

Notice of Preparation

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties	From: San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency
(Agency)	(Agency)
See Distribution List	22 East Weber Avenue, Suite 301
(Address)	(Address)
	Stockton, CA 95202-2317

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Smith Canal Gate Project

The San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFCOA) is proposing the Smith Canal Gate Project (project) to design and construct a gate-type closure structure at the mouth of Smith Canal adjacent to the San Joaquin River/Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel (DWSC) in and adjacent to the city of Stockton, in the county of San Joaquin, California. The project location is shown in Figure 1. The Smith Canal is a backwater slough of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), just north of the DWSC and south of the Calaveras River. The project area, shown in Figure 2, encompasses the areas of construction of proposed risk-reduction measures along the DWSC corridor, abutting Stockton Golf and Country Club to the northwest; Louis Park to the southeast; Atherton Cove to the north; and Dad's Point to the south.

The proposed project is needed because the existing levees along Smith Canal are heavily encroached upon and cannot be certified as meeting Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards or the State's Urban Levee Design Criteria, placing approximately 5,000 properties and approximately 15,000 residents at increased risk from flooding. Additionally, based on topographical data recently developed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), FEMA is presently remapping the region to include an additional 3,000 properties and 9,000 residents in the FEMA 100-year floodplain, an area identified by FEMA as having an increased flood risk. The proposed project would isolate the canal from the main channel of the river during high flow events to facilitate 100-year and ultimately 200-year performance (i.e., passage of high-flow events that have a 1% and 0.5% chance occurring in any given year, respectively.) The resulting flood protection system would conform to Federal and state flood protection criteria. SJAFCOA, acting as project proponent and lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has determined that a project-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared for the project.

Responsible and Trustee Agencies

Responsible and trustee agencies under CEQA may include Reclamation Districts (RD) 1614 and 828, City of Stockton, San Joaquin County, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Lands Commission, and DWR.

Public and Agency Input

SJAFCOA is requesting your input on the scope and content of the Smith Canal Gate Project EIR. All interested parties are invited to comment for a period of 30 days, beginning Wednesday, June 25, 2014. Please send comments by email or standard mail by 5 p.m., Friday, July 25, 2014.

Megan Smith, Project Manager, ICF International
630 K Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814

Email: megan.smith@icfi.com

If commenting on behalf of a public agency or non-governmental organization, please include the name of a contact person.

The public can meet with lead agency representatives and provide written comments at a public scoping meeting to be held Wednesday, July 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at the Ambler's Club, located at 2000 Amblers Lane, Stockton, CA 95204.

The attachment includes supplemental information for the proposed Smith Canal Gate Project.

Date: 6/19/14

Signature: Rogan Churchill

Title: Deputy Executive Director

Telephone: 209 937-8866

Attachment to Notice of Preparation
Environmental Impact Report Additional Information

Location of Project Area:

As introduced in the Notice of Preparation, the San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFA), in partnership with Reclamation Districts (RD) 1614 and 828, is proposing the Smith Canal Gate Project (project) to design and construct a gate-type closure structure at the mouth of Smith Canal adjacent to the San Joaquin River/Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel (DWSC) in and adjacent to the city of Stockton, in the county of San Joaquin, California. The project location is shown in Figure 1. The Smith Canal is a backwater slough of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), just north of the DWSC and south of the Calaveras River. The project area, shown in Figure 2, encompasses the areas of construction of proposed risk-reduction measures along the DWSC, abutting Stockton Golf and Country Club to the northwest; Louis Park to the southeast; Atherton Cove to the north; and Dad's Point to the south.

Project Purpose and Lead Agency:

The primary purpose of the proposed project is to reacquire Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accreditation that was revoked in 2008, causing a large portion of central Stockton to be mapped as a Special Flood Hazard Area. Approximately 5,000 properties and approximately 15,000 residents were identified by FEMA as being in the FEMA 100-year floodplain, an area identified by FEMA as having an increased risk from flooding. Additionally, based on topographical data recently developed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), FEMA is presently remapping the region to include an additional 3,000 structures and 9,000 residents in the 100-year floodplain. In addition, SJAFA has a goal consistent with state law to provide a minimum 200-year level of flood risk reduction performance by 2025. Isolation of the Smith Canal from the San Joaquin River would remove the affected area from the 100-year floodplain, thereby improving the FEMA rating, and would contribute toward ultimate 200-year level of performance in combination with other area projects, complying with state law.

The project would also serve secondary objectives to provide water quality and recreation enhancements.

SJAFA will act as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As such, SJAFA has principal responsibility for carrying out and approving the project, and has determined that a project-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared for the project.

Other relevant state and local regulatory agencies with potential jurisdiction over affected resources may include, but not be limited to, City of Stockton, San Joaquin County, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Lands Commission, and DWR. Federal agencies with resource or regulatory jurisdiction may include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Project Description:

The EIR will analyze the possible environmental effects of a reasonable range of alternatives that address most or all of the project objectives. The EIR may include the following project alternatives.

- A fixed wall structure with an opening gate structure to allow for navigation and tidal movement of water in Smith Canal, extending from the north tip of Dad's Point Levee, northerly across open water to connect with the San Joaquin River right bank levee at the Stockton Golf and Country Club (golf course).
- A fixed wall structure with an opening gate structure extending across the inlet to Smith Canal from Louis Park on the south side to Moreing Road on the north side; as well as construction of a 2,300 ft floodwall along the waterside of the existing levee along Atherton Cove between Moreing Road and the golf course.
- Two fixed wall structures, each with an opening gate to allow for navigation and tidal movement of water in Smith Canal and Atherton Cove. The Smith Canal fixed structure would extend from Louis Park to Atherton Island. The Atherton Cove fixed structure would extend from the northwest side of Atherton Island to the golf course.

The EIR will consider the environmental impacts of other foreseeable project elements and mitigation measures located in the project area. Foreseeable construction and maintenance of such flood risk-reduction measures likely would include, but not be limited to, the following activities.

- use of neighboring roadways for project ingress and egress;
- construction of new roadways;
- resurfacing and/or relocation of existing roadways;
- removal of vegetation adjacent to the riverfront;
- disposal of excess construction material at identified disposal sites; and
- relocation of public and private utilities.

The project alternatives would also allow for continued use of Smith Canal for recreational boating access to the DWSC, except during high water events and structure testing and maintenance.

Environmental Resources Potentially Impacted:

The environmental resources checked below would potentially be affected by the proposed project (i.e., the project would involve at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact”). There may also be one or more mandatory findings of significance, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15065.

	Agriculture Resources	X	Air Quality	X	Cultural Resources
X	Fish and Aquatic Resources	X	Flood Management/ Geomorphologic Conditions	X	Geology and Seismicity
	Mineral Resources and Soils	X	Land Use/Planning	X	Noise
X	Population/Housing	X	Public Services	X	Recreation
X	Transportation and Navigation	X	Utilities and Public Services	X	Vegetation and Wetlands
X	Visual Resources	X	Water Quality and Groundwater Resources	X	Wildlife

Issues of Expected Controversy:

Based on public feedback on the project to date, issues of expected controversy will likely include the risk of reduced aesthetics/effects to the visual viewshed; reductions in water circulation/quality; and impedance of recreational uses of Atherton Cove and Smith Canal.

Attachment to Notice of Preparation
Distribution List

Reclamation District 1614
c/o Christopher Neudeck
711 North Pershing Avenue
Stockton, CA 95203

Reclamation District 828
c/o Daniel J. Schroeder, Esq
P.O. Box 20
Stockton, CA 95201

City of Stockton
Carl Hefner
Community Dev., Building & Life Safety Division
425 North El Dorado Street
Stockton, CA 95202

San Joaquin County
John Maguire
Flood Management Division
1810 East Hazelton Avenue
Stockton, CA 95205

Central Valley Flood Protection Board
Environmental Review Section
3310 El Camino Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95821

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Environmental Review Section
11020 Sun Center Drive, Suite 200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
Environmental Review Section
4800 Enterprise Way
Modesto, CA 95356

San Joaquin County Mosquito & Vector Cntrl District
Environmental Review Section
7759 South Airport Way
Stockton, CA 95206

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Boating and Waterways
1 Capitol Mall, Suite 410
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Water Resources
Paul Morrison
Division of Flood Management
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95821

San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency
Smith Canal Gate Project NOP—Attachment 2 of 2
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Brian Hansen
Bay-Delta Fish & Wildlife Office
650 Capitol Mall, 8th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

National Marine Fisheries Service
Evan Bing Sawyer
NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region
5-100 650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 3
Crystal Spurr
Bay Delta Region
7329 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA 94558

U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, SPK
Tanis Toland
1325 J Street, Room 1513
Sacramento, CA 95814

State Lands Commission
Wendy Hall
100 Howe Avenue, Suite 100 South
Sacramento, CA 95825

U.S. Coast Guard, Eleventh Coast Guard District
Waterways Management Branch
Bridges Section Chief
Bldg. 50-2, CG Island
Alameda, CA 94501-5100

Federal Emergency Management Agency - Region 9
Kathleen Schaefer, P.E., CFM
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607-4052

California Native American Heritage Commission
Environmental Review Section
1550 Harbor Boulevard, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691

CALTRANS District 10
Environmental Review Section
1976 East Charter Way/East Dr. Martin Luther King,
Jr. Blvd
Stockton, CA 95205



Source: Peterson, Brustad, Inc. 2014



Smith Canal
Gate Project

Figure 1
Project Region



**Figure 2
Project Area**