



## FLOOD PROJECT COORDINATING COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE: December 12, 2008**

**DATE:** December 3, 2008

**TO:** Flood Project Coordinating Committee Members

**FROM:** Naomi Duerr, Director, Truckee River Flood Management Project, 850-7420  
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**SUBJECT:** Accept Truckee River Flood Management Project Status Report for October and November 2008

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### SUMMARY

A status report on the activities related to the Truckee River Flood Management Project for the months of October and November 2008 is provided herein.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

The most recent status report was presented to the FPCC at their October 10, 2008 meeting.

### MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

#### Corps Activities

**102 Ranch Section 113 Credit** - The Corps reported that the Section 113 (ecosystem restoration) cost-share credit approval for the 102 Ranch Restoration Project **has been approved**. Section 113 gets its name from the section of law Senator Reid obtained to support the flood project. Nowhere else in the country is credit allowed for early ecosystem restoration. Ecosystem restoration involves construction of river channel meanders, riffles and point bars; creation of wetlands; restoration of abandoned gravel pits; and revegetation of riparian and upland areas with native plant species.

**Corps Managers Meeting** - Director Duerr and FPCC Chairman Larkin met with Corps Managers in Sacramento September 30<sup>th</sup> with a number of positive results that included:

- **Lockwood Section 113 and North Truckee Drain Section 104** applications have been forwarded from Sacramento to San Francisco offices and then to Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

- **FEMA vs. Corps Criteria for Levees** - Recently, the issue of levee standards has become a topic of discussion in our community. The Corps informs us that the term "FEMA criteria" is a bit of a misnomer. Only the Corps has actual standards for levees and recently, FEMA is deferring to the Corps standards when approving or certifying levees. The biggest issue with levees is reliability of the levees once you build them. Corps levees typically have a wider footprint which provides more stability, and less susceptibility to failure. Corps levees also incorporate extra height to ensure +90% certainty that the levee will not fail or be overtopped in a certain size flood. Our choice of levee design and standards will depend on what level of risk our community is willing to accept and pay for.

### **TRAction Projects**

**Lockwood Restoration** - The Nature Conservancy is managing restoration of Lockwood for the Flood Project partners. Restoration got underway in early October. The official groundbreaking of the Lockwood Restoration site was held on October 27<sup>th</sup> and well attended by approximately 60 people consisting of elected officials, local citizens and stakeholders. Media coverage included all major television and print outlets.

**Hidden Valley TRAction Project** - Jay Aldean, Flood Project Deputy Director and Walt West, P.E. from the Washoe County Engineering, attended the October Hidden Valley Homeowner's meeting. They presented a brief update on the project and introduced Jay in his new position with the Flood Project versus his previous position with HDR Engineering. The information was well received and expectations are to update the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) at the December meeting. The update has been shifted to the January meeting.

**Reno/Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) Traction Project** - At the October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of County Commissioners authorized the re-issuance of an invitation to bid on the RSIC Levee/Floodwall project located on the south bank of the Truckee River from Highway 395 to Glendale/Second Avenue. The Flood Project will contribute \$1,720,000 to the construction of the RSIC levee/floodwall. These funds will come from the 1/8 cent infrastructure sales tax specifically appropriated for the Truckee River Flood Management Project. The bid was announced in the Reno Gazette Journal the week of October 24<sup>th</sup>. The award of this project and two additional consultant contracts for construction oversight and testing will be presented to the BCC at their December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Downtown Bridges** - Flood Project staff attended the Downtown Bridges TRAction project Stakeholder Workshop #3, hosted by the City of Reno on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Concepts for replacing the bridge structures and structure types along with desired levels of flood protection were discussed in an open-house format with a question and answer period following. Compilation of the public input is in process. Results to date show that about 50% of the attendees preferred a 75-year design, while the other 50% preferred a 100-year design.

### **Local Sponsors/Collaborative Efforts**

**Regional Hydrologic Model** - Manhard Engineering was selected as the consultant of choice to develop a new hydrologic model for our region. The primary purpose of the model is to provide a tool to ensure that the impact of future development decisions on the floodplain and the flood project are fully understood and mitigated. Next steps include negotiations with Manhard for a scope of work, with the actual bid award expected in January. A meeting was held the week of October 24<sup>th</sup> with representatives from Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County staff to ensure that the

model will be designed to meet a variety of planning and engineering needs, as well as flood project needs. Additional meetings are anticipated.

**Southeast Connector Update** - Garth Oskol, Project Manager, Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), updated the FPCC at the October 10, 2008 meeting on the proposed alignments for the Southeast Connector. He indicated that funding had not been identified and Corps approval was not yet received. A preliminary meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers was set for October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

As discussed at the October FPCC meeting, Project Director Naomi Duerr sent a letter to the RTC commending the RTC for working with the flood project during the road's preliminary design phase to incorporate the proposed flood storage mitigation ordinance into their calculations so as not to increase flooding in Critical Flood Zone #1. In the letter, Ms. Duerr also pointed out that the proposed alignment would bring the road across the Flood Project's proposed Dam at Huffaker Narrows (an issue to be addressed and resolved during detailed design), through the middle of the proposed detention area which is currently included in the locally preferred plan, and through the middle of a proposed regional park which is not yet approved by the FPCC. Ms. Duerr recommended moving the Southeast Connector road to the east through the Huffaker Detention Area to avoid impacts to the dam, the detention area's flood storage capacity, and the proposed park.

At the RTC's November 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting, the Board approved a specific alignment for the Southeast Connector. The RTC selected the route recommended by staff stretching from South Meadows Parkway north through Rosewood Lakes and crossing the Truckee River to Sparks by bridge with no changes to the road alignment through the Huffaker Detention area. It was discussed that small alignment changes could be made during future design phases.

Approximately 200 citizens attended the RTC Board meeting with some voicing opposition and raising questions about flood project impacts and mitigation. Paul Urban, Flood Project Manager, addressed many of the questions. The Southeast Connector road is expected to start construction in perhaps 5 years, based in part on the time required for permitting and the availability of funding.

**Recreation Planning** - Corps, Flood Project, and city recreation staffs held a two-day planning meeting in mid-October. The result was a significant step toward completing the flood project's recreation plan. A public survey is expected to be initiated after the elections to gauge local demand for a variety of recreational options. The entire recreation plan is expected to be completed in early January.

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** - The October 29<sup>th</sup> TAC meeting included discussion of the upcoming FPCC Retreat agenda and expected outcomes. Other discussion included the Regional Hydrologic Model and expectations of how that model would operate and who might be involved.

**Working Group** - The October 29<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting included a presentation by Kerri Williams-Lanza, City of Reno, and CH2MHill on the Downtown Bridge options presented at the October 21<sup>st</sup> stakeholders meeting. New flood mitigation options for Rainbow Bend were also presented. A brief update on Huffaker Dam and Detention area was provided, with a more indepth discussion planned for the December meeting.

**Flood Storage Mitigation Resolution** - For three years the Truckee River Flood Management Project (Flood Project) has been sponsoring an effort to develop an improved Floodplain

Storage Volume Mitigation Model Ordinance for use in Critical Flood Zone #1. The purpose of the effort is to protect the people who currently live and work in the floodplain from being harmed due to new development and to ensure that any new flood project infrastructure (such as a dam or levee) functions as designed and does not fail or overtop. At their October 10 meeting, the FPCC approved a resolution endorsing a new “model” ordinance to be forwarded to the Cities and the County for their consideration.

Resolution # 2008-1 continues to support the concept of 1-to-1 mitigation (i.e., for each unit of fill placed, a similar volume of fill must be excavated) which is currently included in the Reno and Washoe County ordinances. However, the resolution suggests that the communities go further in requiring that any mitigation occur near the site of the fill, not across the valley or at a different height, and that the level of protection should be held to the 117-yr storm event. The resolution also suggests that those who cannot meet the proposed requirements be provided an opportunity to demonstrate that their 1-to-1 mitigation will still work even if not close to the fill site. They would do this using a water modeling tool. The resolution received numerous public comments, many of which proposed that a higher ratio of mitigation-to-fill be required. However, the Flood Board accepted the staff’s recommended proposal.

**FPCC Retreat** – The Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) held a retreat on November 14, 2008 in lieu of the normal Board meeting at the Joe Crowley Student Union building at the University of Nevada, Reno. The retreat focused on all of the currently approved project elements, TRAction project priorities, Army Corps of Engineers project schedule, and project costs. The FPCC reviewed the 45 approved project elements starting from the Downtown Reno reach and continuing 50 miles through to Pyramid Lake. The Board then focused on the TRAction (or Truckee River Action) early start construction projects that are funded locally. The Board directed the Flood Project Management Team, which is comprised of staff members from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County, to prioritize the list of existing and planned TRAction projects and bring the recommendations back to the board in 2009. Lastly, the FPCC discussed the overall cost of the project and the Army Corps of Engineers’ project schedule. Due to the increased cost of the project, the board requested that the project be reviewed by an outside contractor to determine if there are ways to reduce the overall cost. The Board then discussed the project schedule with the Army Corps Managers who re-confirmed their commitment to the Truckee River Flood Project. A detailed list of retreat outcomes is being drafted.

### **Outreach**

**Media Outreach** - Paul Urban, Flood Project Manager represented the Flood Project on the Channel 8 (KOLO) Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> program Not Just Politics, an hour-long local show.

**Leadership Academy** - Flood Project Director, Naomi Duerr presented information about the flood project to the Washoe County Leadership Academy on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Mayor Cashell Leadership Group** – In mid-November, Director Duerr briefed City of Reno Mayor Bob Cashell and the heads of the Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce, Reno-Sparks Convention Authority, Downtown Improvement Association, and others on the Flood Project’s progress, including updates on funding, downstream restoration, congressional actions and Corps progress. The meeting was held prior to the FPCC Retreat in an effort to keep all entities informed regardless of their availability to attend the Retreat.

**Staff/Personnel Update**

**National Floodproofing Conference and Exhibition** - Director Duerr, Deputy Director Aldean and Engineer Eric Scheetz attended the National Floodproofing Conference November 16-20 in New Orleans. Local and national experts focused on all aspects of floodproofing, including techniques, materials, contractors, current issues and programs, and various means for funding floodproofing projects.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) accept this status report on the Truckee River Flood Management Program.

**POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the FPCC wish to implement the staff recommendation, a simple motion to approve the recommendation would suffice.

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