



News for Immediate Release

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DWR to Fund Rice Farm Project Aimed at Stopping Delta Subsidence

SACRAMENTO - The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today announced plans to fund a rice cultivation project that could stop, or even reverse, sinking land in the Delta.

Studies show that rice farming has the potential to stop, and possibly reverse the sinking of land (subsidence) as well as to store carbon as organic matter. Economic benefits to the local area through commercial rice farming will also be part of the evaluation. The project will be made possible via Proposition 84 flood control activity funds.

Local public agencies meeting the criteria defined in California Water Code Section 12311(a) are invited to apply for the funding. A Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) is available online at:
http://www.dfm.water.ca.gov/dsmo/docs/Final_Draft_PSP_Rice.pdf

The minimum size of the rice growing plot is 300 acres and the required average depth of peat underlying the site is seven feet. It is the department's intent to have one funding recipient for a multi-year project lasting up to eight years.

A public meeting has been scheduled to discuss the PSP with potential applicants at the following time and location:

April 10, 2008

10 a.m. - Noon

Walnut Grove Public Library

14177 Market St., Walnut Grove, CA 95690

Subsidence

For more than 100 years, as West Delta islands have been reclaimed and farmed, the land (which is primarily comprised of peat) has been disappearing, or "subsiding," because of oxidation and strong winds. The elevation of some islands has been reduced more than 25 feet and the land continues to "sink" by one-half inch to one inch per year. As the land subsides, more hydraulic pressure is exerted on the levees, increasing the risk for levee failure. Millions of dollars are spent every year maintaining these levee systems to protect the islands from flooding.

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.

Contact the DWR Public Affairs Office for more information about DWR's water activities.

