FEDERAL
CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDIES AND ACTIVITIES ON
THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER AND ITS MAJOR TRIBUTARIES

Compiled by
San Joaquin River Management Program Work Group
April 5, 1990

U. S. Bureau of Reclamation

The U. S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) is defining the scope of the San Joaquin Environmental Recovery Program for the San Joaquin River and its tributaries. $1 million is budgeted over four years, but the program will require local and State cost-sharing. The recovery effort will emphasize fishery flows.

The Stanislaus and Calaveras Rivers Projects are being conducted to study water supply, fisheries needs, and conjunctive use opportunities. The Stanislaus River Fishery Study is under way and is a cooperative effort of USBR, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The primary objective of this study is to determine what measures are necessary to improve survival of the freshwater life stages of chinook salmon in the Stanislaus River and downstream migratory pathways. The study is scheduled for completion in 1994.

USBR is a participant in the refuge supply study.

USBR has a computer model to simulate flood behavior of streams based on average monthly data. The model is expected to be test-ready by summer of 1990.

USBR is a part of an interagency planning team that is developing a ground water model for the whole San Joaquin Valley.

The Mid-Valley Canal is proposed to relieve ground water overdraft, but the project appears to be on hold.

Arvin-Edison/Metropolitan Water District Exchange Project is being considered by USBR. Preparation of an environmental impact statement/report (EIS/EIR) is under way, and hearings before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) should be completed in mid-1990.

Judgment in the Westlands Water District vs. United States litigation (Civil F-81-245) specifies that USBR, in cooperation and consultation with Westlands Water District, must develop, adopt, and submit to Westlands Water District by December 31, 1991, a drainage plan for drainage service facilities.

USBR is conducting a San Joaquin Valley Conveyance Study to develop a plan to reduce the ground water overdraft on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley. The studies are scheduled for completion in fiscal year 1990.

In 1988, Kern-Tulare Water District, one of the eight federal Cross Valley Canal contractors, presented USBR with a proposal to integrate the operations of the Cross Valley Canal with the

Friant Division, specifically Millerton Lake and Friant-Kern Canal. These evaluations and the final report are to be completed in fiscal year 1990.

USBR is renewing the Friant Unit contracts for water service to 28 Friant Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors, with the initial contract renewal beginning in 1989.

USBR recently released the San Joaquin Basin Action/Kesterson Mitigation Plan, which includes a discussion of the Zahm-Sansoni-Nelson Plan for the cleanup of Salt Slough.

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Presented by
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U. S. Corps of Engineers
May 11, 1990

U. S. Corps of Engineers

The U. S. Corps of Engineers (USCE) has initiated a study of the Mokelumne River and its tributaries at the request of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). This investigation will consider potential flood control storage on the Cosumnes River and Dry Creek in Sacramento County and a possible increase in storage on the Mokelumne River.

USCE is conducting a reconnaissance investigation to provide additional flood protection downstream of New Hogan Dam on the Calaveras River. The study will evaluate dams for flood control and water supply on the Calaveras River just downstream of the confluence with South Gulch, a dam on South Gulch, and potential enlargement of channels downstream from Bellota.

USCE has recently completed a reconnaissance study evaluating the viability of raising Pine Flat Dam for additional flood protection and irrigation supply. It was determined that there were no economically justifiable alternatives.

USCE is participating in two cost-shared feasibility studies on the Kaweah River and the Tule River. Each study consists of raising the gross pool at existing reservoirs to provide additional flood control and irrigation water supply.

A feasibility study report for a flood control project on Caliente Creek was rejected at the Washington Level Review Center because of technical concerns. Negotiations are under way with the Kern County Water Agency to execute a new feasibility cost share agreement to conduct additional studies of new alternatives.

USCE is presently evaluating how to proceed, in light of major environmental concerns, with proposed clearing and snagging on the Kings River north and middle reaches.

USCE is cooperating with DWR on the Arroyo Pasajero study of sedimentation problems near Huron.

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U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USFWS is working with USBR and DFG on a cooperative instream flow study (IFIM) on the Stanislaus River.

USFWS is conducting an IFIM on the upper and lower Tuolumne River. Results from the upper Tuolumne IFIM are expected in 1991. Results from the lower Tuolumne IFIM are expected in 1995.

USFWS has an ongoing National Wetland Inventory Program and has recently released a report on the program's status and trends from 1939 through the mid-1980s. Central Valley data are complete from 1950s through 1980s.

USFWS has completed two habitat evaluation procedures (aquatic and terrestrial) for the San Joaquin River Snagging and Clearing Project.

USFWS is pursuing land acquisition for the San Joaquin River Refuge Program (goal of 11,000 acres). Funding is $2 million.

USFWS is conducting a refuge water supply investigation to determine the possibility of using refuges as offstream storage sites. The studies are being conducted at Grasslands.

USFWS is evaluating offstream storage reservoir proposals (Los Banos Grandes).

USFWS would like to conduct future IFIMs on the Merced River and main stem of the San Joaquin River.

USFWS is involved in various aspects of the evaporation pond investigations. Providing additional alternative wetlands for waterfowl and shorebirds could reduce impacts of evaporation ponds.

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Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Central Valley Basin Plan Toxicity Study will characterize the water quality of the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds and determine the spatial and temporal nature of any observed toxic impairment employing sensitive multispecies bioassays.

EPA's Site-Specific Criteria for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary Project will develop site-specific water quality criteria for the Delta Estuary. The lead agency for this project is SWRCB's Planning and Standards Branch.

EPA is developing water quality criteria for four selected toxic substances for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. The lead agency is SWRCB's Division of Water Quality.

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Federal Emergency Management Agency

As a result of changes in the hydrology of the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam, the U. S. Corps of Engineers (USCE) determined that significant increases in water surface elevations in excess of 1 foot had occurred over time. This elevation change triggered the Federal Emergency Management Agency to initiate a program to restudy the 100-year floodplain of the San Joaquin River. Funding for the field portion of the study will become available in 1992.