



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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DWR Releases Final Environmental Documents for New Delta Research Station

SACRAMENTO – A significant milestone has been reached in the effort to build a state of the art scientific field station in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in May finalized the environmental documents for construction of a research hub on the former Rio Vista Army Base.

The proposed field station would be home to scientists from nine State and federal agencies who are now scattered in offices across the region. All are involved in the decades-long effort to monitor conditions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the largest estuary on the West Coast. The Delta is home to many threatened and endangered species as well as a source of drinking water for two-thirds of the state's population.

The proposed Rio Vista Estuarine Research Station includes office space, laboratories and boat storage. It is planned in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Regional Fish Technology Center, a five-acre complex that will house populations of fish species including Delta smelt.

The new Rio Vista field station would bring together scientists, engineers, technicians, computer scientists, and office staff from the Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the California Department of Water Resources, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and other State and federal agencies. The consolidation would reduce operational costs and foster scientific collaboration.

The project enjoys wide support.

“Protection of our Delta, the most important estuary on the west coast of the western hemisphere, depends on science,” said Congressman John Garamendi. “The Rio Vista Estuarine Research Station will advance our understanding of the ecology of the region and provide critical information to direct policy.”

DWR Acting Director Bill Croyle called the 12-acre project a smart investment for State and federal agencies. He noted that construction of the facility is one of 13 actions set forth in the state’s Delta Smelt Resiliency Strategy.

“Ecologically and economically, much is at stake in the Delta,” said Croyle. “The better we understand the estuary, the better we can manage the constant balance that must be struck among competing uses of the Delta. By bringing together scientists who are now scattered across the region, the new Rio Vista field station should bring efficiency, spark collaboration and ultimately improve our understanding and management of this complex, dynamic place.”

The cost of the Rio Vista Estuarine Research Station is estimated at \$90 million to \$100 million, to be shared by the State and federal governments. Now that DWR has finalized the environmental impact report/statement for the project, construction could begin as soon as federal funding is secured.

The final environmental documents and more information about the Rio Vista Estuarine Research Station are available [here](#).

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