

CVFPP Regional Flood Management Planning: Moving from Phase 1 to Phase 2

DWR values the regional planning process and acknowledges the regional partners' extensive work and investment in developing six Regional Flood Management Plans (RFMPs).

CVFPP's success relies upon continued coordination and meaningful engagement with the regional partners, local stakeholders, and interest groups during Phase 2.

The RFMPs ultimately provide a level of local detail necessary to further identify and describe potential systemwide improvements for inclusion in the SSIA and identify regional and local support needs for implementation.

How RFMPs Will Be Used

DWR WILL:

- Confirm technical assumptions used for BWFS/CVFPP studies
- Assess proposed multi-objective projects
- Inform CVFPP Finance Plan (i.e., ability to pay, etc.)
- Inform FloodSAFE Implementation Program guidance criteria

THE REGIONS WILL:

- Use plans to reinforce local investment priorities
- Strengthen local collaboration and governance; develop cohesion among regional interests leading to wise investment
- Achieve strategic bundling of management actions/projects
- Position projects for partnership funding via DWR implementation programs

RFMP Phase 1

Purpose and Value

RFMP Phase 1 built upon the 2012 CVFPP by **gathering region-specific information and local input** that is fundamental to refining the State Systemwide Investment Approach (SSIA).

Phase 1 sought to better **define site-specific flood improvement needs and engage local stakeholders** to develop their regions' visions for flood management and significantly reducing flood risk over the next 25 years. This enabled locally led plan development that **identifies regional priorities** and informs the BWFS/CVFPP about the challenges regional flood managers face, such as environmental compliance and restoration, uncertain future hydrology due to climate change, aging infrastructure, and limited funding. **As local implementation partners, regional flood managers play a pivotal role in CVFPP's success.**

DWR continues developing two Basin-Wide Feasibility Studies (BWFS) in parallel with the RFMPs. The BWFS study teams coordinated with the RFMP groups throughout Phase 1 in preparation for **analysis of potential systemwide improvements and their value to reducing flood risk.** Each BWFS will evaluate systemwide improvements and **identify how regional improvements add to overall system performance.**

Phase 1 Achievements

The value of Phase 1 is evident throughout all regions. Despite different conditions and flood management challenges and priorities, the general achievements across the regions provide the basis for scoping Phase 2.

- Hundreds of diverse regional partners and stakeholders successfully collaborated on regional flood management plan development.
- Communication, engagement, awareness, and understanding of flood issues among stakeholders and with DWR has been substantially enhanced.
- Alignment of the intention of flood management improvements with other overlapping and integrated regional planning efforts is better understood within regions.
- Hundreds of specific potential flood system improvements have been identified at the regional level; costs and benefits developed.
- Local groups are far better informed of floodplain management challenges, perspectives, and opportunities to partner with other local, state, and federal interests.
- Regional finance planning efforts are underway; these are assessing funding sources and ability to fund long-term capital improvements, emergency response operations, and O&M activities.

RFMP Phase 2

Scoping and Funding

Phase 2 is intended to provide funding for meaningful engagement by the Regional Partners in the CVFPP and maintain the working relationships to develop a common understanding of regional flood issues that should be prioritized for funding under appropriate FloodSAFE grant implementation programs.

With most of the RFMPs complete, DWR is now reviewing each plan for two purposes:

- Consistency with the scope of the original funding agreements
- Gain specific information regarding proposed regional flood improvements, actions, and policy recommendations.

DWR will use RFMPs to identify system improvements that are consistent with the SSIA and CVFPP goals.

Most of DWR's FloodSAFE program funding is allocated to implementation programs. Only a small portion is committed to the Flood Management Planning Program that includes the Statewide Flood Management Plan, CVFPP, RFMPs, and the Conservation Strategy. DWR is interested in funding RFMP Phase 2 activities through June 2017 that are consistent with the original *Guidelines for Directed Funding to Prepare Regional Flood Management Plans* released in September 2012, including the following items:

- Project management
- Coordination: Promote regional collaboration with the BWFS and CVFPP processes.
- Communications and Engagement: Continue to coordinate with local landowners, stakeholders, and public interest groups.
- Regional Governance: Establish regional governance bodies to lead and effectively manage grant funds and flood management activities.
- Institutional Barriers: Work with local, State, and federal agencies to assess and develop strategies to deal with institutional issues such as permitting of flood management and O&M activities, flood insurance, sustainable financing, and others.

Many of the activities suggested by the regions include feasibility studies and technical evaluations not scoped under the original funding guidelines, and therefore would be ineligible for funding. However, such regional studies, evaluations, and other activities may be funded through other existing or forthcoming FloodSAFE implementation programs:

- Flood System Repair Program (Guidelines released July 2013)
- Urban Flood Risk Reduction (Draft Program Guidelines released July 2014)
- Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction (Draft Program Guidelines expected November 2014)
- Systemwide Flood Risk Reduction
- Flood Emergency Response Planning



Yolo Bypass.
Photo courtesy
of DWR.

Next Steps

- 1) Amend existing agreements for additional budget (\$500k) and schedule through June 2017.
- 2) The Basin-wide teams schedule meetings with the RFMP Regional Partners to initiate coordination efforts for Phase 2 of the RFMP planning effort.
- 3) Continue engaging RFMP Regional Partners in the CVFPP planning process through 2017 by integration with the BWFS to incorporate local knowledge and better understanding of local priorities and problem issues.



Levee improvement on the San Joaquin River, Firebaugh. Photo courtesy of DWR.