1. INTRODUCTION

As part of an effort to reduce the risk of mortality to native anadromous salmonids, including special-status species within the Sacramento River Basin, the M&T Chico Ranch/Llano Seco Rancho fish screen and pumping facility was redesigned, upgraded, and relocated from Big Chico Creek to the Sacramento River during 1997. Since its construction, local geomorphic changes including erosion and lateral migration of the west bank of the Sacramento River and related sediment deposition at the mouth of Big Chico Creek and in the vicinity of the fish screened intakes have posed a threat to the normal operation and fish protection function of the M&T Chico Ranch/Llano Seco Rancho diversion facility.

An upriver gravel bar adjacent to the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park is migrating toward the vicinity of the fish screened diversion. As a result of continued sediment deposition and increased river meander, the intake screens are progressively becoming threatened by encroaching sediment, which could cause a reduction in sweeping velocities across the screens (parallel to screen). A reduction in sweeping velocities would render the screens out of compliance with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the CDFG fish screen criteria. Periodic maintenance is required to reduce the size of the gravel bar and prevent interference with the diversion facility. In 2001 and 2007, 200,000 and 100,000 tons of material, respectively, were excavated from the gravel bar as a short-term solution to limit sedimentation impacts. Additionally in 2007, 1,500 feet of short-term, rock toe and brush bank protection was installed on the west side of the Sacramento River on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Capay Unit of the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge to prevent further channel meander.

A technical memorandum (Tetra Tech, 2011) describing the bed elevation changes that occurred between 2006 and 2011 was provided to Ducks Unlimited in July 2011 following the June 2011 survey. To ascertain the need for further short-term dredging, a hydrographic survey of the M&T reach was conducted in June 2012 by Tetra Tech.
2. HYDROGRAPHIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEYS

Hydrographic and topographic surveys of the M&T/Llano Seco reach of the Sacramento River between River Mile (RM) 192 and RM 193.5 have been used to monitor geomorphic changes in the reach, including aggradation of the bed as well as bank erosion and lateral migration of the river. Surveys were conducted by Mussetter Engineering Inc. (MEI) in December 2005 and May 2006 and by Tetra Tech Inc. (Tt) in January 2010 and June 2011. The horizontal datum for the surveys is referenced to the State Plane Coordinate System, North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83) (California, Zone 2) and the vertical datum is the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88). The peak flow (~44,000 cfs) during the 2012 spring runoff period was low compared to previous years (Figure 1) and based on the observed trend of deposition occurring during low peak flow years (Tetra Tech, 2011), the 2012 survey was commissioned by Duck’s Unlimited to determine the necessity of dredging and to quantify the volume (tonnage) of material. Unlike the previous gravel removal operations that were conducted in the “dry” during 2001 and 2007, future dredging will likely require a below-water dredge operation.

The hydrographic survey was conducted by Tt on June 26, 2012, when the flows at the Hamilton City gage were reasonably steady at around 11,300 cfs. The survey was conducted with an Ohmex SonarMite Echosounder (±0.1-foot resolution) coupled with a Leica Viva RTK-GPS system that were mounted on Tt’s survey boat.

3. SURVEY RESULTS

The initial survey of the M&T/Llano Seco reach was conducted in December 2005, but in January 2006 there was a flow of 135,000 cfs in the river (Hamilton City gage) which caused both lateral erosion of the west bank of the river and aggradation and degradation in the reach. As a result, the reach was re-surveyed in May 2006, and this survey is used as the baseline condition for the following discussion.

Figure 2 presents the changes in elevation of the bed of the river within the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the 2010 and 2006 surveys. The comparison indicates that there had been significant aggradation (4 to 10 feet) in the vicinity of the pumps which was supported by observations of the river under low-flow conditions. The location of the 2007 gravel removal is clearly visible (-4 to -6 feet) along the left (east) bank of the river upstream of the pumping plant and adjacent to Bidwell State Park. Figure 3 presents the changes in bed elevation between the 2011 survey and the 2006 survey. It is apparent that the amount of deposition in the vicinity of the pumping plant was reduced following the high flows in early 2011 (peak flow at Hamilton City was about 102,500 cfs), but there is still some aggradation when compared to the 2006 survey. Figure 4 presents the differences in elevation of the bed of the river between the 2010 and 2011 surveys.

Figure 5 presents the changes in bed elevation between the 2011 survey and the 2012 surveys. The data indicate that there has been some additional aggradation in the vicinity of the pump intake as compared to the 2011 survey, which is likely due to the lack of significant peak flows during the 2012 spring runoff period (peak flow at Hamilton City was about 44,000 cfs). Figure 6 presents the differences in elevation of the bed of the river between the 2012 and 2006 surveys, and demonstrates that the site is still net aggradational.
In order to further evaluate bed elevation changes between 2006 and 2012, and to determine the volume of dredge material in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets, an approximately 600- by 1,200-foot area was designated and the difference in volume between surveys was determined. Between the 2006 and 2010 surveys, about 89,000 cu.yd. (~120,000 tons) of material accumulated (Figure 7). Between the 2011 and 2006 surveys, the volume of material that accumulated was reduced to about 54,400 cu.yd. (~72,900 tons) (Figure 8). Between 2010 and 2011, there was net loss of about 34,800 cu.yd. (~47,000 tons) of material (Figure 9).

Between the 2012 and 2006 surveys, there was a net accumulation of about 61,300 cu.yd. (~82,800 tons) (Figure 10). From 2011 to 2012, there was slight aggradation in the delineated area and a net gain of about 6,700 cu.yd. (~9,000 tons) of material (Figure 11).

4. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES

Aggradation and degradation within the M&T/Llano Seco reach appears to be tied to the peak flow hydrology. With the exception of WY2004, the peak flows in the six years prior to 2005 were less than the bankfull (~90,000 cfs) in the M&T/Llano Seco reach and this sequence of flows appears to be responsible for the aggradation in the channel (Figure 1). In WY2006, the peak flow was about 135,000 cfs and clearly there was some degradation in the reach, especially in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets (Figure 12). Between WY2006 and WY2010, the peak flows were again less than the bankfull and aggradation occurred in the vicinity of the fish screens and pumps (Figure 13). Peak flow in WY2011 was about 102,500 cfs and this flow appears to have caused degradation in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets (Figure 14). The peak flows during the spring 2012 runoff period was about 44,000 cfs (approximately half of the bankfull flow), which re-activated a concern about the need to dredge. Between 2011 and 2012, there was a relatively small amount of deposition in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets but the general problem of deposition during low flow years was observed (Figure 15).

The general patterns of aggradation and degradation shown in Figures 12 through 15 are supported by comparative cross-sectional plots. The locations of the plotted cross sections are shown on Figure 16, with Cross Section 1 (XS1) being located at the newly relocated City of Chico wastewater outfall and diffuser, XS2 is located near the City’s previous outfall, XS3 through XS5, span the fish screens and pump inlets and XS6 and XS7 are located upstream and incorporate the migrating gravel bar. XS8 represents the area that was dredged in 2007. At the City of Chico’s outfall (Figure 17) the cross sections indicate that there was some aggradation on the left (east) side of the channel in 2005 but the 2006, 2010 and 2011 surveys show that the local aggradation was removed. Given the similarity of the cross sections in the post-2005 period it is likely that the bench represents the coarse gravel material placed along the alignment of the diffuser outfall during construction. The 2012 survey shows aggradation along the left side of the channel from near the left bank (east) to approximately Station 430. The 2012 survey also shows slight aggradation in the main channel compared to the 2011 survey. At the location of the City’s prior outfall (Figure 18), it is apparent that the aggradation in 2010 was removed by the flows in 2011 and that the depth of scour probably depends on the magnitude of the high flows since the bed elevation in 2006 is the lowest. The 2012 survey shows there was very little change along the cross section compared to 2011 conditions. At the location of the fish screens and pump inlets (Figures 19, 20, 21) it is clear that during the lower
peak flow years the deposition approaches the inlets and fish screens, and it is eroded during the higher-flow years. The 2012 survey shows there was up to 3 feet of aggradation near the left bank (east) as well as some aggradation in localized areas in the main channel compared to the 2011 conditions.

The same general trend is seen on the upper part of the migrating bar (Figures 22 and 23). Aggradation occurs during the lower peak flow years (2005, 2010) and there is scour in the higher peak flow years (2006, 2011). The 2012 survey shows there was aggradation near the left bank of XS6 and localized aggradation of up to 1.2 feet in the main channel, but in general, the 2012 survey is very similar to the 2011 survey. At XS7, there was approximately 1 foot of aggradation downstream from the bank attached bar.

The comparative cross sections indicate that there has been little or no filling in the area that was dredged in 2007 (Figure 24) (left side of the cross section). The 2012 survey shows up to 2.5 feet of degradation along the right bank compared to the 2011 survey; this is likely due to scour along the base of the rock-toe revetment.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the response of the system over the five surveys, it appears that there is cyclic behavior within the M&T/Llano Seco reach with the less than bankfull flows delivering sediment to the reach from upstream and causing aggradation, and the higher than bankfull flows causing scour in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets. The scour is most likely due to the formation of a helical flow cell along the riprap that lines the east bank of the river in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets because of downstream translation of flows that approach the riprap obliquely from upstream. Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) measurements collected in June 2011 indicated the presence of a weak helical flow cell at approximately 19,500 cfs (Tetra Tech, 2012a).

At higher flows, it is hypothesized that the strength of the helical flow cell increases and this erodes previously deposited material. The 3-D flow fields associated with the formation of the helical cells are not well represented in the 2-dimensional hydraulic modeling of the reach (Tetra Tech, 2012b). It is hoped that 3-dimensional modeling currently being performed for this study will answer some of these unresolved questions regarding the helical flow cell at higher discharges.

This hypothesis of the cyclic behavior of the system depends on the general alignment of the river being maintained. If the west bank was to erode and migrate westward, it is likely that the flow alignments would change and it is unlikely that the helical flow cell would be maintained in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets, which would probably cause them to be buried. Dive reports at the fish screens tend to support the results of the comparative surveys (Appendix A).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Until a long-term solution is developed and implemented at the M&T/Llano Seco pumping plant inlets and fish screens, it is recommended that geomorphic changes in the reach be monitored. Monitoring should involve deposition/erosion in the vicinity of the inlets as well as any erosion of
the west bank of the river downstream of the rock toe and brush revetment. In addition, monitoring should also involve the City of Chico’s recently relocated outfall and diffuser since the post-2005 survey data tend to indicate that there is potential for sedimentation in that location as well.

The 2011 peak flow event exceeded bankfull conditions and eroded the previously deposited material in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets, leaving the area relatively clear of deposition. The 2012 survey indicated relatively little deposition in this area, and therefore, dredging is not recommended at this time.

7. REFERENCES


Figure 1. Peak annual flows at the Hamilton City gage between WY1997 and WY2011.
Figure 2. Elevation changes in the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the January 2010 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 3. Elevation changes in the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the June 2011 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 4. Elevation changes in the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the June 2011 and January 2010 surveys.
Figure 5. Elevation changes in the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the June 2012 and June 2011 surveys.
Figure 6. Elevation changes in the M&T/Llano Seco reach between the June 2012 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 7. Volumetric calculation of the deposition in the 600- by 1,200-foot segment in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets between the January 2010 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 8. Volumetric calculation of the deposition in the 600- by 1,200-foot segment in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets between the June 2011 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 9. Volumetric calculation of the deposition in the 600- by 1,200-foot segment in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets between the June 2011 and January 2010 surveys.
Figure 10. Volumetric calculation of the deposition in the 600- by 1,200-foot segment in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets between the June 2012 and May 2006 surveys.
Figure 11. Volumetric calculation of the deposition in the 600- by 1,200-foot segment in the vicinity of the fish screens and pump inlets between the June 2011 and June 2012 surveys.
Figure 12. Color gradient plot showing the bed topography in the vicinity of the M&T/Llano Seco Pumping Plant and the relocated City of Chico Outfall in May 2006.
Figure 13. Color gradient plot showing the bed topography in the vicinity of the M&T/Llano Seco Pumping Plant and the relocated City of Chico Outfall in January 2010.
Figure 14. Color gradient plot showing the bed topography in the vicinity of the M&T/Llano Seco Pumping Plant and the relocated City of Chico Outfall in June 2011.
Figure 15. Color gradient plot showing the bed topography in the vicinity of the M&T/Llano Seco Pumping Plant and the relocated City of Chico Outfall in June 2012.
Figure 16. Locations of comparative cross sections discussed in the text.
Figure 17. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 at the relocated City of Chico outfall.
Figure 18. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 at the original City of Chico outfall.
Figure 19. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 immediately downstream of the M&T/Llano Seco fish screens and pump inlets.
Figure 20. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 at the M&T/Llano Seco fish screens and pump inlets.
Figure 21. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 immediately upstream of the M&T/Llano Seco fish screens and pump inlets.
Figure 22. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 upstream of the M&T/Llano Seco fish screens and pump inlets on the lower part of the migrating bar.
Figure 23. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 upstream of the M&T/Llano Seco fish screens and pump inlets on the upper part of the migrating bar.
Figure 24. Comparative cross-section plots, 2005 to 2012 across the area that was dredged in 2007.
APPENDIX A
DIVE REPORTS
Big Valley Divers, Inc. Specializing in Northern & Central California Underwater Needs

Big Valley Divers, Inc. est. 1994. is made up of commercial divers, experienced in every aspect of inland diving operations. Commercial certifications are supported by yearly physicals, CPR, first aid, O2, and AED administration. The customer is always first with BVD.

- Irrigation Districts, Hydroelectric Maintenance and Repair, and Potable Water Service
- Lake & River Marina Maintenance
- Pump Stations, Fish Screens, Siphons
- Sluice Gate and Hydraulic Install and Maintenance
- Underwater Video, R.O.V. Services
- Debris & Sediment Removal, Epoxy and Grout
- Fish Screen Cleaning Repair and Construction
- Aquatic Barrier Construction
- Dredging, Water Jetting & Pigging
- Underwater Welding & Cutting
- Salvage and Recovery
- Hydro-Brush Hull Cleaning
4-9-09 Big Valley Divers Dive Inspection and Spring Cleaning of:

M & T Ranch, Sacramento River Intake Station.
For: Less Heringer and Mike Bolen.

Ord Ferry Reading: 97.25

- * bulleted numbers represent feet from water surface to river bottom.
- Debris cleared from frame structure, screens and H beam deflectors.
- Screens brushed clean no damage found.
- Fasteners on screen bases and air blast piping checked and tight.
- Buoy installed on up stream frame.

- Numbers represent average feet from bottom of screen to river bottom.
- Average depth of water in screen area was 16' to rip rap rock bottom.
To: M&T RANCH - CHICO

Rep: MIKE BOLIN
Re: 09 SPRING PUMP INSPECTION

DIVE REPORT

Date
4-9-09

Location
SAC RIVER PUMPS

Requested By
MIKE BOLIN

Site Forman
MIKE

Dive Supervisor
DOUG

Water Elevation
VARIED

Depth
55'

Water Temp.
55'

Visibility
2 fps

Current (fps)
N

Purpose of job: (Please note basic Tasks, Measurements (IE Before and After), and Drawings.

Readings taken on 4-9-09

---

River Flow

---

40' Distance

OUT

---

Rap Rap Bottom Mixed
WITH SAND UNDER ALL THE SCREENS

Bank
**BIG VALLEY DIVERS, INC.**

P.O. Box 3284  
Chico, CA 95927  
Office (530) 898-1110  
Cell (530) 521-0588  
Fax (530) 898-1110

---

**INVOICE**

**CUSTOMER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>M &amp; T Ranch</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
<td>3984 Chico River Rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY</td>
<td>Chico CA 95928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHONE</td>
<td>Of. (530) 342-2954 Cl. (530) 521-4464 Fx (530) 000-0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REP</td>
<td>Les Heringer / Mike Bolin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Install Bouys and Clean Fish Screens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PER UNIT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/5/2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 Person Dive Team, Heavy Gear, Full Comms.</td>
<td>1450</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Mileage 1 Vehicles.</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>18.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bouy</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|            | 1     | Anchor Chains.  
|            |       | 1 - Anchors were attached with new chains.          | 35       | 35    |
|            |       | 2 - Screens were cleaned.                            | 0        | 0     |
|            |       | 3 - Gravel encroachment is still held off as riprap is around base of intakes. | 0        | 0     |

**TOTAL** | 1558.75 |

---

**NOTES**

Thank You For Using Big Valley Divers.  
Doug.
Big Valley Divers
Doug @ 521-0588

River Flow

No Buoys

FFW

FFW

FFW

FFW

FFW

4' 0 6'

Gravel/Rip Rap

Rip Rap

Fasteners Tight

4' 0 3'

Gravel Bottom

Fasteners Tight

4' 0 4'

Gravel & Rip Rap

Straight H Beams.
No Debris Other
Than Light Sticks.

Ord Ferry EL = 97.7
Flow = 7,950
Notes:

- Depth readings straight out from middle of structure.
  - 6' = 15' (past 30'), slopes up gradually.
  - 10' = 14' (both buoys sunken).
  - 20' = 15' (removed log from structure).
  - 25' = 15'
  - 30' = 14' (all H-beams good).

4-14-08 Inspection
To: M & T Ranch  
3964 Chico River Rd.  
Chico Ca. 95928  

Attn: Less Herringer, Mike Bolin  

Re: 07 Pump Station Inspection.  

DIVE REPORT  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Water Elevation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-26-07</td>
<td>Main Pumping Plant</td>
<td>97.7 - Ord Ferry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less Herringer</td>
<td>17'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Bolin</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doug Maxfield</td>
<td>3'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose Of Job  
1 – Check fish screen intake structure for winter damage and debris.  
2 – Check clearances from bottom of fish screen to river bottom.  
3 – Brush fish screens clean.  
4 – Check fasteners and hardware.  

Report  
1 – No major winter damage was found. Screens and surrounding protective structures were found to be intact. No holes were found and screen integrity was found to be intact.  

2 – Screen #1 average clearance 4’ to gravel and rip-rap bottom.  
Screen #2 average clearance 3’ to gravel bottom.  
Screen #3 average clearance 5.5’ to 6’ to rip-rap bottom.  
Screen #4 average clearance 5’ to gravel and rip-rap bottom.  

3 – Diver traveled West from fish screen structure. The encroaching gravel bar began a slight downward gradient continuing to the West. The bottom leveled off 20’ West of the structure and about 1.5’ lower than the screen structure bottom elevation. Diver reported that the bottom appeared to continue flat to the West.
4 – Fish screens were brushed clean.

5 – Fasteners were checked and no loose hardware was found.

6 - Both buoys need to be replaced this year.

7 – The deflector H beam structure up-stream was cleared of minor debris and all beams were straight and structurally sound.

Report complete.
No Buors

River Flow

Douglas R. Maxfield
Lic. # 75776
“DIVING SAFE SINCE 1954”
- Commercial Divers Specializing in Northern & Central California Underwater Needs.
- Pump Stations, Fish Screens, Siphons.
- Lake, Reservoir, Pond.
- Underwater Video, Welding, R.O.V. services.
- Debris & Sediment Removal, Epoxy and Grout.

P.O. Box 3284, Chico, CA 95927
OFF: (530) 888-1110
FAX: (530) 888-1110
CELL: (530) 521-0368
ads@sunset.net

ORD FERRY EL. = 97.7
Flow = 7,950
5-18-12 - Big Valley Divers Inspection and Spring Cleaning Of:

M & T Ranch, Sacramento River Intake Station.
For: Les Heringer, Mike Bolen

Ord Ferry 5-17-12 River Stage 97.75

- Screen #1 - Flanges and bolts tight. Air test = No leaks. Screen cleaned. No dents.
  6' from bottom of screen to sandy bottom.

- Screen #2 - Flanges and bolts tight. Air test = No leaks. Screen cleaned. No dents.
  5' From bottom of screen to sandy bottom.

- Screen #3 - Flanges and bolts checked. 2 Galled Stainless Steel bolts found. Bolts removed and replaced.
  Bolts tightened. Air test = Small leak at beginning of air burst. Determined leak is workable and not to be repaired but will monitor. Screen cleaned. Two dents found. Diver able to rebind wedge wire back to operational status and closed up small gap. 4' From bottom of screen to sandy bottom.

- Screen #4 - Flanges and bolts tight. Air test = No leaks. Screen cleaned. No dents.
  3' From bottom of screens to sandy bottom.