

California's Wetland Organizations and Joint Ventures

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A number of California organizations and public/private partnerships ("joint ventures") focus on wetlands. Many of these are listed and briefly described in the two sections of this document:

- [Wetlands Organizations](#)
- [Joint Ventures](#)

For more information see the individual websites listed in this document.

Public agency involvement: State, federal and other public agencies are involved in wetlands policy and planning, including: the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California's Department of Water Resources and California's Natural Resources Agency. Wetlands-related websites for these agencies include:

- <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wetland/> (California Department of Fish and Wildlife)
- <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvpcp/> (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation)
- http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml and http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/instream_flow_s/ (State Water Resources Control Board)
- <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/> (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- <http://ceres.ca.gov/wetlands/> (California's Natural Resources Agency)
- http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/wetland_workgroup/ (California's Natural Resources Agency)
- <http://baydeltaconservationplan.com/Home.aspx> (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, California's Department of Water Resources and California's Natural Resources Agency)

Wetlands Organizations

California Legacy Project

<http://legacy.ca.gov/>

The California Legacy Project was a California Resources Agency initiative that involved a broad range of government agencies and citizen organizations. Working collaboratively, it developed a suite of tools and maps to help Californians make the important decisions about conserving and protecting the state's working lands and natural resources. Although the project ended in 2004, the archive is available online.

California (State) Wildlife Action Plan

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/swap/>

"California Wildlife: Conservation Challenges", prepared in 2005 by California's

Department of Fish and Game (now Department of Fish and Wildlife), is the state's Wildlife Action Plan, the comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy developed in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants Program. It identifies the California wildlife species and habitats, including wetland habitats, of greatest conservation need, describes major stressors affecting the state's native wildlife and habitats, and recommends actions to restore and conserve California's wildlife. The plan identifies special status species of plants and animals, many of which depend on wetland habitats. Growth and development, water management conflicts, invasive species, and climate change have major consequences for these species, ecosystems, and habitats across the state. Other stressors, such as pollution, urban or agricultural runoff, recreational pressures, or human disturbance, threaten native plants and animals in parts of California. The plan recommends better integration of wildlife conservation considerations into transportation planning, local and regional planning, land-use decision-making, working with cities and counties to secure sensitive habitats and key habitat linkages, and allocating sufficient water for ecosystem uses and wildlife needs. Specific recommendations for nine wildlife regions are presented.

California's Wetlands

<http://ceres.ca.gov/ceres/calweb/wetlands.html>

Wetlands support ecosystems vital for the survival of many fish, aquatic life forms, birds, and plants. Wetlands improve water quality, flood control, groundwater recharge, erosion control, maintain biological diversity, and provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Only ten percent of the wetlands that existed before European settlement and only five percent of all coastal wetlands remain in California. In response to the shrinking wetlands, government agencies have implemented legal use restrictions; acquired wetlands for protection, restoration and management; and implemented statewide wetland planning strategies and partnerships. These measures have gone far to protect the state's wetlands, but not all of them are subject to government authority, particularly those located on private lands, where recent Supreme Court decisions have reduced wetlands' protection. California has, therefore, prioritized increasing public-private partnerships to restore and manage wetlands on private lands.

California Wetlands Conservation Policy

<http://ceres.ca.gov/wetlands/policies/governor.html>

California's Governor signed the California Wetland Conservation Policy (Executive Order W-59-93) in August 1993. The policy coordinated statewide activities for wetland preservation and protection. The Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency work together in implementing the threefold policy goals:

- Ensure no overall net loss and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California in a manner that fosters creativity, stewardship, and respect for private property.

- Reduce procedural complexity in the administration of state and federal wetlands conservation programs.
- Encourage partnerships to make landowner incentive programs and cooperative planning efforts the primary focus of wetlands conservation and restoration. Statewide policy initiatives, geographically based regional strategies, and an interagency wetlands task force were established to direct and coordinate the administration and implementation of the policy.

California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup

http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/

The California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup's mission is to improve the monitoring and assessment of wetland and riparian resources by developing a comprehensive wetland monitoring plan for California and increasing coordination and cooperation among local, state, and federal agencies, tribes, and non-governmental organizations. The workgroup will review technical and policy aspects of wetland monitoring tool development, implementation and use of data to improve wetland management in California.

National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan

<http://www.fws.gov/policy/660fw4.html>

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for preparing the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan (NWPCP), authorized by the 1986 Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA). The NWPCP's ongoing program provides decision-making guidance on acquiring important, scarce and vulnerable wetlands and establishing other non-acquisition protection measure priorities. Section 301 of the EWRA requires the Secretary of the Interior to establish, periodically review, and revise a National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan that identifies federal and state acquisition priorities for various types of wetlands and wetland interests. The NWPCP is an ongoing program and continues to provide guidance for making decisions regarding wetland acquisition. The NWPCP applies only to wetlands that would be acquired by federal agencies and states using LWCF appropriations.

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

<http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/>

In California, the waterfowl habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement processes set in motion by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and other partnerships play key roles in setting wetland conservation priorities. Important regional wetland conservation efforts in California include:

- **California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program**
<https://www.wcb.ca.gov/programs/riparian.aspx>

The goals of the CRHCP, as noted in its enabling legislation, are to protect, preserve, restore and enhance riparian habitat throughout California. To achieve these goals the program has adopted the following seven objectives:

1. Assess the current amount and status of riparian habitat throughout the state
2. Identify those areas which are critical to the maintenance of California's riparian ecosystems.
3. Identify those areas which are in imminent danger of destruction or significant degradation.
4. Prioritize protection needs based on the significance of the site and potential loss or degradation of habitat.
5. Develop and fund project-specific strategies to protect, enhance, or restore significant riparian habitat.
6. Develop, administer, and fund a grants program for riparian habitat conservation.
7. Provide a focal point for statewide riparian habitat conservation efforts.

- **Delta Stewardship Council**

<http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/mission>

In November 2009, the California Legislature enacted SBX7 1 (Delta Reform Act), one of several bills passed at this time related to water supply reliability, ecosystem health, and the Delta. The Act, effective on Feb. 3, 2010, created the Delta Stewardship Council. California's Delta is the largest estuary on the West Coast and is the hub of the state's major water supply systems. It is inextricably linked to statewide issues that affect its ability to function in a healthy, sustainable way. The mission of the Delta Stewardship Council is to achieve the coequal goals. As stated in the CA Water code, "Coequal goals' means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place." (CA Water Code SS 85054)

- **Ecosystem Restoration on Agriculture lands (ERAL)**

<https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs/AgriculturalLands.aspx>

The Wildlife Conservation Board's agricultural program is formally known as the Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands (ERAL) program. The intent of the funding is to assist landowners in developing wildlife friendly practices on their properties that can be sustained and co-exist with agricultural operations. In California, a large number of wildlife species are dependent on privately owned agricultural lands for habitat. Agricultural lands can provide significant habitat and connectivity with protected wildlife areas. In many cases agricultural landowners are willing to integrate wildlife habitat benefits into the management and

operations of their properties, but lack the capital and/or expertise to implement these practices.

- **Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (IWCP)**
<https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs/Wetlands.aspx>

The Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (IWCP) was created to assist the Central Valley Joint Venture in its mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats. The CVJV, a partnership of twenty two public and private organizations and agencies, has identified through its implementation plan specific goals to increase populations of six bird groups: wintering waterfowl, breeding waterfowl, non-breeding shorebirds, breeding shorebirds, waterbirds, and breeding riparian songbirds. The IWCP has a wide range of options to accomplish these goals, including acquisitions of land or water for wetlands or wildlife friendly agriculture, acquisition of conservation easements, restoration of public or private lands, or enhancement of existing degraded habitats. In addition, the program will work toward providing long term reliable water for wetlands and winter-flooded agricultural lands.

- **Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project**
<http://www.scwrp.org>

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is a broad-based partnership, chaired by the Resources Agency and supported by the State Coastal Conservancy that has public agencies, non-profits, scientists, and local communities working cooperatively to acquire and restore rivers, streams, and wetlands in coastal southern California. The SCWRP's geographic scope is from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County to the international border with Mexico. Using a non-regulatory approach and an ecosystem perspective, SCWRP will work together to identify wetland acquisition and restoration priorities, prepare plans for these priority sites, pool funds to undertake these projects, implement priority plans, and oversee post-project maintenance and monitoring.

- **Suisun Marsh Protection Plan**
http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/laws_plans/plans/suisun_marsh.shtml

Suisun Marsh comprises approximately 85,000 acres of tidal marsh, managed wetlands, and waterways between San Francisco Bay and the Delta. It includes more than ten percent of California's remaining wetlands. Suisun Marsh plays an important role in providing wintering habitat for waterfowl, supports a diversity of plant communities, and provides habitats for a variety of fish and wildlife, including several rare and endangered species.

Conservation of Suisun Marsh is governed by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Suisun Marsh Protection Plan and

by the Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement between agencies with responsibilities in the marsh. The objectives of the Suisun Marsh Plan are to preserve and enhance the quality and diversity of the Suisun Marsh aquatic and wildlife habitats and to assure retention of upland areas adjacent to the Marsh in uses compatible with its protection.

In recent years, Suisun's tidal marshes were restored at Hill Slough and the Blacklock site and other restorations are being planned. A new Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation, and Restoration Plan is being prepared to carry out the Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement and update the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan.

Tulare Basin Wetland Association

<http://www.tbwa.org/>

The Tulare Basin Wetlands Association was founded to further the cause of wetlands conservation and habitat enhancement in those parts of Kern, Kings and Tulare Counties that were formerly defined as the Tulare Lake Basin.

Joint Ventures

Voluntary programs account for the vast majority of wetland gains. Local, state, and federal agencies, in partnership with conservation groups and private landowners, have worked together to develop and increase the capacity for voluntary conservation of California's wetlands. Most of this work has been accomplished through California's six habitat-based joint ventures.

Joint Ventures are public/private partnerships that work entirely through voluntary efforts. These joint ventures were originally developed to implement the North American waterfowl Management Plan, but have since expanded to conserve habitat for all avian species. Each Joint Venture has a planning document that guides its conservation efforts and identifies goals for habitat conservation. Wetland protection, restoration and enhancement play a prominent role in each Joint Venture's conservation work.

Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV)

www.centralvalleyjointventure.org

The CVJV brings together conservation organizations, public agencies, private landowners, and other partners interested in the conservation of Central Valley bird habitat. The mission of the CVJV is to California Outdoor Recreation Plan 2008 49 "work collaboratively through diverse partnerships to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats for waterfowl, shorebirds, water birds, and riparian songbirds, in accordance with conservation actions identified in the Joint Venture's Implementation Plan." The Plan was rewritten and updated in 2006, expanding it from its original focus on waterfowl to include six bird groups: wintering waterfowl, breeding

waterfowl, non-breeding shorebirds, breeding shorebirds, water birds, and breeding riparian songbirds.

Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV)

www.iwJV.org

The IWJV is a public/private partnership dedicated to the conservation of bird habitat in parts of 11 western states stretching from Canada to Mexico, including northeastern California. The mission of IWJV is to facilitate the long-term conservation of key avian habitat including planning, 50 California Outdoor Recreation Plan 2008 funding, and developing habitat projects that benefit all biological components of Intermountain ecosystems. The joint venture's implementation plan was rewritten in 2006. Important bird habitats it identifies in California include Ash Creek, Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, Sierra Valley, the Klamath Basin, Eagle Lake, Goose Lake, Lake Almanor, Honey Lake, and Mono Lake.

Pacific Coast Joint Venture (PCJV)

www.pcjv.org

The PCJV was established in 1991. The PCJV works primarily in 18 focus areas from northern California to British Columbia, Alaska, and Hawaii. The focus areas in northwestern California include key habitats for water birds at the Eel River Delta, Humboldt Bay, and Lakes Earl and Tolowa.

Riparian Habitat Joint Venture (RHJV)

www.rhJV.org

The vision of the RHJV is to restore, enhance, and protect a network of functioning riparian habitat across California to support the long-term viability of land birds and other species. A wide variety of other species of plants and animals will benefit through the protection of forests along the rivers, streams, and lakes. RHJV members' projects contribute significantly to restoration of riparian habitats, especially in the Central Valley. For example, River Partners, an RHJV partner, has restored over 6,000 acres of riparian habitat along the major rivers of California since 1998, and recently planted its millionth tree.

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture

www.sfbayjv.org

The San Francisco Bay Estuary is the nation's second largest and perhaps most biologically significant estuary on the Pacific coast. The SFBJV brings together public and private agencies, conservation groups, development interests, and others to restore wetlands and wildlife habitat in San Francisco Bay watersheds and along the Pacific coasts of San Mateo, Marin, and Sonoma counties. The goal of the SFBJV is to protect, restore, increase, and enhance all types of wetlands, riparian habitat, and associated uplands throughout the San Francisco Bay region to benefit birds, fish, and other

wildlife. SFBJV is accelerating the ambitious effort to restore San Francisco Bay, including high profile acquisitions and restorations of salt ponds and bayland pastures. Since 1996, SFBJV partners have protected, restored, or enhanced over 62,000 acres of wetlands, lakes, creeks, and adjacent uplands in the Bay area.

Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV)

<http://sonoranjv.org/>

The SJV bring together partners from both sides of the border to integrate the strategies, goals, and objectives of existing regional, national, and international bird conservation plans into a single, strategic effort that addresses the needs of our area. The Sonoran Joint Venture supports bird conservation in a number of different ways, primary through their annual Awards Program. Since 2001 the SJV has provided funds through this competitive program to nineteen organizations from the U.S. and Mexico.

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