



Proposition 1 Grant Program 2017-18 Staff Recommendation

I. Project Overview

Project Title	Restoration Planning at River Garden Farms: Improving aquatic habitat resiliency on working lands along the Sacramento River		
Applicant	American Rivers		
Project Number	Prop 1-1702		
Category	Planning	Funding Request	\$661,189
County	Yolo	Total Project Cost	\$799,915
Score	83.2	Funding Recommended	\$661,189
Staff Recommendation	Approve findings for projects located outside the Delta and approve requested funds conditional upon submittal and approval of the items enumerated in the recommendation below.		

II. Staff Recommendations

Delta Conservancy staff recommends that the Board approve findings for projects located outside the Delta and approve funding for the Restoration Planning at River Garden Farms project (Prop 1-1702) proposed by American Rivers conditional upon the submittal and approval of the items enumerated below.

Conditions of Approval:

- (1) Revised budget that clarifies direct and indirect costs, specifically Information Technology costs and occupancy expenses.
- (2) Letter verifying that this Central Valley Habitat Exchange project is not mitigation.
- (3) Memo addressing Delta Stewardship Council comments seeking additional details on how plans to increase floodplain habitat in the Yolo Bypass by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and California Department of Water Resources would not provide winter-run in many years.

Conditional approvals must be resolved by August 1, 2018.

This project is planning for a future implementation project that will take place outside of the legal Delta. Public Resources Code (PRC) section 32360.5 requires the Board make certain findings if it approves funding for activities outside the Delta. Staff recommends the Board find that an implementation project resulting from the planning will meet the following requirements: (1) the project implements the ecosystem goals of the Delta Plan by providing critical floodplain rearing habitat for endangered Chinook salmon and other native fish on their migrations to and from the Delta; (2) the project is consistent with the requirements of any applicable state and federal permits; (3) the Conservancy has given notice to affected local jurisdictions and has received no comments, and staff will work with the applicant to address any comments received from the Delta Protection Commission prior to entering into a grant agreement; (4) there is no State conservancy covering the location of the project; and (5) the project will provide significant benefits to the Delta by creating winter-run Chinook

salmon habitat that will increase the fitness of juvenile salmon migrating through the Delta, thereby increasing their survival.

Staff has prepared the sections below based on staff's best understanding of the information provided in the application. The Conservancy has received comments on the proposal from the Professional Review Panel, the Delta Stewardship Council, and local governments and districts, water agencies, and tribes that responded to the local notification process. Prior to entering into a grant agreement, staff will work with the applicant to further refine the project's scope of work and to address any remaining comments.

III. Project Summary

The Restoration Planning at River Garden Farms project will develop restoration design plans for seven different project sites at River Garden Farms with the goal of restoring ecosystem function in floodplain, wetland, and riparian habitats along the Sacramento River on a large working farm, and providing habitat connectivity within a matrix of intensive agriculture. Projects developed as result of this Category 1 planning proposal will help recover Chinook salmon and steelhead, Swainson's hawk, giant garter snake, and up to 26 focal bird species identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. This project is located in Yolo County near the town of Knights Landing within the boundary of Reclamation District 108 (RD 108). The project site is in private ownership and is currently in intensive agriculture. See Attachment 1 for a project location map.

Delta Conservancy funding will be used to conduct baseline monitoring of current conditions, develop restoration plans, and complete the CEQA process for the seven project sites. Funding will also be used to secure permits for the floodplain and riparian project sites, and to coordinate outreach efforts with the local community and agencies, as well as for project management and indirect expenses.

The project is proposed by American Rivers, which has demonstrated that the project team has sufficient expertise, capacity, and partnerships to successfully carry out this project.

The proposal requests \$661,189 from the Delta Conservancy. Cost share is provided by the applicant, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Defense Fund, RD 108, River Garden Farms, and Audubon California for a total contribution of \$138,726.

This project is ready to begin work as of November 2018. This planning project will advance planning for a specific, on-the-ground project the benefits of which align with Proposition 1 and State priorities.

IV. Consistency with State Priorities

The project is consistent with and directly and specifically links to multiple actions and priorities identified in Proposition 1, the California Water Action Plan, the Conservancy's enabling legislation and strategic plan, and the Delta Plan. The project's consistency with State plans is listed below.

Prop. 1

- Section 79710 (a): The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy shall seek to achieve wildlife conservation objectives through projects on public lands or voluntary projects on private lands.
- Section 79710 (b): The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy may develop and implement a competitive program for habitat enhancements that maximizes voluntary landowner participation in projects that provide measurable and long-lasting habitat or species improvements in the Delta.

California Water Action Plan

- Action 3: Achieve the Co-Equal Goals for the Delta.
- Action 4: Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems.



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Delta Conservancy's enabling legislation

- Section 32300 (i)(1): Protect and enhance habitat and habitat restoration.
- Section 32300 (i)(9): Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources.

Delta Conservancy's Strategic Plan

- Goal 2: Fund and implement high priority projects that increase Delta ecosystem viability through sustaining critical habitat, restoring ecological function, improving water quality, protecting listed species, increasing ecosystem diversity, and managing for climate change; and continue to work collaboratively to define multi-benefit restoration.

Delta Plan

- Chapter 4 - Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta Ecosystem: Actions above and below the Delta also complement actions in the Delta to restore migratory corridors for fish and wildlife (page 140).

V. Local Support

The proposal demonstrates strong local support from River Garden Farms, RD 108, Ducks Unlimited, Audubon California, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, River Partners, and Environmental Defense Fund. The proposal details an approach to inform and consult with all affected parties and to avoid/reduce/mitigate conflicts with existing and adjacent land uses. The proposal includes a Yolo County resolution of support.

VI. Scientific Merit

The proposal describes and references the scientific basis of the project and incorporates the best available science. The proposal demonstrates efforts to develop an adaptive management approach and sufficient capacity and resources to implement it. The proposal addresses climate impacts/benefits and provides a mechanism for incorporating climate change considerations into the project.

Attachment 1. Project Map

