

Public Workshop Comments, Questions and Responses

At the public workshop held in the Napa City/County Library on October 23, 2001, participants made comments and raised questions. These comments and questions are listed below. Brief responses to these comments and questions are provided, and in most instances more information will be analyzed in technical studies currently underway and presented in the EIR/EIS. The draft EIR/EIS is anticipated to be available in June 2002.

Site Conditions

What is the condition of the levees? The levees vary in condition. Some are in good condition and others are severely eroded. The condition of the levees will be described in detail in the EIR/EIS.

What is the history of Pond 2A? Pond 2A was restored to tidal marsh beginning in 1995. More detail on the evolution of this restoration site will be provided in the EIR/EIS to provide background information for the restoration processes proposed for this project.

Analyze wind wave erosion on Pond 2. Wind-wave erosion will be described for this pond and other ponds where it may have a significant adverse impact on the environment, and will be qualitatively analyzed in the EIR/EIS.

Concern that Pond 2 north levee will fail soon and could be better managed for waterfowl. Levee stability and potential for failure will be qualitatively analyzed in the EIR/EIS. Future habitat conditions will be analyzed in the EIR/EIS; however, specific DFG management techniques, including current practices, will not.

Levee stability along the northeast side of Pond 6 and potential effects on private property. Levee stability and potential for failure, including effects on private property in the vicinity of Pond 6, will be qualitatively analyzed in the EIR/EIS.

Existing and historical slough channels. Existing and historic slough channels will be used to evaluate restoration constraints and opportunities. Historic slough channels were mapped by San Francisco Estuary Institute, and will be presented in the EIS/R.

Are there heavy metals in sediment? A sediment sampling program is currently underway to determine if heavy metals are present in the sediment and salts on site. This information will be presented in the EIR/EIS.

Water Issues

How quickly will the ponds be diluted? This is currently unknown, though preliminary modeling indicates timeframes of less than 5 years for most of the ponds. However, the exact time frame will depend on the discharge criteria established by regulatory agencies and the hydrologic conditions in the months following project implementation. A wet year may allow an accelerated desalinization program and a dry year a slower rate. Detailed salinity reduction timeframes, approaches and other considerations will be presented in the EIR/EIS.

Will the project use Sonoma County Water Agency water? This is currently unknown. The EIR/EIS will include the use of recycled water from Sonoma County Water Agency in an alternative.

Could treated wastewater increase the amount of salt that can be discharged? This is currently unknown. The EIR/EIS will analyze multiple ways to achieve various salinity reduction approaches and will include the use of recycled water from Sonoma County Water Agency in an alternative.

Where would the wastewater source be from? The Sonoma County Water Agency will have to provide this information, and the EIR/EIS will only address this information in an assessment of indirect cumulative impacts.

Will the project take water from Sonoma County wineries? The project is not likely to take water from Sonoma County wineries. Sonoma County Water Agency in cooperation with the project team will make a determination whether to extend their wastewater line to the project site and how water from that line will be allocated.

Will there be an opportunity for new wineries to use recycled water? This is currently unknown. See response to next question.

How much Sonoma County Water Agency Water would go to the project? This is currently unknown. The project team is currently working with Sonoma County Water Agency to determine how much water and for what period of time water would be available. These assumptions will be presented for analysis in the EIR/EIS.

Restoration

Where will all the sediment come from to restore the ponds? The Napa River, San Pablo Bay, erosion from adjacent mudflats, and dredge sources are potential sources of sediment for marsh habitat restoration. A sediment budget for the San Pablo Bay is currently being developed and on- and off-site sedimentation will be evaluated in the EIR/EIS.

Are there opportunities to use dredged material from the Napa River? This is currently unknown. DFG has indicated a preference in not using dredged materials on the site because it is not necessarily needed to enhance habitats and because it raises the potential for additional contaminants.

Model restoration sites, including White Slough. Modeling will be employed to evaluate the restoration of the site. Nearby restoration sites, including White Slough, are being evaluated to determine the relative recovery periods needed for various ponds. The restoration modeling and restoration succession process will be described in the EIR/EIS.

Will the project be designed to minimize the need for mosquito abatement? Mosquito abatement will be factored into project design and the potential for increased mosquito control will be described in the EIR/EIS.

Project Planning and Funding

How will the project be authorized and funded? The Corps is seeking project authorization from the U.S. Congress under the Water Resource Development Act. All other federal, state, and local authorizing permits required for project construction will be detailed in the EIR/EIS. The state and federal governments will primarily fund the project, although all funding sources have not yet been finalized.

Where's the funding source? A variety of funding sources will be employed to fund the project including the federal Water Resources Development Act and state agency contributions. The California Coastal Conservancy recently applied for a CALFED grant and other grant sources will likely be explored.