

**Proposition 1 Grant Program 2017-18 Staff Recommendation**

**I. Project Overview**

<b>Project Title</b>	Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration Project at the Cosumnes River Preserve		
<b>Applicant</b>	Department of Water Resources		
<b>Project Number</b>	Prop 1-1710		
<b>Category</b>	Implementation	<b>Funding Request</b>	\$8,700,800
<b>County</b>	Sacramento	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$9,820,800
<b>Score</b>	82.6	<b>Funding Recommended</b>	\$8,700,800
<b>Staff Recommendation</b>	Reserve funds pending CEQA document submittal and approval of the responsible agency findings and conditioned upon submittal and approval of the items enumerated in the recommendation below.		

**II. Staff Recommendations**

Delta Conservancy staff recommends that the Board reserve funds for the Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration Project at the Cosumnes River Preserve project (Prop 1-1710) to allow the applicant to complete the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process and pursue Board approval of the Responsible Agency findings. Reserving funds does not constitute approval of funding for the project and the Board reserves the discretion to approve or reject the funding request. CEQA documents must be submitted and approved by the Delta Conservancy by October 1, 2018.

Delta Conservancy staff recommends that the Board approve conditions that will apply if the project is subsequently approved after the completion of the CEQA process. Funding for the Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration Project at the Cosumnes River Preserve project (Prop 1-1710) is conditional upon the submittal and approval of the items enumerated below.

**Conditions of Approval:**

- (1) Revised budget that clarifies and/or justifies lump sum and subcontractor costs, and sample timesheet.
- (2) Memo addressing Delta Stewardship Council comments recommending more information be provided about how the project meets actions or recommendations regarding ER P3. Protect Opportunities to Restore Habitat, ER P5. Avoid Introductions of and Habitat Improvements for Invasive Nonnative Species, DP P2. Respect Local Land Use When Siting Water or Flood Facilities or Restoring Habitats, and RR P4. Floodplain Protection

Conditional approvals must be resolved by October 1, 2018.

Staff has prepared the text 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, the Office of the Delta Watermaster, 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 Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration Project at the Cosumnes River Preserve will restore wetland and riparian habitat to the 334-acre site by breaching the levee and reintroducing tidal and seasonal flooding, and by establishing native vegetation. The project will restore 91 acres and enhance an additional 71 acres of valley/foothill riparian habitat, restore 3 acres of freshwater wetland, restore 12 acres of seasonal wetland, restore 72 acres of seasonal floodplain habitat, restore approximately 500 linear feet of shaded riverine aquatic habitat, reconnect approximately 2,500 linear feet of fluvial channel habitat, enhance 157 acres of agricultural land to be wildlife-friendly, and restore 20 acres of willow riparian scrub habitat. The project will benefit species such as floodplain-rearing juvenile Chinook salmon, riparian-nesting Swainson's hawk, and foraging sandhill cranes. This project is located in Sacramento County northeast of Thornton, CA. The project site is publicly owned and is currently a mix of low-intensity agriculture and fallow fields. See Attachment 1 for a project location map.

Delta Conservancy funding will be used to fund the construction of floodplain habitat elements, agricultural infrastructure for wildlife habitat, and revegetation with native plants.

The project is proposed by the Department of Water Resources, which has demonstrated that the project team has sufficient expertise, capacity, and partnerships to successfully carry out this project.

The proposal requests \$8,700,800 from the Delta Conservancy. Cost share is provided by the applicant for a total contribution of \$1,120,000.

This project is ready to begin work as of October of 2018. The applicant describes the bulk of the construction work occurring in fiscal year 2019/2020, after permits have been secured in fiscal year 2018/2019. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for this project and a Notice of Decision was posted in November 2010. An updated addendum to the EIR is being prepared and is scheduled to be complete by August 2018. Reviewers recommended that the addendum address mitigation requirements for the loss of foraging habitat for Sandhill cranes. Once the addendum is complete, Conservancy staff will review it and ensure that all necessary mitigation measures have been included in the project to eliminate any significant effects on the environment, and that no additional mitigation measures are necessary. This implementation project will provide benefits that align with Proposition 1 and State priorities, and that will be maintained for at least 15 years.

### **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

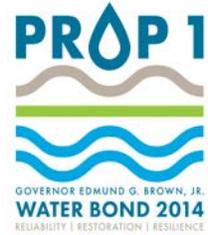
- Section 79732 (a)(4): Protect and restore aquatic, wetland and migratory bird ecosystems including fish and wildlife corridors and the acquisition of water rights for in-stream flow.
- Section 79732 (a)(12): Assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving watershed health, instream flows, fish passage, coastal or inland wetland restoration, or other means, such as natural community conservation plans and habitat conservation plan implementation.



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#### California Water Action Plan

- Action 3: Achieve the Co-Equal Goals for Delta.
- Action 4: Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems.
- Action 6: Expand Water Storage Capacity and Improve Groundwater Management.
- Action 8: Increase Flood Protection.

#### Delta Conservancy's enabling legislation

- Section 32301(i)(1): Protect and enhance habitat and habitat restoration.
- Section 32301(i)(2): Protect and preserve Delta agriculture and working landscapes.
- Section 32301(i)(5): Increase the resilience of the Delta to the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission.
- Section 32301(i)(9): Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources.
- Section 32301(i)(12): Promote environmental education.

#### Delta Conservancy's Strategic Plan

- Goal 1: Promote multi-benefit Delta working landscapes and a robust Delta tourism economy, in collaboration with local stakeholders and the Delta Protection Commission, to enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta
- 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

- ER P2: Restore Habitats at Appropriate Elevations.
- ER R2: Prioritize and Implement Projects that Restore Delta Habitat in Priority Habitat Restoration Areas (Cosumnes-Mokelumne).

### **V. Local Support**

The proposal demonstrates local support from U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Sacramento County, and the Department of Water Resources EcoRestore Program. Reviewers recommended that the applicant specifically address the issue of flooding, and seek additional support from private landowners immediately adjacent to the project. Conservancy staff will make utilizing the Good Neighbor Checklist and securing demonstrated support for the project from adjacent landowners a condition of the grant agreement. The proposal does not include a county resolution of support.

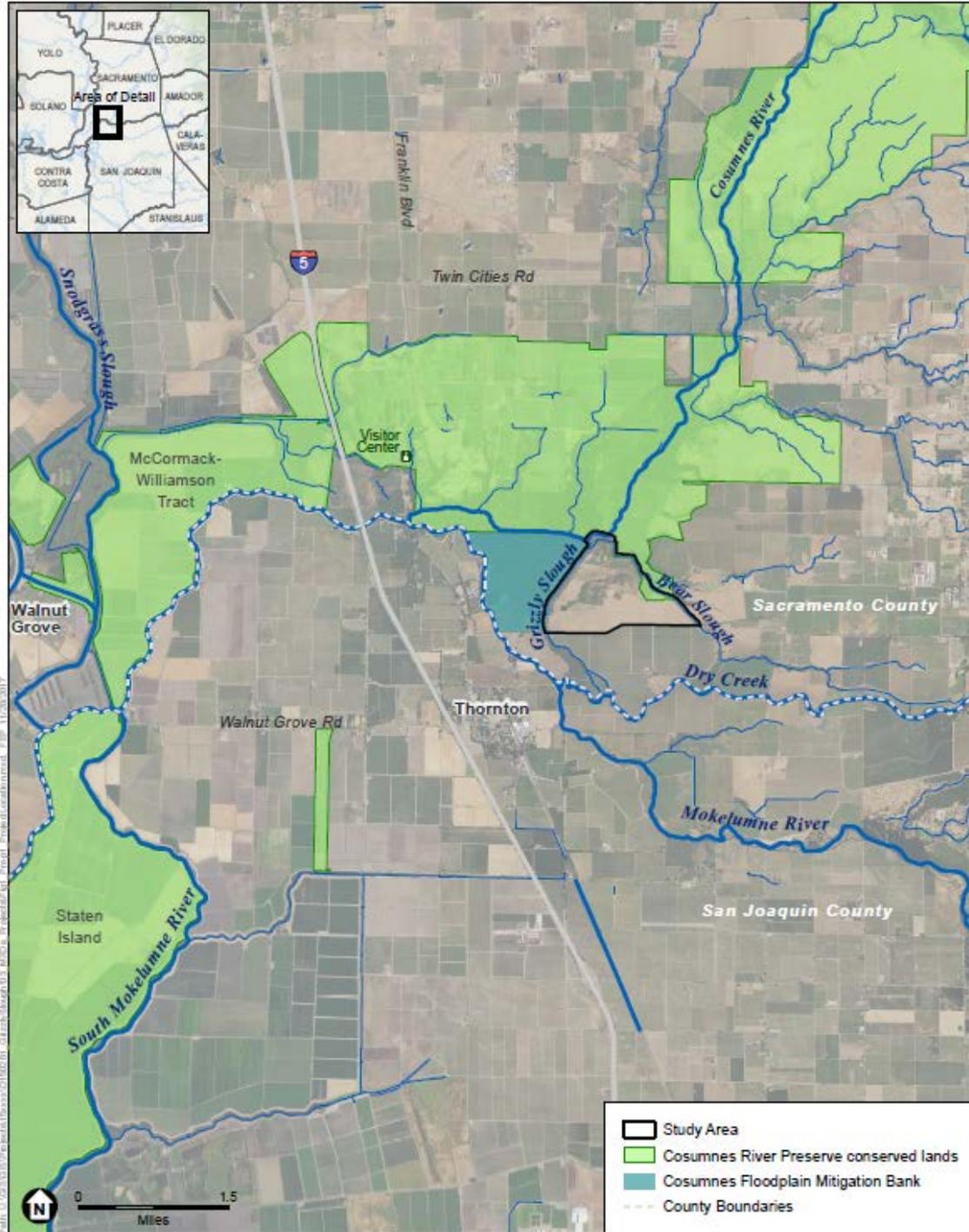
### **VI. Scientific Merit**

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. Outcomes and outputs utilize standard measures, are achievable and connect to objectives and goals. The proposal

includes a clear process for measuring and monitoring progress towards stated outcomes and outputs and demonstrates an approach for collecting and managing data, and for reporting results beyond the applicant's organization.



**Attachment 1. Project Map**



SOURCE: USDA, 2016; ESA, 2017

Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration