

Appendix E. Record of Stakeholder Involvement

This appendix contains the record of stakeholder involvement associated with preparation of the Draft and Final Socioeconomic Assessment of Proposed Habitat Restoration within the Riparian Corridor of the Sacramento River Conservation Area. The initial pages describe four categories of public and Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum stakeholder outreach conducted to provide direction to the study. The outreach discussion is followed by a letter from Jones & Stokes to The Nature Conservancy providing responses and guidance related to letters of comment received on the draft report. All letters of comment received on the draft report are attached at the end of this appendix. The final two letters in the appendix were received after Jones & Stokes developed its responses, so are not addressed in the Jones & Stokes letter to The Nature Conservancy.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Stakeholder involvement was an important component to the development of the Socioeconomic Assessment of Proposed Habitat Restoration within the Riparian Corridor of the Sacramento River Conservation Area (hereafter referred to as the study). Stakeholder participation was used as a tool for helping define the parameters and to review the data analysis and results. Early discussions within the Riparian Habitat Committee of SB1086 (precursor to SRCAF) led to the initiation of this study. The participating agencies and landowners of the SRCAF and the counties included in the study area (Tehama, Glenn, Butte, and Colusa) were used as the primary stakeholder base for the study.

The intent of the study was to develop a tool to provide socioeconomic information regarding proposed habitat restoration within the riparian corridor of the Sacramento River Conservation Area and to stimulate informed discussions on this topic. It is broadly recognized that there will be economic consequences resulting from habitat conversion; however, the magnitude of the impacts and benefits can be modified through informed actions.

The stakeholder involvement and outreach activities for this study occurred in four categories:

1. Stakeholder input used in developing baseline assumptions,
2. Stakeholder contribution of data for the analysis,
3. Stakeholder review and comment on the data analysis and the draft report, and
4. General outreach activities.

Communication to stakeholders occurred through several avenues, including: letters to interested individuals; notification to SRCAF Board members, agency and county staff; announcements in meetings and newsletters; and formal meetings and presentations. Three stakeholder meetings were conducted, two during the baseline assessment phase and one for review of the data analysis. Additionally, a Beehive Bend newsletter was produced twice to share information on planning efforts and to provide background on the Assessment.

Outreach in Category 1:

The first phase of this study was to develop a set of assumptions to describe the “post-restoration conditions and assumptions.” The assumptions describe how the riparian corridor would most likely look in 30 years, including potential land ownership and land use patterns. Stakeholder input was considered an important part of the development of these assumptions, since the goal was to define future conditions that reflect the most plausible land configuration scenario to all. Stakeholder input was solicited through two stakeholder meetings. These meetings provided stakeholders with a project overview and were used to gather input for the post-restoration assumptions.

Broad stakeholder participation was solicited for this first meeting on February 22, 2001. Meeting announcements were sent to over 100 individuals, including those people listed in the SRCAF database for the Technical Advisory Committee. SRCAF Board Members received an announcement for the meeting along with a three-page outline describing the study. Approximately 20 stakeholders attended the public workshop. During the meeting, the consultants used a PowerPoint presentation to describe the study and proposed assumptions; they then facilitated a discussion to solicit feedback.

A second stakeholder meeting focused on ensuring participation that included a subset of SRCAF Board Members, at least one representative from each county, and individuals with background and experience in agriculture. This meeting included 10 participants and was held on March 22, 2001 following the same format as the first meeting.

Following each meeting, participants (and individuals that responded to the announcement but could not attend the meetings) received a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. During April and May, the consultants distributed a revised list of assumptions that were modified based on stakeholder input received during the meetings in February and March, and again solicited feedback. The revised assumptions were sent to all meeting participants and SRCAF Board Members.

Outreach in Category 2:

The second phase of this study involved data collection for the analysis. County officials and staff were contacted to request relevant county data. The consultants also surveyed landowners and other individuals familiar with agriculture and conditions along the river. State and federal agencies provided data layers used for land use and ownership analysis.

Outreach in Category 3:

Following the data analysis, the third and final phase of the study included receipt of input from both stakeholders and those agencies and individuals that had contributed data. Review of the study occurred in two stages. The first stage was a review of the data analysis. For this review, a stakeholder meeting was held June 20, 2002 following the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting for SRCAF. The meeting was announced in the SRCAF notes, and meeting announcements were sent SRCAF Board members, participants and interested parties from the previous meetings, and to county staff, agencies, and individuals who had contributed data for the analysis.

At the June 2001 public meeting, SRCAF facilitated a presentation and discussion by Jones & Stokes of the draft findings for the socioeconomic assessment. Approximately 45 people were in attendance. The purpose of this meeting was for the consultants to gather comments and suggestions on the data analysis to be considered for inclusion in the first draft report. Based on input from this meeting, Jones & Stokes revised portions of the analysis before preparing the draft report.

In late September 2002, the draft report was sent (65 copies) to county staff, agencies and individuals who contributed data, SRCAF Board members and the members of the SRCAF Economic/PILT committee. The report has also been posted since this date at www.sacramentoriverportal.org. Recipients of the report and other interested stakeholders were asked to provide any comments in writing. The SRCAF Economic/PILT committee also conducted several discussions and reviews during its meetings.

Eight comment letters were received and reviewed by the consultants. Jones & Stokes prepared a response to the comments; their response is included in this appendix to the final report, along with the comment letters. As noted earlier, two additional letters were received after Jones & Stokes developed its responses, so are not addressed in Jones & Stokes' letter to The Nature Conservancy.

Outreach in Category 4:

Updates on the status of the report and meeting announcements were provided at SRCAF meetings and in the SRCAF notes (January, May, June and July of 2002). Periodic updates were also provided at both SRCAF TAC and Economic/PILT committee meetings. A description of the project was included in several newsletters, including the SRCAF newsletter, Beehive Bend newsletter, and the Sacramento Valley Landowners Association newsletter. A press release was distributed to newspapers and media to announce the release of the draft report, and an article appeared in the Chico Enterprise-Record. A brief presentation was requested and delivered to the Butte County Supervisors describing the study.