United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Scoping Report

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation Supplemental Watershed Plan

Sonoma County, California

November 2021

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1. Introduction

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), with the Sonoma County Water Agency (hereafter referred to as "Sonoma Water") as the project sponsor, is developing a Rehabilitation Supplemental Watershed Plan for the Matanzas Creek Dam in Sonoma County, California. Development of the plan and project construction is authorized by the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law [PL] 83-566).

NRCS, as the lead federal agency, is initiating scoping under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to inform the development of a Supplemental Watershed Plan and Environmental Assessment (Plan-EA).

The Plan-EA will comply with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, which require an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with federal projects and actions. The purpose of the Plan-EA is to develop and analyze the effects of watershed project plan alternatives to the natural and human environment.

1.1. Scoping Goals and Objectives

Scoping is the integral first step of the NEPA process. It is an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action (40 CFR Part 1501.7). The objectives of the scoping process are to:

- Engage interested parties and the general public in the early identification of concerns, potential impacts, and possible alternative actions;
- Determine the scope and the significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the Plan-EA;
- Identify potentially significant issues related to the proposed action, as well as identifying and eliminating issues that are not significant or that have been covered by prior environmental review;
- Identify the scope of issues to be addressed and integrate analyses required by other environmental laws (e.g., Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act); and
- Identify technical studies needed to adequately address potential impacts of the project.

2. Scoping Process

2.1. Schedule

The following dates outline the milestones for the scoping announcement and activities that occurred in preparation for the formal 30-day scoping comment period. The scoping comment period opened on March 29, 2021, and closed on April 30, 2021.

- November 17, 2020: Kick-off meeting with the NRCS and sponsor project team
- **March 29, 2021: Opening of formal public comment period**; flyers with meeting details were mailed to agencies, stakeholders, tribal contacts, and landowners within 1 mile of the dam.

- March 31, 2021: Notice was published in *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*
- April 13, 2021: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in conformance with restrictions issued by the Sonoma County Health Officer, public scoping meetings were held virtually; an agency and stakeholder meeting was held in the afternoon, and a public webinar meeting was held in the evening.
- **April 30, 2021: Close of formal public comment period**

Public scoping notice materials are included as Appendix A.

2.2. Public Meetings

A public scoping meeting for agencies and stakeholders was held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, from 2 to 3 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting consisted of a presentation of the PL 83-566 program, the project purpose and need, and an introduction to the NEPA process; presenters included staff from Sonoma Water (Aaron Fulton), the NRCS (Ernesto De La Riva) and Jones and DeMille Engineering (Jenna Jorgensen and Ricky Anderson). There were 16 attendees from agencies and stakeholders, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Santa Rosa City, the EPA, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Permit Sonoma, and Sonoma County.

A public scoping meeting for a broader audience was held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar. The same meeting presentation was shared. There were three public attendees.

The meeting presentation slides are attached as Appendix B. The meeting attendance lists are attached as Appendix C.

3. Comments

The formal open public comment period was from March 29 to April 30, 2021.

Comments could be submitted by email, mail, phone, or website. Comments were received from four commenters during the public comment period; the EPA provided comments on May 12. The comments are included as Appendix D.

4. Summary of Identified Issues

The following list summarizes the comments and concerns that were expressed during the scoping process:

- Project financing (would parcel taxes increase?)
- Agency coordination (compliance with Fish and Game Code section 1602)
- Potential impacts to individuals or habitat of numerous wildlife species
- Creation or enhancement of wildlife habitat
- Available water supply
- Public acquisition of waste material
- Rehabilitation and revegetation of the project area
- Noise impacts from project implementation
- Risk of dam failure and design need
- Sedimentation/siltation impacts

- Listed species and migratory birds
- Air quality
- Environmental Justice
- Tribal consultation

All comments submitted will be given full consideration for applicability to the project scope; however, not all of the comments and concerns expressed are relevant to the analysis of the Proposed Action. Those comments that are relevant will be carried forward in the environmental analysis.

Appendix A. Public Meeting Notice Documents

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

(2015.5 C.C.P.)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

County of Sonoma

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the county aforesaid: I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the printer of The Press Democrat, a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published DAILY IN THE City of Santa Rosa, County of Sonoma; and which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of the County of Sonoma, State of California, under the date of November 29, 1951, Case number 34831, that the notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy (set in type not smaller than nonpareil), has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates to wit:

The Press Democrat - Legal Notices

3/31 - 3/31/2021

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Santa Rosa, California, on

3/31/2021

This space for County clerk's Filing Stamp

Proof of Publication of

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation Public Meeting Notice

Project Information

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water), with the assistance of the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), is considering alterations to the Matanzas Creek Dam to bring the structure into compliance with current NRCS design criteria. Matanzas Creek Dam was designed and constructed under the Central Sonoma Watershed Work Plan that was approved by Congress in 1958. Alterations to bring the dam into compliance with current NRCS criteria will require a supplement to the 1958 Plan, which was implemented with assistance from the USDA Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS).

The project team will hold a preliminary public scoping meeting to provide information about the proposed project and to solicit comments. At this time, we are requesting comments on the project to identify issues and resource concerns. **Written comments are due within 30 days, post-marked by April 30, 2021.**

Preliminary Public Scoping Meeting:

The public is invited to attend, discuss, and comment during the following public scoping meeting:

Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021
Time: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Place: Online at zoom.us
Meeting ID: 915 9994 8880
Call-in Number: (346) 248-7799

How to Submit a Comment:

Comments may be submitted with one of the following methods, or during the public scoping meeting. Comments must be received by **April 30, 2021.**

Web: https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/
Email: jenna.j@jonesanddemille.com
Mail: Jones & DeMille Engineering
Attn: Jenna Jorgensen
1535 S. 100 W., Richfield, UT 84701
Phone: (435) 896-8266

83812 – Pub Mar 31, 2021 1ti.

The Press Democrat 5/14/19

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation Supplemental Watershed Plan
Sonoma County, California

Agency/Stakeholder Notice - Fact Sheet

Project Information

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The NRCS will assist Sonoma Water in preparing a supplemental watershed project plan and environmental document, which will be combined into a single document, called the Supplemental Plan-ED. The Supplemental Plan-ED will be prepared to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Technical studies are currently being conducted, with a Draft Plan-ED anticipated in the spring of 2022.

Additional information can be found at the project website: https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/

Questions and comments can be directed to:

Web: https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/

Email: jenna.j@jonesanddemille.com

Mail: Jones & DeMille Engineering
Attn: Jenna Jorgensen
1535 S. 100 W., Richfield, UT 84701

Phone: (435) 896-8266

Preliminary Scoping Meeting

Agencies and stakeholders who may have interest or involvement in the project are invited to attend a virtual meeting:

Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Place: Online at zoom.us

Meeting ID: **918 7470 0293**

Call-in Number: **(346) 248-7799**

Project Area Overview

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation Supplemental Watershed Plan
Sonoma County, California

Public Notice - Fact Sheet

Project Information

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water), with the assistance of the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), is considering alterations to the Matanzas Creek Dam to bring the structure into compliance with current NRCS design criteria. Matanzas Creek Dam was designed and constructed under the Central Sonoma Watershed Work Plan that was approved by Congress in 1958. Alterations to bring the dam into compliance with current NRCS criteria will require a supplement to the 1958 Plan, which was implemented with assistance from the USDA Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS).

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At this time, we are requesting comments on the project to identify issues and resource sensitivities. Written comments can be submitted during the open period starting March 29, 2021, and ending on April 30, 2021.

Questions and comments can be directed to:

Web: https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/

Email: jenna.j@jonesanddemille.com

Mail: Jones & DeMille Engineering
Attn: Jenna Jorgensen
1535 S. 100 W., Richfield, UT 84701

Phone: (435) 896-8266

Preliminary Scoping Meeting

Those members of the public who may have interest or involvement in the project are invited to attend a virtual meeting:

Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Time: 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Place: Online at zoom.us

Meeting ID: **915 9994 8880**

Call-in Number: **(346) 248-7799**

Project Area Overview

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

March 2021

Jones & DeMille Engineering

Appendix B. Scoping Meeting Presentation Slides

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation
- Preliminary Scoping Meeting -

Sponsor: Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water)

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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Welcome and Introductions

Sponsor – Sonoma Water

Aaron Fulton – Project Manager

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Ernesto De La Riva – State Watershed Engineer

Jones & DeMille Engineering

Darin Robinson – Project Manager

Jenna Jorgensen – Planning Lead

Ricky Anderson – Water Resources Engineering Lead

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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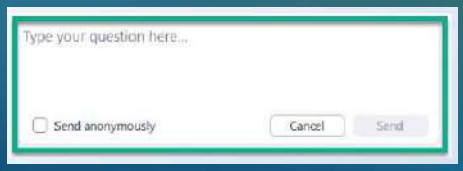
To submit a question:

Click on the Q&A button at the bottom of the screen

Type your question in the Q&A window



Website:
https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/

PL-566 Program Overview

Public Law 83-566; the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954, as amended

General Purposes

- Preventing damage from erosion, floodwater, and sediment
- Furthering conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water
- Furthering conservation and proper utilization of land

PL-566 Program Overview

Authorized Purposes

★ **Watershed structure rehabilitation** ★

Flood prevention (flood damage reduction)

Watershed protection

Public recreation

Public fish and wildlife

Agricultural water management

Municipal and industrial water supply

Water quality management

Purpose and Need

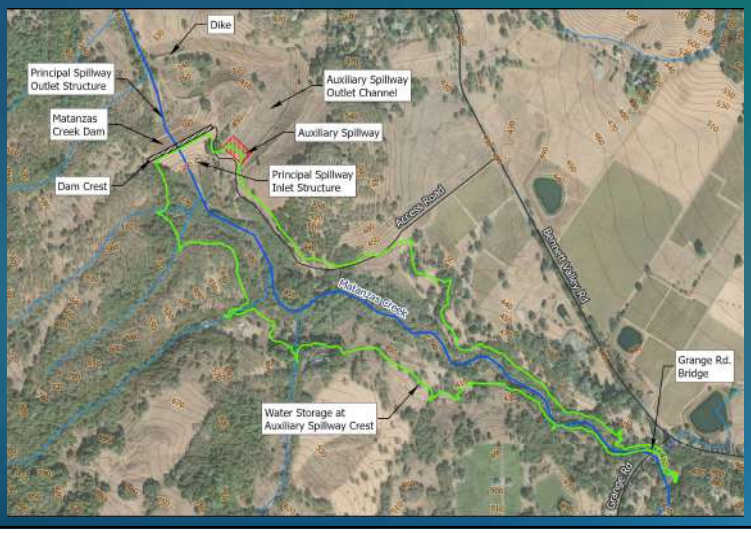
Purpose: Preserve and increase flood protection downstream of Matanzas Creek Dam.

Need: Bring the dam and spillway facilities into compliance with federal standards.

Matanzas Creek Dam History

- Constructed in 1964 as part of Central Sonoma Watershed PL-566 project
- Flood protection for Santa Rosa and Sonoma County
- Controls/reduces peak flows and flooding along Matanzas Creek and Santa Rosa Creek

Matanzas Creek Dam Facility Overview

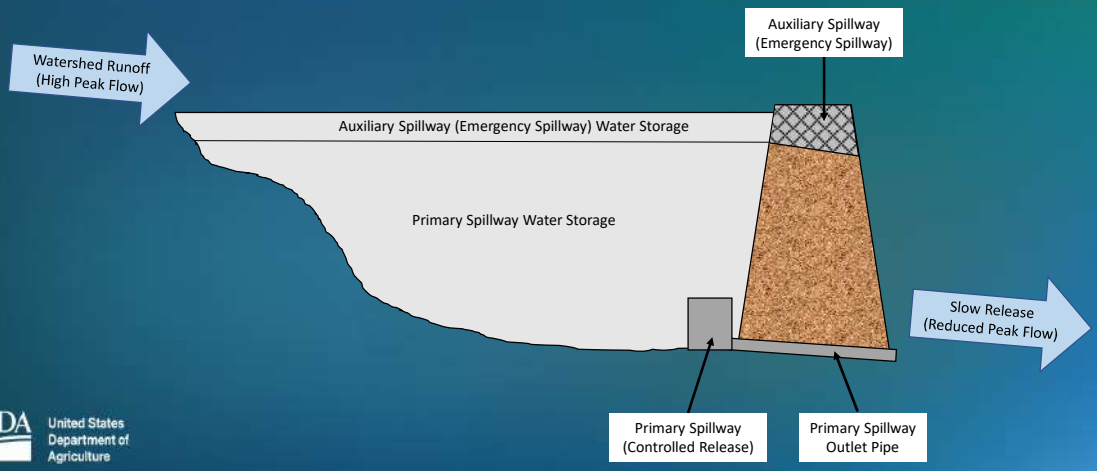


Matanzas Creek Dam – 2005 Flood Event

Sonoma Water

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation

Detention Basin Function Overview



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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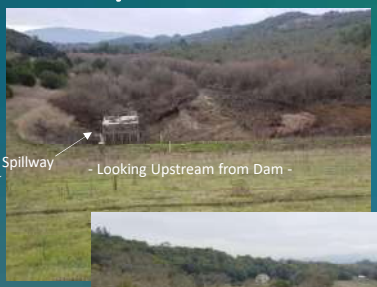
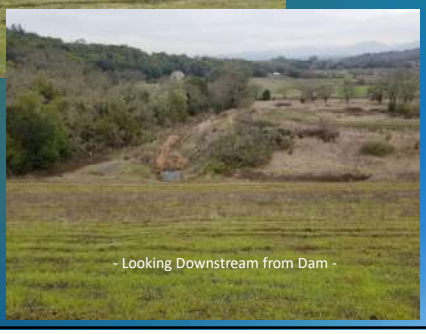
Sonoma Water

Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation

Matanzas Creek Dam Facility Photos





USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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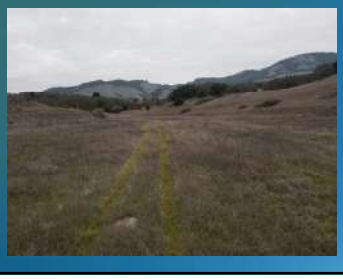
Matanzas Creek Dam Facility Photos

Looking at upstream face of dam

Looking across auxiliary spillway

Looking at downstream face of dam

Looking down auxiliary spillway



Rehabilitation Concepts being Considered

1. Increase storage
   - Removal of sediment, debris, etc.
   - Raise the auxiliary spillway and dam elevation (increased water surface elevations)
2. Modify spillways
   - Increase capacity (release rate) of principal spillway (increased flows in downstream channel)
   - Increase efficiency of auxiliary spillway (increase crest elevation but hold dam crest elevation)
3. Combination of the concepts above

Purpose of this Planning Phase

Federal funds = NEPA

(National Environmental Policy Act)

*Federal lands and federal permits also invoke NEPA requirements

State-level compliance efforts (CEQA, permitting) will follow

NEPA aims to:

1. Consider environmental consequences
2. Inform the public

40 CFR 1501.9 - Scoping

"Agencies shall use an early and open process to determine the scope of issues for analysis . . ."

17

Issues to consider

Air Quality

Cultural Resources

Water Resources

Land Uses

Visual Resources

Policy and Regulation

Economics

Wildlife

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Alternatives to Consider

PL-566 Standard Alternatives (for comparison):

1. Rehabilitation (30% design)
2. Non-Structural
3. Federal Decommissioning
4. No Federal Action

Questions to identify the scope:

- Are there concerns with the possible outcomes?
- What are the most important environmental concerns?
- Is there any controversy?
- What other environmental laws apply?
- When does the decision need to be made?

Schedule

Public scoping comment period:
March 29 – April 30, 2021 (32 days)

Draft Plan-ED/30% Design: 45 days (estimated Spring 2022)

Final Plan-ED & Decision: estimated Fall 2022

Comments

Online: https://matanzascreekdamrehab.com/

Email: comment@matanzascreekdamrehab.com

Call: Jenna Jorgensen @ (435) 896-8266

Mail: Jenna Jorgensen
Jones and DeMille Engineering
1535 S. 100 W., Richfield, UT 84701

Appendix C. Attendee Lists

Name in Zoom	Entity	Meetings attended
Jon Stead	AECOM	Agency
Seth Gentzler	AECOM	Agency and Public
Craig Weightman	CDFW	Agency
Jessie Maxfield	CDFW	Agency
Eric Larson	CDFW	Agency
Ryan Watanabe	CDFW	Agency
Claire Myers	City of Santa Rosa	Agency
Steve Brady	City of Santa Rosa	Agency
Andy Zellinger	EPA	Agency
Darin Robinson	JDE	Agency and Public
Jenna Jorgensen	JDE	Agency and Public
Ricky Anderson	JDE	Agency and Public
Valerie Quinto	Sonoma Resource Conservation District	Agency
Carlos Velasquez	NRCS	Agency and Public
Darren Holguin	NRCS	Agency
Ernesto De La Riva	NRCS	Agency and Public
Julia Grim	NRCS	Agency and Public
Steve Hill	NRCS	Agency and Public
Andrew Loganbill	NRCS Petaluma Field Office	Agency
John Mack	Permit Sonoma	Agency
Oriana Hart	Permit Sonoma	Agency
Elise Howard	City of Santa Rosa	Agency
Flannery Banks	City of Santa Rosa	Agency
Sean McNeil	City of Santa Rosa	Agency
Aaron Fulton	SCWA	Agency and Public
Anne Crealock	SCWA	Agency and Public
Barry Dugan	SCWA	Agency and Public
Carlos Diaz	SCWA	Agency and Public
Jessica Martini-Lamb	SCWA	Agency and Public
Kent Gylfe	SCWA	Agency and Public
Susan Haydon	SCWA	Agency and Public
Robert Pennington	Permit Sonoma	Agency
Caryl Hart	Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District	Agency
Bert Whitaker	Sonoma County Regional Parks	Agency
Craig Harrison		Public
Daniel Derdula		Public
Kevin Cooper		Public

Appendix D. Comments

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
1	Bill Pisenti Jr.	Financing	Is there going to be another parcel tax to finance this project? I already have $800 plus in parcel taxes already so, I don't need any more.	An important part of the watershed plan is an economic analysis that considers the costs for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the project; the analysis will be disclosed in the Plan-EA and made available for public review. As a federal dam rehabilitation project funded under PL-566, the USDA-NRCS will consider financial assistance for a portion of the construction costs. An estimate of Sonoma Water's construction cost share will be disclosed in the Plan-EA. Sonoma Water's financing will be determined separate from the NEPA process.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
2	CDFW (in chat during meeting)	Agency coordination	Just a reminder that Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that requires any person, state or local governmental agency, or public utility to notify CDFW prior to beginning any activity that may do one or more of the following: • Divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake; • Change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake; • Use material from any river, stream, or lake; or • Deposit or dispose of material into any river, stream, or lake.	This requirement will be addressed during the design phase. Permits for any activities that impact jurisdictional areas will be acquired by Sonoma Water.
3	Craig Harrison	Wildlife impacts	My purpose in providing these comments is to alert you to the existence of at least five aquatic or riparian species in the Matanzas Creek watershed that are identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species under federal or state law, or both. I hope that your activities will avoid adversely affecting them directly or through habitat modifications.	Listed and special status species will be addressed as a part of the NEPA and CEQA evaluation processes. Informal and formal consultations with relevant agencies, including permit applications and determination of mitigation, will be completed as needed. Specifically, NRCS will consult with USFWS regarding potential effects to species listed under federal law. Sonoma Water will ensure special status species identified under state law are evaluated for potential effects from the project alternatives.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
4	Craig Harrison	Wildlife impacts	This includes controlling invasive species such as bull frogs.	Invasive species will be addressed in the Plan-EA as they relate to the project area and project activities. The Plan-EA will identify the presence of invasive species, the potential for invasive species to spread, and measure that will be taken to prevent potential spread.
5	Craig Harrison	Wildlife habitat	Perhaps more important, I hope that there may be ways that your project can enhance habitat for rare and endangered species. I suggested on the April 13 call that it would be helpful to keep some water in the reservoir year-round, as I believe was once was the case.	NRCS TR-210-60 – *Earth Dams and Reservoirs* outlines the design criteria for earth dams and associated spillways. Since Matanzas Creek Dam was designed as a flood detention basin and is not permitted for joint use, it must be drained within 10 days to meet the required criteria per TR-210-60. There is no extra storage capacity available for a year-round water pool; the entire available storage capacity is necessary for flood detention. Draining of the reservoir is critical to providing downstream flood protection. Although Matanzas Creek Dam once operated with a reservoir pool, the practice was discontinued in 2006 as part of the Matanzas Creek Detention Reservoir Sediment Removal Project when it was determined that there is not adequate storage capacity for this practice.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
6	Craig Harrison	Available water supply	As wildland fires increase (the Nuns Fire burned in Bennett Valley in October 2017), having additional water supplies to fight fires is an advantage to our community.	See the response to comment #5. Providing water for emergency use is beyond the primary purpose of the dam and evaluation for such is outside the scope of this project.

7	Craig Harrison	Wildlife habitat	The Matanzas Creek watershed is relatively undisturbed compared to many other areas in Sonoma County. I am attaching four reports and letters, prepared for other purposes, that provide helpful background for your assessment of the species in this area. First, a biological assessment for 3803 Matanzas Creek Lane (on Matanzas Creek) prepared by Darren Wiemeyer provides much information on the biological resources in this area. He found that Matanzas Creek and its riparian corridor provides good refuge habitat for amphibians and reptiles, and identified five rare species that are found in this watershed: California giant salamander (special concern); foothill yellow-legged frog (candidate threatened); red-legged frog (federal threatened); red-bellied newt (special concern); and California freshwater shrimp (federal endangered). I have found a dead California giant salamander on the road near my home at 4953 Sonoma Mountain Road, which runs along the South fork of Matanzas Creek. I have also identified on my property over the years many red-bellied newts and one yellow-legged frog. A letter from California Department of Fish and Wildlife dated March 17, 2021 (especially protection of biotic species, pp. 9-11) and a letter from NOAA dated February 26, 2021 provide some good current information on Sonoma County, including water, rare species, and habitat issues. Finally, a Sonoma Land Trust baseline documentation report for the Drake Family for 7400 Bennett Valley Road provides good information on plant communities in the watershed.	Effects to protected species will be evaluated for each alternative within the Plan-EA. It is standard practice for the NRCS to identify the potential for protected species to be present in the project area and avoid impacts whenever possible. If impacts cannot be avoided, measures will be taken to minimize any potential effects and then mitigate for those effects if they are significant.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
8	Craig Harrison	Wildlife habitat	The piecemeal diminution of aquatic habitat is why the species that live in this habitat are listed as threatened, endangered, or are being considered for listing. A factor the California Department of Fish and Wildlife considers in listing a Species of Special Concern is when they occur in small, isolated populations or in fragmented habitat, and are threatened by further isolation and population reduction. That is the situation in the Matanzas Creek watershed, and it is vital to preserve this habitat to avoid further fragmentation. Preserving year-round water flows, summer water flows, and avoiding elevated water temperatures are important to these creatures.	See the response to comment #5. Providing stored water for habitat use is beyond the primary purpose of the dam and evaluation for such is outside the scope of this project.
9	Craig Harrison	Wildlife habitat	There was a time when river otters were common in the reservoir behind the dam. It would be nice to create such a reservoir again.	See the response to comment #5 providing stored water for habitat use is beyond the primary purpose of the dam and evaluation for such is outside the scope of this project.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
10	Edmund B MacDonald Jr.	Public acquisition of waste material	(5525 Bennett Valley Road) I own the above referenced property, an historic ranch of 475 acres. It lies in Sonoma County, California directly across from what will be the Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation project on Bennett Valley Road. I would be willing to purchase excavated dirt from your project in order to create a long berm (as much as 500' long for a berm 3' to 4' high) to partially shield my residence and property from noisy road noise and create a safety barrier protecting me from dangerous cars. I would open an entry onto my property directly across from the dam project site exit so Sonoma Water dump trucks could easily offload the soil onto my property. I would then distribute the soil from there to create the berm. Please contact me if this might work to the advantage of your project and be otherwise possible.	Thank you for the inquiry. This proposal will be considered during the final design phase and you may be contacted.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
11	Daniel Derdula	Wildlife habitat	Even though it's not a "natural" landscape per se, it's a unique ecosystem and is well populated. It's an oasis for wildlife in the area. It also protects some amazing heritage oaks. So as far as concerns, the issue of habitat protection/restoration is my main one. I assume that the study and planning phase will take these issues into consideration and I assume you will be consulting with local experts. The dam and reservoir area are home to many species including an active mountain lion population which is collared and tracked. I hope the county has data to provide on their territory. If not there is an expert who has given lectures to local residents on co-existing with the big cats in our area. His name escapes me at the moment but I can get his contact info to you if needed.	Wildlife habitat will be considered in the NEPA and/or CEQA process. Effects to local species and their habitats, including heritage oaks and mountain lions, will be evaluated for each alternative within the Plan-EA. The information you provided is informative and will receive consideration as effects are analyzed. It is standard practice for the NRCS to identify the potential for protected species to be present in the project area and avoid any effects whenever possible. If effects cannot be avoided, measures will be taken to minimize any potential effects and then mitigate for those effects if they are significant.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
12	Daniel Derdula	Rehabilitation	Also, I know that the county planted the oaks and willows which I assume was meant as a step towards restoration, but they have never been cared for maintained. I do hope that the new proposals will include plans for tree planting and re-establishing of native plants, especially wildflowers to support bee and insect populations. Certainly the CA Native Plant Society would be a great partner.	Rehabilitation will be included in the project description and analyzed for each alternative within the Plan-EA. Existing vegetation will be inventoried and assessed for effects from the project. NRCS makes every effort to preserve native vegetation and make improvements that are within the scope of the project. A revegetation plan will be developed and tied directly to the selected design alternative. The revegetation plan will follow standard recommendations obtained through consultation with state and local agencies and replacement of riparian/bank vegetation will occur at a greater than 1:1 ratio.
13	Daniel Derdula	Noise	There's one issue that isn't of immediate concern but when the project is finally approved and construction starts can affect local residents and that is noise. Some years ago (maybe 10?) the county dredged the reservoir and spread the silt the whole length of the auxiliary spillway. This involved 5 or 6 graders operating nonstop 8 hrs a day for several months! The noise of beeping equipment was absolutely terrible and almost caused us to sell our property. So just something to be aware of as that phase approaches.	Noise effects will be evaluated in the NEPA and/or CEQA process. Noise generated from project activities is a required consideration under CEQA and will receive a full analysis to identify measures that can be taken to reduce the effects. The analysis will be disclosed in the Plan-EA that is provided to the public for review.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
14	Daniel Derdula	Dam failure and design need	given that the water level has never (in the past 20 years) reached even close to the level of the auxiliary spillway, are there actually concerns about dam failure? I appreciated the explanations given during the meeting but I'm curious about how well the dam was monitored over the years by the county and how accurate the data and assumptions are heading into a redesign.	The dam is being evaluated to current criteria outlined in NRCS TR-210-60 – *Earth Dams and Reservoirs*. The evaluation of the dam will identify the purpose and need for the project in order to bring the dam into compliance with TR-210-60. Documentation of the evaluation and dam failure risk will be addressed in the NEPA process. The dam is regularly inspected as required by CA Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD). Also, this effort includes topographic surveys, hydrology and hydraulics modeling, and a geologic/geotechnical investigation, the results of which are used to assess the risk of dam failure with a high degree of confidence.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
15	EPA	Sedimentation/ Siltation	Discuss sediment loading and how the project will or will not contribute to watershed goals to reduce sediment loading in Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed. Quantify project impacts to sediment loading as necessary. The EPA recommends reviewing the total maximum daily loads for sedimentation/siltation for the Laguna de Santa Rosa wetland area in Sonoma County, CA (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/2014_16state_ir_reports/03306.shtml). The Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed is located within the 8-digit Hydrologic Unit 18010110 (Russian Watershed), and occupies a total area of 255.5 square miles (163,528 acres), including the city of Santa Rosa. The 2015 EPA analysis suggests that the sediment loading rate to Matanzas Reservoir is higher than the loading rate for the Santa Rosa Creek watershed in general. The additional load in this area is likely associated with channel incision and gully processes. Consider project alternatives which help reduce erosion and further sedimentation to this watershed.	Thank you for the information; it will be included in the evaluation of potential impacts of alternatives. Sedimentation into the reservoir is a critical component of design, and the potential impacts of the alternatives on downstream streambank stability, bank erosion, and sediment yield to Laguna de Santa Rosa will also be considered to meet sedimentation criteria per TR-210-60. Sedimentation considerations will be addressed and documented in the NEPA process.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
16	EPA	Listed species and migratory birds	EPA recommends the document identify all petitioned and listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that might occur within the project area. Quantify which species or critical habitat might be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by each alternative. We understand the project may include potential river restoration, flow and channel modifications, changes to wetlands hydrology, and potential habitat fragmentation. The EPA recommends engaging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service as early in the analysis as possible to ensure that the proposed alternatives account for the following: • Species habitat requirements, including Steelhead Oncorhynchus mykiss; • Migratory Bird Treaty Act compliance; and • Protection from invasive species.	These recommendations will be implemented in the NEPA process. It is standard practice for the NRCS to identify the potential for protected species and migratory birds to be present in the project area and avoid impacts whenever possible. If effects cannot be avoided, measures will be identified in consultation with federal and state regulatory agencies to minimize any potential effects and then mitigate for those effects if they are significant.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
17	EPA	Air Quality	The project would take place in a federal nonattainment area for ozone and fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$). A portion of Sonoma County is designated as non-attainment for multiple National Ambient Air Quality Standards pollutants. This includes 2021 designation of marginal non-attainment for the 8-Hour Ozone (2008), marginal non-attainment for the 8-hour Ozone (2015), and moderate non-attainment for $PM_{2.5}$ (2006). EPA's General Conformity Rule, established under Section 176(c)(4) of the Clean Air Act, provides a specific process for ensuring that federal actions do not interfere with a state's plans to attain or maintain NAAQS. For any criteria pollutants in the air basin of the project area where the air quality status is in nonattainment or attainment – maintenance, complete a general conformity applicability analysis (i.e., a comparison of direct and indirect emissions for each alternative with de minimis thresholds of 40 CFR 93.153). We recommend including a draft general conformity determination in the Draft EA to fulfill the public participation requirements of 40 CFR 93.156.	The recommended analysis will be completed and disclosed in the Plan-EA.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
18	EPA	Air Quality	We encourage the USDA-NRCS to consider opportunities to reduce dust and exhaust emissions during the project. In general, we recommend committing to the best available emissions control technologies for project equipment. We encourage the USDA-NRCS to create and append a Fugitive Dust Control Plan as part of the Draft EA and clearly list all measures to be taken to reduce fugitive dust and exhaust emissions. Creating a clear plan before construction begins will best manage and minimize fugitive dust. (Additional details provided in letter).	Potential air quality impacts of alternatives considered will be evaluated in the NEPA/CEQA process. Dust control and exhaust reduction measures will be incorporated into the action alternatives to reduce emissions.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
19	EPA	Environmental Justice	The EPA recommends that the Draft EA identify whether the proposed project may disproportionately and adversely affect low income or minority populations in the surrounding area and discuss appropriate mitigation measures for any adverse impacts. The EPA recommends the following for development of the EJ analysis: • Consider Promising Practices for EJ Methodologies in NEPA Reviews when developing the EJ section of the Draft EA. • Include a description of the area of potential impact used for the environmental justice impact analysis and provide the source of demographic information. • Consider using the EPA's EJ Screen tool found at: https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/. • Include opportunities for incorporating public input to promote context sensitive design, especially in minority and low-income communities. • Survey and inventory cultural resources which might be impacted by the project and describe the results in the Draft EA. • Document the process used for community involvement and communication, including all measures to specifically reach out to low-income and minority communities. Include an analysis of results achieved by this outreach.	EJ analysis will be conducted using the EPA's EJ Screen tool, the California Environmental Protection Agency's CalEnviroScreen tool, and the scoping process; analysis will be disclosed in the Plan-EA. Tribal, cultural, and historic resources will be evaluated through a formal consultation process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the results will be summarized in the Plan-EA. All public scoping documents will be appended to the Plan-EA. Cultural resource inventories will be conducted in accordance with state and national requirements.

#	Commenter	Comment Topic	Comment	Response
20	EPA	Consultation with Tribal Governments	The EPA recommends beginning consultation with tribal governments near the project area by sending letters to tribal governments to determine their interest in consulting on the Matanzas Creek Dam Rehabilitation Project. The EPA recommends that the Draft EA describe the outcome of tribal consultation between the USDA-NRCS and tribal governments of Sonoma County including, but not limited to: • Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California • Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians • Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria • Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria • Lytton Rancheria of California • Manchester Band of Pomo Indians of the Manchester Rancheria	The NRCS is in the process of initiating tribal consultation with interested federally recognized and other California tribes as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission. The list of tribes provided by EPA will also be considered. A summary of tribal consultation as well as consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) will be included in the Draft EA and may be ongoing. The Project Sponsor (Sonoma Water) is responsible for completing tribal consultation according to CEQA and AB 52.