



County of Yolo

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE

KNIGHTS LANDING FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROJECT

SMALL COMMUNITY FLOOD RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM

JULY 2022

Introduction

Yolo County is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Knights Landing Flood Management Project (Proposed Project) as part of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction Program (SCFRRP). Yolo County is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District (KLRDD), DWR, and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), are responsible agencies under CEQA. Yolo County is proposing to implement the Proposed Project to provide flood protection for the community of Knights Landing. The purpose of the Proposed Project under the SCFRRP is to attain a 100-year level of flood protection for the community of Knights Landing and reduce the flood risk to the Knights Landing Basin while sustaining agriculture and the regional economy, providing safe access to the river, and improving the riverine habitat viability. Multi-benefit enhancement opportunities have been integrated with flood protection improvements into the Proposed Project to enhance the function of the region's flood system, consistent with the objectives of the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) 2017 Update. The CVFPP strongly supports and encourages the planning and implementation of projects that provide multiple benefits, including increasing flood system resilience by protecting and restoring important ecosystems, and improving water supply, water quality, recreation, and public education related to integrated water management. According to the CVFPP, a multi-benefit approach more efficiently and effectively leverages flood infrastructure to achieve a broader array of public benefits and may potentially increase access to more funding sources.

Background

In 2017, Yolo County received a grant from the DWR SCFRRP to complete a Feasibility Study to evaluate structural and non-structural actions that could reduce flood risk to Knights Landing. Yolo

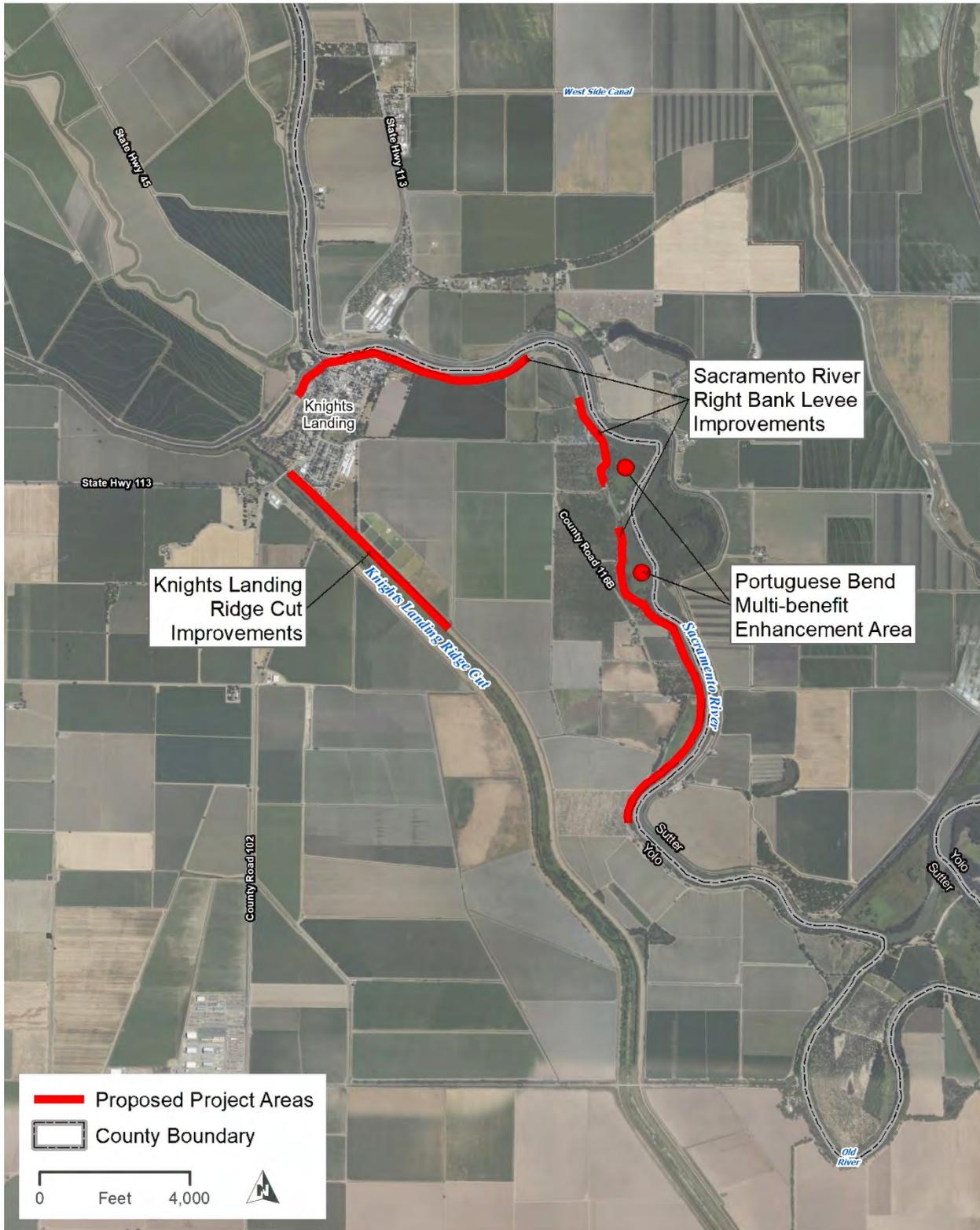
County prepared the 2019 Knights Landing Small Community Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study, which analyzed several alternatives and ultimately identified a preferred alternative, for levee remediation in the Knights Landing Basin. DWR reviewed the Feasibility Study for further implementation and funding and awarded additional grant funding to Yolo County in 2020 as part of the SCFRRP Phase 2. The Knights Landing Flood Management Project under the SCFRRP Phase 2 agreement includes the following components: the design and permitting of levee improvements along the Sacramento River Right Bank; the design and permitting of levee improvements along the Knights Landing Ridge Cut; the design, permitting, and construction of levee improvements at the Sacramento River Right Bank, Mid-Valley Sites 9, 10, and 11; completion of Phase 1 concepts for the Portuguese Bend and Grays Bend Habitat enhancement projects; the design and permitting of the drainage infrastructure improvements in the community of Knights Landing; and the preliminary design of a New Cross Levee. The Mid-Valley Sites 9, 10, and 11 (SCH # 2021120063) and drainage infrastructure improvements (SCH # 2022030394) in the community of Knights Landing have been analyzed in separate, previous CEQA documents.

Therefore, the Proposed Project includes three elements: the Sacramento River Right Bank Levee improvements, the Knights Landing Ridge Cut improvements, and the Portuguese Bend multi-benefit enhancement area. Yolo County is in the process of developing the engineering design for these three elements as described below.

Project Location

The Proposed Project is located in Knights Landing, California and surrounding areas. Knights Landing is a rural agricultural community located along the Sacramento River 20 miles northwest of Sacramento, California. The Proposed Project work areas are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Location of Proposed Project Sites.



Sacramento River Right Bank Levee Improvements

The proposed Sacramento River Right Bank Levee improvements would address under-seepage, through-seepage, stability, and freeboard deficiencies. To address under- and through-seepage, from levee mile 0.0. to 0.75 adjacent to the community of Knights Landing, an 80-foot-deep clay cutoff wall would be installed through the center of the existing Sacramento River Right Bank Levee. The construction area would extend approximately 0.75 miles along the Sacramento River Right Bank Levee (see Figure 1). Additional improvements along the Sacramento River Right Bank Levee are proposed downstream of Knights Landing to address seepage. Seepage areas would be addressed by either constructing seepage stability berms or cutoff walls. For the construction of cutoff walls, the existing levee would need to be degraded by half its height for the installation of the cutoff wall, and then rebuilt. Large earthmoving construction equipment would be used to complete the improvements. The levee will be reconstructed to meet current levee standards and attain a 100-year design surface water elevation. The construction work area would include an access corridor on the landside toe of the existing levee. All construction staging and material stockpiling would occur along the levee as construction progresses down the levee and would take place within the construction work areas. Access to the construction work areas would be from the levee or County Road 116B. The construction work area would include an access ramp up onto the existing levee. No residents would be displaced as a result of the proposed seepage improvements. While some private parcels may be affected, no buildings or structures would be removed.

Knights Landing Ridge Cut Improvements

The proposed Knights Landing Ridge Cut improvements would occur southwest of Knights Landing (see Figure 1) and would include clearing and grubbing of trees and vegetation, excavating the face of the existing landside levee slope, and reconstructing the levee with imported fill to widen the levee crown and create a consistent elevation along the levee. The proposed improvements on the landside of the Knights Landing Ridge Cut Levee would also include remediation of existing levee encroachments, including but not limited to removal of levee pipe penetrations, relocation of PG&E power poles, and replacement of levee gates. The finished levee crown elevation would be reconstructed a minimum elevation of 43 feet.

Large earthmoving construction equipment would be used during construction. The proposed improvements can be accessed via existing levee ramps and temporary earthen ramps. Proposed haul routes include Locust Street and existing agricultural/farm roads. These access routes would be used by two-way traffic. The proposed haul routes are currently used as agricultural roads and may require grading or crushed rock surface to be placed in order to support construction vehicles. Construction staging areas would be located, to the extent practicable, away from sensitive resource areas and known cultural resources. Construction staging and material stockpiling would occur along the levee as construction progresses down the levee. A wider area within the northwest portion of the proposed construction area would likely be used for parking construction trailers and vehicles. No residents would be displaced as a result of the proposed improvements to the Knights Landing Ridge Cut Levee. While some private parcels may be affected, no buildings or structures would be removed.

Portuguese Bend Multi-Benefit Enhancement Area

The Portuguese Bend multi-benefit enhancement area would protect and restore habitat in line with the objectives of the CVFPP 2017 Update within an approximately 136-acre area located between the levees of the Sacramento River known as Portuguese Bend (see Figure 1). Situated southeast of Knights Landing and along the eastern perimeter of the Knights Landing Basin, the habitat improvements within Portuguese Bend include controlling invasive plant species, planting native species, and implementing an ongoing management and monitoring program. The native species to be planted would replicate and enhance the existing native habitat within the area including the existing mixed riparian forest, riparian willow forest, emergent marsh, and tule marsh plant communities. The planting would be implemented appropriate to the site's topography and hydrology to ensure the long-term viability of the enhanced plant communities. The use of heavy equipment is not anticipated; passenger vehicles and light trucks would be used to facilitate planting. Access to the work areas would be from County Road 116B. Staging would occur either on top of the levee or on the exposed areas and dirt roads that are located on the site. No residents would be displaced as a result of the proposed freeboard and seepage improvements. While some private parcels may be affected, no buildings or structures would be removed.

Construction Schedule

The Proposed Project would be constructed over a three-to-four-year period. The anticipated construction sequence of proposed levee improvements would consist of constructing the Knights Landing Ridge Cut improvements first and then constructing the Sacramento River Right Bank Levee improvements. Construction of each of the aforementioned proposed levee improvement elements would occur in one construction season. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2024 and last through 2027, depending on permit approvals and conditions. The Portuguese Bend multi-benefit enhancement area would be constructed within the next five years.

Operations and Maintenance

Upon completion of construction, Yolo County Service Area No. 6 (CSA 6) would continue to perform routine maintenance in the area of the Sacramento River Right Bank Levee improvements. The KLRDD would continue to perform routine operation and maintenance activities in the area of the Knights Landing Ridge Cut improvements. It is anticipated that the Yolo Habitat Conservancy would perform routine maintenance in the Portuguese Bend multi-benefit enhancement area. Routine operation and maintenance activities may include vegetation control, rodent control, and maintenance of levee patrol roads.

Permits and Approvals

Anticipated permits and approvals for the Proposed Project are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Permits and Approvals

Agency	Type of Approval
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Section 408 Authorization
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement
California Native American Heritage Commission	Consultation for effects on Native American burials or artifacts
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Encroachment Permit
Regional Water Quality Control Board	CWA Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification
Yolo Habitat Conservancy	Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan Compliance
Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District	Consultation for Authority to Construct/Permit to Operate

Environmental Review

Yolo County has preliminarily determined that the Proposed Project could have potentially significant environmental impacts. The Draft EIR will discuss the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and will identify mitigation measures to avoid or substantially reduce any potentially significant impacts, to the extent feasible. Yolo County will also identify and consider feasible alternatives to the Proposed Project in the Draft EIR analysis. Based on preliminary analysis, the anticipated level of environmental impacts as a result of the Proposed Project for a range of resource areas have been identified in Table 2.

Table 2. Estimated Environmental Impacts

Environmental Resource Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hydrology and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land Use and Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Population and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utilities and Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This list in Table 2 is not intended to be all-inclusive or to imply a predetermination of impacts. Yolo County invites interested stakeholders to suggest specific issues, including possible mitigation measures, within these general categories or other categories not included above, to be considered in the Draft EIR. Alternatives to the Proposed Project are still being evaluated and will be analyzed further in the Draft EIR.

Scoping and Public Involvement Process

Written comments and suggestions concerning the Proposed Project must be received by August 22, 2022, and sent to Elisa Sabatini, Yolo County Natural Resources Manager at 292 W. Beamer Street, Woodland, CA 95695, or by e-mail to naturalresources@yolocounty.org. Questions about the Proposed Project and Draft EIR should also be addressed to Elisa Sabatini.

A public scoping meeting will be held on August 3, 2022, to present information about the Proposed Project and Yolo County's decision-making processes, and to listen to the views of the public on the range of issues relevant to the scope and content of the Draft EIR. The details of the scoping meeting are as follows:

Knights Landing Flood Management Public Scoping Meeting

Wednesday, August 3, 2022

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Knights Landing Community Center
42114 7th St, Knights Landing, CA 95645

The Draft EIR is scheduled to be available for public review and comment in the fall/winter of 2022. A 45-day public review period will be provided for individuals, interested parties, and agencies to review and comment on the Draft EIR. All interested parties are encouraged to respond to this notice and provide a current email address and contact information if they wish to be notified of the Draft EIR circulation.

Project information will also be posted periodically at www.yolonaturalresources.org.