

PREFACE

Seven Oaks Dam was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which was completed in September 1999. The ownership of this project was turned over to the San Bernardino, Orange, and Riverside counties in October 2002.

About mid-way through the construction of the Seven Oaks Dam flood control project, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat (SBKR), which occupies the Santa Ana River downstream of the dam, in the Federal endangered species list. The listing prompted formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in order to evaluate the possible effects of the dam's design and flood control operation plan on the SBKR and their habitat. During this time, the Interim Plan entitled "Seven Oaks Dam Interim Water Control Plan Prior to and During the Section 7 Consultation Period," was implemented, which was approved by the Corps' South Pacific Division in May 1999, and finalized in January 2000. Since Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act prohibits the operation of the dam for its intended purpose of flood control during the consultation period, the Interim Plan's objectives were limited to dam safety and meeting the downstream water users' release requirements; however, due to the limited physical release capabilities of the dam, substantial incidental flood control benefits were still achieved during flood events.

The formal consultation with USFWS started in January 1998 and was concluded in the fall of 2002. In December 2002, the biological opinion was completed allowing official acceptance of the design document's water control plan as the final operation plan for Seven Oaks Dam, on the condition that the operation of the dam also include operation for sustaining the endangered species habitat. A discussion about "environmental operations" is included in section 7-05.h. A copy of the biological opinion has been included as part of this document as Exhibit J.

The San Bernardino County Flood Control District has the primary responsibility for the physical operation of the dam and the Orange County Public Facilities and Resources Department (OCPF&RD) will be mainly responsible for its regulation. The San Bernardino Flood Control District dam tenders reports to and receives instructions from the OCPF&RD water control managers. This manual was written to also reflect this arrangement. If a different working arrangement occurs at a later time, this document will be revised as necessary.

NOTICE TO USERS OF THIS MANUAL

Regulations specify that this Water Control Manual be published to loose-leaf form; and only those sections, or parts thereof, requiring changes will be revised and printed. Therefore, this copy should be preserved in good condition so that inserts can be made in order to keep the manual current.

EMERGENCY REGULATION ASSISTANCE PROCEDURES

In the event that unusual conditions arise, contact can be made by telephone to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District Office, Reservoir Regulations Section at (213) 452-3623. During non-flood periods the contact can be made during regular business hours (0730 - 1600 Monday through Friday), during flood-events the office is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.