

**YOLO BYPASS WORKING GROUP
MEETING 30**

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: June 17, 2004

LOCATION: California Department of Fish and Game
Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters
45211 County Road 32B (Chiles Road)
Davis, California 95616

IN ATTENDANCE: Robin Kulakow, Yolo Basin Foundation
Dave Feliz, California Department of Fish & Game (DFG)
Paul Phillips, California Waterfowl Association (CWA)
Ralph Bulkley, Skyraiders Duck Club
James Navicky, DFG
Chris Erichsen, Larry Walker Associates
Chris V. Fulster, Jr., Glide In Ranch
Selby Mohr, Mound Farms
Walt Cheechov, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Michael Stumbos, Stumbos & Company
Robert Eddings, CLOA
Greg Kukas, US Army Corps of Engineers
Mick Klasson, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA)
John Currey, Dixon Resource Conservation District (RCD)
Bryan Plude, Canvasback Consulting
Tony Lucchesi, Wildlands, Inc.
Don Stevens, Glide In Ranch
Dick Goodell, Glide In Ranch
Phil Martinelli, Channel Ranch
Ken Martin, Rising Wings
Ed Towne, Bullsprig Outing
Dennis Kilkenny, Dawsons Duck Club
Dennis Murphy
Casey Walsh Cady, California Department of Food & Agriculture
Ted Sommer, Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Marianne Kirkland, DWR
Michael Perrone, DWR
Lauren Hastings, California Bay Delta Authority –Ecosystem Restoration
Program
Betsy Marchand, State Board of Reclamation
Butch Hodgkins, SAFCA
Chuck Dudley, Dudley Ag

Jack Palmer, H Pond Ranch
David Kohlhorst, Glide In Ranch
Clyde Ongard, Glide In Ranch
Lori Clamurro, Delta Protection Commission
Chris Voight, Mosquito & Vector Control Association of California
Dave Brown, Sacramento Yolo Mosquito Vector Control District
Regina Cherovsky, Conaway Ranch
Mike Hall, Conaway Ranch
Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)
Carla Blanton, CCP

NEXT MEETING: August 26, 2004 from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

Dave Ceppos called the meeting to order. The Working Group has been in existence for approximately 4 years. During that time the Yolo Bypass Management Strategy was created in 2001. The Management Strategy has been used by many agencies in the area as an informative document about local stakeholder sentiments regarding the Yolo Bypass.

Mr. Ceppos briefly summarized the agenda and made changes per the request of the group. He also asked participants to please update Robin Kulakow with any new contact information or let her know if you are experiencing problems with e-mails/agendas.

**Yolo Wildlife Area – Fiscal year 2004/2005
Robin Kulakow – Yolo Basin Foundation**

The DFG is pursuing a consultant to complete the Management Plan for the expanded Wildlife Area. (Dave Feliz was interviewing consultants during the meeting and was unable to present other status information.) Mr. Feliz's goal is to complete the Management Plan within 18 months of having a consultant under contract.

**Update on Regional Water Quality Control Board Agricultural Waiver
Chuck Dudley**

The Yolo County and Solano County Ag Waiver groups met the Regional Board's deliverables deadline

Participant Questions: My farm is not enrolled in a program currently and I'm not sure which group I'm supposed to be in. I want to get in the program but I also don't want to be assessed twice. How much communication will occur between the two counties' groups?

Answer: Both counties are sharing information and cleaning up database records. For now make sure you are registered with both groups and can show payment of fees for at least one of them. Hopefully, the lists will be combined before the next mailing.

Participant Questions: Are the fees different for the type of acreage use? For example, total property verses floodable property?

Answer: It might be. Check with both groups for the specific rules they are using.

Participant Questions: Is there going to be an April 2005 deliverable regarding compliance and monitoring results?

Answer: It's not clear yet whether the Regional Board is going to adjust some of its previously prescribed compliance dates.

Update on the Yolo Bypass Water Quality Planning Process Chris Erichsen, Larry Walker Associates

The Yolo Bypass Water Quality planning process is trying to integrate information from all water quality projects in the Bypass. The monitoring program is based on a list of pollutants of concern including metals, pesticides, nitrates, and organic carbon. Dissolved solids, electrical conductivity and bacterial indicators such as fecal coliform and e-coli are also included in the monitoring plan.

Information is still preliminary but it appears that the highest degree of contaminants in the Bypass is pesticides

Participant Questions: What monitoring sites are you looking at?

Answer: There is a monitoring station at Knights Landing co-located with a USGS survey site, A station near I-80 at the downstream confluence of a small canal that carries Cache Creek water into the Toe Drain, and a final station south of Lisbon Weir near the "Z drain".

Information so far indicates that total mercury increases starting in November in Cache Creek and the Sacramento River. Bioassays of benthic invertebrates in the laboratory show high toxicity/ mortality from samples taken at the Tule Canal / Cache Creek station.

Participant Questions: What about monitoring in the Sacramento River

Answer: Sacramento River conditions are being monitored by the Sacramento River Watershed Program and other Ag Waiver groups in the Sacramento Valley.

A general question was asked about any interest of the group to have a future focused discussion about mercury issues in the Bypass. A show of hands indicated a strong majority interest in such a discussion.

Participant Questions: What solutions are there regarding mercury? How is mercury generated?

Answer: There is some natural contribution of mercury from the geology of the region but most of it is remnant of historic mining activities. Cache Creek is one of the primary mercury sources in the Sacramento River system. Mercury stays suspended as an inorganic metal until it gets deposited in certain perennially wetted conditions like a wetland or river sediments. When that happens, it is chemically transformed into an organic format called methyl mercury. Methyl mercury is organically available to organisms and so enters certain food chains including humans' by way of consumption of fish that have eaten contaminated smaller organisms.

**Update on SAFCA Regional Planning Process/Sacramento River
Corridor Forum Process
Butch Hodgkins, SAFCA**

The SAFCA Regional Planning Process/Sacramento River Corridor Forum is an effort between SAFCA, the Reclamation Board, the Cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento, and the counties of Yolo, Sacramento and Sutter.

The Forum has adopted a draft plan for Sacramento River front development and interim guidelines have been developed.

Mr. Hodgkins presented a set of aerial photos taken during the Winter of 2003-2004. The purpose of the photos was to identify localized flooding conditions in the Bypass before the Fremont Weir spills, and then locations of flooding after the Weir spills.

It is hoped that aerial photos such as these, in concert with pending modeling efforts by the U.S. Corps of Engineers will provide better information on how and when the Bypass floods and how landowners can be better safeguarded from localized flood events.

**Lower Yolo Bypass Working Group Feasibility Assessment
Dave Ceppos, CCP**

Mr. Ceppos described the ongoing dilemma of current land management in the lower Yolo Bypass. Specifically, several large tracts of land have been owned for some time by public agencies and one non-governmental conservation advocacy organization. These lands have gone for sometime now with no comprehensive management plan. Some land and flood management conditions on these properties have deteriorated over the past several years. It was recently proposed that a subgroup should be spun off of the Yolo Bypass Working Group to try and address these outstanding issues in the lower Bypass. A general question is whether such a subgroup should be formed and if so, what format should it take. The Working Group is not a decision-making body and participants have previously determined that they did not want to play that role. In the case of the lower Bypass, the specific issues may require a more structured process that is focused on a making some specific recommendations. The first step to be taken by the Yolo Basin Foundation is to have the Center for Collaborative Policy assess stakeholder conditions and come back with recommendations about whether it is feasible to start a lower Bypass group and what format it should take.

Participant Statements: We would like to remain as a group and not be broken down into subdivisions. We could be more powerful as an official structured group. Who will be appropriate stakeholders?

**Status of West Nile virus in California
(Dave Brown, Sacramento Yolo Mosquito Vector Control District)**

The West Nile virus has been documented in 26 states. 17 humans have died in California from the virus. There have been 5 confirmed cases in the Los Angeles area. An alarming number of crows and related species in southern California have been infected with the virus. In addition, the horse population has been infected. The virus is now found in virtually every mosquito species commonly found in California. There have been no reported human cases in northern California so far but the virus has been confirmed in bird species in almost every county in northern California.

Participant Questions: In humans, who is largely affected?

Answer: Individuals 45 years or older

Symptoms:

- ❖ Extended paralysis (most recover)
- ❖ Extreme flu like symptoms
- ❖ Fever
- ❖ Persistent headaches

Participant Questions: Can you obtain the virus after eating an infected bird?

Answer: If cooked, no, it is unlikely. There is no clear evidence about whether consumption of improperly cooked bird meat can pose an infection risk.

Participant Questions: In southern California what are they doing about the bird deaths?

Answer: The birds have been getting picked up and tested in certain zip codes. However, due to the number of avian deaths, it appears the vector control and public health districts in the south have suspended further testing since the virus appears to be fully incorporated into the vector chain at this time .

**Update and discussion on potential Conaway Ranch Land Sale
(Helen Thomson, Yolo County)**

A Yolo County Board meeting regarding the purchase of the Conaway Ranch was held on June 17, 2004 at 6pm. Yolo County would like to purchase the ranch to ensure water rights.

Currently, there is no access to the land. There is no appraisal. The land is part of a bankruptcy sale and commissions are involved. Main interests in the land are:

- ❖ Surface water
- ❖ Flood control
- ❖ Mineral rights

Known facts are:

- ❖ No sale price (bankruptcy)
- ❖ No appraisal yet
- ❖ 17,000 + acres
- ❖ Interest bids will be accepted July 17, 2004 (narrows the field)
- ❖ Second round of bidding
- ❖ Will go to the highest bidder
- ❖ Land will be acquired by new owner (as is)

Would like to use the land for:

- ❖ Flood plain
- ❖ Hunting
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Agriculture

Participant Questions: Who is involved in the quest to purchase the Ranch?

Answer: Yolo County, Davis, Woodland, Winters, and UC Davis.

Participant Questions: Will a group letter of support from the Working Group be written?

Answer: There is no formal membership to the Working Group but we have written group letters previously expressing the groups concerns. A sub-committee will be developed and a draft letter will be given to the entire group for review and approval at the next meeting. The following individuals will be on the sub-committee:

- ❖ Chuck Dudley
- ❖ Dick Goodell
- ❖ Michael Perrone
- ❖ Chris Fulster
- ❖ Selby Mohr
- ❖ Dennis Kilkenny