



## News for Immediate Release

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### DWR and DFG Sign Fish Restoration Program

SACRAMENTO -- The California Departments of Water Resources (DWR) and Fish and Game (DFG) will develop a "Fish Restoration Program" in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh. The program goal will be to mitigate State Water Project (SWP) impacts on sensitive fish species in the Delta, a milestone for the west coast's most vital and diverse estuary and California's critical water-supply hub.

DWR Director Mark Cowin and DFG Director John McCamman signed the agreement on Oct. 18, 2010. The agreement is designed to enhance program coordination for improved Delta habitat and favorable conditions to benefit key native fish species, including the Delta smelt. An implementation schedule will be developed by DWR and DFG during the next 12 months.

"The signing of this agreement is a wonderful step for conservation in California," said McCamman. "It will mean that we can step up our restoration efforts for endangered Delta species."

"DWR and the SWP Contractors see this program as a vital effort to help heal and nurture the Delta ecosystem and benefit its native fish populations," said Cowin.

The program will create or restore fish habitat and include other activities with the intent to satisfy requirements in the 2008 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion for Delta Smelt; the 2009 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Biological Opinion for Salmonids; and DFG's Longfin Smelt Incidental Take Permit for SWP operations.

Expected to cost an estimated \$188 million over 10 years, funding will come from SWP Contractors, a group of 29 public water agencies with long-term contracts for purchase of SWP water.

Components of the plan may include:

- Creation or restoration of 8,000 acres of intertidal and associated subtidal habitat to benefit many fish species of concern
- Improvement of habitat and ecosystem support conditions for delta smelt
- Satisfying many of the restoration obligations of Biological Opinions for salmon
- Restoration of 800 acres of habitat for longfin smelt
- Satisfying restoration obligations of Biological Opinions for salmon including funding for Phase Two of the Battle Creek Restoration Project.

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*The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.*

*The Mission of the Department of Fish and Game is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.*