MINUTE ITEM
This Calendar Item No. 23
was approved as Minute Item
No. 22 by the State Lands
Commission by a vote of 2
to 0 at its 6/30/87
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

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CONSIDERATION OF STAFF REVIEW
SACRAMENTO RIVER CARRYING CAPACITY STUDY

BACKGROUND:

On July 12, 1984, the State Lands Commission imposed a moratorium on marina development along the Sacramento River within Sacramento and Yolo Counties, until a comprehensive study of the cumulative effect of existing and proposed marina development on the River's carrying capacity was completed ("River Study").

The purpose of the River Study was to assess the marina carrying capacity of the Sacramento River from River Mile (RM) 44.8, approximately one and one-half miles below Freeport, up river to RM 76.0, just above the Sacramento/Sutter County line. Carrying capacity is defined as "the extent to which the Sacramento River and its adjacent banks can carry marina development without significant negative impact on other human, ecological or water quality benefits associated with the river system". The River Study area is shown on the location map attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

A principal focus of the River Study was to develop criteria which could be used by the Commission and local agencies to evaluate what level of marina development could be accommodated within the River Study area in balance with competing uses for the river and with resource protection. The River Study was to provide the Commission, other public agencies, and prospective developers with a common information base to: (a) use in their respective planning efforts; (b) assess specific project proposals in a more comprehensive way; and (c) incorporate relevant information into future project and site specific environmental impact reports.

(ADDED 06/25/87)

The River Study was conducted, and a report of the results of the study prepared, with staff by Riparian Systems and Meyer Resources, Inc., in association with consultants Taylor Miller, David Storm, and Susan Anderson. At its meeting on September 25, 1986, the Commission accepted the River Study report and directed staff to develop a plan for the implementation of the findings and recommendations contained in the report. The moratorium on marina development imposed by the Commission in 1984 remains in effect.

CURRENT SITUATION

There are currently four applications on file with the State Lands Commission for new or expanded marina facilities. Applications from Riverbank, DaRosa and Metro Marina are incomplete at this time. The application from Virgin Sturgeon for additional dockage is complete. The staff has also received applications for tie-up facilities from Sacramento Steam Navigation and Mr. O'Leary, which are still incomplete.

While these are the only applications on file at this time, the staff has been contacted by other parties who have expressed an interest in marina construction within the River Study area. These are at the Captain's Table, Raley's Landing, and Light 29. The proposed Lighthouse Marina is within the study area, but will be constructed offstream.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Staff has conducted public agency workshops and public hearings to review the report's recommendations. Government agencies have shared the Commission's concerns regarding development in the River Study area, but have generally indicated a lack of funding and manpower to implement and enforce many of the measures recommended in the report.

Public response to the report has varied from a strong environmental emphasis, stressing the need for strict regulatory controls over future river activities, to a more moderate, flexible approach urged by the development community.

(ADDED 06/25/87)

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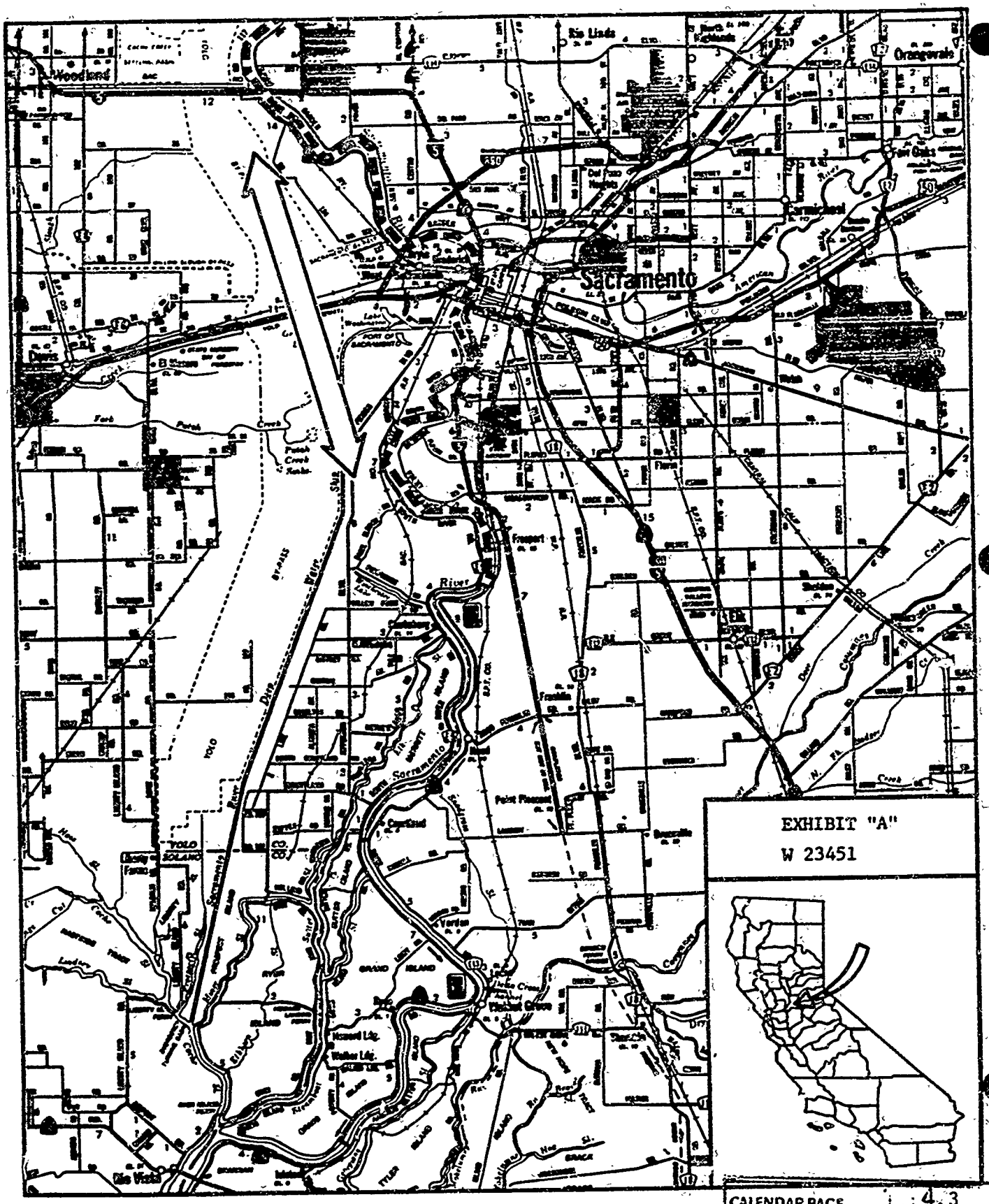
The Sacramento River Study has provided valuable insights into the carrying capacity of this area. It has also identified potentially adverse cumulative impacts, uses which will increasingly conflict with one another, and a myriad of responsible agencies with authority that is overlapping and fragmented. Greater levels of coordination will be required between these agencies to manage the river in a manner which will optimize use and enjoyment by all interest groups.

While the River Study has identified issues that projects in the study area must address, the range of issues and the spread of jurisdictional responsibility is too great to provide confidence today in the establishment of any absolute standards. Rather, there is a need to place these issues in real world context to see what trade-offs emerge and what conflicts arise. Such testing of the concepts outlined in the River Study can only take place in the context of staff evaluations and public hearing processes on a series of permit applications. The experience of handling permit applications in light of the information contained in the River Study should provide the SLC with a better grasp on that which is truly possible.

This can be accomplished by handling development proposals on a case-by-case basis. To assure that the information in the River Study is put to use, the staff is working on an implementation program. Such a program would have four major components: (1) a checklist supplementing current application forms to identify project information which must be submitted; (2) a supplementary CEQA Initial Study Checklist for projects within the study area; (3) consideration of the recommendations made by the River Study in the evaluation of any project within the study area; and (4) ongoing coordination with other affected agencies to establish common ground and enhance cooperative planning and permitting efforts. Staff is expecting to have this program prepared for Commission consideration within the next several months.

AB 884: N/A.

EXHIBIT "A" Location Map.



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