CAPITOL-TO-CAPITOL

SACRAMENTO, CA WASHINGTON, D.C.

FLOOD PROTECTION

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INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS TO REDUCE FLOOD RISK IN CALIFORNIA'S CAPITAL REGION

Requested Action

Congressional support on federal investment for projects is essential to reducing flood risk for the urbanized population centers and rural agricultural areas vital to the California's Capital Region and our nation's economy. There are eight projects and programs that the Flood Team is requesting support for from either for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 2024 Workplan and/or Fiscal Year FY 2025 appropriations.

- Support the FY 2025 budget request under Investigations to continue the Yolo Bypass Comprehensive Study; and Support FY 2024 Workplan and/or Community Project Funding request for Cache Creek Settling Basin feasibility study.
- Support the FY 2025 budget request under Construction for the Natomas Levee Improvement and the West Sacramento projects; Support the FY 2024 Workplan for Sacramento River Bank Protection Program; and Support FY 2024 Workplan and the Community Project Funding request to continue technical, planning, and design assistance under the Section 219 Program for Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Cosumnes River only).
- Support additional funding under Operations and Maintenance in FY 2024 Workplan and FY 2025 budget for the Section 408 regulatory program at the enacted FY 2023 level; and Support funding in the FY 2025 budget request for Scheduling Reservoir Operations, California for Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) for New Bullards Bar Dam, Yuba River and Oroville Dam, and Feather River.

Business Nexus

California's Capital Region lies at the confluence of two major rivers, with a combined watershed of 26,000 square miles that includes the Sacramento Valley and the foothills and mountains of Northern California. During winter storm events, runoff from this large watershed rushes past this region, often surging dangerously close to flood stage, threatening the Capitol, surrounding cities, towns, and communities. Reducing this flood risk is critical to the social and economic stability of our region and will only be achieved through a streamlined process of improving the existing levee, bypass, and water conveyance system.

Thanks to the continued support of the region's delegation, the significant investment in this region over the past years has addressed a portion of the backlog in authorized projects; however, sufficient annual appropriations are still required. Ongoing projects in the planning, design, and construction phases are critical to significantly reduce life safety risk for more than one million people living in the floodplain and to protect tens of billions of dollars of existing infrastructure, thus sustaining the region's rich agricultural productivity, and supporting economic growth.

Background

Flood protection for the region is not just about historical urban population centers—it is equally about small communities in the rural agricultural areas. A significant portion of productive agricultural lands in California's Central Valley are protected by levees that do not meet USACE's current engineering standards. Over the next decade, as the construction winds down on the levees protecting the urbanized areas, there will be a need for federal investment on the levees protecting the economically disadvantaged and small agricultural communities.

California's Central Valley has a long history of flooding and relies on an elaborate flood risk reduction system to store and convey flood flows. While local farmers and communities constructed some of the Valley's earliest levees, Congressional authorization of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP) led the USACE and the State of California to strengthen and expand that original system. The SRFCP consists of approximately 980 miles of levees, in addition to overflow weirs, pumping plants, and bypass channels that protect more than 2.3 million people within 50 communities, 1 million acres of land, and nearly $38 billion worth of infrastructure. The Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) serves as the non-Federal sponsor and is responsible for the operations, maintenance, repair, replacement, and rehabilitation of the SRFCP. The CVFPB relies on local maintaining agencies to care for the system and share in the cost of Federally-authorized improvements.

While the typical approach to flood risk reduction relies primarily upon USACE to lead project development and implementation, the state and local agencies in the Central Valley have assumed a greater role since the passage of the Disaster Preparedness and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 1E). Proposition 1E authorized $4.1 billion in general obligation bonds to improve California's most vulnerable flood infrastructure to protect homes and prevent loss of life. Up to $3 billion of the bond was specifically allocated for the evaluation, repair, improvement, or expansion of the Federally-authorized levee system. The availability of these state funds resulted in the state and local agencies partnering for the implementation of levee improvements to protect high-risk areas. Nearly all these State funds, matched with local funds, have been invested in projects primarily focused on levee improvements in Sacramento, West Sacramento, Yuba City, Plumas Lake, Knights Landing and Wheatland. A detailed description of each project and/or program follows the table.

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	Program/Project/Study Name	Approp	CA Rep.	Short-Term Goal	FY 2024 Tentative Allocation	FY 2025 Budget	FY 2025 CPF Request
1	American River Watershed (ARW)–Common Features: WRDA 2016	C	6, 7	Project Fully funded.	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	ARW–Common Features: Natomas Levee Improvement	C	6, 7	Support FY 2025 funding request to continue ongoing design and construction activities.	$13,000,000	$34,444,000	$0
3	ARW–Folsom Dam Raise	C	3, 5, 6, 7	Project fully funded.	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Cache Creek Settling Basin	I	4	Support FY 2024 Workplan and/or FY 2025 CPF request to initiate and complete a study.	TBD	$0	$1,500,000
5	Lower Cache Creek Project	I	4	Received full funding in FY 2023 to complete PED.	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	Sacramento River Bank Protection	C	6, 7	Support FY 2024 Workplan to continue repairs.	TBD	$0	$0
7	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Section 219 (Consumnes River only)	C	7	Support FY 2024 Workplan and FY 2025 CPF request to continue technical assistance, planning and design.	$50,000	N/A	$2,000,000
8	West Sacramento Project	C	7	Support FY 2025 funding request to continue construction.	$52,758,000	$43,463,000	$0
9	Yolo Bypass Comprehensive Study	I	6, 4	Support FY 2025 budget request to continue the Comprehensive Study.	$600,000	$600,000	$0
10	Yuba River Basin (Phase 3 Marysville Ring Levee)	C	1	Project fully funded.	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	Review of Non-Federal Alteration of USACE Civil Works Projects (Section 408)	O&M	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Support additional funding in FY 2024 Workplan and FY 2025 at FY 2023 enacted level of $21,000,000.	*$10,500,000*	*$10,500,000*	$0
12	Scheduled Reservoir Operations, CA (New Bullards Dam Yuba River and Oroville Dam Feather River)	O&M	1, 3	Support FY 2025 budget request to continue the Water Control Manual updates.	$2,000,000	$3,361,000	$0

Appropriation: I = Investigations; C = Construction; O&M = Operations and Maintenance; TBD = Unsure if USACE is including in Workplan; CPF= Community Project Funding; *Italic* = Nationwide USACE Funding

For additional information, please contact Robert Heidt, President & CEO at rheidt@metrochamber.org | www.metrochamber.org

1. American River Watershed (ARW)-Common Features WRDA 2016 Non-Federal Sponsors: CVFPB and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) Contact: Dan Tibbitts, (916) 875-0639, tibbittsd@saccounty.gov.

Update only. The project fully funded and ongoing. In December 2016, the work identified in the ARW Common Features General Re-Evaluation Report (GRR) was authorized for Federal construction. The authorized work addresses deficiencies along the Sacramento River east levee south of the American River and the North Area Streams Levees, as well as a comprehensive assessment of erosion potential along the American and Sacramento Rivers. Beyond recommending standard levee improvements, the authorized work includes the benefit of broader improvements to the SRFCP including widening of the Sacramento Weir and Bypass to reduce flood stages along the Sacramento River. Received full funding, $1,565,750,000 from the Bi-Partisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123) and executed a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) to complete the design and construction of the authorized project. The non-Federal sponsors constructed a portion of the most critical components ahead of Federal construction to advance flood-risk reduction for the citizens. Federal construction has been underway for five years. Levee construction is substantially complete and functioning as designed. Approximately half the erosion work is complete or under construction along with construction of the Sacramento Weir widening project which provides regional benefits. Design efforts for Sacramento River Erosion contracts 3 and 4 are scheduled for construction in 2024 thru 2026.

2. ARW-Common Features, Natomas Levee Improvement Project Non-Federal Sponsor: CVFPB and SAFCA: John Bassett, (916) 874-8731, bassettj@saccounty.gov.

SAFCA and CVFPB appreciate the funding received in FY 2024. Request support for FY 2025 budget request for $34,444,000 for ongoing construction. In June 2014, the work identified in the Post-Authorization Change Report (PACR) for the Natomas Basin under the ARW Common Features authority was authorized for Federal construction. The authorized work includes improvements to the 42-miles of levee surrounding the basin necessary to provide 200-year flood protection to the approximately 100,000 residents: and critical infrastructure, like the Sacramento International Airport and two interstate highways. The non-Federal sponsors have already completed more than $400 million of advanced construction toward the authorized project. The remaining work will be completed by the USACE. Reaches F and G are the last two full reaches that need a construction contract award. For Reach I, the first construction contract has been completed and that included installation of a slurry cutoff wall. A second Reach I contract will be awarded to flatten the landside levee slope. USACE still has outstanding work to perform to drainage, mitigation, and at pumping plants and highways.

3. ARW-Folsom Dam Raise Non-Federal Sponsor: CVFPB and SAFCA: Renna Jawanda, (916) 874-8736, jawandar@saccounty.gov.

Update only. The project is fully funded and ongoing. In October 2022, received $37,792,000 from the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2022 to award the Temperature Control Structures contract and closeout the project. The project consists of a raise of 3.5 feet to the dikes and wing dams around Folsom Lake, and a modification of the gates on the existing spillway. Raising the dam increases the ability to manage storms larger than the 200-year event and improve the robustness and reliability at managing less than 200-year storm events. The ecosystem restoration component of this project is focused on improving salmon habitat in the Lower American River through improved temperature control for Folsom Dam releases. The dam raise construction was fully funded in 2018. The PPA was executed in 2019 and construction began in 2020 and is expected to be complete in 2027, with the ecosystem restoration temperature control structures (also fully funded) scheduled to be completed in 2028.

4. Cache Creek Settling Basin Non-Federal Sponsor: CVFPB Contact: Corey Lasso, (916) 574-1041, corey.lasso@water.ca.gov or Nicole Ortega-Jewell, 916-456-4400, ortega-jewell@mbkengineers.com.

Request support for $1,500,000 in FY 2024 workplan or FY 2025 Community Project Funding request to initiate and complete a feasibility study. The Cache Creek Settling Basin (CCSB) is a part of the SRFCP constructed by the USACE in 1937 at the terminus of Cache Creek to preserve the floodway capacity of the Yolo Bypass by entrapping the heavy sediment load carried by the Cache Creek before its waters release into the Yolo Bypass. The facility was re-authorized in 1987 and improved in 1993 to enlarge the basin to its current sediment management capacity. The USACE 1987 Final General Design Memorandum (GDM) included raising the weir by 6 feet to an elevation of 38.5 feet at year 25 of the project life, or in 2018, based on the anticipated rate of sedimentation within the Basin. The CVFPB sent letters to USACE in March 2023 and 2024 to formally request the USACE to initiate a study to address the federal interest in the proposed weir raising, to address underseepage in the south and west levees, and to evaluate flood impacts upstream and adjacent to the City of Woodland by improving sediment trapping efficiency.

5. Lower Cache Creek Project Non-Federal Sponsors: CVFPB and City of Woodland Contact: Nicole Ortega-Jewell, (916) 456-4400, ortega-jewell@mbkengineers.com or Corey Lasso (916) 574-1041, corey.lasso@water.ca.gov.

Update only. The City of Woodland and CVFPB appreciate the funding received in FY 2023 to complete PED. The design agreement was executed in May 2023 and design of the first construction contract which includes a slurry wall along the existing SRFCP levee, is ongoing. Project was authorized in WRDA 2022. A feasibility study was completed in February 2021 and a USACE Chief of Engineers report was signed in June 2021. The 2019 storm events and flood fight efforts have heightened the flood risk concerns in the area. The USACE's project will extend horizontally above the north end of the city limits, starting just west of County Road 98 and tying into the Cache Creek Settling Basin levee east of Interstate 5. It includes the construction of 5.6 miles of new levee and seepage berms, installation of cutoff walls in 2.3 miles of existing levees, and construction of approximately 5.6 miles of drainage channels, among other features. The project will be augmented by the City's related Woodland Flood Risk Management Project, which proposes additional flood risk reduction actions for properties and structures north of the City and addresses state criteria for 200-year flood protection. Once the projects are completed, more than 1,000 Woodland properties will be removed from special flood hazard areas, eliminating federal mandates for high-cost flood insurance and restrictions on improvements.

6. Sacramento River Bank Protection Non-Federal Sponsor: CVFPB Contact: Dave Wheldon, (916) 574-1243, dave.wheeldon@water.ca.gov or Nicole Ortega-Jewell, ortega-jewell@mbkengineers.com.

Support FY 2024 Workplan request. The CVFPB is working with USACE to continue funding this program for ongoing Operations, Maintenance, Repair, Replacement, and Rehabilitation (OMRR&R), specifically for repairs and rehabilitation of the SRFCP levee banks. Funding was last provided in October 2022 from the IIJA for $600,000 to execute a new PPA, prepare detailed surveys, perform real estate investigations and incorporate results into an implementation plan. The PPA was executed September 29, 2023. The remaining funds will be used to complete erosion surveys, site selection and begin an economic update on the selected sites.

The Sacramento River Bank Protection Program (SRBPP) was authorized in Section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1960. It was subsequently modified in 1974 to add 405,000 linear feet. Section 3031 of the WRDA 2007 authorized an additional 80,000 linear feet. The SRBPP is a USACE-led program that evaluates the levees bordering the river and repair and rehabilitates stream bank erosion sites along the SRFCP. The authorization was based on the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers in a report dated May 9, 1960 (Chief's Report). When the SRFCP was turned over to the State by execution of the 1953 Memorandum of Understanding, there was a growing concern that the system that was constructed to flush hydraulic mining debris and maintain navigable waters was eroding the banks of the river and threatening the levees.

The Chief's Report recommends an ongoing program to construct bank protection as "new work" and makes clear that bank protection is a capital improvement and, therefore, beyond what can be funded by local agencies.

7. Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Section 219 (Cosumnes River only) Non-Federal Sponsor: Sacramento County Contact: Rebecca Thornton Sloan, (916) 874-5465, SloanR@saccounty.gov.

Sacramento County appreciates the $50,000 received in FY 2024, to initiate a project funded under Section 219 Environmental Infrastructure program Sacramento-San Joquin Delta, California (authorized under Section 8375 (300) of Public Law 117-263). Request support for FY 2024 Workplan to develop a Letter Report to identify and scope a potential project that leverages existing data from other groundwater, flood risk reduction and aquatic habitat studies to reduce flood risk while recharging the floodplain for increased water supply for neighboring agriculture. Request support for a Community Project Funding request in the amount of $2,000,000 in FY 2025 to design and construct the project identified in the Letter Report. The Cosumnes River drains 580 square miles on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. The Cosumnes River is leveed along 34.05 miles in Sacramento County beginning at Rancho Murietta in the north and ends at Freeman Road to the south and levees are maintained by Reclamation District (RD) 800. There have been 19 federal disaster declarations from flood events between 1950-2020. After the 1997 flood the RD expanded its boundaries to 25,435 acres and includes the lands along the left bank of the river down to the vicinity of Wilton. However, some landowners have created berms south of the RD. During the January 2023 storm, there were breaks along the RD 800 levees and the private berms resulting in flooding and closure of evacuation routes to include Highway 99 and Dillard Road where three people died.

8. West Sacramento Project Non-Federal Sponsors: CVFPB and West Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (WSAFCA) Contact: Greg Fabun, (916) 617-4855, gregf@cityofwestsacramento.org and Paul Dirksen, (916) 617-4560, pauld@cityofwestsacramento.org.

The CVFPB and WSAFCA appreciate the $52,758,000 in construction funding received in FY 2024. Request support for FY 2025 budget request of $43,463,000 for continued construction. The project was authorized in the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act with a total project cost of $1.17 billion. In advance of federal funding, the City of West Sacramento (City), the West Sacramento WSAFCA, and the State of California invested $210 million in construction to immediately reduce flood risk to the City's 56,000 residents and to protect $6.7 billion in damageable assets. This advanced construction included the first component of the authorized project, the Southport Setback Levee Project. Two construction contracts were awarded in 2023.

The Yolo Bypass East Levee South Project which was completed in 2023, and the Yolo Bypass East Levee North Project, which is scheduled to begin and complete construction in 2024. Pre-construction activities along the Sacramento River North Levee are underway and include survey, bathymetry, and geotechnical investigations. Design of one or more segments in this reach are scheduled to begin in 2024 and 2025. A design charrette was completed for the Stone Lock Reach, which is now scheduled for design in 2024 and construction in 2025, slightly ahead of the overall project schedule.

9. Yolo Bypass Comprehensive Study Non-Federal Sponsors: CVFPB and SAFCA Contact: Gary Bardini, (916) 874-7606, bardinig@saccounty.gov.

The CVFPB and SAFCA appreciate the funding provided in FY 2024. Request support for FY 2025 budget request of $600,000 to continue the comprehensive study. The Yolo Bypass is a 40-mile long, 59,000-acre federal flood management facility constructed in the 1930s. It is designed to divert 80% of the Sacramento River watershed flood flows, which results in reducing risk to $68 billion in property and 650,000 people in the Sacramento Metropolitan area. While located within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, it serves as a major project feature of the SRFCP and is central to a systems approach to reducing flood risk to the Sacramento metropolitan area, small communities, and adjacent non-urban areas. In 2016, the Yolo Bypass Cache Slough Partnership was formed between 15 federal, state, and local agencies to establish a new era of multi-benefit collaborative planning that encourages collaboration on regional solutions to implement landscape-level change. This partnership creates a unique opportunity for interagency collaboration in pursuit of a common plan of activities that would advance the national interest in flood risk reduction, ecosystem restoration, agricultural sustainability, resilient water supply, and water quality, and recreational opportunities. In 2020, Congress authorized the USACE to conduct a formal feasibility study called “Comprehensive Study of the Sacramento River, Yolo Bypass, CA”, to identify actions to be undertaken by the Secretary for the comprehensive management of the Yolo Bypass System for the purposes of flood risk management, ecosystem restoration, water supply, and recreation. Accomplishments to date include: Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement executed September 25, 2023; development of an Interim Status Report to Congress in December 2023; and initiated collaboration to further define the study scope, schedule, and budget in preparation of the Alternative Milestone meeting in March 2024.

10. Yuba River Basin (Phase 3 Marysville Ring Levee) Non-Federal Sponsors: CVFPB and Marysville Levee District Contact: Willie Whittlesey; (530) 741-5026, wwhittlesey@ycwa.com or Tom Engler (916) 456-4400, engler@mbkengineers.com.

Update only. This project is fully funded and ongoing. The Yuba River Basin flood damage reduction project is an unprecedented initiative to provide greater than a 200-year level of protection for Yuba County communities. To advance this Federally authorized project, the state and local interests (Yuba County, Yuba Water Agency, Marysville Levee District, and the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority) began an advanced construction program in the southern portion of the county. Improvements are now complete on 29 miles of levees (estimated cost - $450 million), including the construction of two setback levees: the 2-mile-long Bear River setback and 6-mile-long Feather River setback. These setbacks, besides providing greater regional flood protection, also resulted in the creation of nearly 2,200 acres of floodplain habitat along the Bear and Feather rivers.

USACE is presently repairing sections of the Marysville Ring Levee. These improvements to the 7.5-mile-long levee which surrounds the City of Marysville are the final scheduled improvements of the entire project. Construction is complete on Phase 1 (2012), Phase 4A (2017), Phase 2A-North (2018), Phase 2A-South (2019), Phase 2C (2020), and Phase 3 (2022). Phase 2B cutoff wall construction started in 2023 and is expected to be completed in 2025. The project received full funding from the FY 2019 appropriation of $35,500,000 and the $13,600,000 from the Bi-Partisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123). Recent construction cost increases and design refinements resulted in an increase in the authorized total project cost, and USACE approved an additional $48,600,000 of the Bi-Partisan Budget Act of 2018 funds to complete the remaining construction features (Phase 2B cutoff wall and Highway 70 seepage berm). USACE is completing a project risk assessment that is undergoing technical reviews.

11. Review of Non-Federal Alteration of USACE Civil Works Projects (Section 408 Program) Non-Federal Sponsor: CVFPB Contact: Chris Lief, (916) 574-0609, chris.lief@cvflood.ca.gov or Nicole Ortega-Jewell, (916) 456-4400, ortega-jewell@mbkengineers.com.

Support is needed in FY 2025 continue the FY 2023 funding level of $21,000,000 provided by Congress to adequately enable the USACE, specifically the Sacramento District, to coordinate with requesters and review proposed alterations and encroachments to the SRFCP. Since the additional funding received in FY 2023, no additional funding above the budget requested amount of $10,500,000 has been received. Through Section 408 reviews, USACE ensures that the alteration will not adversely impact the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of the authorized Federal projects. The number of Section 408 requests in any year is dependent on many factors – primarily actions, schedules, and resources external to USACE.

In previous years, the allocated amount has been inadequate, and the Sacramento District has continuously exhausted its funding by third quarter, delaying many locally-led flood improvement projects and placing additional burden on the requesters to contribute funds to sustain USACE review. It is important to maintain the funding level provided in FY 2023 of $21,000,000 into future years.

12. Scheduled Reservoir Operations, California Contact: Willie Whittlesey, wwhittlesey@ycwa.com, (530) 741-5026.

Yuba Water Agency requests support for FY 2025 budget request of $3,361,000 to continue preparing the water control manual updates for New Bullards Bar Dam, Yuba River, CA and Oroville Dam, Feather River, CA.

The Yuba-Feather Rivers system has a long history of catastrophic floods. Since 1950, five major floods have resulted in 41 deaths, significant property damage, and devastating social and economic impacts.

Yuba Water Agency (Yuba Water), owner and operator of New Bullards Bar (NBB) Reservoir, and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), owner and operator of Lake Oroville, are working with the U.C. San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E) to assess the potential of Forecast-Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) in the ongoing process to update the water control manuals for NBB Reservoir and Lake Oroville. FIRO leverages scientific improvements in forecasting of atmospheric rivers, which are responsible for more than 90 percent of the flood damages in this region, to anticipate and better manage large storm events while providing opportunities to enhance water supply. A preliminary study indicated FIRO could significantly reduce flood risks in Yuba and Sutter Counties.

The NBB Reservoir and Lake Oroville WCM updates and Yuba-Feather FIRO build on the Forecast-Coordinated Operations (F-CO) Program that Yuba Water and DWR created after a devastating flood in 1997. The F-CO Program seeks to improve public safety by reducing flood risk and coordinating flood operations between Lake Oroville and NBB Reservoir. F-CO includes real-time runoff forecasting and an Advance decision support system. Other members of the F-CO Program include the USACE and the National Weather Service.

To achieve the full potential for operating Lake Oroville and NBB Reservoir under FIRO, an ongoing analysis is being conducted of the reservoirs' release capacities.

At NBB, Yuba Water is planning to construct a new high-capacity, low-level outlet—the Atmospheric River Control (ARC) Spillway—to allow larger releases of water in the early stages of a storm event, preserving storage space to contain peak inflows. While DWR can already release water from Lake Oroville at low lake levels, it is also conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment to identify improvement priorities, appropriate solutions, and potential changes to bolster the integrity and resiliency of the Oroville Dam complex to further reduce flood risks downstream.