

Yolo Bypass Integrated Project

The **Yolo County Integrated Resource Water Management Plan** is composed of a set of water related projects loosely grouped by watershed. For purposes of the Yolo County IRWMP, projects in the Yolo Bypass are called the **Yolo Bypass Integrated Project (YBIP)**. Since FY 2007/08, **Yolo Basin Foundation** has been under contract with the **Yolo County Water Resources Association** to serve as the facilitating entity for the YBIP.

In the past 12 months there has been progress in bringing forward the concept of integrated planning for the Yolo Bypass. Kris Tjernell, the newly appointed Special Assistant for Water Policy at the **CA Resources Agency** gave a presentation entitled: "California Water Action Plan implementation coordination and progress; Integrating flood and ecosystem planning in the Yolo Bypass." Yolo Basin Foundation's continuing work on the YBIP has consistently stressed that integration is essential to successfully improving flood protection and habitat restoration while recognizing the importance of the balance of agriculture and managed wetlands that currently exists. The Yolo IRWMP recognized the importance of the concept by creating the YBIP in April 2007. Yolo Basin Foundation and Yolo County have led the way by working behind the scenes to promote multi-objective planning for many years.

University of California, Davis and the **Delta Science Program** sponsored a symposium titled, *Meeting Nature Halfway on the Floodplain*, on February 9, 2014. This event brought together experts on flood plain restoration and flood protection with the goal of continuing the discussions on how to integrate them in the Yolo Bypass while sustaining agricultural practices and established habitat. Yolo County continues to work with UCD Watershed Sciences on development of a publicly available model to assist in Yolo Bypass planning.

In April 2015, the CA Resources Agency announced that the Bay Delta Conservation Plan was no longer under consideration. A new program called EcoRestore replaced this habitat conservation plan effort. David Okita is the director of the EcoRestore program. The proposal for twin tunnels to deliver water to the State and Federal Water Project is now called WaterFix:

California EcoRestore is an initiative to help coordinate and advance at least 30,000 acres of critical habitat restoration in the Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta over the next four years.

(<http://resources.ca.gov/ecorestore/>)

Lower Sacramento River/Delta North Regional Flood Management Plan (RFMP) Yolo County working with **Sacramento and Solano Counties** and other local agencies and districts issued the FloodProtect Plan (aka RFMP) in July 2014. The staffing for this group, called the **Project Delivery Team (PDT)**, is working on initial implementation activities for a series of projects recommended in the RFMP. Following release of the RFMP, the PDT developed a **Corridor Management Framework**, which is intended to serve as the basis for a collaborative and transparent partnership between federal, state, and local agencies operating in the Lower Sacramento River/Delta North region.

The **US Army Corps of Engineers** recently announced the initiation of a 3-year study called the **Sacramento River General Re-evaluation Report** this will establish the baseline for all future actions in the Sacramento Flood Control System and especially the Yolo Bypass.

Local Outreach Strategy In an effort to implement the outreach envisioned in the Corridor Management Framework, the PDT and Yolo Basin Foundation, initiated discussions regarding the development of a local outreach strategy for state and federal projects within the Yolo Bypass. This outreach structure would include two distinct working groups the Yolo Bypass Working Group by Robin Kulakow. The other group would be focused on the Cache Slough Complex.

Yolo Bypass Salmonid Habitat Restoration and Fish Passage Environmental Impact Statement/Report (Yolo Bypass EIS/EIR) This is a planning effort underway by the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBOR) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to comply with actions included in the National Marine Fisheries Service 2009 Biological Opinion on the Coordinated Long-term Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. The Yolo Bypass EIS/EIR analysis is considering modifications to the Yolo Bypass, including Fremont, Sacramento and Wallace weirs, and potentially other areas, to help increase seasonal floodplain habitat and improve fish passage.

Post value planning team This is an ad hoc stakeholder group including Yolo Bypass landowners (te Velde Trust, Knaggs Ranch, Conaway Ranch, Swanston Ranch), Yolo Basin Foundation, RD 108, Yolo County, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), and Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Cbec eco engineering is under contract with SAFCA to provide technical assistance. Meeting coordination and facilitation is paid for by MWD. The group continues to meet monthly to discuss developing early action solutions for multi-functional Yolo Bypass projects that benefit flood protection, managed wetlands, agriculture and fish habitat. This fall this group has been working closely with the USBOR and CA Resources Agency on a joint locally developed alternative for the **Yolo Bypass EIS/EIR**.

Yolo Bypass Drainage and Infrastructure Study Yolo County released the final study document in April 2014. Yolo County, Ducks Unlimited and Yolo Basin Foundation submitted a proposal to the Delta Conservancy this summer for drainage and infrastructure improvements to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, a top priority identified in the Study. Yolo County also submitted two other proposals.

Lower Putah Creek Restoration from Toe Drain to Putah Diversion Dam, Ecosystem Restoration Grant Yolo Basin Foundation is the grantee for this 4-year CEQA and permitting effort for restoration projects on Putah Creek from the Yolo Bypass Toe Drain to Putah Diversion Dam (a distance of 23 miles.) The Foundation is working in partnership with CA Department of Fish and Wildlife and is coordinating stakeholder involvement and also serves as overall grant manager.

Delta Conservancy Board of Directors Yolo Basin Foundation is a community liaison to the Delta Conservancy Board. Delta Conservancy will grant \$9 million per year for the next five years in Water Bond (Prop 1) grant funding to focus on the restoration of important species and habitat. The first call for proposal was in August 2015.

Delta Projects Coalition This group meets periodically to assess projects that have support from Delta stakeholders, both public and private. These would be "early" implementation projects as a funding source is secured. The group will be meeting on November 18th.