Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: Agencies and Interested Parties

From: Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency

Date: March 27, 2009

Subject: **Announcement of:**

1) **Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report on the Natomas Levee Improvement Program, Phase 4a Landside Improvements Project;**
2) **Public Scoping Meeting to be held on April 13, 2009; and**
3) **Scoping Comments due by April 27, 2009**

The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) intends to prepare a "joint" environmental impact statement (EIS) and environmental impact report (EIR), consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Section 4321 et seq.) and with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.; see also 14 California Code of Regulations Sections 15220, 15222 [State CEQA Guidelines]), for the Natomas Levee Improvement Program (NLIP) Phase 4a Landside Improvements Project (Phase 4a Project) in the Natomas Basin in Sacramento and Sutter Counties, California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Sacramento District, will be the Federal lead agency for purposes of complying with NEPA, and SAFCA will be the state lead agency for compliance with CEQA.

In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, SAFCA has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible and trustee agencies, Federal agencies taking action on the project, and interested parties that an EIS/EIR will be prepared. The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow the Office of Planning and Research (OPR), responsible and trustee agencies, and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIS/EIR, including the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that the responsible or trustee agency, or the OPR, will need to have explored in the EIS/EIR (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082[b]).

The project location, description, and probable environmental effects are presented below. An initial study has not been prepared for the Phase 4a Project because the EIS/EIR will address all issue areas. The EIS/EIR will also include feasible mitigation measures and consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives to avoid or substantially reduce the proposed project's significant adverse environmental impacts.

A joint NEPA/CEQA public scoping meeting, with USACE and SAFCA representatives, will be held during the 30-day public review period to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR. The joint scoping meeting will satisfy the meeting requirement for projects of statewide, regional, or areawide significance. (See State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082, subd. [c].)

INTRODUCTION

CEQA specifies that a public agency must prepare an EIR on any project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant direct or indirect effect (also referred to as "significant impact") on the environment (PRC Section 21080[d]). SAFCA is proposing the NLIP Phase 4a Project, as described below, and has determined that the proposed project may have significant impacts on the environment. Therefore, acting as the lead agency for CEQA compliance, SAFCA will prepare an EIR that evaluates these significant environmental impacts.

To implement the proposed project, SAFCA is requesting permission from USACE pursuant to Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 United States Code [USC] 408, referred to as "Section 408") for alteration of Federal project levees; Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344) for placement of fill into jurisdictional waters of the United States; and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 403) for work performed in, under, or over navigable waters, and excavation of material from or deposition of material into navigable waters. A joint EIS/EIR will be prepared to evaluate the significant environmental impacts of the proposed project, including those impacts associated with USACE's decision-making processes for Sections 408, 404, and 10.

The Phase 4a Project consists of improvements to a portion of the Natomas Basin's perimeter levee system (see **Exhibits 1** and **2** below) in Sutter and Sacramento Counties, California, and associated landscape and irrigation/drainage infrastructure modifications. SAFCA has initiated this effort in cooperation with the California Department of Water Resources and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (together referred to as "State"), and USACE with the aim of incorporating the NLIP into the Natomas components of the Federally authorized American River Common Features Project.

The overall purpose of the NLIP is to bring the entire 42-mile Natomas Basin perimeter levee system into compliance with applicable Federal and state standards for levees protecting urban areas.

In addition to requesting permission from USACE pursuant to Sections 408, 404, and 10, as discussed above, SAFCA may also need to obtain several state, regional, and local approvals or permits to implement the Phase 4a Project: Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) encroachment permit; California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act permit; Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification, Clean Water Act Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit; California Fish and Game Code Section 2081 incidental take authorization; California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 streambed alteration agreement; encroachment permits from the California Department of Transportation, Sacramento County, and Sutter County; and authority to construct permits from the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District and the Feather River Air Quality Management District.

PURPOSE OF THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The purposes of this notice are to:

1. briefly describe the proposed project and the anticipated content of the EIS/EIR to be prepared for the proposed project;

2. announce the public scoping meeting to facilitate public input and to be held: April 13, 2009, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at South Natomas Community Center (Activity Room) in Sacramento, California; and

3. solicit input by April 27, 2009, from Federal, state, regional, and local agencies, and from interested organizations and individuals about the content and scope of the EIS/EIR, including the alternatives to be addressed and the potentially significant environmental impacts.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Phase 4a Landside Improvements Project is part of SAFCA's efforts to reduce the risk of flood damage in the Sacramento area, and is part of the NLIP evaluated in SAFCA's programmatic *EIR on Local Funding Mechanisms for Comprehensive Flood Control Improvements for the Sacramento Area* (State Clearinghouse # 2006072098). Volume II of that EIR contained a project-level evaluation of the Natomas Cross Canal South Levee Phase 1 Improvements (Phase 1 Project).

In 2007, SAFCA prepared the *EIR on the NLIP Landside Improvements Project* (2007 Landside EIR, State Clearinghouse # 2007062016), which covers the three additional phases of "landside" improvements to the levees protecting the Natomas Basin in Sacramento and Sutter Counties, including the Phase 2 Project, Phase 3 Project, and Phase 4 Project. The Phase 2 Project was analyzed at a project level and the remainder of the Landside Improvement Project (Phase 3 and Phase 4 Projects) was analyzed at a program level in the 2007 Landside EIR. On November 29, 2007, the SAFCA Board of Directors certified the EIR and approved implementation of the Phase 2 Project. Following completion of the Landside EIR, USACE prepared an EIS to meet USACE's NEPA requirements to support USACE's decisions on the permissions and permitting under Sections 408, 404, and 10. A Record of Decision was signed by USACE in January 2009. The USACE EIS also contained a project-level analysis of the Phase 2 Project and a program-level analysis of the Phase 3 and Phase 4 Projects. Since certification of the 2007 Landside EIR, SAFCA has made modifications and refinements to the design of the Phase 2 Project. A supplemental EIR (SEIR) was prepared by SAFCA to evaluate these modifications, which the SAFCA Board of Directors certified in January 2009, at which time the Board also approved the modifications to the Phase 2 Project.

The Phase 3 Project was analyzed at a project-level in the *EIS/EIR on the NLIP Phase 3 Landside Improvements Project* (Phase 3 EIS/EIR, State Clearinghouse # 2008072060), which was released for public review on February 13, 2009.

The EIS/EIR to be prepared for the Phase 4a Project (which is the subject of this notice) will evaluate the environmental impacts of the Phase 4a Project at a project level. The Phase 4a Project is one of three sub-phases of the overall Phase 4 Project that was analyzed in the 2007 Landside EIR. The Phase 4 Project was divided into sub-phases to provide the flexibility to construct this phase over more than one construction season. The Phase 4b and Phase 4c Projects will be the subject of future, separate EIS/EIRs and are not analyzed in the Phase 4a Project EIS/EIR. Each of the sub-phases has its own independent utility, can be accomplished with or without the other sub-phases, and provides additional flood risk reduction benefits to the Natomas Basin whether implemented individually or collectively.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were adopted by SAFCA in connection with approval of the NLIP: (1) provide at least a 100-year level of flood protection to the Natomas Basin as quickly as possible, (2) provide "200-year" protection to the Basin over time, and (3) avoid any substantial increase in expected annual damages as new development occurs in the Basin.

The first two project objectives would reduce the residual risk of flooding sufficiently to meet the minimum requirements of Federal and state law for urban areas like the Natomas Basin. The third project objective is a long-term objective of SAFCA.

An additional project objective adopted by SAFCA in connection with the Phase 2 and Phase 3 Projects that is also applicable to the Phase 4a Project is to use flood damage reduction projects to increase the extent and connectivity of the lands in the Natomas Basin being managed to provide habitat for giant garter snake, Swainson's hawk, and other special-status species.

PROPOSED PROJECT

Key Project Elements

The Phase 4a Project includes the following major activities anticipated to begin in 2010, which will be analyzed at a project level in the Phase 4a EIS/EIR:

- **Sacramento River east levee Reaches 10–15: levee raising/rehabilitation and seepage remediation (see Exhibit 2)**—Construct an adjacent setback levee, raised in Reaches 10–11B, with cutoff walls, seepage berms, and relief wells where required to reduce seepage potential. Cutoff wall construction would take place 24-hours-per-day, 7 days-per-week during the construction period.

- **Natomas Cross Canal (NCC) south levee improvements: levee raising and seepage remediation at two locations**—At Natomas Central Mutual Water Company (NCMWC) Bennett Pump Station and Northern Main Pump Station, raise the NCC south levee, flatten levee side slopes, install cutoff walls, and modify or replace the existing pumps and motors to reflect raising the discharge pipes above the "200-year" design flood elevation. Cutoff wall construction would take place 24-hours-per-day, 7 days-per-week during the construction period.

- **Relocation of the Riverside Canal (highline irrigation canal) away from the existing Sacramento River east levee**—Extend the relocated canal upstream of Powerline Road in Reaches 11B–12B, relocate the canal west of the adjacent levee in Reaches 13–15, relocate the canal west of the adjacent levee/residences/tree groves in Reaches 15–18B, and construct a piped section in Reach 15-18B at the toe of the new adjacent levee.

- **Modifications to NCMWC Riverside Pumping Plant**—Raise and extend discharge pipes, and modify or replace the existing Riverside Pumping Plant pumps and motors to reflect raising the discharge pipes above the "200-year" design water surface. In-water construction would include use of dredge pumps to remove sediment in order to install new pumps, but no dewatering through use of a coffer dam would take place.

- **Modifications to Reclamation District (RD) 1000 Pumping Plants Nos. 3 and 5**—Raise and extend discharge pipes, replace or modify pumps and motors, and perform other seepage remediation, including relocation of the stations away from the levee to accommodate raising the discharge pipes above the "200-year" design water surface. The pipe extensions would tie into existing discharge pipes within the waterside bench. These modifications would take place above normal Sacramento River summer and fall water surface elevations; therefore, no dewatering would occur.

- **Borrow site excavation and reclamation**—Excavate earthen material at the borrow sites and then return the sites to preconstruction uses or suitable replacement habitat. For the levee and canal improvements along the Sacramento River east levee, the Fisherman's Lake Borrow Area is anticipated to be the primary source of soil borrow material for the Phase 4a Project (see **Exhibit 2**). However, additional borrow sites may be needed, including the Interstate 5 Borrow Area, the Elkhorn Borrow Area, and the Airport north bufferlands. For construction on the NCC south levee, the source of soil borrow would be the Brookfield borrow site. All of the proposed borrow areas have been the subject of previous environmental documents and, therefore, their potential impacts will be incorporated by reference, with the exception of the Fisherman's Lake Borrow Area which will be fully analyzed in the Phase 4a EIS/EIR.

- **Habitat creation and management**—Create up to 300 acres of managed seasonal and perennial marsh and agricultural upland habitat in the Fisherman's Lake Borrow Area; establish perennial native grasses on levee slopes, seepage berms, and access and maintenance areas; and establish woodlands consisting of native riparian and woodland species at locations along the landside of the Sacramento River east levee.

- **Infrastructure relocation and realignment**—Realign and relocate private irrigation and drainage infrastructure, including wells, pumps, canals, and pipes; and relocate utility infrastructure, such as power poles, as needed to accommodate the levee improvements and major canal relocations.

- **Landside vegetation removal**—In Reaches 12B–15 of the Sacramento River east levee, clear landside vegetation in a corridor up to 660 feet wide to prepare for Phase 4a Project levee and canal improvement work.

- **Right-of-way acquisition**—Acquire lands within the Phase 4a Project footprint along the Sacramento River east levee and at associated borrow sites.

- **Encroachment management**—Remove encroachments as required to meet the criteria of USACE, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Other Project Details

The following describes additional project details associated with the Phase 4a Project.

- **Project footprint and soil borrow requirements**—To address uncertainty in engineering design and cultural resource investigation and assess worst-case impacts from ground disturbance in a maximum potential project footprint, the Phase 4a EIS/EIR will analyze a footprint that could include both cutoff walls and 500-foot-wide seepage berms throughout Reaches 10–15 of the Sacramento River east levee. In some locations, to fully remediate seepage, a combination of shallow cutoff walls, seepage berms, and relief wells may be used. Deep cutoff walls may also be used as a seepage remediation measure. Cutoff wall construction would take place 24-hours-per-day, 7 days-per-week during the construction period. Continuing cultural investigations and refinement of engineering design are likely to produce a footprint that includes 500-foot-wide berms in only a few culturally sensitive locations, with most reaches containing either 100-foot-wide berms or deep cutoff walls. Soil borrow requirements are based on this more probable footprint and would total between 4 and 5 million cubic yards.

- **Measures to avoid residences and heritage oaks**—Where residences and heritage oak trees are located, particularly in Reaches 12B and 13–15, SAFCA would employ, to the extent feasible under levee design and seepage remediation performance requirements, measures to minimize the project footprint to avoid these resources. These measures would include reducing the width of the adjacent setback levee, seepage berms, and operations and maintenance/utility corridor and the strategic use of cutoff walls or seepage relief wells.

- **Power pole relocation**—Power poles that currently exist on the landside slope of the levee and at the landside levee toe would need to be relocated and/or rerouted to accommodate the widened levee footprint. To the extent feasible, mainline utility infrastructure, such as power poles, would be relocated beyond the landside levee toe or berms, and a secondary distribution line of poles would be relocated to the area between the existing levee and the adjacent levee. Should placement of poles be required on top of the seepage berms, either raised foundations or steel reinforced concrete piers would be constructed to prevent the poles from impacting the performance of the seepage berm. Some poles may need to be relocated to the waterside of the existing levee; however, no new power poles would be located on the waterside of the levee in the vicinity of existing waterside residences unless there is no feasible alternative for providing service to these residences. Tree pruning would likely be required in some locations to accommodate the power poles and associated wires. SAFCA would conduct the relocations in coordination with the USACE, CVFPB, and the appropriate utility companies and the construction operations.

- **Riverside Canal and pipeline alignment**—The proposed canal right-of-way would be roughly 155 feet wide, including a landside operation and maintenance corridor and embankments on each side of the channel. The bottom width of the canal would range from about 8 to 10 feet wide. To provide for stable banks, the side slopes of the canals would be 3H:1V or flatter. A patrol road with an aggregate base rock surface would be constructed on the top of the landside (eastern) embankment. Disturbed areas, aside from the lined canal and

patrol road, would be seeded following construction. In addition to the open canal, an approximately 8,500 foot long, 24- to 36-inch diameter pipeline would be constructed immediately east of the new levee footprint in Sacramento River east levee Reaches 15–18B. The Riverside pipeline would allow the relocated canal system to provide irrigation service to the parcels currently served by the Riverside Canal. Following construction, these parcels would be located between the improved levee and the relocated Riverside Canal.

- **Fisherman's Lake Complex**—The proposed project would include development of a mosaic of habitat types in the Central Fishermen's Lake Area, including managed marsh, managed agricultural upland/grassland, and woodlands. These postproject land cover types and associated management practices are proposed to offset the loss of habitat values attributable to on the NLIP improvements. This habitat complex would also help further the following SAFCA objectives for the NLIP:

  - expand the size and biological diversity of The Natomas Basin Conservancy's (TNBC's) preserve complex on the west side of Fisherman's Lake;

  - consolidate management of habitat preserve lands consistent with the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan;

  - enlarge and enhance existing giant garter snake habitat such as managed marsh, rice, and canal corridors;

  - create native perennial grasslands and preserve and manage field crops suitable for Swainson's hawk foraging; and

  - expand the size and locations of woodland corridors and groves adjacent to Swainson's hawk foraging areas.

The following describes the habitat types that would be created within the Fisherman's Lake Complex:

- **Managed Marsh**—After the completion of borrow activities, soil borrow sites in the vicinity of Fisherman's Lake would be finish graded and planted with native riparian and marsh vegetation by SAFCA to create up to 150 acres of managed seasonal and perennial marsh habitat that would benefit the giant garter snake. Marsh design and management would optimize the values of giant garter snake habitat but minimize the attraction to wildlife species considered to be potentially hazardous to aircraft approaching or departing from runways (e.g., flocks of waterfowl, starlings, pheasants). An essential component of the managed marsh would be procurement of a firm, reliable water supply and good water quality throughout the giant garter snake's active season of April–October. The marsh would be situated near to and functionally connected to TNBC's created marshes in the vicinity of Fisherman's Lake (Natomas Farms and Cummings Preserves), thereby providing for greater contiguous management areas and enhancing the overall habitat value and giant garter snake population resilience of the adjacent preserves.

- **Foraging Habitat**—To compensate for the permanent loss of foraging habitat within the foraging range of potentially impacted Swainson's hawk nest locations, SAFCA would create or preserve in perpetuity foraging habitat for Swainson's hawks and other raptors. This would be primarily achieved by the acquisition and reclamation to cropland of sites used for excavation of soil borrow material in the vicinity of Fisherman's Lake. Crop types and crop rotations would be managed to optimize the seasonal variation of prey availability for Swainson's hawks and other raptors. Foraging habitat of moderate quality would also be provided by managed grassland within the project footprint on levee slopes, berms, and maintenance setbacks.

- **Woodlands**—Woodlands consisting of native riparian and valley oak woodland species would be planted at several sites as a component of the proposed project. The sites would be located within a 100- to 200-foot-wide corridor running generally north-south along the east side of the relocated Riverside Canal.

These woodlands would be intended to provide new nesting opportunities to areas farther inland from the levees where those habitat values have been lost, and to make existing Swainson's hawk foraging habitat on interior agricultural fields more accessible. The sites would also provide connectivity between TNBC preserves, which would also create a larger contiguous area managed for Swainson's hawk than currently exists.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Because the EIS/EIR for the Phase 4a Project is a joint NEPA/CEQA document, it will fully evaluate the environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and the following two alternatives at an equal level of detail:

- **No-Action Alternative (No-Project Alternative for purposes of CEQA)**—Under NEPA, the expected future without-project conditions; under CEQA, the existing condition at the time the NOP was published (March 27, 2009), as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project were not approved. The No-Action Alternative will consist of two components:

  - **No-Project Construction**—The No-Action Alternative in this analysis consists of the conditions that would likely prevail in the Natomas Basin if no action at all were taken by SAFCA, the State, or USACE to further improve the Basin's perimeter levee system beyond the accomplishments of the Sacramento Urban Levee Reconstruction Project; the North Area Local Project; and the NLIP Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 Projects. Under this scenario, key segments of this system would continue to provide less than 100-year flood protection, and the entire Natomas Basin would be permanently designated as a special flood hazard area subject to development restrictions and mandatory flood insurance requirements pursuant to the regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program. SAFCA would not provide the Natomas Basin with at least a 100-year level of flood protection by the end of 2010 and would not be able to facilitate achieving a "200-year" level of protection by the end of 2012.

  - **Potential Levee Failure**—The same conditions with respect to development within the Natomas Basin as described above for the No-Project Construction component of the No-Action Alternative would exist for the Potential Levee Failure component. Without additional improvements to the Natomas perimeter levee system, wind and wave run-up or seepage conditions could cause portions of this system to fail, triggering widespread flooding and extensive damage to the Basin's existing residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial structures. Extensive damage to utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure systems would also likely occur. The magnitude of the flood damage would depend upon the location of the levee breach, severity of the storm, and river flows at the time of a potential levee failure.

- **Strengthen-Levee-in-Place Alternative**—All elements of the Strengthen-Levee-In-Place Alternative would be the same as described for the Proposed Action (including the "Other Project Details," described above), except for the method of levee raising and rehabilitation, the extent of levee degrade to construct cutoff walls, and the extent of encroachment removal along the Sacramento River east levee (differences from the Proposed Action are shown in italicized text):

  - **Sacramento River east levee Reaches 10–11B: levee raising and seepage remediation**—*Raise the existing levee and flatten the existing landside slope from Reach 10 through 11B,* and construct cutoff walls *within the existing levee section,* seepage berms, and relief wells where required to reduce seepage potential.

  - **Sacramento River east levee Reaches 12–15: seepage remediation**—*Widen levee crown, flatten landside slopes, construct cutoff walls within the existing levee section,* and construct seepage berms, and relief wells where required to reduce seepage potential.

- **Riverbank erosion control**—*Implement erosion control improvements along approximately 5,400 feet of river bank at the waterside toe of the Sacramento River east levee at River Miles 68.8 through 70.0 (Sites I, J, K, L, and M in Sacramento River east levee Reaches 10–11B).*

- **Waterside vegetation removal**—*In Reaches 13–15 of the Sacramento River east levee, clear waterside vegetation to meet USACE vegetation guidance criteria.*

- **Encroachment management**—*Remove substantial encroachments from the waterside and landside of the Phase 4a Project Sacramento River east levee (Reaches 10–15) to ensure that the levees can be certified as meeting the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program and USACE encroachment guidance.*

- **Project footprint and soil borrow requirements**—*The Strengthen-Levee-in-Place Alternative would have the same seepage remediation but would widen the Sacramento River east levee by approximately 30 feet less than the Proposed Action. The estimated soil borrow requirement for the Strengthen-Levee-in-Place Alternative would be approximately 4.8 million cubic yards.*

Alternatives that have already been addressed in previous environmental documents for the NLIP will be briefly summarized in the EIS/EIR for the Phase 4a Project and incorporated by reference. These alternatives include the following:

- Yolo Bypass Improvements
- Reduced Natomas Urban Levee Perimeter
- Construction of a New Setback Levee
- Raise Levee in Place with a 1,000-Foot Levee Setback in the Upper 1.4 Miles along the Sacramento River East Levee
- Construct an Adjacent Setback Levee with a 500-Foot Levee Setback in the Upper 1.4 Miles along the Sacramento River East Levee
- No SAFCA Levee Improvements—Private Levees in Natomas

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PHASE 4A PROJECT

The EIS/EIR will describe the direct and indirect significant environmental impacts of the Phase 4a Project. The EIS/EIR will also evaluate cumulative effects of the project when considered in conjunction with the other phases of the Landside Improvements Project and other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, including other USACE (408 permission) and SAFCA projects.

On the basis of preliminary evaluation, programmatic environmental analyses of the Phase 4a Project in previous NEPA and CEQA documents, and relevant environmental analyses of previous project phases, USACE and SAFCA have determined that the probable environmental effects of the proposed project are as follows:

- **Agricultural Resources:** Conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use; temporary and permanent effects on agricultural productivity.
- **Land Use:** Temporary disturbance and division of an existing community and temporary disruption of commercial activities during construction.
- **Geology and Soils:** Potential for soil erosion or loss of topsoil during construction.

- **Hydrology and Hydraulics:** Minimized flood risk; potential temporary and/or permanent alteration of local drainage patterns; potential effects on groundwater recharge.

- **Water Quality:** Temporary effects on water quality during construction.

- **Biological Resources**; temporary disturbance or permanent loss of woodland habitats and wildlife corridors; temporary disturbance or permanent loss of special-status species habitats; construction disturbance or take of special-status terrestrial species, especially to Swainson's hawk and giant garter snake; and temporary disturbance or permanent loss of jurisdictional waters of the United States.

- **Fish and Aquatic Habitat:** Loss of fish or aquatic habitat through increased sedimentation and turbidity or release of contaminants during construction; and loss of shaded riverine aquatic habitat (SRA).

- **Cultural Resources:** Temporary and/or permanent disturbance of known and unknown historic or archaeological resources.

- **Paleontological Resources:** Potential disturbance of previously undiscovered fossils during earthmoving activities.

- **Transportation and Circulation:** Temporary increase in traffic and traffic hazards on local roadways during construction; temporary closure of roadways, including the Garden Highway for up to 3 months during construction of flood control improvements within the roadway (associated with the Strengthen-in-Place Alternative).

- **Air Quality:** Temporary and short-term increases in pollutant emissions associated with construction activities, including the potential overlap in construction of portions of the Phase 2 and/or Phase 3 Projects with the Phase 4a Project.

- **Noise:** Temporary and short-term increases in noise and vibration levels near sensitive receptors during construction, including the need for 24-hour-per-day, 7-days-per-week construction of the cutoff walls to ensure that construction is completed before the start of flood season.

- **Visual Resources:** Temporary and long-term changes in scenic views or visual character of the project area from the construction of project features and tree/vegetation removal.

- **Utilities and Service Systems:** Temporary disruption of irrigation supply; potential disruption of utility service from construction activities and from the relocation of power poles.

- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Potential spills of hazardous materials during construction; potential exposure to hazardous materials at project sites during construction; potential for higher frequency of collisions between aircraft and wildlife at the Sacramento International Airport during construction and as a result of permanent changes in land cover; and increased exposure to wildland fire risk during construction.

- **Socioeconomics and Population, Employment, and Housing:** Potential displacement of existing housing, especially affordable housing; potential reduction in local or regional employment, and other potential socioeconomic impacts, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.

- **Environmental Justice:** Potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low income populations, including Tribal resources, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.

- **Climate Change:** Temporary and short-term generation of greenhouse gas emissions (CO_2) from project construction, including potential overlap with construction of the Phase 2 and/or Phase 3 Projects.

- **Cumulative and Growth-Inducting Impacts:** Potential cumulatively considerable incremental contributions from Phase 4a Project impacts in the areas of agricultural resources, water quality, fisheries, biological resources, cultural resources, air quality, noise, visual resources; potential growth-inducing impacts from construction of the proposed flood-damage reduction improvements, including substantial new permanent employment opportunities, substantial short-term employment opportunities, and removal of an obstacle to additional growth and development in the Natomas Basin.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

A joint EIS/EIR public scoping meeting, conducted by USACE and SAFCA, will be held to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to obtain the views of agency representatives and the public on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR. The meeting will be held on April 13, 2009, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., at 2921 Truxel Road (South Natomas Community Center) in Sacramento, California.

The meeting will have an open-house format with multiple stations set up to highlight different aspects of the proposed project and the NEPA/CEQA process. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the project and the EIS/EIR process with project team members and to provide oral and written comments. The meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals needing special assistive devices will be accommodated to the best of our ability. For more information, contact John Bassett with SAFCA at (916) 874-7606 or bassettj@saccounty.net at least 48 hours before the meeting.

PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THE NOP

Interested parties may provide written or oral comments on the content and scope of the EIS/EIR at the public scoping meeting or may provide written comments directly to SAFCA. **Written comments must be provided to SAFCA at the earliest possible date, but must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, April 27, 2009**. Agencies that will need to use the EIS/EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person. Comments provided by e-mail should include the name and address of the sender. Please send all written and/or e-mail comments on the NOP to:

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Director of Engineering
Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
1007 7th Street, 7th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: (916) 874-7606
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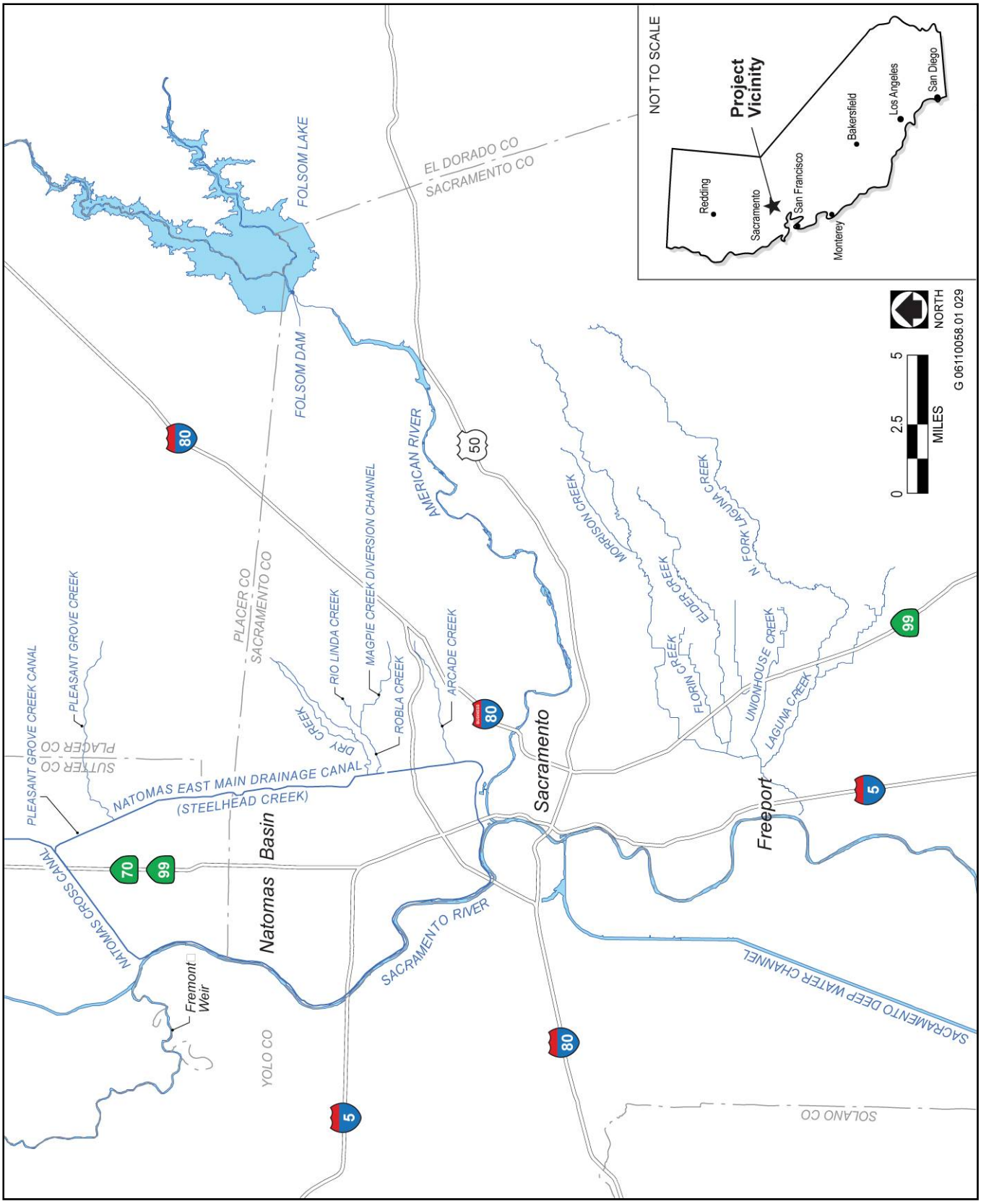
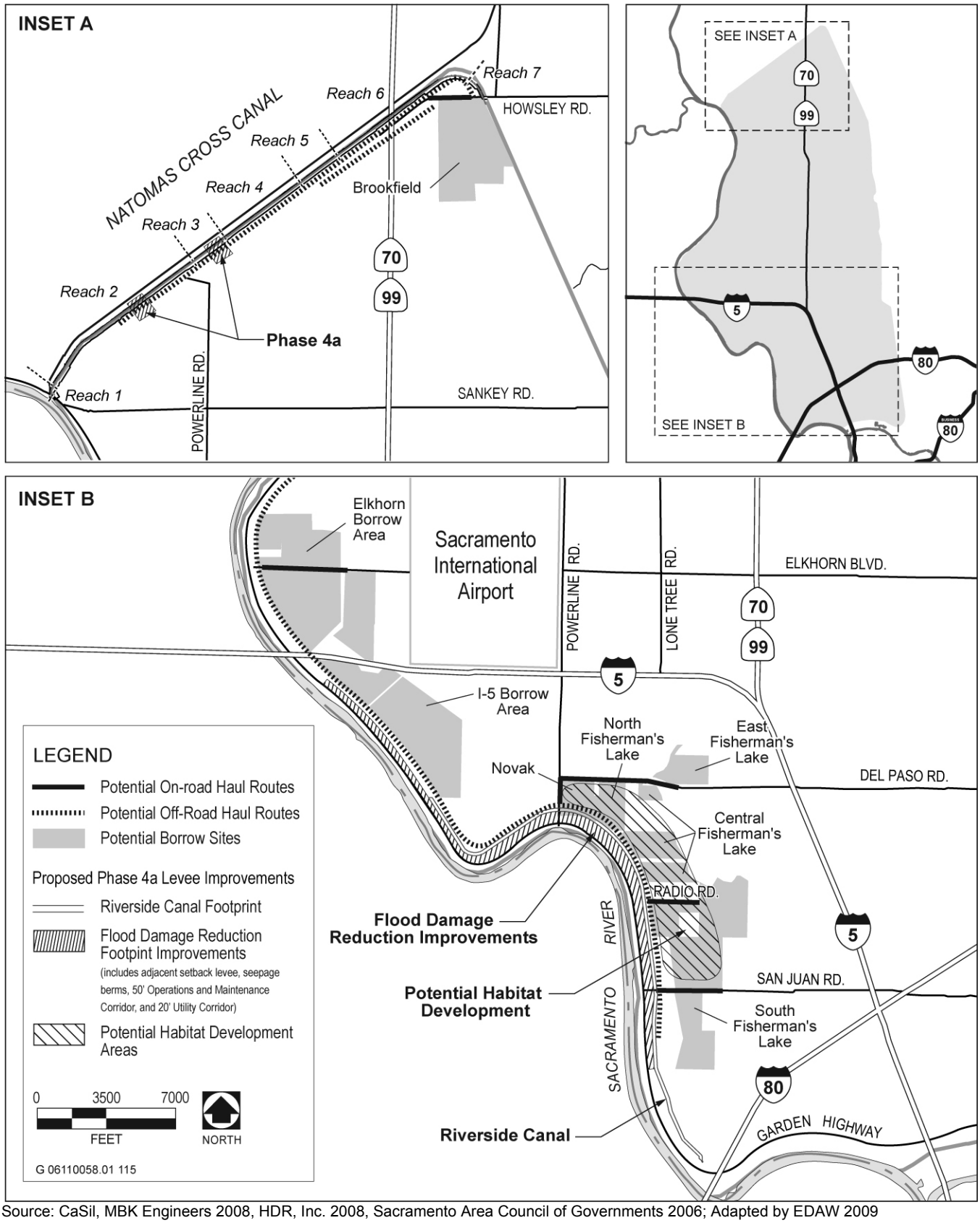


Source: CaSil, Adapted by EDAW in 2007

Exhibit 1 – Regional Location Exhibit



Source: CaSil, MBK Engineers 2008, HDR, Inc. 2008, Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2006; Adapted by EDAW 2009

Exhibit 2 – Phase 4a Construction Areas