

Agenda of August 20, 2009

**TO: Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
Board of Directors**

**FROM: Stein M. Buer, Executive Director
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**SUBJECT: INFORMATION – NATOMAS LEVEE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
(NLIP) UPDATE**

OVERVIEW:

This update includes a status of program funding, construction, design and permitting activities, right of way efforts and the Sacramento River East Levee encroachment documentation and evaluation efforts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board receive and file this report.

MEASURES/EVALUATION:

This is an ongoing item. Success will be measured by implementation of the program on schedule and within budget.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed action does not have a fiscal impact.

SUMMARY

Implementation of the NLIP is moving forward on schedule. Construction on the Natomas Cross Canal (NCC) South Levee Phase 2 and Sacramento River East Levee Phase 1 (Reach 1) Project - Contract 3980 is well underway and scheduled for completion by October 31, 2009.

On July 16, SAFCA awarded the Sacramento River East Levee (SREL) Phase 1B (Reaches 2 Through 4B), Elkhorn Irrigation Canal Phase 1 Relocation and Giant Garter Snake/Drainage Canal Phase 1 Construction Project - Contract 4032. The contractor has been given notice to proceed.

SAFCA staff and the NLIP consultant team are moving forward with acquisition of right of way needed to investigate, design, and construct levee improvements

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along the Sacramento River east levee for Reaches 5A through 15 (just upstream of Elverta Road to just downstream of San Juan Road). We will work closely with the landowners and farmers to minimize impacts to ongoing agricultural operations by taking possession of the properties after the fall harvest.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE's) Phase 3 final EIS is scheduled to begin public review on August 21. Phase 3 includes the Sacramento River East Levee Reaches 5A-9B, the Pleasant Grove Creek Canal and the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal from Elkhorn Boulevard to Northgate Boulevard. The Phase 4a draft EIS/EIR is scheduled to begin public review on August 28. Phase 4a includes the Sacramento River East Levee Reaches 10-15 and closing of the gaps in the cutoff wall on the NCC South Levee at the Bennett and Northern Main Pump Stations.

In anticipation of the need to fully comply with FEMA 100-year certification requirements, the team is also moving forward with mapping and evaluating encroachments along the existing levee system to determine which encroachments may need to be modified or removed in order to achieve that certification. A draft report is scheduled for public review in November 2009.

DISCUSSION

Construction, real estate acquisition and permitting activities for the NLIP are progressing on schedule for completion of the Natomas Cross Canal and Sacramento River Reaches 1-15. SAFCA staff is working closely with the USACE on execution of the remaining elements of the program which would include Phase 3 construction on the east side of the basin and all aspects of Phase 4b. The following is a summary of the status of key elements of the program.

Status of Construction Efforts

NCC Phase 2/SREL-Phase 1- Construction Update

Teichert Construction began degrading the existing NCC portion of the work during the week of June 8, 2009. Teichert is currently completing the balance of the installation of the slurry cutoff wall. Work on the final slurry wall heading, east of Highway 99, is anticipated to be completed during the week of August 17. Teichert is currently installing embankment to the west of Highway 99. Earth work on the NCC is scheduled for completion in early October.

The SREL-1A portion of the contract is currently undergoing preparation for the slurry cutoff wall and embankment work. Utility poles located along the northeast side of the Garden Highway, at the landside toe of the existing levee require re-location prior to the commencement of the slurry wall construction. SAFCA anticipates that the PG&E portion of the relocation efforts will be completed during the week of August 17. The PG&E work should allow for the commencement of the installation of slurry cutoff wall construction on the SREL-1A work on August 24.

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SREL Phase 1B Reaches 2-4B

Independent Construction has been awarded a contract in the amount of \$20,727,121 for this project. A pre-construction meeting was conducted on July 29, 2009.

Independent is currently preparing submittals, attending environmental training, and furnishing additional paperwork in preparation for the commencement of construction activities. A significant portion of the work is located on property owned by Sacramento County and requiring advanced approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)/Sacramento Airport. Approval from the FAA is pending and earth work in the vicinity of the Prichard pumping plant is anticipated in approximately three weeks. Road closures and detour notices and signage will be posted a minimum of one week prior to construction activities impacting local traffic.

Work in Progress/Public Update

SAFCA currently posts weekly updates on its website to inform the public of current and pending impacts to the community including working hours and impacts on traffic. The following is a truncated version of this report. (please see attachment Table 1).

NEPA/CEQA and Permitting Update

Phase 3 Project Update

The Phase 3 Project EIR was certified by the SAFCA Board on May 21, 2009. The final EIS is scheduled to be released by the USACE to begin public review on August 21. A record of decision is scheduled to be signed in September 2009.

Phase 4a Project Update

The Phase 4a Project includes the Sacramento River East Levee Reaches 10-15 and work on the Natomas Cross Canal South Levee at the Bennett and Northern Main Pump Stations. The draft EIS/EIR is scheduled to be released to the public on August 28. A public hearing will be scheduled for September 17. The Phase 4a Project construction contract will be ready for award in early 2010.

Phase 4b Project Update

The Phase 4b Project includes the Sacramento River East Levee Reaches 16-20, the American River North Levee, the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal west levee from Sankey Road to Elkhorn Boulevard and additional improvements to the Pleasant Grove Creek Canal west levee. SAFCA staff is currently working with the USACE to develop a plan for completing this work using a combination of USACE and SAFCA resources. A detailed schedule has not been developed. However, the goal is to complete a record of decision in September 2010.

SREL Encroachment Report Update

SAFCA staff is currently working with RD 1000 to develop proposed criteria for defining an acceptable encroachment and vegetation standard. We are currently evaluating each of the levee encroachments to understand the implications of the criteria. We will then discuss the proposed criteria with the USACE and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) to seek their input. The criteria will be crafted to assure that the water side slope of the levee system can be inspected and accessed for operation, maintenance and flood fighting activities. Based on preliminary evaluations of the draft database, staff believes that only a small percentage of the existing encroachments will need to be modified or removed along the Garden Highway because the adjacent setback levee will provide the primary structural defense against floodwaters.

The SAFCA team will then screen all of the encroachments based on the criteria agreed to by the agencies. The results of this process will be documented in the form of a GIS-based database and a report summarizing the data, the initial screening process, and the results. The first draft of the report was scheduled to be available in September 2009. However, developing the draft criteria and evaluating it against each encroachment is taking longer than anticipated and the report will be delayed until November. The report will then be made available to affected property owners, local, State and Federal agencies, and the public. SAFCA will then work with individual property owners and RD 1000 to address any encroachment concerns before finalizing the report. SAFCA's goal is to achieve the NLIP public safety goals, including 100-year certification of the upgraded levee system, with minimum disruption for existing property owners.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is an informational update on implementation of the NLIP. The program is currently within budget and there is no proposed action with this report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report is an informational update on implementation of the NLIP. There is no change in policy as a result of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Board receive and file this report.