

Project Summary Sheet

Project Name: Vierra Unit Restoration

Tracking No: 3006

Location: San Joaquin River NWR
10 mi w/o Modesto

County: Stanislaus

Project Sponsor: Sacramento River Partners

Point of Contact: Tom Griggs, (530) 894-5401 Ext. 31, tgriggs@riverpartners.org

Co-applicant(s): None.

Assembly District 17

Senate District 12

Project Description (including size): The project is located on the west side of the San Joaquin River in and adjacent to former Reclamation District 2099. The District's federal levees and nearby local levees failed in the 1997 floods. The federal levees were repaired; the local levees were not. USFWS purchased the property and NRCS bought flood easements over these acres. The Corps made the area a Non-Structural Flood Control Protection Program and will breach the federal levees. The area is now administered by the USFWS. The proposed project will involve 511 acres. Levee breaches will be engineered and constructed to minimize erosion, allow water circulation, and minimize fish stranding; wetlands will be restored including grading, water control structures, and a pump and fish screen; riparian woodland will be restored by planting and three years of irrigation and weed control.

Flood Benefits: Federal levee breaching may not occur and USFWS may repair local levees to deal with fish stranding. Project would eliminate the need to repair the local levees and allow area to be opened for flood storage. Proponents claim benefits of lowered stages downstream and upstream, leading to unquantified flood damage reduction. Application cites 6- to 12-foot depths of entire 511 acres in 1997. Entrapment of sediment will also occur, helping to maintain capacity of the main stream.

Agricultural Benefits: None claimed. Entire area is a wildlife refuge.

Agricultural Land Conserved, if any: None.

Wildlife Benefits: Conversion of abandoned agricultural fields, now growing exotic weeds, to 200 acres of wetlands and 311 acres of riparian forest. Advantages of project: Elimination of low areas acting as fish traps; forage for anadromous fish and spawning beds for Sacramento splittail; foraging and resting area for ducks, geese, egrets, sandhill cranes, shorebirds; breeding

grounds for song sparrows and blue grosbeaks; habitat for woodland species including riparian brush rabbit and valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

Wildlife Habitat Conserved, acres, if any: 511

Total area conserved, acres: 511

Other Benefits: Habitat for other species not mentioned, particularly other riparian-obligate birds and neo-tropical migratory birds; fits in with larger (3,166 acre) project that includes it; fits into and enhances wildlife corridor; adds to particularly good riparian forest, largest on the San Joaquin River; creates opportunity for hunting and bird-watching.

Total Cost: \$ 1,755,542

FPCP Cost: \$ 1,755,542

Funding Partners and Share of Cost: USFWS supplying the property.