



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

**DELTA CONSERVANCY**

*A California State Agency*

## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 26, 2016**

Contact:

Laura Jensen, Program Manager, 916-375-2087

### **The Delta Conservancy Board Advances 8 Projects Requesting \$5.9 Million for Ecosystem Restoration in the Delta**

**WEST SACRAMENTO** – The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Board has approved, conditionally approved, or reserved funding for 8 projects that advance ecosystem restoration, water quality, and agricultural sustainability in the Delta. These projects have requested approximately \$5.9 million in grant funding. This is the first award cycle of the Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality grant program, and Proposition 1 is the first bond funding that the Conservancy has administered since the agency was enacted in 2010.

The projects that are progressing contribute to multibenefit ecosystem protection and restoration by restoring upland, floodplain, and wetland habitat, enhancing habitat on working lands, acquiring flood and conservation easements, and improving water management to benefit species. These projects will leverage over \$5.1 million in private, State, and federal cost share dollars, amplifying the benefit of bond dollars.

Grant recipients, dollar amounts, and projects moving forward include the following:

1. Yolo Resource Conservation District, \$688,195.65, Yolo Bypass Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (conditionally approved)
2. American Rivers, \$836,409.00, Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project (reserved funding)
3. American Rivers, \$73,493.00, Lower Marsh Creek and Sand Creek Watershed Riparian Restoration Planning (approved)
4. San Joaquin County RCD, \$99,924.00, Paradise Cut Conservation and Flood Management Plan (conditionally approved)
5. San Joaquin County RCD, \$2,000,000.00, Paradise Cut Flood and Conservation Easement Acquisition (reserved funding)
6. Ducks Unlimited, \$2,000,000.00, Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project (reserved funding)

7. California Land Stewardship Institute, \$89,450.00, Fish Friendly Farming Certification Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (approved)
8. Ducks Unlimited, \$100,000.00, Sherman Island Wetland Restoration Project, Phase III (conditionally approved)

More information about the projects can be found here: <http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/grant-program>. Grants that have been conditionally approved or for which funding has been reserved must secure necessary administrative, legal, or environmental compliance items before a grant can be executed.

Campbell Ingram, the Conservancy's Executive Officer, notes that this is an important milestone for the Delta, and for the Conservancy. "The Board's advancement of worthy projects provides a catalyst for locally-led ecosystem restoration in the Delta. Prop 1 fills a funding gap that has existed for years, and is building capacity within the Conservancy and its partners, so that we can continue to promote ecological gains within the Delta," said Ingram.

Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Prop 1), identified \$50 million for the Delta Conservancy "for competitive grants for multibenefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities (Sec. 79730 and 79731)." Both Prop 1 and the Conservancy's enabling legislation emphasize focusing on projects that use public lands and that maximize "voluntary landowner participation in projects that provide measurable and long-lasting habitat or species improvements in the Delta." For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, \$9.3 million was allocated to the Conservancy.

In August 2015, the Conservancy opened its first grant solicitation. The grant program is a two-part competitive program, with a concept proposal solicitation open to the public, and a full proposal solicitation open to qualifying concept proposal applicants. This year, the Conservancy received 24 concept proposals and invited 14 full proposals. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous scoring and evaluation process by both staff and an external review panel, and are recommended based upon score and funding availability.

The Conservancy will open a second grant solicitation period in Fall 2016 and anticipates awarding funding in Spring 2017. The Conservancy plans to administer at least one grant cycle each fiscal year for five years.

###