



U.S. Department of the Interior Water Acquisition Program



Level 4 Water Supplied To Central Valley Wildlife Refuges

Fact Sheet

November 2003

On October 30, 1992, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) was signed into law modifying the priorities for managing water resources of the California Central Valley Project (CVP), a major link in California's water supply network. CVPIA amended previous authorizations of the CVP to include fish and wildlife protection, restoration, and enhancement as project purposes having equal priority with agriculture, municipal and industrial, and power purposes. A major feature of CVPIA is that it requires acquisition of water for protecting, restoring, and enhancing fish and wildlife populations. To meet water acquisition needs under CVPIA, the U.S. Department of the Interior has developed a Water Acquisition Program (WAP), a joint effort by the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CVPIA requires Interior to acquire additional water supplies, known as incremental Level 4, to meet optimal waterfowl habitat management needs at National Wildlife Refuges in the Central Valley of California, certain State of California wildlife management areas, and the Grassland Resource Conservation District (collectively known as refuges). Incremental Level 4 is defined as the difference between historic annual average water deliveries (Level 2), and the water supplies required to achieve optimum waterfowl habitat management (Level 4).

The WAP is required to provide up to 133,264 acre-feet annually to meet full incremental Level 4 requirements at the refuges. Typical annual water acquisition needs are somewhat less since refuge water supplies are partially met in most years by rainfall, runoff, and/or local supplies. Also, some refuges have not historically been able to receive full Level 4 supplies due to a lack of water delivery systems. The WAP is also charged with acquiring an additional 26,007 acre-feet of replacement water for the refuges (currently provided by CVP yield) when willing sellers and funds are available in order to minimize impacts to south of Delta CVP contractors.

Water acquired to meet incremental Level 4 refuge water supplies will provide optimal water supplies to Central Valley wildlife refuges. This water will be used to restore permanent wetlands and summer water areas, and provide for earlier flooding of seasonal wetlands to maximize habitat for migrating waterfowl. Typically in the past, these areas have been drained or have not been supplied with water on a year-round basis. The increase in habitat resulting from the additional water supplies will decrease waterfowl overcrowding and reduce waterfowl diseases at the refuges. Additional water supplies will also increase populations of some threatened and endangered fish and wildlife species as a result of improved wetland habitats.

The accompanying table summarizes information for each of the refuges receiving incremental Level 4 water from the WAP. The summary includes the purpose, size and habitat types, key special status species, and the total incremental Level 4 water allocated for each refuge.

For additional information on the WAP, call Reclamation at 916-978-5556, or visit the WAP website at www.usbr.gov/mp/cvpia/3406b3_wap. You can also write to the Bureau of Reclamation, WAP Program Manager, MP-410, Division of Resources Management, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, California 95825-1898 or e-mail LCollea@usbr.gov

WILDLIFE REFUGES SUPPORTED BY THE CVPIA WATER ACQUISITION PROGRAM				
REFUGE	PURPOSE *	SIZE AND HABITAT TYPES	KEY SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES	INCREMENTAL LEVEL 4 WATER
Sacramento NWR Complex				
Delevan NWR	ES, MS, MBR, NR, R, W, WC	5,663 acres of seasonal marsh, permanent ponds, watergrass, irrigated pasture and uplands habitat	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, Palmate-bracted Bird's beak, VELB	9,050 af/yr
Sacramento NWR	ES, MBR, MS, NR, NR, R, W, WC	10,776 acres of seasonal marsh, permanent ponds, watergrass, and uplands	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, VELB	3,600 af/yr
Sutter NWR	ES, MBR, MS, NR, R, W, WC	2,591 acres of seasonal marsh, permanent ponds, watergrass, and uplands	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, VELB	6,500 af/yr
San Luis NWR Complex				
Merced NWR	ES, MBR, MS, NR, R, W, WC	2,562 acres of native grasslands, agricultural fields, and wetlands (1,500 acres)	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, San Joaquin kit fox	2,500 af/yr
East Bear Creek Unit		4,000 acres		4,432 af/yr
West Bear Creek Unit		3,892 acres		3,603 af/yr
Kern NWR Complex				
Kern NWR	ES, LC, MS, NR, R, W, WC	10,618 acres of natural valley grasslands and developed marsh	Bald eagle, Blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin kit fox, Tipton kangaroo rat	15,050 af/yr
Pixley NWR	ES, LC, MS, NR, W, WC	6,192 acres of native valley grasslands, developed marsh, and vernal pools	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin kit fox, Tipton kangaroo rat	4,720 af/yr

WILDLIFE REFUGES SUPPORTED BY THE CVPIA WATER ACQUISITION PROGRAM

State of California Wildlife Areas

Grasslands WA	ES, MBR, NR, R, W, WC	75,000 acres of wetland and grassland habitats	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, San Joaquin kit fox	55,000 af/yr
Gray Lodge WA	ES, LC, MBR, R, W, WC	8,400 acres of marshlands, permanent ponds, wheat fields, and uplands	Giant garter snake, VELB	8,600 af/yr
Los Banos WA	ES, MBR, NR, R, W, WC	5,586 acres of watergrass, marshlands, permanent ponds, and uplands	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, San Joaquin kit fox, VELB	8,330 af/yr
Mendota WA	ES, LC, MBR, R, W, WC	12,425 acres of seasonal marsh, watergrass, and uplands	Palmate-bracted bird's beak, San Joaquin kit fox	2,056 af/yr
North Grassland WA	ES, MBR, NR, R, W, WC	5,556 acres of wetlands, riparian habitat uplands, and vernal pools	Bald eagle, Giant garter snake, San Joaquin kit fox, VELB	
China Island Unit				3,483 af/yr
Salt Slough Unit				3,340 af/yr
Volta WA	ES, MBR, R, W, WS	3,000 acres of alkali ponds, watergrass, marshlands, and uplands	Aleutian Canada goose, Bald eagle, Giant garter snake	3,000 af/yr

af/yr - acre feet per year

CVPIA WAP - Central Valley Project Improvement Act Water Acquisition Program

NWR - National Wildlife Refuge

VELB - Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

WA - State Wildlife Area

* ES = Endangered and threatened species conservation; LC = Land conservation and utilization; MBR = Migratory bird refuge and breeding ground; MS = Migratory bird sanctuary; NR = Natural resource protection; R = Recreation; W = Wildlife management and control; WC = Wetlands conservation