation and education.

### **SPECIFIC RESPONSES**

A number of comments on the public draft of the LMP were received in addition to comments addressed in general response above. These comments are addressed individually in this section.

STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. BOX 942849  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0008  
(916) 319-2008  
FAX (916) 319-2108  
DISTRICT OFFICE  
555 MASON STREET, SUITE 275  
VACAVILLE, CA 95688  
(707) 455-8025  
FAX (707) 455-0490

E-MAIL: [assemblymember.wolk@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:assemblymember.wolk@assembly.ca.gov)  
WEBSITE: [www.assembly.ca.gov/wolk](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/wolk)

Assembly  
California Legislature



LOIS WOLK  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, EIGHTH DISTRICT

CHAIR  
WATER, PARKS AND WILDLIFE  
COMMITTEES  
BANKING AND FINANCE  
BUDGET  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEES  
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON INFORMATION AND  
TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY  
BOARDS  
PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION  
AND RENOVATION  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

August 7, 2007

Mr. Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

Subject: Support for the Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Mr. Feliz:


I am writing to endorse the Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area which you recently completed. The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area is the product of a nationally recognized process for cooperation in managing land for wildlife habitat, agriculture, and public use within an important floodway. The Management Plan recognizes these important uses and seeks to guide continued innovative multi-use management in the future. I appreciate that the Plan grew out of an inclusive community-wide discussion, involving several years of public outreach and stakeholder interaction facilitated by the Yolo Basin Foundation and the Department of Fish and Game.

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area is a valuable public asset for many reasons. It provides accessible opportunities for the public to interact with wildlife in a variety of ways. The unique combination of shorebird management, songbird and riparian habitat, as well as vernal pools, wetlands and grasslands creates a diverse mix of important habitats. The Management Plan recognizes the importance of maintaining a balance between agriculture and wildlife habitat, working with existing and future partnerships, cooperating with regional hiking and bicycling trail networks, cooperating with regional planning efforts such as the Yolo County Natural Heritage Program, providing environmental education for all ages, and supporting biological monitoring and research. The diversity of these goals and values reflects the inclusiveness of the consultative process you have employed.

I also support the expansion of wildlife viewing and other recreational, economic, restoration and preservation opportunities outlined in the plan. Discover the Flyway, public field trips, the Pacific Flyway Center, and expansion of the current wildlife viewing loop and creation of a new route to the south on the Tule Ranch are initiatives that are of particular importance for public education, recreation, tourism and other economic pursuits -- while preserving the habitat in a manner consistent with sustainable and wildlife-friendly agricultural practice. For all these reasons, I am pleased to offer my wholehearted support for the Plan.

Sincerely,

  
LOIS WOLK

cc: Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation 

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## COMMENT LETTER A

**Comment A-1:** Please see General Response.

MIKE THOMPSON

1ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT

REVENUE MEASURES

PERMANENT SELECT

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,

HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, ANALYSIS AND

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

MANAGEMENT



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

August 23, 2007

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
1040 MAIN STREET, SUITE 101  
NAPA, CA 94559  
(707) 226-9898

317 THIRD STREET, SUITE 1  
EUREKA, CA 95501  
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POST OFFICE BOX 2208  
FORT BRAGG, CA 95437  
(707) 962-0933

712 MAIN STREET, SUITE 101  
WOODLAND, CA 95695  
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CAPITOL OFFICE:  
231 CAYTON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3311

WEB: <http://mikethompson.house.gov>

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

Dear Mr. Feliz:

I am writing to express my strong support for the recently completed Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Established more than a decade ago, the Yolo Wildlife Area is the outcome of a nationally recognized process for bringing about cooperation in managing land for wildlife habitat, agriculture, and public use within an important floodway.

This new Management Plan recognizes these important uses and ensures that innovative management practices continue into the future. The Draft Plan is the outgrowth of inclusive community-wide discussion, the result of several years of public outreach and interaction facilitated by the Yolo Basin Foundation and the Department of Fish and Game. The conclusions, arrived at through exemplary stakeholder consultation, deserve widespread support.

The Management Plan recognizes the importance of: maintaining a balance between agriculture and wildlife habitat; working with existing and future partnerships; cooperating with regional hiking and bicycling trail networks; cooperating with regional planning efforts such as the Yolo County Natural Heritage Program; environmental education for all ages; biological monitoring; supporting research. The "Discover the Flyway" program, public field trips, the Pacific Flyway Center project, expansion of the current wildlife viewing loop and creation of a new route to the south on the Tule Ranch are initiatives that hold particular value for public education, recreation, tourism and other economic pursuits -- while preserving habitat in a manner consistent with sustainable and wildlife-friendly agricultural practice.

I commend everyone involved in the creation of the Land Management Plan for their dedication and exemplary stewardship of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.

Sincerely,

MIKE THOMPSON  
Member of Congress

MT:ef

Printed on recycled paper.  
♻️

**COMMENT LETTER B**

**Comment B-1:** Please see General Response.

**DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

14215 RIVER ROAD  
P.O. BOX 530  
WALNUT GROVE, CA 95690  
Phone (916) 776-2290  
FAX (916) 776-2293  
E-Mail: [dpc@citlink.net](mailto:dpc@citlink.net) Home Page: [www.delta.ca.gov](http://www.delta.ca.gov)



August 15, 2007

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
Ca Dept of Fish and Game  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, Ca  
95618

Dear Mr. Feliz:


**SUBJECT: Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
(SCH# 2007072099)**

Staff of the Delta Protection Commission ( Commission) has reviewed the Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area ( Bypass Plan), and has found that it supports the policies and recommendations of the Commission's Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta ( Management Plan), pursuant to the Delta Protection Act.

The Bypass Plan, as presented, demonstrates recognition of the importance of maintaining a balance between agriculture and wildlife habitat, working with existing and future partnerships, and cooperating with regional recreational endeavors, including hiking and bicycling trail networks. These are all values encouraged in the Management Plan for activities in the Primary Zone of the Delta.

In that the Bypass Plan is compatible with the Policies and Recommendations of the Management Plan, particularly in the areas of the environment, agriculture, and recreation and access, Commission staff supports your intent to move on to the next stage in your process of finalizing and implementing the Bypass Plan.

Sincerely,

  
Suzanne Butterfield  
Deputy Director, Special Projects

Cc: Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation



## COMMENT LETTER C

**Comment C-1:** Please see General Response.



August 17, 2007

## Putah Creek Council

MAILING: P.O. BOX 743 · DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95617  
OFFICE: 5189 PUTAH CREEK ROAD · WINTERS CA 95694

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

Subject: Support for the Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Mr. Feliz:

I am writing on behalf of the Putah Creek Council in support of the Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. The Putah Creek Council is dedicated to protecting and enhancing Putah Creek and its tributaries and has been closely following the proposed plans for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. We are excited about the plans to enhance Putah Creek's connection to the Toe Drain, especially for anadromous fish. We strongly support the continued operation of the check dam after the arrival of spring water releases to move salmon smolts from Putah Creek into the Toe Drain and research into a fish passage facility at the check dam.

We specifically support the management goals related to Putah Creek (Chapter 5 of the Plan):

- Subject to Reclamation Board approval, maintain and enhance riparian vegetation along Putah Creek and the East Toe Drain to serve as corridors for resident and migratory songbirds and nest sites for a variety of species.
- Improve habitat in the riparian ecosystems at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area through enhancement of existing riparian areas and establishment of new riparian habitats as permitted. Maintain and enhance riparian vegetation along Putah Creek and the East Toe Drain to provide nest trees and brush for resident and migratory songbirds, wading birds, and raptors.



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We support the projects related to Putah Creek and the East Toe Drain:

- Creating a new realigned Putah Creek channel through the Tule Ranch Unit (Putah Creek from above the Los Rios Check Dam to the East Toe Drain below the Lisbon Weir).
- Exploring the potential for restoration of intertidal marsh habitat and/or seasonal managed floodplain habitat at the southeast portion of Tule Ranch adjacent to the East Toe Drain for the benefit of native birds such as black rail and native fish species such as splittail, in ways that are compatible with salmonid restoration.
- Improve coordination and enhancement of spring passage of Chinook salmon smolts emigrating from Putah Creek through the Los Rios Check Dam to the East Toe Drain.
- Coordinate annual replacement of the check dam after the arrival of spring water releases from the Solano Diversion Dam intended to move salmon smolts from Putah Creek into the toe drain.
- Consider the construction of a fish passage facility at the check dam to move adult salmon upstream and smolts downstream.
- Restore native fish to Greens Lake and permanent ponds including Sacramento perch. Stocking of this fish species may also serve as a biological control agent for mosquitoes.
- Continue coordination and enhancement of fall passage of Chinook salmon immigrating from the East Toe Drain through the Los Rios Check Dam to Putah Creek.
- Consider the construction of a fish passage facility at the Los Rios Check Dam to allow passage of adult salmon upstream and juveniles downstream while still maintaining the Los Rios Check Dam in place.
- Improve Lisbon Weir for both the passage of anadromous salmon into Putah Creek and increased water capture efficiency for irrigation purposes.

We appreciate the balanced objectives of the Plan for wildlife habitat, agriculture, and public use within the Yolo Basin floodway based on inclusive community-wide discussions.

We look forward to continuing our education and restoration efforts along Lower Putah Creek including collaboration with the State Department of Fish and Game and the Yolo Basin Foundation. We support the plans efforts to enhance fish and wildlife habitat, especially salmonid spawning habitat, and to improve the riparian corridor that connects the Yolo Bypass with the Coast Range.

Sincerely,



Dawn Calciano  
Executive Director  
(530) 795-3006

## COMMENT LETTER D

**Comment D-1:** Please see General Response.

## Memorandum

Date: August 23, 2007

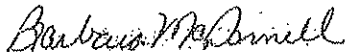
To: Mr. Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters  
Department of Fish and Game  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, California 95618

From: Department of Water Resources

Subject: Yolo Basin Wildlife Area Land Management Plan Public Comments

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Yolo Basin Wildlife Area Land Management Plan. The document provides the reader a comprehensive description of the Yolo Basin Wildlife Area spanning the range of cultural, natural, and social aspects from past to future. The informative photos and maps add a visual understanding to the detailed text that explains the management goals and tasks the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) proposes to undertake in managing the Wildlife Area. Attached you will find a list of specific Department of Water Resources (DWR) Comments.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Teresa Fong, Engineer WR, with the Division of Environmental Services at (916) 651-1419.



Barbara McDonnell, Chief  
Division of Environmental Services  
Department of Water Resources

Attachments

cc: (See attached list.)

L. Ryan Broddrick, Director  
Department of Fish and Game  
1416 Ninth Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

Sandra Morey, Regional Manager  
Department of Fish and Game  
Region 2  
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A  
Rancho Cordova, California 95670

Brad Burkholder  
Central Valley Bay-Delta  
Department of Fish and Game  
Region 3  
4001 North Wilson Way  
Stockton, California 95205

Chuck Armor  
Central Valley Bay-Delta  
Department of Fish and Game  
Region 3  
4001 North Wilson Way  
Stockton, California 95205

Laurie Briden  
Central Valley Bay-Delta  
Department of Fish and Game  
Region 3  
4001 North Wilson Way  
Stockton, California 95205

### Section 3.1 Planning Influences and Considerations

- The Land Management Plan (LMP) does not list the Delta Smelt Action Plan (October 2005) nor the Pelagic Fish Action Plan (March 2007), both co-written by The Resources Agency, DWR and DFG prior to completion of the draft LMP. Given the long timeframe it takes to put together a large document such as the LMP, it is understandable that these potential source documents may have been overlooked. However, these plans are reflective of current policy direction. It would be appropriate to recognize the opportunity to study, and perhaps stimulate the food web through management of the Wildlife Area in the LMP, as Opportunities or Goals, if not as tasks, in the LMP.
- 3.1.13 paragraph 1 (page 17) Passage and habitat for Chinook salmon and Sacramento splittail are mentioned. Sturgeon is omitted. All native species should be stated here.

### Section 3.4 Geomorphology, Hydrology, and Water Quality

- 3.4.2, (page 7) Water leaves the Yolo Bypass either via the Toe drain [or Liberty Cut] at Prospect Slough, [via Shag Slough, or] over the southern end of Liberty Island to Cache Slough.

### Section 3.5 Biological Resources

- 3.5.1, Unmanaged Open Water Habitat (page 9) No mention is made of the benefits of this habitat to native fishes.
- 3.5.3, Putah Creek (page 44) paragraph 1. The Los Rios Dam is a 12-foot-high, 30-foot-long concrete box culvert
- 3.5.3, Putah Creek (page 44) paragraph 1. It would be more accurate to state that The Los Rios Check Dam is currently being managed primarily for use in irrigation, and secondarily to facilitate the migration of fall-run Chinook salmon. Flashboards have been removed in conjunction with pulse flow releases from the Putah Diversion Dam (PDD) as soon as the irrigation season ends. In recent years this has occurred in late November or early December, well over a month after the arrival of Chinook salmon in the East Toe Drain. The Los Rios Check Dam is needed for irrigation during the same time that salmon arrive (early to mid-October based on DWR fyke trap sampling). The direct observations of DWR fisheries biologists are that there are few holding areas below the Dam and that the water conditions below the Dam are marginal for salmon in October and November.

We are encouraged to see in the LMP several potential projects to improve upstream and downstream passage along Putah Creek when salmon are present. In Chapter 6, Operations and Maintenance, Table 6.1-1, pages 6-13 and 6-14, the LMP identifies several promising approaches as potential projects under Aquatic Ecosystems Goals 1 and 3.

- 3.5.3, Green Sturgeon (page 51) Green sturgeon have been recorded in the toe of the Yolo Bypass and Cache Slough. This is not mentioned.

#### **Chapter 4 Compatible Resource Management and Public Use**

- 4.2.1, General Public-Use Activities (page 12 Bullet 9) "DFG may prohibit or restrict the use of dogs." Suggest explicit exception for assistance dogs.
- 4.3, last paragraph (page 13) Management of the Wildlife Area will continue to speak frequently with flood protection and vector control personnel, and local farmers on a daily basis. Consider including frequent coordination with other resource management agencies?

#### **Chapter 5 Management Goals**

- 5.2.1.3, Nonnative Invasive Species (page 17) The YBWA should integrate pest and weed management employed by organic farms to minimize the impact to the aquatic food web.

#### **Chapter 6 Operations and Maintenance**

- We appreciate that the Draft LMP does include consideration of measures to enhance aquatic habitat for native fish species and that restoration and enhancement of riparian vegetation ... where compatible with flood management (page 6-6) is within the task description. It is good to see restoration and enhancement of Putah Creek and associated aquatic habitats and ecological processes in the seasonal floodplain specifically listed as an opportunity (page 5-5).



- Page 6-7 Some tasks read much more as goals (e.g. SG-8.2, Support bat diversity), and many tasks have a great amount of overlap. At the 5-Year Revision, it may be useful to structure budgeting around a smaller number of specific actions, many of which will serve multiple goals (e.g. Flood-up and drain fields in a timely manner, in coordination with Vector Control, etc. to serve... shorebird benefits, vegetation management, vector control compliance, etc.). It might also be helpful to focus on achieving a subset of the larger goals. The job descriptions for given staff are much clearer, and might serve as a source for a more streamlined set of tasks.
- Table 6.1-1 (pages 6-13 and 6-14), Aquatic Ecosystems Goals Additional fish monitoring may be required to assure timely information regarding Chinook salmon presence in the Toe Drain. In the past, DWR has conducted sampling in the Toe Drain, and has notified the Wildlife Area Manager when the first salmon are caught in the fyke trap as an indication of their presence. The funding and future of DWR's monitoring in the Yolo Bypass is uncertain. In the absence of continued monitoring data, DFG could also base fish passage-related operations on the typical recorded arrival of the salmon in early to mid-October.
- We support allocation of additional staff and O&M budget for the YBWA. Wildlife Area Manager Dave Feliz's work is responsible for the wide range of tasks described in the LMP. The LMP outlines an ambitious undertaking to achieve full implementation. Even with the larger staff proposed, Wildlife Area Management may be hard pressed to perform all the monitoring proposed, particularly with the hours allotted. It may be appropriate to designate some studies and monitoring for contracted studies or collaborative efforts with others. It might also be helpful to focus on achieving a subset of tasks in any given 3 or 5-year period. Lack of sufficient staffing and O&M budget has at times appeared to be a barrier to consideration and development of projects, postponing projects with great ecological merit such as floodplain habitat restoration, fish passage improvement, and potential stimulation of the food web (See Pelagic Fish Action Plan).
- 6.3.2, (page 4 Bullet 11) Riparian [Habitat] Joint Venture

#### Chapter 7 Future Revisions to Plans

- 7.2, Five-Year Plan Status Reports (page 2 Bullet 4), Consider including a process for incorporating feedback during "evaluation of the effectiveness of DFG's coordination efforts with CALFED, local governments, and other property management and regulatory agencies involved in the Yolo Bypass".

#### Chapter 9 References and Personal Communications

- Page 13, "Kirkland, M., R. Beckwith," should read "Kirkland, M., R. Beckwith,"

## COMMENT LETTER E

- Comment E-1:** Please see General Response.
- Comment E-2:** Changes have been made referencing the *Delta Smelt Action Plan* and the *Pelagic Fish Action Plan* in Section 3.1.
- Comment E-3:** Changes to text have been made to address comments.
- Comment E-4:** Changes to text have been made to address comments.
- Comment E-5:** Reader is referred to Section 3.5.3 for a discussion on fish utilization of open water habitat.
- Comment E-6:** Change to text has been made to address comment.
- Comment E-7:** Change to text has been made to address comments. The timing of flashboard removal at the Los Rios Dam for purposes of salmon migration facilitation is based on coordination with California Department of Water Resources.
- Comment E-8:** Comment noted.
- Comment E-9:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.
- Comment E-10:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.
- Comment E-11:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.
- Comment E-12:** The Wildlife Area considers the integration of weed management employed by organic farms; however, implementation of organic farming practices is limited by vector management requirements.
- Comment E-13:** Comment noted. Please see General Response.
- Comment E-14:** Comment noted. Wildlife Area staff will consider the identification of a smaller number of specific actions geared to achieve multiple goals for budgeting purposes during 5-year reviews.
- Comment E-15:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.
- Comment E-16:** Comment noted. If monitoring needs can not be met, DFG will pursue additional funding sources and consider contracting and/or collaborating with others to implement monitoring programs.
- Comment E-17:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.
- Comment E-18:** Comment noted. Basic conceptual level processes are identified throughout Chapter 7 and in the general context of descriptions of adaptive management (see Chapter 5).
- Comment E-19:** Changes to text have been made to address comment.

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

23 Russell Boulevard - Davis, California 95616  
530/757-5602 - FAX: 530/757-5603 - TDD: 530/757-5666



August 22, 2007

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

**Subject: City of Davis - Support for the Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area**

Dear Mr. Feliz:

I am writing to inform you of the City of Davis' support the Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area which you have recently completed. The City has been a supporter of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area since its inception and is pleased to see that the Draft Management Plan continues to encourage cooperation in managing the Wildlife Area for habitat, agriculture, and public use within an important floodway. We applaud this Management Plan for recognizing these important uses and setting the stage for continuing your innovative management into the future.

We also recognize that this Plan is based on an inclusive community-wide discussion, the result of several years of public outreach and interaction facilitated by the Yolo Basin Foundation and the Department of Fish and Game. In the spirit of your comprehensive collection of input, City staff has provided specific comments regarding the Plan (Attached) that we believe will further improve on the draft document. Please consider these comments as you work to complete the Plan.

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area is a valuable public asset for many reasons. In particular it is an important source of opportunities for the public to interact with wildlife in a variety of ways. The unique combination of shorebird management, songbird and riparian habitat, as well as vernal pool, seasonal and permanent wetlands and grasslands creates a diverse mix of important habitats for resident and migratory birds, as well as rare and sensitive plant, reptile and fish species.

The Management Plan recognizes the importance of

- maintaining a balance between agriculture and wildlife habitat
- working with existing and future partnerships
- cooperating with regional hiking and bicycling trail networks
- cooperating with regional planning efforts such as the Yolo County Natural Heritage Program



*Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Draft Management Plan  
City of Davis Letter of Support  
August 22, 2007*

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- environmental education for all ages
- biological monitoring
- supporting research

The diversity of these goals and values reflects the inclusiveness of the process you have employed. The ability of Fish and Game and its partners to achieve them reflects the strength of the partnerships created through the consultative process.

The City supports the expansion of wildlife viewing and other recreational, economic, restoration and preservation opportunities outlined in the plan. Discover the Flyway, public field trips, the Pacific Flyway Center, expansion of the current wildlife viewing loop and creation of a new route to the south on the Tule Ranch, and improved bicycle access are initiatives that are of particular importance for public education, recreation, tourism and other economic pursuits -- while preserving the habitat in a manner consistent with sustainable and wildlife-friendly agricultural and operational practices.

The City of Davis looks forward to working with the State Department of Fish and Game in making the expansion of wildlife habitat and viewing opportunities possible.

Sincerely,



Bill Emlen  
Davis City Manager

encl.

H:\OPENS\PA\Wildlife Area - Flyway Center - Bypass\Wildlife Area Management Plan 2007\draft LMP support letter\_Davis 8-07.doc

Attachment 1

**City of Davis Staff Comments Regarding  
the Draft Yolo Wildlife Area Management Plan**

1. Page 3.4-30, third paragraph. As written the text states that specific constituents are "high" or sources are "large." This is truly relative. Specific sources are characterized as being "contaminating" lending to characterizing the source as a pollutant as opposed to a naturally occurring mineral. The following text is offered to illustrate a more accurate means of reflecting the findings.

*"Erosion and groundwater discharge . . . resulted in release of high boron and mercury concentrations to the Cache Creek watershed. Mercury . . . erosion of naturally occurring mercury contaminating latent soils, geothermal . . . sediments and water (Central Valley RWQCB 2004). High Elevated quantities of mercury travel . . . high flows. Consequently, high concentrations of mercury have has been detected in the Yolo Bypass. The Cache Creek watershed is a large significant source of mercury contamination in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (. . .). The Central Valley RWQCB adopted a TMDL to limit . . . A fish consumption advisory is in effect for high mercury levels in Clear Lake fish to protect human health due to concerns of bioaccumulation of mercury in fish tissue (. . .). Clear Lake is also listed as impaired by high elevated levels of nutrients. Cache Creek . . ."*

2. Page 3.4-30, fifth paragraph. The paragraph as constructed may be read to imply that City of Davis treated wastewater effluent is impairing Willow Slough Bypass. Not that the author intended to make such an implication, but we respectfully request that the paragraph be rewritten in such a manner to not make any such implication. The following text is offered:

*". . . noted invertebrate and algae impairment from unknown causes and sources. The City of Davis discharges its treated wastewater effluent to Willow Slough Bypass. The Central Valley RWQCB requires municipal dischargers such as the City of Davis to regularly perform effluent and receiving water toxicity testing for invertebrates and algae. Pesticide concentrations in Willow Slough Bypass waters have been measured to be high relative to above other Bypass tributary water bodies (Smalling et al. 2005)."*

3. Page 3.4-34, last paragraph. The statement "Generally, the highest concentrations of coliform organisms can be found in the vicinity of major municipal waste discharges." is unsupported. Is there a study that may be cited here? Wastewater dischargers are required to disinfect water prior to release into the receiving stream. It is likely that, similar to areas with concentrated urban runoff, areas with high

concentrations of wildlife would experience elevated concentrations of coliform organisms.

4. Page 3.4-35, first paragraph. The statement "Selenium has also been identified as a concern at the City of Davis Wetlands." in the context of the paragraph implies imminent impacts associated with bio accumulation selenium. The "concern" at the Davis Wetlands is no more so than that of the region. We recommend that you omit the original sentence and use the following in its place:

*"The City of Davis conducts ongoing food chain and avian egg monitoring for selenium bioaccumulation. No adverse effects have been detected during the last 7 years of monitoring (City of Davis, unpublished data)."*

5. 3.7-9. Don't forget Western Section of the Wildlife Society Conservationist of the Year Award (2007).
6. Page 4-10. How about potential connectivity of the YBWA and City of Davis Wetlands via trails?
7. 5-16. SS-1. We believe that the Plan should address maintenance impact avoidance for existing sensitive species. Pre-maintenance surveys could help to detect occurrence prior to ground disturbing activity. The timing of maintenance activity should be scheduled, to the greatest extent feasible, to accommodate life history characteristics (i.e. GGS and western pond turtle active season, SWHA and BUOW breeding seasons, etc.).

## **COMMENT LETTER F**

- Comment F-1:** Please see General Response.
- Comment F-2:** Changes to text have been made.
- Comment F-3:** Changes to text have been made.
- Comment F-4:** Statement regarding coliform organisms in the vicinity of municipal waste discharges has been removed.
- Comment F-5:** Changes to text have been made.
- Comment F-6:** Changes to text have been made.
- Comment F-7:** Evaluating the feasibility of connecting the Causeway Ranch with the Davis Wetlands through a trail system is identified under Public Use Goal 3 (PU-3), Task 12.
- Comment F-8:** Changes to text have been made.



Conserving California's waterfowl, wetlands, and waterfowling heritage.

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

Subject: Comments and Support for the Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Mr. Feliz:

The California Waterfowl Association (CWA) is writing to endorse the Draft Land Management Plan (LMP) for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (WA). CWA has been an active partner in the restoration and enhancement of the WA's habitats, the development of the public hunt program, and the education and outreach programs sponsored by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Yolo Basin Foundation (YBF). We feel that the WA and the recently completed LMP management plan exemplify our mission and core values.

California Waterfowl Association is hunting for a better California. We are a non-profit, hunter-supported conservation organization, named "Conservationist of the Year" in 2006 by the Wildlife Society. In the last 60 years we've restored, protected or enhanced more than 300,000 acres which provided wildlife habitat for millions of animals, and introduced more than 250,000 children to the wonders of the outdoors.

Thanks to strong partnerships and family involvement, CWA has been successful at connecting with Californians of all interests to our wetlands and wildlife resources. CWA stimulates youths and adults to value waterfowl and wetlands through unique outdoor exploration, hands-on learning, and active conservation. These experiences have the power to inspire stewardship, create family traditions for getting outdoors, and results in a legacy of abundant wildlife and



California Waterfowl Association healthy habitats for future generations.

4630 Northgate Blvd.  
Suite 150  
Sacramento, CA 95834

TEL: (916) 648-1406  
FAX: (916) 648-1665  
www.calwaterfowl.org

CWA is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization (94-1149574).



In concept, the LMP embodies our desire to promote, protect, restore, enhance, and enjoy California's natural resources and outdoor heritage, but a plan is only as good as its implementation. We feel that the current LMP is a very comprehensive and functional document, and if executed well, it will help create a true jewel in the Pacific Flyway.

Of particular importance to CWA, the draft LMP recognizes the value of the following;

- Recreational Use:** CWA supports all public uses described in the LMP, especially hunting and the concept of boat in access for hunting during winter flood periods. Other public hunting areas allow boat in access for hunting (North and South Freitas Units, and Tule Lake and Klamath NWRs). The WA has the potential to provide a unique hunting opportunity in the Sacramento area and CWA looks forward to working with DFG to develop these exciting opportunities.
- Central Valley Joint Venture:** The goals and objectives of the Central Valley Joint Venture are mentioned in the LMP. The need to provide not only wintering habitat, but also breeding habitat for resident waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife is of utmost importance to CWA.
- **Wildlife Area Habitat Committee (WAHC):** The need for adaptive management and the valuable oversight of WAHC is critical to the successful implementation of the LMP.
- Agriculture and Wildlife Compatibility:** The LMP recognizes that maintaining a balance between agriculture and wildlife habitat for not only financial stability, but also preservation of natural and cultural diversity is important.
- Partnerships:** The strength of the LMP lies in the contributions of the many partners that care for and dedicate time and energy to the WA. Maintaining these partnerships and developing future ones will aid in successfully implementation of the LMP.
- Environmental Education:** Educating the next generation of land stewards is critical to maintaining the health of California's natural lands.
- Biological Monitoring and Supporting Research:** Science is the backbone of adaptive management. Monitoring and research will help ensure that

management actions on and off the WA produce the highest and best use of the land and its associated habitats.

Of potential concern to CWA, the draft LMP may take into consideration the following;

**-Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan:** Although the LMP mentions the 2006 Central Valley Joint Venture Plan update, it does not reflect the most current version of the Plan. The plan update has been completed and is based on the most current science and includes current habitat acreage goals for the Yolo Basin and more descriptive management objectives for breeding waterfowl, shorebirds, and other water birds. How will the LMP incorporate the updated Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan?

**-Agriculture and Wildlife Incompatibility:** CWA believes that the WA's highest and best use is wildlife habitat. Although agricultural practices can provide valuable habitat (i.e. winter flooded rice), managed natural habitats are preferred. CWA understands that agriculture plays an important role on the WA and provides critical operating funds, but agricultural practices and revenues should not be at the expense of wildlife habitat. How will the DFG address future funding needs to maintain financial stability and ensure that the WA is managed for its highest and best use, wildlife habitat?

**-Grazing in Uplands:** The grazing practices described in the LMP may negatively impact desirable upland vegetation. Grazing can be a useful habitat management tool, but if misused can be detrimental to habitat, wildlife, and water control infrastructure. The LMP describes the grazing period as beginning in early to mid spring and ending in January. The waterfowl breeding season typically begins in early March and extends through June. Grazing of upland nesting fields during this time will negatively impact ground nesting birds, especially waterfowl and pheasants. The grazing of upland fields after the nesting season can be a useful management tool to control undesirable vegetation but only if done at low densities and for short durations. Removing all ground cover prior to the winter months eliminates valuable cover for pheasants and other birds. CWA has serious concerns that upland habitats will continue to be over grazed. CWA believes that the LMP should designate specific areas for upland nesting species to ensure that suitable habitat is available during the critical breeding months and is not impacted by grazing operations. In addition, the LMP should also delineate upland areas where grazing is limited to ensure that adequate upland cover is available for grassland dependent species during the fall and winter months. What will DFG do to

ensure that upland habitats continue to provide high quality nesting habitat and winter cover for grassland dependent species?

**-Grazing in Wetlands:** The LMP describes grazing as a valuable tool to enhance habitat by controlling undesirable vegetation, which reduces the need to mow or spray herbicides. This is true, but only with precise management. High density and long duration grazing negatively impacts wetland vegetation by removing not only undesirable plants, but also beneficial wetland plants such as tule, smartweed, watergrass, etc. In addition, grazing should only be done in wetlands when dry. Grazing in wet conditions compact the soils and increases erosion, this in turn facilitates silting of ditches and swales and the degradation of levees and other water control infrastructure. CWA has serious concerns that wetland habitats will continue to be over grazed in the future. What will DFG do to ensure that wetland habitats are not over grazed and provide the highest quality food resources and cover for migrating and breeding waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife?

**-Upland Irrigations and Management:** If not done at the appropriate time of year and for the proper duration, upland irrigations may also negatively impact ground nesting birds. CWA questions the utility of irrigating uplands and the perceived benefit to grassland dependent wildlife. The LMP describes irrigations as increasing invertebrate production, which is undoubtedly true, but proper wetland management throughout the WA should do the same. A cost benefit analysis should be done and consider the impacts that irrigations may have on ground nesting birds. If irrigations are necessary to produce feed for grazing operations and lost revenues is of concern, alternative funding should be sought to ensure that the WA prioritizes wildlife habitat values before all else. CWA would be interested in assisting the DFG with identifying alternative funding sources if it would guarantee that the highest and best use of the land is wildlife habitat. Additionally, more detail should be added to the LMP that delineates upland areas and their specific management designations. The LMP describes the importance of continued grazing in vernal pool areas, but other grassland areas may not require grazing except under special conditions. How will DFG address our concerns with upland irrigations and management?

**- Diversified Upland Habitat Units (DUHU):** CWA believes that DUHU practices may cause a reduction in waterfowl nest success. The potential increase in predator corridors introduced to the field with the inclusion of new waterways may negatively impact some ground nesting birds. Further study of DUHU sites should be conducted before being implemented on a wide scale at

the WA. Several years of nesting data have been collecting from Grizzly Island WA where DUHU practices have been implemented. Nest success has plummeted in these areas, which may be due in part to the introduction of DUHU management. An analysis of these data may shed some light on effect of DUHU management on grassland nesting birds. How will DFG address our concerns with DUHU implementation on the WA?

**-Seasonal/Moist Soil Wetland Habitat Management:** The LMP states that the focus of seasonal wetland habitat management is for swamp timothy instead of recognizing the need to manage for a diversity of moist soil waterfowl food plants. Swamp timothy is noted as being "a target species for managed seasonal wetlands at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area because it provides tremendous numbers of nutritious seeds for consumption by migratory waterfowl, its branch structure is an excellent substrate for invertebrate production, and its low stature presents very little resistance to flood waters moving through the Yolo Bypass." The same is true for both watergrass and smartweed, with the exception of its low stature. The LMP also recognizes that neither watergrass nor smartweed is considered to be an impediment to the floodway as characterized by the emergent vegetation restrictions listed in the updated hydraulic models. Only tules, trees, and structures are listed as potential threats to the floodway. CWA believes that the WA should also incorporate watergrass and smartweed management into the annual habitat management plan. This would require more active management, including timely drawdowns, periodic soil disturbance, and most importantly, summer irrigations. On the other hand, proper water management and timely irrigations would reduce or eliminate the need to mow or graze undesirable plants, such as clover and cocklebur, on an annual basis. Most undesirable plants can easily be prevented and/or controlled with proper water management. If the cost of additional management activities, including mosquito abatement fees is of concern, a cost benefit analysis should be done and should consider seed and invertebrate production (lbs/acre) and overall bird use. If it is determined that funding is the limiting factor in determining management practices, additional funding should be sought to ensure that the WA is providing the highest quality habitat possible. CWA would be willing to assist the department in locating additional funding to provide the highest quality moist soil wetland habitat management and more diverse seed production and wetland structure. Although the LMP mentions in the management goals section that 33% of the seasonal wetlands will be irrigated to produce watergrass, CWA is concerned that the LMP is too general when describing habitat management goals. More detail should be added to the LMP to include locations of moist soil management units and acreage goals for specific

vegetation types. The annual habitat management plan developed by the WA should reflect these goals and work to achieve them. The WA should be managed for a diversity of wetland vegetation types. How will DFG and the LMP address our concerns as outlined above? Will DFG manage for a diversity of wetland habitats, including watergrass, smartweed, and other beneficial wetland plants? How will these areas be determined and delineated?

**-Species Specific Habitat Management:** The LMP highlights innovative management practices for shorebirds in both agricultural rice lands and in seasonal wetlands. CWA is concerned that species specific management may skew the ratio of habitat types managed on the WA and reduce the diversity of actively managed natural wetland habitats. Again, more detail should be added to the LMP to identify habitat management goals by vegetation type and flooding schedule. The LMP, under the shorebird management section, discusses seasonal wetland management specifically for shorebirds and the utility of holding winter water until June before drawing down. Also, mentioned is the problem vegetation that is created by the extended period water is retained in the management unit. CWA questions the utility of this late drawdown. As described in "A Guide to Wetland Management in the Central Valley" produced by DFG, specific drawdown schedules are described to optimize wetland habitat management. During June and early July, seasonal wetlands should be irrigated to promote moist soil food plants. In doing so, the irrigations will also increase invertebrate production, control problem vegetation like cocklebur, and provide shallow water habitat for shorebirds and a wide variety of other wetland dependent wildlife. Whereas specific management for shorebirds may only benefit one guild, standard wetland management practices benefit many. How will DFG ensure that species specific management does not negatively impact habitat diversity on the WA?

**-Hunt Area Shift to the Tule Ranch:** The LMP introduces the idea of shifting all hunting activities south to the Tule Ranch. CWA has serious concerns with how this major adjustment in public use will affect hunters both on and off the wildlife area. This potential major change to the WA's public use should be carefully thought through and include further consultation with interested parties. Of the total acres available to hunters, actively managed wetlands should be prioritized. The large amount of upland acreage on the Tule Ranch should assume a lesser value when the ratio of hunted versus non hunted land is considered and ultimately determined. It appears as if the Tule Ranch is a much drier site with more topographic relief and may be more difficult to manage for highly productive wetland habitats. In combination with vernal pool acreage,

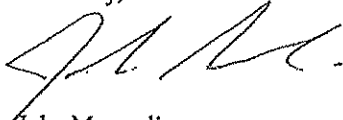
grazing leases, adjacent duck clubs and residences, CWA is very concerned that a public hunt program will be limited on the Tule Ranch. We also believe that hunting opportunities provided on the Tule Ranch will be of lesser quality, especially for waterfowl hunters. Areas north of the Tule Ranch provide high quality and valuable hunting opportunities, even in their infancy. Over the past 10 years, as wetland habitats have matured, bird use and hunter success has increased dramatically as shown in the LMP. These areas are in close proximity to or located on areas managed for rice and provide excellent hunting and should be prioritized when determining hunt area boundaries. How will the LMP address these concerns and how will DFG ensure that public hunting opportunity and quality is not compromised if a public use adjustment were to occur? How will DFG include the public in making future decisions about changes in public use?

-Public Use Acreage Ratio: Acreage determinations for specific land uses (i.e. hunt area, sanctuary, auto tour route) are not specified, but only discussed in rough estimation. Public land hunting opportunities are limited in California and are often very crowded. CWA would like to see a large majority of the WA open to the public for hunting and managed as such. We also recognize that there's a delicate balance to be made, taking into consideration sanctuary for wildlife and recreational areas for the non hunting public during the hunting season. The LMP states that non hunting areas open to the public will not be considered sanctuary. CWA has serious concerns with this statement. Some of the areas open to the non hunting public, such as auto tour routes, provide refuge for waterfowl and wildlife with very little disturbance compared to areas with walk in access for wildlife viewing or hunting. These areas should be considered, at least in part, as sanctuary areas. CWA understands the utility of sanctuary areas, but again is concerned with the ratio of hunted versus non hunted land. How will DFG address our concerns regarding sanctuary designations and the ratio of hunted versus non-hunted lands?

Overall, the goals and objectives outlined in the LMP, the inclusiveness of the consultative process you have employed, and the overall ability of the Department of Fish and Game and its partners working to achieve them, reflects the passion and strength of the general public and CWA's interests in preserving wildlife habitat and our outdoor heritage in California. Because of this, the California Waterfowl Association looks forward to working with you in further developing and managing the habitat and public use opportunities on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and would like to extend our support for the Land Management Plan and our continuing desire to assist you in making the Yolo

Bypass Wildlife Area an outstanding example of habitat managed in the Central Valley.

Sincerely,



Jake Messerli  
Director of Waterfowl and Wetland Programs  
California Waterfowl Association

cc:

Dr. Robert McLandress, California Waterfowl Association  
Chadd Santerre, California Waterfowl Association  
Mark Hennelly, California Outdoor Heritage Alliance

## COMMENT LETTER G

- Comment G-1:** Please see General Response.
- Comment G-2:** Comments noted.
- Comment G-3:** An updated discussion of the Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan has been added to Section 3.1.
- Comment G-4:** Comprehensive discussion on agriculture and wildlife compatibility is provided throughout the document (see Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Section 3.2, Section 3.5, Chapter 4, and Chapter 5). While restoration of agricultural lands to natural communities is anticipated, DFG is committed to maintaining wildlife-friendly farming practices on the Wildlife Area.
- Comment G-5:** DFG will consider all comments regarding grazing in uplands through its adaptive management and monitoring program and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area (see also points raised in response to comment G-8).
- Comment G-6:** DFG will consider all comments regarding grazing in wetlands through its adaptive management and monitoring program and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area.
- Comment G-7:** DFG will consider all comments regarding upland irrigations and management through its adaptive management and monitoring program and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area. Additionally, DFG will seek to work with CWA to identify potential funding sources to offset necessary income provided by grazing leases (see also points raised in response to comment G-8).
- Comment G-8:** Regarding the concern expressed by the CWA about the possibility that proposed “Diversified Upland Habitat Units” on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area may reduce duck nest success, DFG suggests that the following points are important to keep in mind:
1. The central focus of the LMP for the Wildlife Area is to manage for a diverse mosaic of managed and natural habitat communities. The area will be managed to benefit a full suite of wildlife guilds, rather than a single species or single group of species. The management of a small proportion of upland sites as Diversified Upland Habitat Units to increase pheasant survival is consistent with this concept.
  2. The Upland Game Policy of the Fish and Game Commission directs the Department as follows: “The Department shall continue the process of reviewing the current upland game management opportunities of lands under its control. The management of the Department’s lands should be an example and be a model for what can be done to maximize habitat development opportunities and upland game populations.” Managing a small proportion of upland fields in a way that has the potential to substantially increase pheasant chick survival is consistent with this Commission policy.



3. In addition to benefiting pheasants, it appears likely that the Diversified Upland Habitat Unit management technique will benefit some nongame bird species as well. A Masters Thesis project completed in 2003 investigated the effects on bird species richness, territory density, and nesting success of three management practices on state wildlife areas in the San Joaquin Valley. This study found that some species of nongame birds attained highest nest densities on Diversified Upland Habitat Units, and the researcher recommended that, by managing for diversity of upland nesting habitats, wildlife area managers provide habitat for more upland nongame species that would otherwise be present under any single management regime. (Allen, R. 2003. The Effects of Gamebird Management on Nongame Bird Species in the San Joaquin Valley, California. M.S. Thesis, Humboldt State University).
4. DFG agrees that predation on waterfowl nests may be influenced by proximity to edge habitat, such as that provided by Diversified Upland Habitat Units, and that further investigation of the effects of this type of management on all species, including waterfowl, may be needed. DFG will be seeking opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future to design and fund research projects to help determine the best ways to manage our wildlife areas for a wide variety of species.

**Comment G-9:** While swamp timothy is a target species for managed seasonal wetlands, watergrass and smartweed are also desired plant species that are targeted with management practices. DFG will consider all comments regarding seasonal wetland habitat management through its adaptive management and monitoring program and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area.

**Comment G-10:** DFG is committed to managing the Wildlife Area for a rich diversity of habitats and species. DFG will consider all comments regarding species-specific habitat management through its adaptive management and monitoring program and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area.

**Comment G-11:** The concept of potentially shifting hunting areas to the Tule Ranch is preliminary and DFG would actively seek to work with CWA and other interested stakeholders prior to making such a shift. As stated in the LMP, public hunting has and will continue to be a priority for the Wildlife Area. DFG will consider all comments regarding potential shifts in hunting areas and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area.

**Comment G-12:** As stated in response to comment G-11 and throughout the LMP, public hunting has and will continue to be a priority for with Wildlife Area. Additionally, the Wildlife Area is managed for several other wildlife-related public uses including wildlife viewing, environmental education, fishing, and photography. A detailed discussion on compatible public use and resource management is provided in Chapter 4. DFG will consider all comments regarding the management of public uses and will seek opportunities to collaborate with CWA and other interested entities in the future adaptive management of lands within the Wildlife Area.

**Comment G-13:** Please see General Response.

Mr. Dave Feliz  
Area Manager  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95618

Subject: Support for the Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Mr. Feliz:

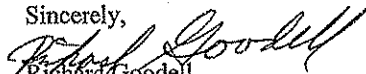
I am writing in support of the Draft Land Management Plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Having attended many of the meetings held at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters I am well aware of the tremendous effort put into drafting this plan.

I recognize the importance of the Yolo Bypass for its basic function of flood control for the urban area of Sacramento. Your plan for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area will increase its value to the people of California in many ways. One of the areas I as a waterfowl sportsman am supportive of is the increased habitat the plan will provide for waterfowl during the nesting and brood period in the spring. Also I am supportive of the additional resting and food opportunities which will be available to waterfowl during the winter months. Those birds that leave the Sacramento Valley for the migration north in the spring will have much greater nesting success due to food made available to them by the Wildlife Management Plan.

The plan offers substantial hunting opportunities. The diverse bird hunting opportunities which the plan makes available to the general public at reasonable cost and close proximity to a major urban area will provide another valuable asset to the people of California.

I support the many opportunities the plan offers for wildlife viewing and interpretive classes for school age children.

Sincerely,

  
Richard Goodell  
Partner Glide in Ranch

## COMMENT LETTER H

**Comment H-1:** Please see General Response.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

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WILLIAM K. REISEN, Ph.D.  
RESEARCH ENTOMOLOGIST AND PROFESSOR  
CENTER FOR VECTORBORNE DISEASES  
DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY, MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY  
SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
OLD DAVIS ROAD  
DAVIS, CA 95616  
PH: 530-752-0124  
EMAIL: arbo123@pacbell.net

August 10, 2007

David Feliz  
Manager, Yolo By-pass Wildlife Area  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters  
45211 County Rd 32B, Davis, CA

Dear David:

The purpose of this letter is to thank you and your staff for your support and facilitation of our West Nile Virus Research Project. Access for sampling seroprevalence rates in wild-birds and being able to monitor mosquito abundance and infection rates have been most helpful and have formed an important part of our project. We are grateful that access to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area for research is allowed in your land use management plan. Mary Schiedt, Wildlife Biologist, has been especially helpful and has become almost a regular member of our collection team.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of William K. Reisen.

William K. Reisen, PhD

## **COMMENT LETTER I**

**Comment I-1:** DFG looks forward to continued collaboration with the University on the West Nile Virus Research Project. Also, please see General Response.

**From:** "Neil Rubenking" <neilr@yolo.com>  
**To:** "Dave Feliz" <dfeliz@dfg.ca.gov>  
**Date:** 7/24/2007 5:25:26 PM  
**Subject:** Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area plan

I have one very simple request for the new plan. Remove the unnecessary ban on bicycles. I wouldn't complain if you banned autos - that seems more logical. Cycling through a wildlife area you're actually in touch with the wildlife, much more so than in a car. And yet you can traverse the area more quickly than on foot.

The Davis Wetlands area to the north has no such ban, and biking its (much smaller) tour route is quite an experience.

Please, lift the bicycle ban!

Neil J. Rubenking  
Davis, CA  
756-2768

## COMMENT LETTER J

**Comment J-1:** The issue of bicycling in the Wildlife Area has been addressed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 of the LMP. As described in Chapter 5 (Public Use Goal-1), DFG will continue to allow bicycle access to the Causeway Unit; evaluate, develop, and consider implementing a plan for allowing bicycle use on specified parts of the tour routes; continue to monitor the use of bicycles in the hunting area during hunting season; cooperate with regional trail development efforts to create bicycle access across the Yolo Bypass through the Causeway Unit at ground level; and evaluate efforts to provide bicycle access to the Pacific Flyway Center and participate as infrastructure is developed and funding permits.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DISTRICT 3 – SACRAMENTO AREA OFFICE  
VENTURE OAKS, MS 15  
P. O. BOX 942874  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94274-0001  
PHONE (916) 274-0614  
FAX (916) 274-0648  
TTY (530) 741-4509



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August 14, 2007

07YOL0020  
03-YOL-80 P.M. 2.492 – 6.358  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan  
Negative Declaration  
SCH#2007072099

State of California  
Department of Fish and Game  
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters  
45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, CA 95616  
Attention: Dave Feliz, Area Manager

Dear Mr. Feliz:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area – Land Management Plan. Our comments are as follows:

- Improvements to Interstate 80 are planned along the mainline between the cities of Davis and West Sacramento, within the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan boundaries. The Draft 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) produced by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) includes the development of bus/carpool lanes from Mace Boulevard in Davis to Enterprise Boulevard in West Sacramento which will also necessitate replacement of the current bicycle route that is adjacent to the highway. It is important to ensure that Caltrans' right-of-way and easements are acknowledged in the Land Use Plan in order to preserve access to the causeway and bicycle bridge for future maintenance and construction activities.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Patrick Tyner of my staff at (916) 274-0558.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce De Terra".

Bruce De Terra, Office Chief  
Office of Transportation Planning – South

C: California State Clearinghouse

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*



## **COMMENT LETTER K**

**Comment K-1:** Chapter 2 of the LMP acknowledges the Caltrans easement along Interstate-80 and respects Caltrans need to maintain access to the causeway and bicycle bridge for future maintenance and construction activities.

## DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

1416 NINTH STREET, P.O. BOX 942836  
SACRAMENTO, CA 942360001  
(916) 653-5791



August 1, 2007

Dave Feliz, Area Manager  
California Department of Fish and Game  
YBWA Headquarters – 45211 County Road 32B  
Davis, California 95616

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Land Management Plan  
State Clearinghouse (SCH) Number: 2007072099

The project corresponding to the subject SCH identification number has come to our attention. The limited project description suggests your project may be an encroachment on the State Adopted Plan of Flood Control. You may refer to the California Code of Regulations, Title 23 and Designated Floodway maps at <http://recbd.ca.gov/>. Please be advised that your county office also has copies of the Board's designated floodways for your review. If indeed your project encroaches on an adopted flood control plan, you will need to obtain an encroachment permit from the Reclamation Board prior to initiating any activities. The attached Fact Sheet explains the permitting process. Please note that the permitting process may take as much as 45 to 60 days to process. Also note that a condition of the permit requires the securing all of the appropriate additional permits before initiating work. This information is provided so that you may plan accordingly.

If after careful evaluation, it is your assessment that your project is not within the authority of the Reclamation Board, you may disregard this notice. For further information, please contact me at (916) 574-1249.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Huitt".

Christopher Huitt  
Staff Environmental Scientist  
Floodway Protection Section

cc: Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## Encroachment Permits Fact Sheet

### **Basis for Authority**

State law (Water Code Sections 8534, 8608, 8609, and 8710 – 8723) tasks the Reclamation Board with enforcing appropriate standards for the construction, maintenance, and protection of adopted flood control plans. Regulations implementing these directives are found in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 23, Division 1.

### **Area of Reclamation Board Jurisdiction**

The adopted plan of flood control under the jurisdiction and authority of the Reclamation Board includes the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries and distributaries and the designated floodways.

Streams regulated by the Reclamation Board can be found in Title 23 Section 112. Information on designated floodways can be found on the Reclamation Board's website at [http://recbd.ca.gov/designated\\_floodway/](http://recbd.ca.gov/designated_floodway/) and CCR Title 23 Sections 101 - 107.

### **Regulatory Process**

The Reclamation Board ensures the integrity of the flood control system through a permit process (Water Code Section 8710). A permit must be obtained prior to initiating any activity, including excavation and construction, removal or planting of landscaping within floodways, levees, and 10 feet landward of the landside levee toes. Additionally, activities located outside of the adopted plan of flood control but which may foreseeable interfere with the functioning or operation of the plan of flood control is also subject to a permit of the Reclamation Board.

Details regarding the permitting process and the regulations can be found on the Reclamation Board's website at <http://recbd.ca.gov/> under "Frequently Asked Questions" and "Regulations," respectively. The application form and the accompanying environmental questionnaire can be found on the Reclamation Board's website at <http://recbd.ca.gov/forms.cfm>.

### **Application Review Process**

Applications when deemed complete will undergo technical and environmental review by Reclamation Board and/or Department of Water Resources staff.

### **Technical Review**

A technical review is conducted of the application to ensure consistency with the regulatory standards designed to ensure the function and structural integrity of the adopted plan of flood control for the protection of public welfare and safety. Standards and permitted uses of designated floodways are found in CCR Title 23 Sections 107 and Article 8 (Sections 111 to 137). The permit contains 12 standard conditions and additional special conditions may be placed on the permit as the situation warrants. Special conditions, for example, may include mitigation for the hydraulic impacts of the project by reducing or eliminating the additional flood risk to third parties that may caused by the project.

Additional information may be requested in support of the technical review of

your application pursuant to CCR Title 23 Section 8(b)(4). This information may include but not limited to geotechnical exploration, soil testing, hydraulic or sediment transport studies, and other analyses may be required at any time prior to a determination on the application.

#### Environmental Review

A determination on an encroachment application is a discretionary action by the Reclamation Board and its staff and subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code 21000 et seq.). Additional environmental considerations are placed on the issuance of the encroachment permit by Water Code Section 8608 and the corresponding implementing regulations (California Code of Regulations – CCR Title 23 Sections 10 and 16).

In most cases, the Reclamation Board will be assuming the role of a "responsible agency" within the meaning of CEQA. In these situations, the application must include a certified CEQA document by the "lead agency" [CCR Title 23 Section 8(b)(2)]. We emphasize that such a document must include within its project description and environmental assessment of the activities for which are being considered under the permit.

Encroachment applications will also undergo a review by an interagency Environmental Review Committee (ERC) pursuant to CCR Title 23 Section 10. Review of your application will be facilitated by providing as much additional environmental information as pertinent and available to the applicant at the time of submission of the encroachment application.

These additional documentations may include the following documentation:

- California Department of Fish and Game Streambed Alteration Notification (<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/1600/>),
- Clean Water Act Section 404 applications, and Rivers and Harbors Section 10 application (US Army Corp of Engineers),
- Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and
- corresponding determinations by the respective regulatory agencies to the aforementioned applications, including Biological Opinions, if available at the time of submission of your application.

The submission of this information, if pertinent to your application, will expedite review and prevent overlapping requirements. This information should be made available as a supplement to your application as it becomes available. Transmittal information should reference the application number provided by the Reclamation Board.

In some limited situations, such as for minor projects, there may be no other agency with approval authority over the project, other than the encroachment permit by Reclamation Board. In these limited instances, the Reclamation Board

may choose to serve as the "lead agency" within the meaning of CEQA and in most cases the projects are of such a nature that a categorical or statutory exemption will apply. The Reclamation Board cannot invest staff resources to prepare complex environmental documentation.

Additional information may be requested in support of the environmental review of your application pursuant to CCR Title 23 Section 8(b)(4). This information may include biological surveys or other environmental surveys and may be required at anytime prior to a determination on the application.

## **COMMENT LETTER L**

**Comment L-1:** Comment noted. DFG acknowledges that certain activities within the Wildlife Area require an encroachment permit from the California Department of Water Resources, Central Valley Flood Protection Board. DFG has applied and received permits for past activities in the Wildlife Area and will continue to do so in the future.