

## Upper San Joaquin River Regional Flood Management Plan Stakeholder Workshop

**ATTENDEES:** Full list is attached to the end of this meeting summary

**FROM:** San Joaquin River Flood Control Project Agency

**DATE:** January 24, 2023

**LOCATION:** San Luis Canal Company  
11704 Henry Miller Ave  
Dos Palos, CA 93620

This meeting summary was prepared to summarize discussions and comments captured at the Regional Flood Management Plan (RFMP) workshop conducted by the San Joaquin River Flood Control Project Agency (SJRFPCA).

The presentation is available at <http://usjrflood.org/>.

A summary of key discussion items is included below:

- Shane Swartz and Rob Tull welcomed attendees and invited participants to introduce themselves.
- Participants gave updates on their agencies current flood operations given recent storm events in early January 2023.
  - Shane Swartz, LSJLD (District): The District began receiving flood flows from Friant Dam and had good communication with USBR. The District was able to prepare all bypass structures for flows and fortunately, the initial flows from Friant Dam were relatively low. The District also had good communication with agencies downstream, including Fresno, Madera, and Merced counties. The flows are currently ~3,000 cfs from Friant with the highest being ~7,500 cfs, which was testing the banks. Fresno County OES helped with some emergency erosion repairs. Local landowners helped repair boil spots along the bypass in Madera County. The District is regrouping and making sure to keep communication open in preparation for snowmelt.
  - Oscar Ortiz, Merced County: Top priority of the county has been to address levee overtopping. The County has been coordinating with OES and local communities and encouraging notification of possible overtopping. The County is still under emergency declaration.
  - Sean Brophy, USFWS: There have been a few flareups and his agency has helped the LSJLD with on the Merced Refuge and San Luis NWR. Flooding has mostly impacted the hunt program, closing about 30% of program. On the San Joaquin River near

Patterson, the agency has been rescuing riparian brush rabbit, vaccinating them, and releasing. Some infrastructure was lost related to Bear Creek flooding.

- Ben Gallegos, City of Firebaugh: There was some light flooding on trails but nothing of major concern. The city is concerned about upcoming snowmelt flows.
- Christopher Williams, DWR: The State’s Flood Operations Center (FOC) was activated on January 1 and deactivated on January 20, 2023. He acknowledged the Merced flooding and significant sandbag efforts throughout the state.
- Highlights from the presentation:
  - Presentation was in 5 parts:
    1. RFMP overview
    2. 2022 CVFPP Update
    3. USJR RFMP activities, priorities, and challenges
    4. Future RFMP activities
    5. Open discussion
  - There is a difference between the USJR region and other Sacramento-area regions such as the lack of large and/or centralized flood control agencies (i.e., SAFCA). USJR also includes several DACs.
  - Highlighted funding achievements for projects in the region. Acknowledged FSRP funding for O&M in Madera was not listed on the slide.
  - The RFMP team will want to update the City of Firebaugh’s project list based on the recently completed feasibility study.
  - San Luis NWR’s proposed floodwater intake project appears to be feasible given the recent storm events.
- Sarah Puckett provided an update on the Great Valley Grasslands project. Construction to begin notching sections of the levees was approved but was delayed due to recent storm flooding. Construction is scheduled to resume soon. American Rivers and CA State Parks submitted a proposal to CDFW to restore access to the north side of the San Joaquin River for planned parking and trails.
- The USJR website (<http://usjrflood.org/>) is updated regularly with meeting notifications, funding opportunities, CVFPP updates, and other resources.
- Rick Iger asked if the RFMP program has any funding for Jacobs staff to assist locals in obtaining permits. Specifically, Rick mentioned CDFW requirements for bypass flow measurements, fish flow requirements in Chowchilla Bypass, fish screens on diversions and pumps, and diversion measuring with 2% accuracy.
  - Currently the RFMP funding contract does not support permit applications. Aaron Wu, DWR, stated that this may become an option in the future.
  - Rick Iger described San Joaquin River areas with significant subsidence issues and recent erosion problems and stated that these issues could create reverse grade. He mentioned that there is a possibility of recharging the aquifers while mitigating subsidence, and that several agencies have applied for water right permits but

requirements are very stringent. Rick also noted that raising levees will not solve these issues and is looking for guidance on water right permits and coordination with CDFW.

- The RFMP team is aware of the permitting issues as other stakeholder agencies have had issues with vegetation management/O&M permitting. The RFMP team is advocating for streamlining the permitting process.
- USBR's restoration program publishes subsidence maps which can be accessed on the USJR website. The last survey was conducted in December 2022 and maps should be released soon.
- Rick Iger mentioned that SWRCB has expediated some permits but the flood flows in the bypass are outside of the expediated timeline jurisdiction.

- **Next meeting/workshop**

- The RFMP team will be setting up individual stakeholder group meetings to discuss priorities and provide updates. Expect correspondence in the next month to schedule meetings.
- The RFMP teams plans to conduct quarterly regional meetings but are open to comments and feedback.

UPPER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER REGIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

Agency	Contact Name	Email	In-person	Virtual
American Rivers	Sarah Puckett	<a href="mailto:spuckett@americanrivers.org">spuckett@americanrivers.org</a>		X
Friends of the River	Tom Biglione	<a href="mailto:ftbiglione@gmail.com">ftbiglione@gmail.com</a>	X	
Friends of the River	Jann Dorman	<a href="mailto:jannorman@friendsoftheriver.org">jannorman@friendsoftheriver.org</a>		X
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Patrick Ferguson	<a href="mailto:Patrick.Ferguson@wildlife.ca.gov">Patrick.Ferguson@wildlife.ca.gov</a>		X
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Ruth Darling	<a href="mailto:Ruth.Darling@CVFlood.ca.gov">Ruth.Darling@CVFlood.ca.gov</a>		X
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Michael Wright	<a href="mailto:Michael.Wright@CVFlood.ca.gov">Michael.Wright@CVFlood.ca.gov</a>		X
City of Firebaugh	Ben Gallegos	<a href="mailto:publicworks@ci.firebaugh.ca.us">publicworks@ci.firebaugh.ca.us</a>		X
Department of Water Resources	Susan Karimi Arao	<a href="mailto:Susan.Arao@water.ca.gov">Susan.Arao@water.ca.gov</a>		X
Department of Water Resources	Nancy Finch	<a href="mailto:nfinch@water.ca.gov">nfinch@water.ca.gov</a>		X
Department of Water Resources	Hilary Mann	<a href="mailto:Hilary.Mann@water.ca.gov">Hilary.Mann@water.ca.gov</a>		X
Department of Water Resources	Christopher Williams	<a href="mailto:Christopher.Williams@water.ca.gov">Christopher.Williams@water.ca.gov</a>		X
Department of Water Resources	Aaron Wu	<a href="mailto:Aaron.Wu@water.ca.gov">Aaron.Wu@water.ca.gov</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Shannon Litchfield	<a href="mailto:Shannon.Litchfield@jacobs.com">Shannon.Litchfield@jacobs.com</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Sirisha Nemani	<a href="mailto:Sirisha.Nemani@jacobs.com">Sirisha.Nemani@jacobs.com</a>	X	
Jacobs Engineering	Clara Rose	<a href="mailto:Clara.Rose@jacobs.com">Clara.Rose@jacobs.com</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Bryan Sherrill	<a href="mailto:Bryan.Sherrill@jacobs.com">Bryan.Sherrill@jacobs.com</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Katie Stone	<a href="mailto:Katie.Stone@jacobs.com">Katie.Stone@jacobs.com</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Jeremy Thomas	<a href="mailto:Jeremy.Thomas@jacobs.com">Jeremy.Thomas@jacobs.com</a>		X
Jacobs Engineering	Rob Tull	<a href="mailto:Robert.Tull@jacobs.com">Robert.Tull@jacobs.com</a>	X	
Lower San Joaquin Levee District	Shane Swartz	<a href="mailto:shane.swartz.lsild@gmail.com">shane.swartz.lsild@gmail.com</a>	X	
Merced County	Oscar Ortiz	<a href="mailto:oscar.ortiz@countyofmerced.com">oscar.ortiz@countyofmerced.com</a>	X	
Merced County Farm Bureau	Denelle Flake	<a href="mailto:dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org">dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org</a>		X
Merced County Farm Bureau	Alexxis Rudich	<a href="mailto:arudich@mercedfarmbureau.org">arudich@mercedfarmbureau.org</a>		X
Provost & Prichard	Rick Iger	<a href="mailto:riger@ppeng.com">riger@ppeng.com</a>		X
San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority	Scott Petersen	<a href="mailto:youtellus@sldmwa.org">youtellus@sldmwa.org</a>		X
SJ River Exchange Contractors	Steve Chedester	<a href="mailto:stevededester@sirecwa.net">stevededester@sirecwa.net</a>		X
Summers Engineering	Scotts Jacobson	<a href="mailto:sjacob@summerseng.com">sjacob@summerseng.com</a>		X

UPPER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER REGIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

Agency	Contact Name	Email	In-person	Virtual
USBR	Cindy Meyer	<a href="mailto:cameyer@usbr.gov">cameyer@usbr.gov</a>		X
USBR	Samuel (Joshua) Newcom	<a href="mailto:snewcom@usbr.gov">snewcom@usbr.gov</a>		X
USBR	Donald Portz	<a href="mailto:DPortz@usbr.gov">DPortz@usbr.gov</a>		X
USBR	Rebecca Victorine	<a href="mailto:RVictorine@usbr.gov">RVictorine@usbr.gov</a>		X
US FWS	Sean Brophy	<a href="mailto:Sean_brophy@fws.gov">Sean_brophy@fws.gov</a>	X	