

v3 DRAFT Management Objectives and Actions for Salinas River Stream Maintenance

Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) is leading development of a long-term management plan (LTMP) for the Salinas River. The LTMP will include a comprehensive set of management objectives and actions for the Salinas River system, including the management of vegetation and channel stability.

Below is a draft of management objectives and actions focused on the Salinas River lagoon. These proposed objectives and actions were initially drafted (v1) based on the discussion at a Working Group meeting held on August 22, 2018. These draft measures were informed by SMP documentation, MCWRA input, and review by the Salinas River Management Unit Association and the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC). A revised version (v2) was provided for Salinas River LTMP Planning Group review during a meeting on September 14, 2018. The measure were subsequently revised to the current version (v3) based on feedback from the Planning Group.

These management objectives and actions are intended to be considered together with objectives and actions identified for other resource categories such as listed species and lagoon management.

Potential Management Objectives and Actions for the LTMP to Address Stream Maintenance Needs

Objectives are targets that will be sought to achieve a given goal. Objectives are typically quantitative or at least measurable. Objectives describe a specific desired outcome.

Actions are specific activities that will be carried out to meet the associated objectives. Actions describe how objectives can be achieved.

Objective SMP-1. Establish an equitable funding mechanism for implementing stream maintenance activities that allocates cost of maintenance and associated mitigation across all beneficiaries.

Action SMP-1. Collaborate with the Salinas Valley Basin Sustainable Groundwater Agency (GSA) in development of the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to ensure stream maintenance needs are incorporated in the GSP Measurable Objectives.

Objective SMP-2. Establish a geographic framework for the LTMP within which all river management planning and implementation will be considered, including—but not limited to—groundwater management, stream maintenance, conservation actions.

Action SMP-2. Expand the geographic extent of the SMP RMU designations to provide a planning framework for the entire management area that. RMU designations will reflect the



different management and/or conservation considerations of given reaches throughout the Salinas River watershed.

Objective SMP-3. Develop a practical and implementable (i.e., able to be permitted by the regulatory agencies) vegetation management program for the entire Salinas River main stem and select tributaries within the LTMP management area.

Action SMP-3. Work with the regulatory agencies to confirm information required to develop a vegetation management program that meets regulatory requirements. Once confirmed, identify funding opportunities to develop identified information.

Action SMP-4. Conduct a site visit with members of each regulatory agency, discussing the key vegetation management needs, identifying differences between each RMU, and how the river is a dynamic system, with changing vegetation characteristics reflecting the amount of water in the basin (either as a result of reservoir operation or by water year type).

Action SMP-5. Collaborate with organizations and agencies conducting vegetation management throughout the Salinas River watershed (including in San Luis Obispo County) on a cohesive approach to vegetation management, focused on invasive plant management.

Action SMP-6. Compile and organize information on vegetation management into a program document. Include an analysis of how the vegetation management program will affect regulated natural resources and water quality.

Action SMP-7. Develop a mitigation strategy that minimizes the short-term adverse impacts of a management action and takes into account the long-term benefits of those actions on regulated resources, ecological processes, and flood risk reduction.

Action SMP-8. Conduct research to inform what is the “natural” state of the Salinas River, particularly after removal of extensive stands of invasive vegetation, including how sandbars shift during high flows. Use the results of the research to inform adaptive management under the vegetation management program.

Action SMP-9. Conduct outreach to landowners along the Salinas River mainstem and select tributaries to educate them on the benefits of the vegetation management program and increase participation.

Action SMP-13. Consider development of a suite of best management practices that would help avoid and minimize impacts on sensitive resources, and in some cases, provide guidance on appropriate mitigation (e.g., establishment of vegetated buffers agricultural fields and the river).

Action SMP-14. Continue the current option of coordinated mitigation led by one or more agencies on behalf of multiple landowners.

Objective SMP-4. Develop a floodwater management program focused on reducing erosion and flooding.

Action SMP-10. Investigate the potential for flow attenuation by retaining floodflows upstream of the Lagoon during storm events greater than a 5-year return interval. Investigation should consider establishment or enhancement of on- or off-channel groundwater percolation zones for

percolation of floodwater into the groundwater basin, and the reintroduction of floodplains. For off-channel sites, investigation should also consider the potential adverse effects of retaining surface flows, such as introduction of weed seed to new sites, degradation or loss of topsoil, restrictions on producing food crops following flooding, and changing the chemistry of flooded soils.

Action SMP-11. Include guidance on managing debris, both natural (e.g., fallen trees) and man-made (e.g., shopping carts, telephone poles, tires), to enhance in-channel habitat conditions and improve flow capacity.

Action SMP-12. Develop a suite of voluntary bioengineered bank stabilization designs and accompanying guidance on the appropriate use of each design that considers site conditions and constraints. Guidance will include information if hydraulic analysis is necessary for each design. Designs will be applicable to a range of conditions encountered within the management area.

Objective SMP-5. Protect and restore sensitive habitats.