



FLOOD PROJECT COORDINATING COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 13, 2009

DATE: March 3, 2009

TO: Flood Project Coordinating Committee Members

FROM: Naomi Duerr, Director, Truckee River Flood Management Project, 850-7420
nduerr@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Accept Truckee River Flood Management Project Status Report for February 2009

SUMMARY

A status report on the activities related to the Truckee River Flood Management Project for the month of February 2009 is provided herein.

PREVIOUS ACTION

The most recent status report for January 2009 was presented to the Flood Project Coordinating Committee at their February 13, 2009 meeting.

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Legislative Issues

Joint Meeting - The future governance for the flood project was discussed at a Joint Meeting of the region's elected officials on Monday, February 9, 2009. All elected officials representing Reno, Sparks and Washoe County voted unanimously to support formation of a Joint Powers Authority for eventual establishment of a flood management authority for our region.

Bill Draft Request for a Governance Model - On Friday, February 13th, the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) unanimously endorsed a DRAFT of a Bill Draft Request (BDR). The draft BDR recommends statutory changes necessary to support implementation of a Joint Powers Authority with sufficient authority to enact rates, tolls and charges (fees) to partially fund the flood project. The draft BDR was forwarded to the appropriate staff at the Legislative Counsel Bureau for their review and consideration in drafting the actual BDR.

Assembly Government Affairs Presentation - Flood Project Director Naomi Duerr, accompanied by Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) officers and representatives, presented an overview of the Truckee River Flood Project to the Assembly Government Affairs Committee on

Tuesday, February 17 at 8 am. The presentation focused on the basics of the flood project, recent accomplishments of the team, and AB-5 grant expenditures. Legislators asked questions about the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony public-private partnership and the recently FPCC approved TRAction project for the Mustang Ranch. The Committee requested a tour of the flood project, expected to take place later in the spring.

Corps Activities

Corps Schedule - Flood Project Staff travelled to the Sacramento Corps office for a two-day session to discuss the schedule. Corps personnel included Colonel Chapman, Project Management Team, economists, cost estimators, hydrologists, engineers, attorneys and real estate experts. As with any large project, new information emerges and this face-to-face contact keeps all parties on track and informed. A new schedule is expected to be produced at the end of March.

Fiscal Issues

Brownfields - Flood Project staff held a preliminary meeting with Kleinfelder Engineering to discuss potential grant funding opportunities for "brownfields" applications. A brownfield is a piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused and generally contaminated. Funding is provided by EPA through NDEP to check for contamination problems on properties that could become possible redevelopment sites. Staff are considering applying for grant funding from NDEP to conduct Phase I and Phase II site assessments on properties which may become part of the Flood Project. Brownfield grants were used to address the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony's future Walmart site. This opportunity may hold real promise for us.

Carmen Group - The FPCC voted to continue a contract with the Carmen Group to provide federal lobbying services for up to \$180,000 per year. The Carmen Group is especially skilled in working projects through the Army Corps of Engineers. At the February 24th meeting, the Board of County Commissioners approved the agreement authorizing the Chairman to execute it.

TRAction Projects

Virginia Street Bridge – At their February 13th meeting, the FPCC approved an award of \$2,000,000 to support the next phase of the City of Reno's Bridge TRAction project. The funds will be used to develop a preliminary design for the Virginia Street Bridge and to initiate the required environmental permitting. This item was discussed at the February 25 Reno City Council meeting. Public Works staff presented the public information and findings from the Bridge Visioning meetings to the Reno City Council, who in turn, requested comments from the Flood Project on the Virginia Street Bridge designs. Council members felt that the "upper support" designs were not aesthetically pleasing and sought other opinions. After the additional comments, the Council agreed that the "upper support" along with other options should remain on the table. City of Reno staff will bring back designs to a future Council meeting based on the 100-year flood protection level that was agreed on.

Lower Mustang Restoration – At the February 13th meeting, the FPCC approved the Lower Mustang Restoration project as an early start TRAction Project. Funding for the project is expected to come from the Bureau of Reclamation -\$4.2 million, the Washoe County Q-1 bond program (administered by the Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Department) – \$1.325 million, and the Truckee River Flood Project through a grant from the state of Nevada (AB5) for

ecosystem restoration - \$1.675 million, for a total anticipated cost of \$7.2 million. Work on the project is expected to start this coming summer.

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Update – The concrete keyway for the foundation of the floodwall is being poured. Construction remains on schedule with a summer 2009 expected completion date.

Local Sponsors/Collaborative Efforts

ASA Woodley - Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, John P. Woodley, and Colonel Thomas Chapman, head of the Sacramento District Corps Office visited the Flood Project on February 13, 2009. The FPCC hosted a Breakfast and mini-tour of the Flood Project for the dignitaries. Stops on the tour included the ongoing construction site for the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony floodwall and levee, the construction site for the Lockwood “restoration” project, and The Nature Conservancy’s McCarran Ranch “restoration” project. The visitors departed with personalized copies of the **Living River Map** book, available for download at http://truckeeflood.us/55/living_river.html

Working Group

Huffaker Project Element - After a generous amount of discussion, the Working Group was in agreement with dropping the Huffaker detention area from the LPP plan with the following conditions attached: 1) a white paper explaining the basis for the decision and the history to date, 2) a commitment that the original footprint of the Huffaker Detention Area would remain in Critical Flood Zone 1 and the Flood Storage Mitigation ordinances would apply, and 3) a statement that the Huffaker recreation component would also be dropped from the LPP. Paul Urban will develop the white paper and the recommendation to remove Huffaker from the LPP will go forward to the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC).

Bill Draft Request - Director Duerr provided the Working Group with an overview of the AB 54 Bill Draft Request (BDR). The primary purpose of AB 54 is to obtain authority to provide grants and loans to individuals to help resolve water and wastewater issues. However, the bill also includes a section focused on providing grants and loans to individuals for floodproofing-- an activity that the Flood Project has long advocated as a way to reduce our overall flood project costs and increase resident satisfaction. The BDR is scheduled to be heard at the legislature March 3rd. The complete language for the BDR is available at www.truckeeflood.us

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)-

Paul Urban, Project Manager, discussed the Huffaker detention area and explained that inclusion of this project does not make a significant difference in the Vista outflows for either the 100-yr storm or the 117-yr storm. On the other hand, dropping the Huffaker detention area from the Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) would save approximately \$300 million to the overall cost of the project. In light of the now available modeling data, the TAC agreed to drop Huffaker from the LPP. An official vote was not taken on the item as the TAC had lost their quorum and requested that the item be brought back for review. This item was rescheduled for consideration at the February 27 TAC, but a quorum was again not available.

Flood Project Tour - Senior Flood Project Staff hosted Alex McDonough, Legislative Counsel on Environment and Energy with Senator Reid’s office on Thursday, February 19th. The Flood Project overview and tour included the Downtown area, Living River Parkway, UNR Farms, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and other parts of the upper and lower Truckee River Reach. Victor Mercado of Senator Reid’s local office accompanied Mr. McDonough.

Recreation Plan – Meetings continued in February on the development of the Flood Project’s Recreation plan. The plan is much scaled down from the original concept plan presented last fall. A final plan is expected to be developed by April 2009 and presented to the FPCC for consideration for inclusion in the Living River Plan.

Nevada Hazard Mitigation Presentation - Flood Project Staff presented the flood project and proposed a number of floodproofing opportunities that might be eligible for FEMA mitigation grants to the Nevada Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee on Tuesday, February 17th. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Nevada Division of Emergency Management (NDEM) concerning hazard mitigation planning activities and policies and promote activities that contribute toward building disaster-resistant communities throughout Nevada.

Outreach

Groundbreaking – The Flood Project held its first groundbreaking of a levee and floodwall on Thursday, January 29, at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony-Walmart site. Over 120 attendees enjoyed the gorgeous Nevada Day. The event included an Indian song, prayer, and drum song, speeches from local elected officials and the use of 10 gold shovels. This groundbreaking has taken on special significance in that it is a major public-private partnership, with much of the funding coming from sources other than the flood project. The entire project including land and construction is estimated to cost \$5.8 million. Through the development of funding partners, construction at this site provided an opportunity to leverage \$1.7 million in flood project sales tax funds for an additional \$16 million in flood project construction on this site and others. It is also the first flood project element to be constructed in the Meadows and is quite visible from US 395.

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.

ND:sk