



COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

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To: Honorable Judge David W. Reed
Superior Court of California, County of Yolo
1000 Main Street
Woodland, CA 95695

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To: Yolo County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 2142
Woodland, CA 95776

via e-mail: grand-jury@sbcglobal.net

RE: 2018-2019 Yolo County Grand Jury Report: Missed Funding Opportunities: West Sacramento Flood Control Projects

Honorable Judge Reed:

The following is the response to the findings and recommendations in the 2018-2019 Yolo County Grand Jury Report titled, "Missed Funding Opportunities: West Sacramento Flood Control Projects" from the Yolo County Board of Supervisors.

F2 The potential for partnerships among agencies is readily available but communication and leadership between multiple levels of government is significantly lacking. There was a lack of effective coordination between regional, state, and federal agencies when navigating the process to secure state and federal grant funding.

Response: We disagree partially with the finding. There are some very successful examples of coordinated flood planning efforts in Yolo County and the region (see list below in response to R3). However, it is true that there is not a workgroup focused on the entire county. Instead, the current working groups are focused on specific drainages and basins within the county and region.

One example of long-term collaboration and communication between the region and State/Federal agencies is the Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership. This partnership was formalized in 2016 with a Memorandum of Understanding between the participating entities, which include: Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Agency, Bureau of Reclamation, State Department of Water Resources (DWR), Central Valley Flood Protection Board, State Water Resources Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, West Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (WSAFCA), Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), Yolo and Solano

counties, Solano County Water Agency and various reclamation districts. This effort is not countywide. It is focused on the eastern portion of the county because State and Federal agency involvement is only applicable to the portions of the county that fall within the State Plan of Flood Control. The remainder of the county (west of the Yolo Bypass) is not part of the State/Federal flood control system.

F4 Because the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) obtained full funding to improve levees on the east side of the Sacramento River whereas WSAFCA did not, there will be an increased flood risk on the unimproved Yolo County side.

Response: We disagree partially with the finding. If considering only the flood improvements currently underway by SAFCA and the Army Corps through the American River Common Features project, it may seem as if this is the case. However, there are major system-wide improvements underway that will mitigate hydraulic impacts and greatly improve the flood risk to Yolo County. Such projects include:

- Bryte Landfill Remediation project (under construction, funded by DWR and SAFCA) which will allow for the construction of a new set-back levee in the Lower Elkhorn basin (LEBLS) and the widening of the Sacramento Bypass and Sacramento Weir. The LEBLS project, funded by DWR, will construct 7 miles of new levee along the eastern portion of the Yolo Bypass between I-5 and the Sacramento Bypass. This levee will be constructed to greater-than-100-year flood protection at a cost of \$300 million. The current Bypass levees do not provide 100-year flood protection. The LEBLS project will start construction in 2020. The widening of the Sacramento Bypass and Weir (by the Army Corps) will commence in 2021. Both projects will replace aging substandard levees with robust levees designed to provide 100+ year flood protection, greatly improving flood risk to the residents and infrastructure in Yolo County.
- Additional projects to improve the Bypass levees are in the planning stage and are slated for construction in 5-7 years include:
 - Upper Elkhorn Setback Levee
 - Widening of the Fremont Weir
 - New setback levees on the westside of the Bypass (both north and south of I-80).

These projects are designed to upgrade the flood system to allow more floodwaters to be diverted into the Yolo Bypass. The new levees will ensure robust flood protection to Yolo County while lowering the flood stage in the Sacramento River, which provides tremendous benefits to West Sacramento and Clarksburg.

F5 Although Yolo County had FloodSAFE Yolo in the past, the County has no active stakeholder flood protection committee now.

Response: We disagree wholly with the finding. There are multiple active stakeholder flood protection committees presently (see list below in response to R3); however, they are focused on specific flood basins as opposed to the entire county.

R3 By January 1, 2020, the Board of Supervisors should lead the creation or reactivation of a multi-agency and stakeholder flood protection committee or working group to facilitate collaboration among all Yolo County communities on all flood topics, and to present these discussions to the citizens.

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. This year, Yolo County reinitiated FloodSAFE Yolo 2.0, a coordinated comprehensive flood management planning effort for the west side of the county. One of the goals is to establish a sustainable governance structure. Once that is established, it may offer an opportunity for greater coordination, but for now, it is the desire of the parties involved to start with a smaller area and demonstrate success before expanding. Should, however, the cities express interest in a countywide approach in the near term, the County stands ready to participate. Meanwhile, many agencies and stakeholders in Yolo County, including the County, participate in the following flood coordination groups:

- [Westside Sacramento Integrated Regional Water Management](#) (Lake, Solano, Napa and Yolo counties with Yolo County chairing the effort)
- [Lower-Sacramento/Delta North Regional Flood Management Planning Group](#) (Yolo and Solano counties, Reclamation District 2068/2098, WSAFCA, SAFCA, Solano County Water Agency)
- [Central Valley Flood Control Association](#) (50+ reclamation districts, 6 counties and 4 flood control agencies; Yolo County holds a seat on the Board)
- [Central Valley Ag Floodplain Task Force Executive Committee](#)
- [Water Resources Association of Yolo County](#) (County, all cities within Yolo County and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation)