

TERRA LAND GROUP, LLC

March 5, 2018

VIA EMAIL

City of Manteca General Plan Advisory Committee
1001 W. Center Street
Manteca, CA 95337
% Beth Thompson, DeNovo Planning Group
(bthompson@denovoplanning.com)

Re: March 5, 2018 Manteca General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda Items 4. General Plan Update: Economic Development and Fiscal Discussion; 5. Review of Public Comment Items from Previous Meeting: a) Schools, and b) Flooding and wastewater.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Martin Harris and I am an authorized representative for Terra Land Group, LLC ("TLG"). TLG owns several properties located in Manteca and Lathrop. As an organization, TLG devotes many of its efforts to ensuring the safety of our community by urging local and state authorities to pursue flood mitigation efforts when moving forward with new development projects.

As recent flooding in Houston, Texas has demonstrated, unrestrained development without consideration for flood impacts can have serious consequences. In particular, as more and more development projects continue to move forward, TLG has put forth a regular effort to ensure that local authorities are aware of the need for cumulative environmental review and analysis of all hydrology-related impacts associated with all currently existing and foreseeable development projects affecting drainage in and along the Lower San Joaquin River Basin and especially the areas affecting the urban and rural areas of Manteca and Lathrop.

This is especially important when you consider that Ben Ritchie, principal for DeNovo Planning Group and consultant for the City of Manteca General Plan Update, stated at the first General Plan Workshop that the General Plan process would be self-mitigating as new information was received and processed.

With that in mind, TLG presents new information in the form of TLG's public review and comments submitted in response to the recently released January 2018 San Joaquin River Basin Lower San Joaquin River, CA FINAL Integrated Interim Feasibility Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report ("LSJRFS"). (**See Enclosure 1**)

For some time now, TLG has sent various copies of our letters to the Manteca City Council ("MCC") and other authorities expressing public concern related to development in the floodplain and the need to examine any potential impacts related to San Joaquin River (and tributary) flow deficiencies and the potential for upstream and downstream channel flow stage increases due to drainage patterns affected by grade, levee location, and other environmental considerations. (**See Enclosure 1** which contains a list of

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letters and related items in its own Enclosure 1. This list contains information that TLG believes is important to consider as part of any public hearing meant to determine the adequacy of prior environmental review(s) and the potential need for further study and environmental impact analysis.)

These drainage concerns gain relevance when you consider that on February 27, 2018, the Manteca Planning Commission approved a Master Plan Amendment and Parcel Map Extension for the Family Entertainment Zone-Great Wolf Development Project as presented to the Commission per Agenda Item 6.1.

TLG believes this is especially important when you consider that the previous Family Entertainment Zone Great Wolf Lodge EIR dated October 2015 was conducted and certified prior to determining the RD 17 tie back levee improvement alternatives that were chosen and carried forward for further study in association with SB5 adequate progress findings approved by MCC on July 5, 2016, Agenda item C1. In addition, the EIR was carried forward prior to any and all City of Manteca (and General Plan Advisory Committee) approvals necessary in conjunction with the articles incorporated in and any and all changes made as included in the May 14, 2016 Manteca SB5 Safety Element amendment. **(See Enclosures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7)** Through careful study, the letters, maps, and other items included in the enclosures attached can offer significant details relating to what appears to be very significant drainage impacts affecting the Lower San Joaquin River Drainage system.

In brief, the enclosures attached describe recently discovered information as detailed in letters from TLG to various agencies involved in flood control in the RD 17 and Manteca/Lathrop region. These letters provide supporting evidence while building an overall context and framework for TLG's and other members of the public's concerns regarding any current and/or future development projects that continue to be approved with the potential to affect hydrology in the urban and rural areas of Lathrop and Manteca. The significant details contained in the enclosed letters offer a framework which leads TLG to believe that the complex nature of the potential flood issues involved may be too difficult for the public to adequately understand without the benefit of a comprehensive and cumulative CEQA and NEPA Environmental Review and Analysis.

Further, TLG believes that it is important to mention that the LSJRFS may not fully consider the potential for any and all flood and other hydrology related impacts involved due to RD 17's plan to pursue a phased strategy of levee improvements and other Federally assisted improvements in order to meet SB 5 requirements. (See page 3-40 of the LSJRFS).

Most concerning is TLG's belief that it is the intent of local authorities to assign a project sponsor to seek Section 408 approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allowing expansion and/or relocation of the RD 17 dry land cross levee system to a location south of the point that Paradise Cut and the San Joaquin River converge. **(See Enclosure 1)**

It is in this way that TLG believes the City of Manteca intends to move forward with plans to gain the approvals necessary to construct critical but currently unidentified public services infrastructure supporting:

- (i) Storm water drainage,
- (ii) Treated and untreated wastewater spray field discharge,
- (iii) Groundwater sustainability through percolation and recharges, and

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(iv) Traffic circulation

as necessary to accommodate the rapid pace of development affecting both the urban and rural developing and non-developing areas of our community.

For this reason, TLG urges the Manteca GPAC members to make recommended findings that require the City of Manteca to conduct additional environmental impact study and analysis that fully evaluates impacts to Reclamation Districts Nos. 2094, 2075, 2096, and 2064 in conjunction with any and all SB5-related modifications (including relocation, extension, or expansion) to the RD 17 levee system to be considered. As a result of this action, the Manteca GPAC can serve the best interests of every member of our community by promoting a higher level of flood protection for the entire RD 17 levee system area by providing a mechanism that will allow appropriate mitigation measures to be identified, funded, and put in place promoting the reduction of any associated impacts for any and all developing and non-developing urban and rural properties that may be affected.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Martin Harris
for Terra Land Group, LLC

MH/cm

Enclosure:

1. February 26, 2018 letter from TLG to San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency. *Please access this Enclosure by downloading the file through this Dropbox link:*
https://www.dropbox.com/s/8scnhemfwexbkr9/2018-02-26_LTR_SJAFCA_LSJR%20EIR_PublicComm_wEncl.pdf?dl=0
2. Weekend edition April 14th and 15th, 2012 Manteca Bulletin Newspaper Article titled: "Mining Gold From Sewer Land."
3. July 15, 2013 Manteca Bulletin Newspaper Article titled: "Farmland Key to Great Wolf."
4. 2012 San Joaquin County Assessor's parcel map, Book 241, Page 07
5. Drake Hagland recommended **Alternative 2A** Study Map for RD 17 Tie Back Levee as approved by MCC on August 16, 2016.
6. Figure 7: Reclamation District 2094 and Levee System (Source: May 14, 2016 Manteca SB5 Safety Element Amendment)
7. Table B-5: San Joaquin Basin Management Actions included with the 2017 Refined SSIA Portfolio: specifically, Item 214.

cc:

Manteca City Council, % Lisa Blackmon, City Clerk (lblackmon@ci.manteca.ca.us)

Mining gold from sewer land

Resort, business park & entertainment may sprout up there

By DENNIS WYATT
MANTECA (CALIF.) BULLETIN

Extending Milo Candini Drive to Airport Way as well as Daniels Street to McKinley Avenue is the next step in Manteca's effort to turn sewer - or more precisely sewer plant land - into gold.

The goal is to open up 100-plus acres of city-owned land along the 120 Bypass for commercial entertainment and

retail development and additional

land north of the Big League Dreams for the creation of a business park.

It would essentially take land now worth several thousand dollars an acre and make it worth well over \$50,000 an acre with some land such as where the Great Wolf resort is being proposed worth as much as \$100,000 an acre.

ECONOMY

Manteca Mayor Willie Weatherford has indicated he would like to see the street extensions that include infrastructure such as sewer, water, and storm pipe move forward as quickly as possible. He believes that will mean hiring outside consultants to handle preliminary work that would normally be handled by staff.

He said staffing cutbacks

due to general fund budget pressures means it would be prudent to obtain outside help to keep the road extensions moving forward. Such work could be funded by the growth fees collected for public infrastructure improvements.

The mayor noted that the increased value of the land could generate the money needed to pay for the street

SEE ECONOMY, PAGE A8



Milo Candini Drive will eventually be extended to Yosemite Avenue to open up city-owned land to development as a business park.

HIME ROMERO/
The Bulletin

ECONOMY

FROM PAGE A1

extensions and other infrastructure improvements. Essentially, a private concern would buy a parcel to develop retail or a business park and that money paid could finance the public improvements. The bottom line for the city would be increased property and sales tax as well as more jobs.

In essence, the wastewater treatment plan could become an engine that powers economic development for Manteca.

Manteca already has converted close to 80 acres of former wastewater treatment plant land into economic engines in the form of the Stadium Retail Center and the Big League Dreams sports complex.

The city is currently in negotiations with McWhinney Development of Colorado. The firm is willing to invest upwards of \$200 million to build a 400- to 600-room Great Wolf Lodge resort hotel complete with a 70,000-square-foot indoor water park along with a conference center.

Great Wolf - should it be built - is projected to have 45 salaried management positions, 370 full-time hourly positions and an annual payroll of almost \$10 million.

The city has already inked a deal with the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors to develop a South County administrative services center on former wastewater treatment plant land on the northeast corner of Milo Candini Drive and Daniels Street in the future.

Making the city's long-term economic strategy to convert land at the treatment plant into prime real estate given its proximity to the 120 Bypass and Airport Way work was a deal closed this past summer to buy 417 acres deep in the rural farm country to the south of the city.

The \$3.4 million purchase of the farmland at 23000 South Hays Road near the San Joaquin River roughly over a mile west of the T-inter-

section of Airport Way and West Ripon Road was paid through sewer connection fees assessed on new development. It comes out to a purchase price of \$7,529 per acre.

Acquisition of the land will enable the city to:

- create spray fields to pipe untreated agricultural waste water from Eckert's for disposal.

- use those same spray fields to actively go after securing food processors that seek locations to expand near crop production in the San Joaquin Valley that by some estimates could add between 5,000 and 1,000 jobs.

- the relocation of spray fields plus the transporting of sewer sludge for drying to the Hays Road location will eliminate any traces of odors connected with the present wastewater treatment plant.

- to replace wetlands that are part of more than 100 acres of city-owned wastewater treatment property west of Costco and Big League Dreams to allow the land to be converted into prime commercial uses.

- create the first wetland mitigation bank in San Joaquin County working in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers that they can then sell easements to other jurisdictions in the county for the replacement of wetlands when needed within their communities.

- develop its own green waste composting facility.

- secure a site for a possible regional wastewater treatment plant 50 years or more into the future.

Future wetlands

Some 50 acres of the 417 acre site purchased by the city is considered ideal for an easy conversion into wetlands. That would mean for every acre of wetland that Manteca must compensate for, the city would save \$124,500 per acre through the Hays site instead of accessing a wetland mitigation bank.

At the same time that same land west of Costco that is part of the wastewater treatment plant site is valued at \$100,000 an acre even in today's market due to its proximity to a major

interchange, freeway frontage, and adjacent economic activity. By that measuring stick, Manteca would be earning a return of \$92,500 per acre if and when they go to sell the land west of Costco. And on land that is actual wetlands, between savings for replacement wetlands and a potential sale at today's prices, Manteca would come out \$217,000 an acre ahead.

The city would need to build a pipeline for the wastewater treatment plant to divert agricultural wastewater from Eckert's and other potential food processing plants to the proposed spray fields on Hays Road nearly three miles to the south.

The food processing strategy is a sharp departure from the last 30 plus years where the city avoided such operations like the plague since they gobbled up wastewater treatment plant capacity at the expensive of being able to serve homes. And because they are seasonal in nature they don't send waste water for treatment year round. Even so, the city could never commit the unused capacity during off season for other uses as it was reserved for Eckert's.

The shift to land disposable via spray fields a few years back for Eckert's changed all of that.

Agricultural water waste has nutrients in it that can play havoc with a treatment process balanced primarily for human waste. However those nutrients are conducive to growing many crops specifically grain crops used to feed livestock. Manteca has leased land at the wastewater treatment plant land disposal fields of treated wastewater and wastewater from Eckert's for years to a farmer growing feed.

This isn't the first time that the city has turned a sewer plant into an attractive use.

The Manteca Park Golf Course - the most successful municipal course in the Northern San Joaquin Valley based on rounds played - was built atop the old municipal dump and wastewater treatment plant.

Farmland key to Great Wolf

Resort could break ground in mid-2014 if it gets green light

Dennis Wyatt
dwyatt@mantecabulletin.com
July 15, 2013

Construction of the Great Wolf Lodge that represents upwards of a \$200 million private sector investment could start in the summer of 2014.

The construction timeline for the 400 to 600 room hotel with a 70,000-square-foot indoor water park plus conference center would take two years to complete. Ultimately, Great Wolf is projected to have a \$9.4 million annual payroll with 414 permanent jobs and 156 part-time jobs.

The construction timeline for the project that is still undergoing extensive financial analysis by both the investment firm of McWhinney Development and the City of Manteca is included in a report the City Council is reviewing Tuesday in relation to the status of 417 acres on Hays Road. A final decision on whether Great Wolf will proceed is not expected until at least November.

Manteca bought the farmland at 23000 Hays Road in June 2011 for \$3.4 million. That was the equivalent of \$7,529 an acre. The purchase of the farmland near the San Joaquin River roughly over a mile west of the T-intersection of Airport Way and West Ripon Road was paid for with sewer connection fees assessed on new development.

The land purchase actually cleared the way for the potential Great Wolf project envisioned on 30 acres of city-owned land west of Costco as well as the proposed 140-acre family entertainment zone.

The resort and entertainment zone would be located on property currently that is part of the municipal wastewater treatment plant. The Big League Dreams complex at one time was also part of the wastewater treatment plant's land bank.

The strategy was to eventually utilize the Hays Road for the disposal of agricultural waste and possibly other treated effluent to free up the 170 acres. The wastewater

treatment plant land has become increasingly more valuable as the 120 Bypass corridors develops. At one point three years ago, commercial real estate experts contacted by the Bulletin said the land could eventually be valued by as much as \$100,000 an acre or almost 12 times what Manteca paid for the Hays Road property.

The council during Tuesday's meeting will be informed of how the city is working to obtain regulatory permit approval to utilize the Hays Road property. The council will also be told of the timetable for a master plan for the Hays property as well as obtaining the right-of-way for a purple pipe to carry the discharge to the property.

The land will allow the:

- u creation of spray fields to pipe untreated agricultural waste water from Eckert's for disposal.

- u use of those same spray fields to actively go after securing food processors that seek locations to expand near crop production in the San Joaquin Valley that by some estimates could add between 500 and 1,000 jobs.

- u relocation of spray fields plus the possible transporting of sewer sludge for drying to the Hays Road location will to eliminate any traces of odors connected with the present wastewater treatment plant.

- u replacement of wetlands that are part of more than 100 acres of city-owned wastewater treatment property west of Costco and Big League Dreams to allow the land to be converted into prime commercial uses.

- u creation of the first wetland mitigation bank in San Joaquin County working in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers that they can they sell easements to other jurisdictions in the county for the replacement of wetlands when needed within their communities.

- u development of the city's own green waste composting facility.

- u securing of a site for a possible regional wastewater treatment plant 50 years or more into the future.

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San Joaquin County jurisdictions get inquires from an average of three firms a year that want to locate processing operations in the valley near farm production.

The council meets Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Civic Center, 1001 W. Center St.

To contact Dennis Wyatt, e-mail dwyatt@mantecabulletin.com

<http://www.mantecabulletin.com/archives/79604/>

POR. SECS. 14,15,22 & 23., T.2S. R.6E.

241-07

THIS MAP IS FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT FOR THE INTENT OF INTERPRETING LEGAL BOUNDARY RIGHTS, ZONING REGULATIONS AND/OR LEGALITY OF LAND DIVISION LAWS.



LEGEND:

⓪ Assessor's Parcel Numbers
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 Book Page Parcel
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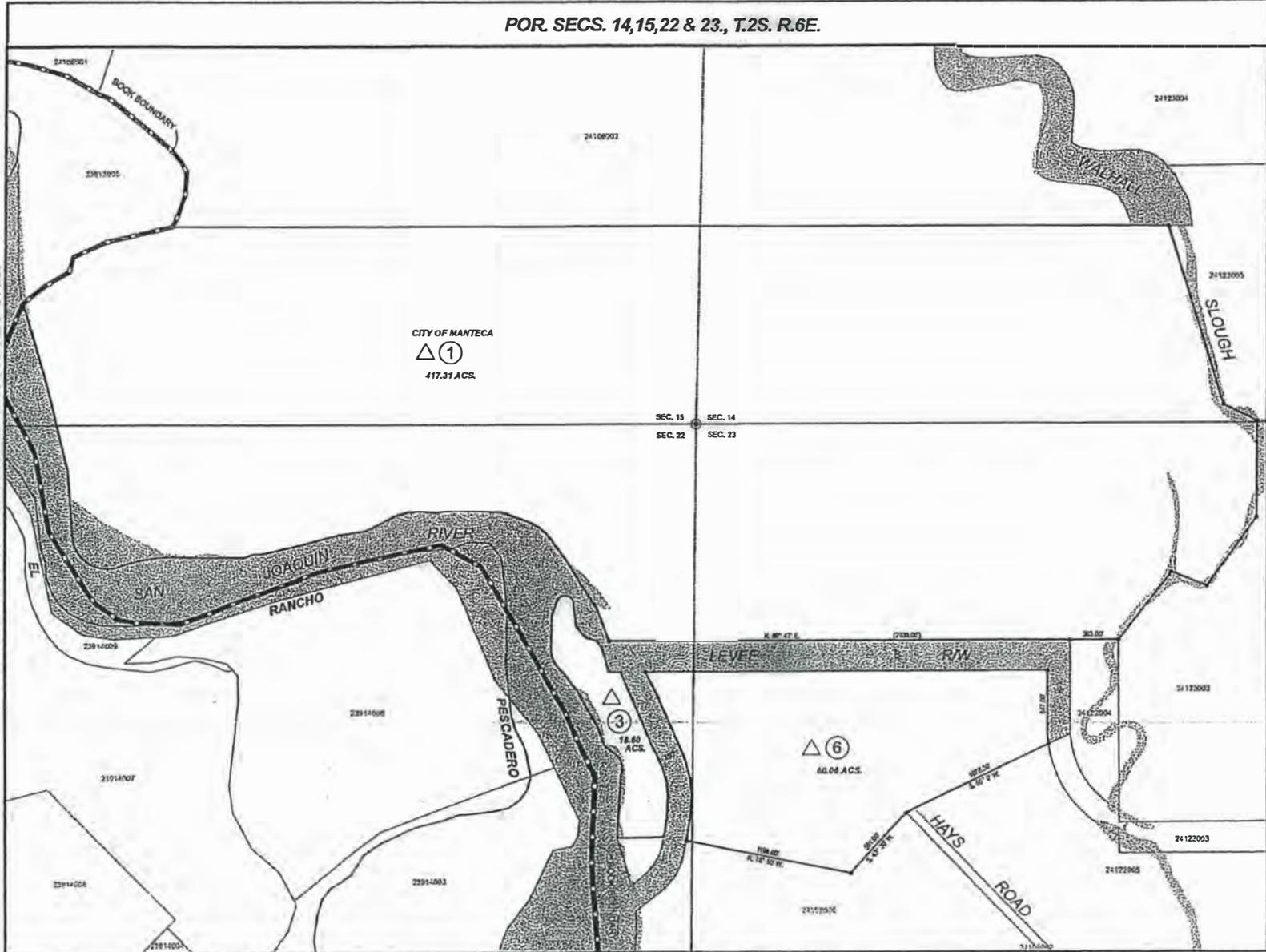
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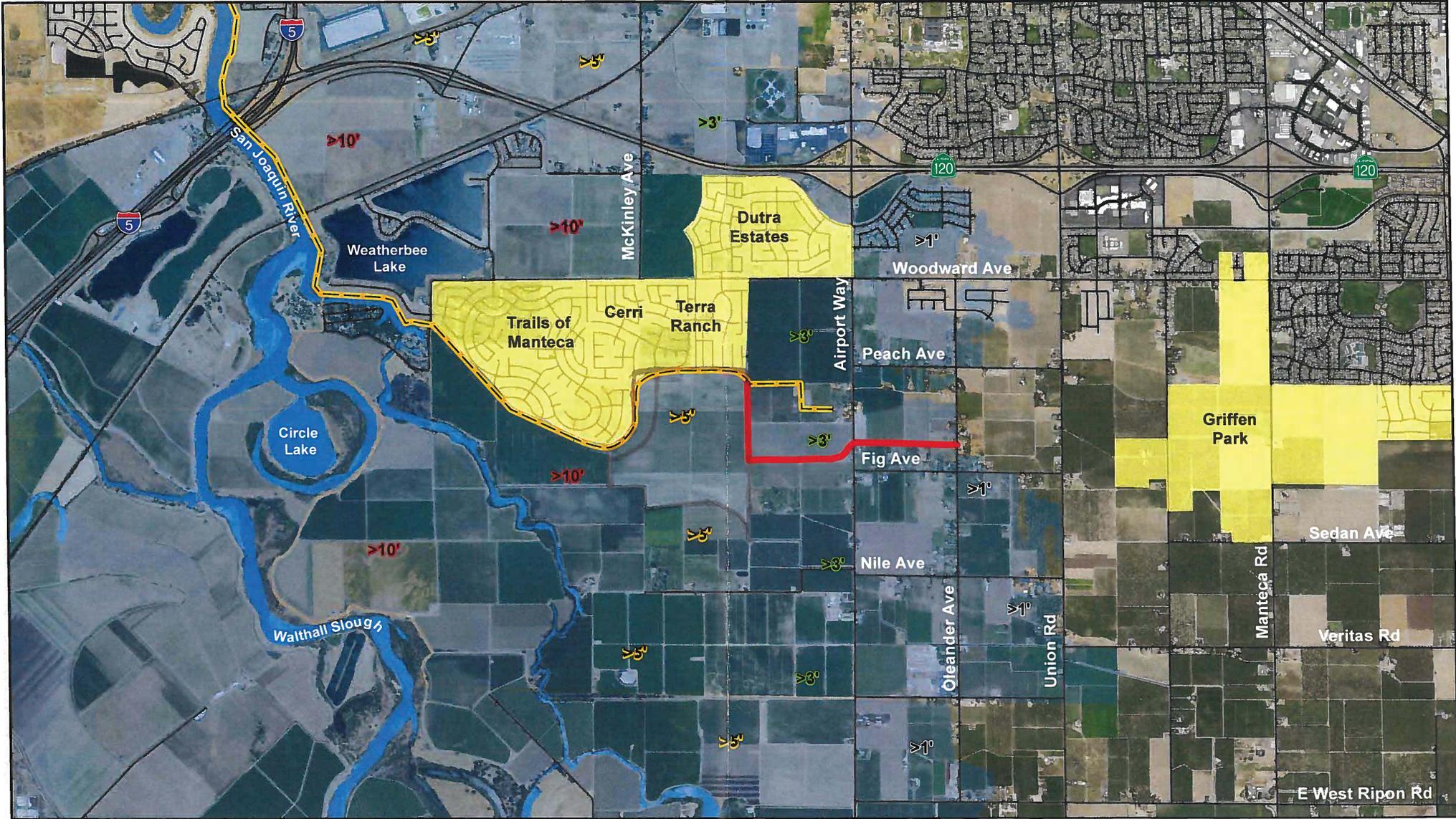
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BK. 241 PG. 07
 County of San Joaquin, CA

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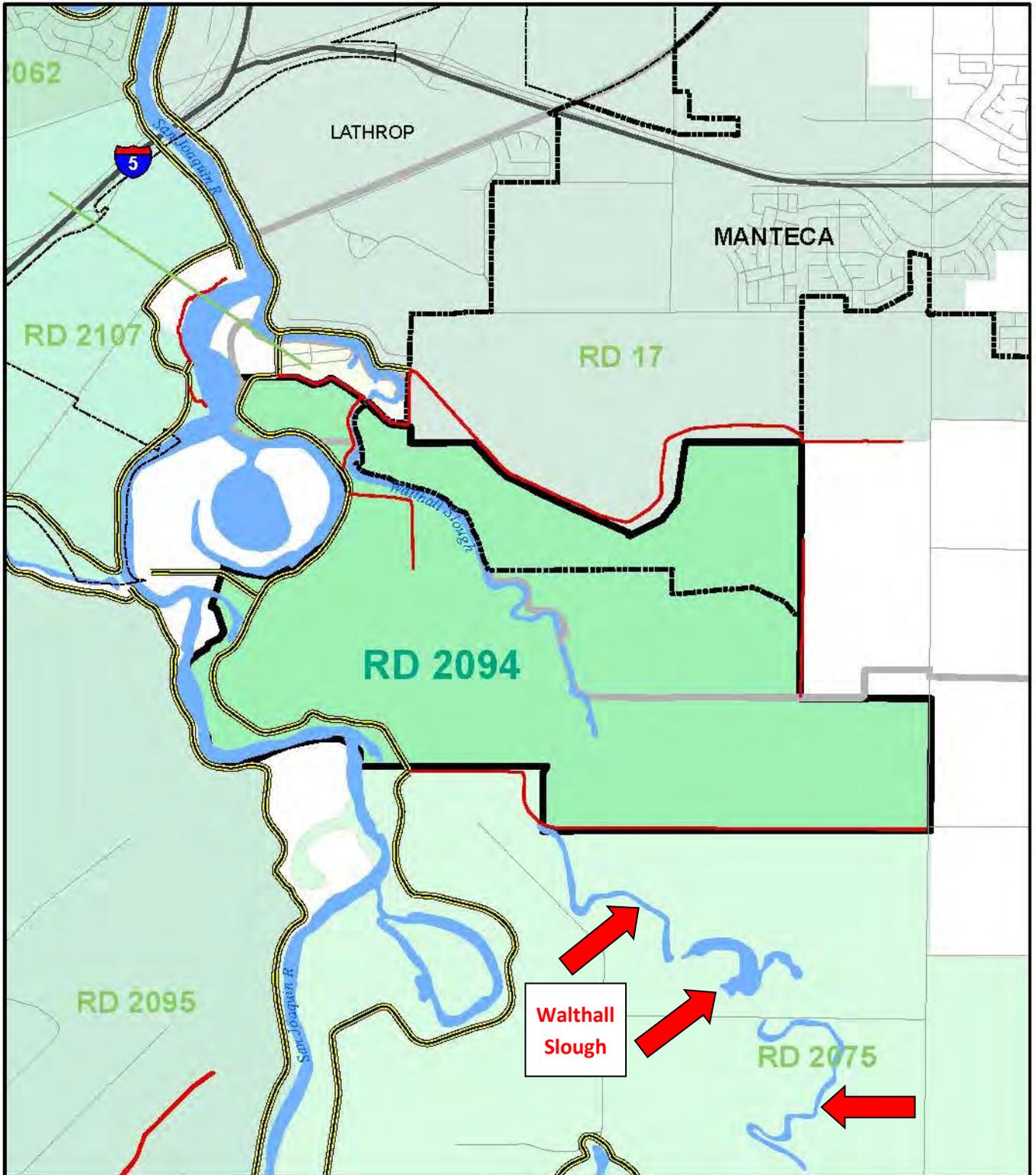
- Proposed Dryland Levee Alignment
- Existing RD17 Levee
- Planned Future Development



Sources: Esri Online Basemap,
 San Joaquin County
 Coordinate System: NAD 83
 State Plane California III FIPS
 Notes: This map was created for display
 and informational purposes only.

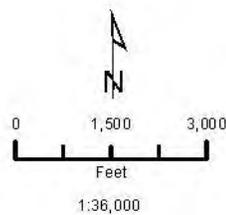
Project:
 Dryland Levee Alignments
 City of Manteca
 -Alternative 2A





Legend

-  Reclamation District 2094
-  City of Manteca
-  Other Cities
-  City of Manteca Sphere of Influence
-  State-Federal SPFC Levee
-  Non-SPFC Levee



MANTECA SB 5 SAFETY ELEMENT AMENDMENT

Figure 7: Reclamation District 2094 and Levee System

*Sources: California Department of Water Resources;
San Joaquin County, California. Map date: April 11, 2018.*

Table B-5. San Joaquin Basin Management Actions Included within the 2017 Refined SSIA Portfolio

#	Data Set Source	Lead Agency	Project Name	Project Description	Estimated Cost Provided by Source
214	RFMP	Reclamation District 2094	Reclamation District 2094 Improve Dryland Levees	<p>The dryland levee located on the south boundary of RD 2094 is lower and less reliable than the levees along the San Joaquin River and was overtopped in 1997 when RD 2075 flooded. This levee was originally constructed to protect RD 2075 in the event of a failure of a levee downstream (north) on the San Joaquin River. Furthermore, this cross levee is one of only two means of egress during a flood event. This project would improve this levee to protect RD 2094 from flooding in RD 2075, and would improve public safety.</p>	\$13,781,000