

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM



Program Update

April 2010

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



Water from Friant Dam flows into the San Joaquin River

DRAFT Program Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report Coming Soon

Introduction

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (PEIS/R) for implementation of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) will be available for public review around May or June 2010. Once released, there will be a 60-day public comment period as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Executive Summary will also be available and both documents will be posted on the SJRRP website at www.restoresjr.net or Reclamation's website at www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=2940. Copies of the documents will be available at various libraries and locations including Sacramento, Fresno, Firebaugh, and Los Banos. If you wish to receive a printed copy of the Executive Summary and an electronic version of the document on disk, please contact Margaret Gidding at mgidding@usbr.gov or 916-978-5461.

Comments

Comments on the Draft PEIS/R will be accepted for 60 days after the issuance of the Notice of Availability. During this time, responsible and trustee agencies and other interested parties, including the general public, are asked to review the document and provide input. Comments must be submitted in writing within the 60-day time period or provided orally during public hearings to be held in various locations. Oral and written comments have the same legal standing. As soon as the document is released, the dates and locations of the public hearings will be posted on the web site at www.restoresjr.net.

During the formal 60-day comment period, input can be submitted online at www.restoresjr.net or by mail. Please send all comments to:

Jason Phillips
Bureau of Reclamation
San Joaquin River Restoration Program
Draft PEIS/R
2800 Cottage Way, MP-170
Sacramento, CA 95825
peisrcomments@restoresjr.net

or
Fran Schulte
California Dept. of Water Resources
South Central Region Office
Draft PEIS/R
3374 East Shields Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726
fschulte@water.ca.gov

Document Purpose

Reclamation and DWR have prepared a Draft PEIS/R that fulfills the requirements of both NEPA and CEQA. The document evaluates the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of implementing the Settlement consistent with the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act. The Draft PEIS/R presents the program-level or "first tier" of analysis for a reasonable range of alternatives by considering the broad environmental effects of the SJRRP. The alternatives considered include actions that will be implemented to work towards achieving the Settlement's Restoration and Water Management goals. The Draft PEIS/R analyzes most activities that would be implemented at a general or program level of detail. These activities would require future project-specific environmental compliance documentation.

The document does contain some project-level actions. One example is the Interim Flows. Reclamation is currently releasing Interim Flows via a Water Year 2010 Environmental Assessment and will do a Supplemental EA for Water Year 2011 until the completed Program document covers those actions in the future.

Range of Alternatives

The Draft PEIS/R evaluates a no-action alternative and six action alternatives to implement the Settlement. For more information on how the alternatives were identified and selected, you can find the SJRRP 2008 Initial Program Alternatives Report on the Program website at http://www.restoresjr.net/program_library/02-Program_Docs/index.html. Each action alternative includes measures to re-operate Friant Dam and other actions called for in the Settlement. The map on page 3 illustrates all of the restoration actions that are common to all of the action alternatives. The action alternatives differ in two ways. The first is how much flow is routed through Reach 4B1 (at least 475 cubic feet per second or at least 4,500 cfs). The second is how water is recaptured (combinations of Delta or existing San Joaquin diversions and new pumping facilities below the Merced River).

How will comments be addressed?

Upon the close of the public comment period, Reclamation and DWR will evaluate and prepare responses to the environmental issues raised in the comments received from both citizens and public agencies. In some cases, this may result in the need for additional analysis or possibly refinements to the PEIS/R. Responses to environmental issues raised in the comments along with any changes to the Draft PEIS/R will be published in a Final PEIS/R.

Document Organization

The Executive Summary at the beginning of the document provides a broad overview of the action alternatives and the results presented in the Draft PEIS/R. Subsequent chapters present the project's potential impacts in greater detail by distinct categories. The following details the sections included in the Draft PEIS/R:

TOPIC AREA
Introduction and Description of Alternatives
Environmental Considerations
Geology and Soils
Hydrology Considerations
Societal/Community Considerations
Cumulative Impact and Alternative Comparisons and Considerations
Consultation, Coordination and Compliance
References
List of Preparers
Index

There will be several appendices to the document, including the Fisheries Management Plan.

Decision Making and Next Steps

Reclamation must prepare a Final PEIS/R and sign a Record of Decision before carrying out the project. DWR must certify the Final PEIS/R, prepare written findings, and approve the project before carrying out the actions detailed in the document. A Final PEIS/R is expected in late 2010 followed by a signed Record of Decision from the Federal Government and Notice of Determination from the State Government. Both documents must be in place before the Program can progress to the implementation phase.

How to Stay Involved

The [Program Website](#) is great source for specific and general project information. You can find information about public involvement opportunities, ongoing site specific studies, real-time flows from Friant Dam, and Interim Flow releases, among other things: www.restoresjr.net.

Partial List of Locations to View the Document:

Bureau of Reclamation
San Joaquin River Restoration
Program Office
2800 Cottage Way, W-1727
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-978-5455

Bureau of Reclamation
South-Central California Area Office
1243 N Street
Fresno, CA 93721
559-487-5116

California Department of Water Resources
South Central Region Office
3374 East Shields Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726
559-230-3300

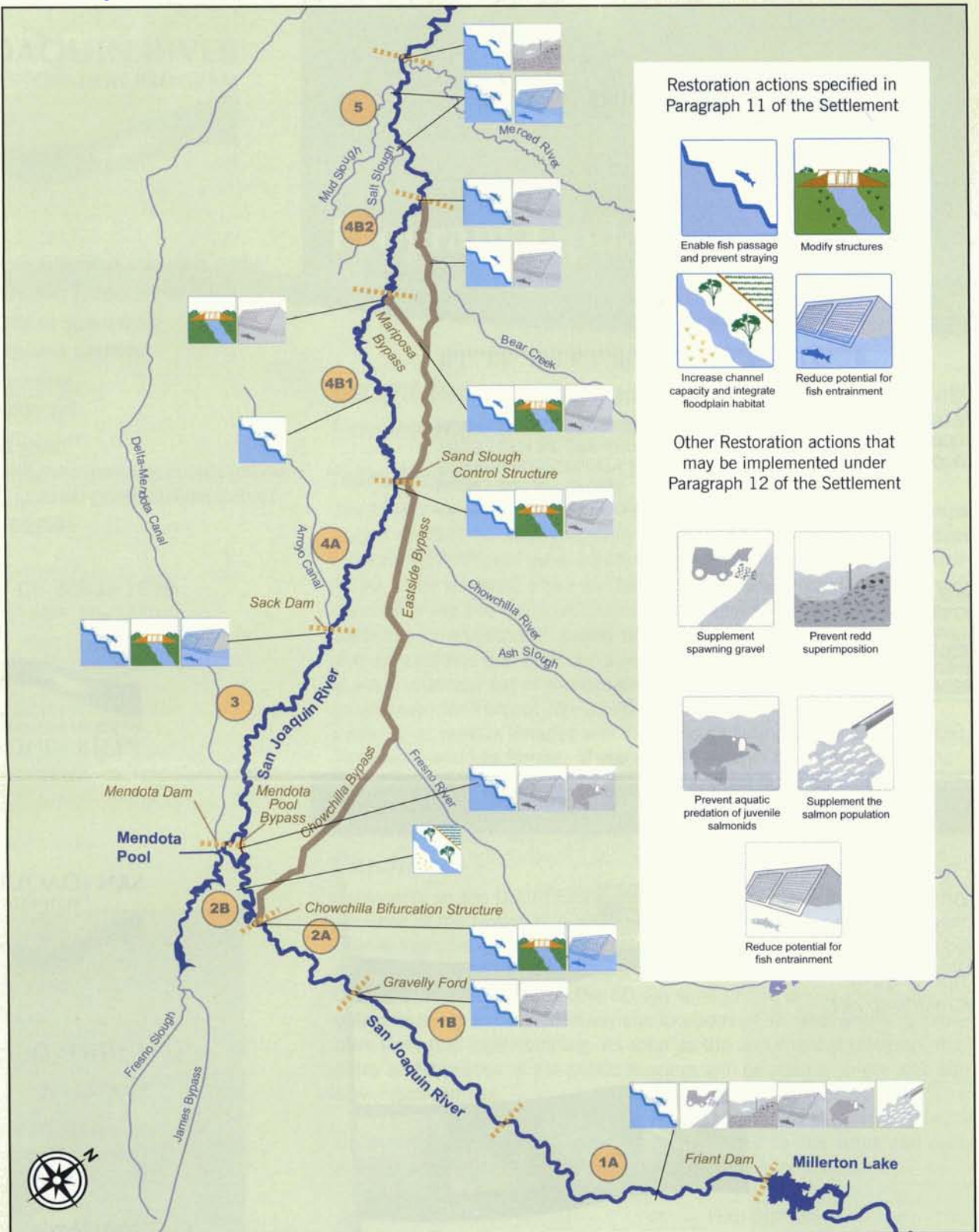
Fresno County, Firebaugh Branch Library
1315 O Street
Firebaugh, CA 93622
559-659-2820

Merced County, Los Banos Library
1312 S. 7th Street
Los Banos, CA
209-826-5254

Woodward Park Library
944 East Perrin Avenue
Fresno, CA 93720
559-433-3135

A full list of locations to view the document will be available on the web soon.





Summary of Action Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE	FLOW	RECAPTURE
A1	Reach 4B1 at least 475 cfs	Delta
A2	Reach 4B1 at least 4,500 cfs	Delta
B1	Reach 4B1 at least 475 cfs	Delta and San Joaquin River
B2	Reach 4B1 at least 4,500 cfs	Delta and San Joaquin River
C1	Reach 4B1 at least 475 cfs	Delta, San Joaquin River, and New Pumping Facilities
C2	Reach 4B1 at least 4,500 cfs	Delta, San Joaquin River, and New Pumping Facilities

Recorded SJRRP information available on Reclamation's Grapevine at 800-742-9474; select option 2 for a list of projects, and select option 4 for the SJRRP activities and updates.

Craig Moyle
Landowner Coordinator
916-418-8248

Margaret Gidding
Outreach Coordinator
916-978-5461

Contacts:

SJRRP Outreach

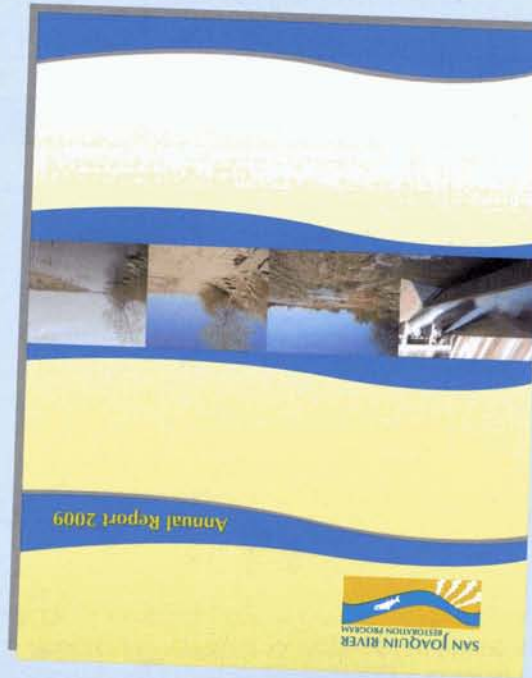


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Public Meeting Information and the Draft PEIS/R will be posted on the website as soon as it is available: www.restoresjr.net.



The SJRRP 2009 Annual Report is now available on the Program's web site. Click on the link from the front page at www.restoresjr.net.

SJRRP 2009 Annual Report

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