

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**Environmental Assessment for a Right-of-way Permit for
Training Dike Construction and Long-Term Training Dike Maintenance
Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge
Capay Unit**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) proposes to issue a right-of-way permit to Reclamation District 2140 (RD 2140) for the construction and maintenance of a portion of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) *Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration, California Project* (also referred to as the J-Levee Project) on the Capay Unit of the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Two alternatives, the no action and proposed action, were described in the Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA is herein incorporated by reference. The proposed action is needed to implement a joint flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration project near Hamilton City, California.

Decision

Following review and analysis, the Service selected the Proposed Action for implementation because it is the alternative that best achieves the purpose and need.

Alternatives Considered

The following is a brief description of the alternatives presented in the EA. For a complete description of each alternative, see the EA.

No Action:

Under this alternative, the FWS would not issue a right-of-way permit to RD 2140.

Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to issue a right-of-way to RD 2140 for the construction and maintenance of a training dike on the Capay Unit of the Refuge. The right-of-way would facilitate construction of the Corps' Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project.

Effects of Implementation

As described in the EA, implementing Alternative B would have no significant impacts on any of the environmental resources identified in the EA. The proposed action is

consistent with the purposes for which the Refuge was established and meets the objectives of the Refuge Complex. The section of the Capay Unit of the Sacramento River NWR on which the training dike would be constructed is composed primarily of native perennial grasses. In 2007, the Capay Unit was restored to a variety of riparian habitats. The western boundary was purposefully not planted with woody plant species in order to provide a placeholder location for the training dike identified during preliminary planning. A brief summary of the impact analysis and conclusions in the EA follows.

Cultural Resources – Records search and pedestrian surveys did not locate prehistoric or historic-era resources, therefore construction and long-term maintenance of the training dike would not result in impacts to cultural resources

Soils – Potential impacts to soil resources are not significant. Restoration of temporary work areas to the current condition of native perennial grasses will limit the area of impact to 4.5 acres.

Biological Resources – Potential impacts to biological resources are not significant. Construction and long-term maintenance activities would result in temporary disturbance to wildlife; however, the disturbance is localized and would not adversely impact overall populations.

Endangered Species – The *Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration, California* including levee/training dike construction and long-term maintenance was evaluated under the Endangered Species Act for federally threatened valley elderberry long-horned beetle, western yellow-billed cuckoo and giant garter snake by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 2004, amended in 2008, and 2015 (2009-F-0209-R003). The USFWS Biological Opinion includes an incidental take statement that provides exemptions from prohibitions against take of the beetle due to project related activities, but most if any adverse effects were found to short-term in nature.

Public Use – Potential impacts to public use are not significant. Some temporary closures may be required during construction in the immediate vicinity of County Road 23. The Special Use Permit will require a traffic safety plan to allow public access during construction.

Public Availability

The EA was available for public review and comment from January 14, 2016 through February 13, 2016. The document was posted on the Refuge's website and the public was notified of its availability through news releases. No comments were received

Conclusion

Based on review and evaluation of the information contained in the EA, it is my finding that the proposed action, Alternative B, does not constitute a major federal action

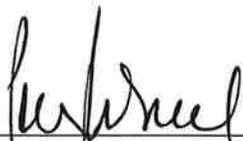
significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. As such, an environmental impact statement is not required.

This Finding of No Significant Impact and supporting EA are on file at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 752 County Road 99W, Willows, California. These documents are available to the public and can be found on the Internet at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/sacramento_river. Interested and affected parties will be notified of this decision through a news release.

References

ACOE (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). 2004. Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration, California Final Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. February 2015. Environmental Assessment for Right-Of-Way Permit for Training Dike Construction and Long-Term Training Dike Maintenance, Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, Capay Unit.



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

3.9.16

Date