



October 2002

Cosumnes River Task Force

<http://www.cosumnesriver.org>

Sloughhouse Resource
Conservation District

Sacramento County

Amador Resource
Conservation District

Florin Resource
Conservation District

Sacramento County Farm
Bureau

Lower Cosumnes
Resource Conservation
District

Reclamation District 800

The Nature Conservancy

Sacramento-El Dorado-
Amador Cattlemen's
Association

El Dorado County
Resource Conservation
District

USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service



Cosumnes River Resources Inventory and Assessment Phase II

The CALFED funded Cosumnes River Resources Inventory and Assessment Phase II is well underway. Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District subcontractor Jones & Stokes commissioned and obtained current aerial photographs of the entire watershed from Radman Aerial Surveys. The aerial photographs were taken at a 33,600 scale and will be available for review at the USDA Service Center in Elk Grove upon project completion. Jones & Stokes will use the aerial photographs along with field surveys, flight surveys and contact with knowledgeable stakeholders to identify erosion sites that may be major sources of sediment.

Data on roads, landuse, slope and other features that may increase erosion and sediment yield is also being collected from the National Forest Service, relevant county agencies, local stakeholders and other landuse management sources. This information will be combined with the aerial photography to develop a sediment yield model. The model will be used to simulate delivery of sediment to the streams and provide insight into the amount of sediment different sites may be contributing. This identification of potentially high sediment yield areas will provide guidance in determining where efforts should be concentrated during Phase III restoration efforts.

Jones & Stokes has also been compiling data on important historical river channel changes due to levee construction, water diversion, aggregate extraction, vegetation management, natural flood flow and other pertinent factors. A timeline of the changes will be created in an effort to identify possible cause-and-effect relationships. Implications to present and future morphology, and specifically channel migration, bank erosion, and the location/condition of spawning gravels will be addressed, as will implications to potential habitat restoration and flood management within the reach.

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OUR MISSION

“The mission of the Cosumnes River Task Force is to develop a long term strategy that will encourage restoration of watershed health and improve flood management.”



Flashboard Dam Repairs

The Omochumne-Hartnell Water District operates four flashboard dams on the Cosumnes River. This past summer, the water district received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to complete repairs on the four dams and to add one fish ladder.

Flashboard dams are temporary barriers placed across the river during low flows. These dams expand the wetted perimeter of the river channel increasing the amount of water percolating to groundwater table depths. A higher groundwater table is important to neighboring landowners pumping water from wells to irrigate their crops. It is also important to fish migration as a higher groundwater table means the river channel will be wetted sooner when the rains come.



Blodgett Dam undergoing repairs.

The Omochumne-Hartnell Water District has hired Robertson-Bryan, Inc. to complete the repairs and build the new fish ladder. Three of the four dams: the Rooney Dam, Elk Grove Hop Ranch Dam and Mahon Dam required only minor repairs that were completed in early October. The fourth dam, the Blodgett Dam, suffered extensive damage during the 1997 flood. The Blodgett Dam was so badly damaged that it had not only become a barrier to migrating Chinook salmon, but a hazard to human life as well. In addition to repairing the dam, a boulder weir fish ladder that has actually become a barrier to fish migration is to be replaced. Repairs to the dam and construction of the fish ladder are scheduled for completion by the end of October.

South Sacramento County Agricultural Water Authority

The 1992 Groundwater Management Act (AB3030) authorized local agencies providing water services to adopt and implement Groundwater Management Plans. Due to limited financial resources, three of our local water districts, Galt, Omochumne-Hartnell and Clay signed a Joint Powers Agreement to create a Groundwater Management Plan representing the interests of all three districts. The three districts will further be referred to as the South Sacramento County Agricultural Water Authority (SSCAWA).

The SSCAWA will be responsible for developing objectives for groundwater levels, storage, recharge and quality of the underlying aquifer that meet the needs of its community. The SSCAWA will also be responsible for developing objectives for inventorying surface water sources contributing to groundwater recharge, for water conservation guidelines primarily for agricultural and residential users, and for actively pursuing the development of a conjunctive use program where surface water supplies are made available to groundwater users.

In addition to the Groundwater Management Plan distributed on October 24, 2002, the SSCAWA will be submitting grants when appropriate to help implement projects in the Plan. The SSCAWA will continue to rely on the appropriate agencies to administer the well abandonment and destruction program, and will continue collaborating with appropriate agencies to effectively transfer information regarding all aspects of groundwater management within the SSCAWA's jurisdiction.



Salmon Get A Step Up

The Fisheries Foundation of California, in cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, The Nature Conservancy, Rancho Murieta Community Service District, the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a private landowner recently repaired one fish passage structure, called a fish ladder, and replaced another along the Cosumnes River. These structures are part of the Granlees Dam located near Rancho Murieta.

Salmon, which is derived from the Latin for leaping fish, need pools at least one and a half times deeper than the rise to successfully leap up a structure. The old fish ladders at Granlees Dam were less than optimum and did not meet the current standards set by the California Department of Fish and Game. Obtaining the correct ratio for salmon passage was no easy task as Fisheries Biologist Trevor Kennedy and a crew from the Fisheries Foundation of California had to use jackhammers to deepen the pools in one of the fish ladders.

Another of the older ladders had to be replaced completely, as the initial jump was too high and again the pools were not deep enough. The new fish ladder, built to meet the hydraulic criteria for passage of large fish, will allow adult Chinook salmon access to an additional 7 miles of spawning grounds upstream.

The Fisheries Foundation of California, in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, will be monitoring the effected area for flows and temperatures required for upstream migration; quality, quantity and distribution of spawning habitat; and spawning distribution and success. The data will be helpful in the planning of future projects and will be reviewed carefully for indications of reduced compatibility problems between flood control projects on the Cosumnes River and spawning fish.



Standing atop Granlees Dam, Fisheries Biologists, Trevor Kennedy (left) and Keith Whitener discuss the improvements made to the fish ladder recently repaired by the Fisheries Foundation of California.

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PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS CARD TO
 COSUMNES RIVER TASK FORCE
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- Resources Inventory Update
- Flashboard Dam Repairs
- S. Sacramento County Agricultural Water Authority
- Fish Ladder Restoration and Replacement at Granlees Dam

The Cosumnes River Task Force usually meets:
 Date: Second Tuesday of Every Month
 Where: Sacramento County Farm Bureau in Elk Grove
 Time: 7:00-8:30 p.m.
 For up-to-date information contact Tina Lunt at (916) 714-1104 ext. 112,
 by e-mail at Tina.Lunt@ca.usda.gov or visit us online at
<http://www.cosumnesriver.org>.

Schedule of Events



Cosumnes River Task Force
 News

Volume 3 Issue 6 October 2002



9701 Dino Drive Suite 170
 Elk Grove CA 95624-4042
 Phone: 916-714-1104 ext. 112
 Fax: 916-714-1117
 Email: Tina.Lunt@ca.usda.gov

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Editing & Design
 Tina Lunt



This newsletter is provided for
 with funding from the CALFED
 Watershed Program.

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 Sloughhouse Resource Conserva-
 tion District (916) 714-1104 ext.
 112 with questions or comments.