



## Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Update

### Staff Report

## PROGRAM UPDATE

As of May 20, 2025, there are 14 active projects and 25 closed projects.

For updates on a specific project, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Table Updates page](#).

For an interactive map of program projects, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Maps page](#).

## PROJECT MILESTONES

**P1-1709: Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project (Planning)**

This planning grant funded efforts to move the Project from concept designs to the selection of a preferred alternative, the development of 65 Percent Design Plans, site assessments and studies, initial permitting work, and community outreach. The grant term has ended, and the project team is seeking funding for construction.

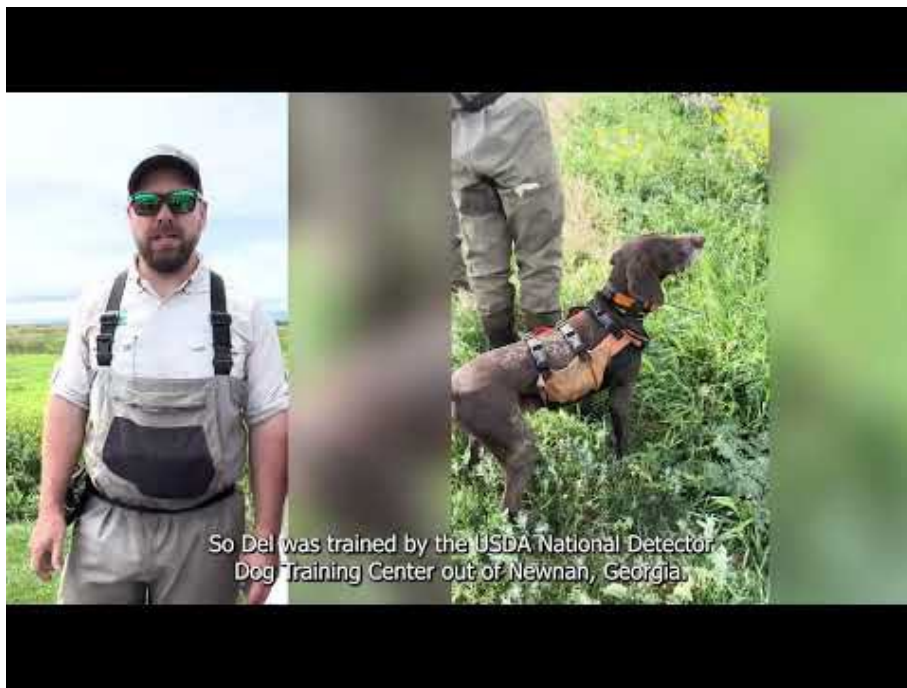


**Figure 6.1.** Site design plans show proposed habitat restoration, including a mosaic of wetland and upland habitats for special status species.

## P1-1813: Nutria Eradication, Phase 2 (Implementation)

This implementation grant supports efforts to eradicate nutria throughout California to prevent significant ecological damage in the Delta. In April, staff conducted a site visit at Sherman Island with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the United States Department of Agriculture. The Grantee uses

nutria-scent detection dogs from the Chesapeake Bay to conduct nutria surveys throughout the state. Staff prepared and shared a video on our social media pages: [Delta Conservancy Nutria Dogs Instagram post](#).



**Figure 6.2.** Video created by Conservancy staff that shows how detection dogs are being used to find nutria.

### **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FIELD UPDATE (MAY 19, 2025)**

Since March 2018, the nutria eradication efforts in California have:

- Completed full and/or rapid assessments on over 1.9 M acres
- Executed entry permits with over 4,900 landowners for over 12,000 parcels in 19 counties
- Set up 13,196 camera stations (1,271 currently active) and conducted 108,138 camera checks
- Detected nutria in 1,342 sites (40-acre cells)
- Deployed 17,041 trap sets (422 currently active) for a total of 185,781 trap nights
- Taken or accounted for the take of 5,890 nutria (since March 2017)
  - Merced - 2,837
  - Fresno - 1,166
  - Stanislaus - 999
  - Solano - 565
  - San Joaquin - 110
  - Madera - 109
  - Sacramento - 57
  - Mariposa - 26
  - Contra Costa - 20
  - Kings - 1
  - See [www.wildlife.ca.gov/nutria](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/nutria) for an interactive map showing locations and densities of nutria taken over time

Of 5,888 necropsies, the data has shown:

- 1.16 sex ratio (M:F)
- 7,232 fetal nutria have been removed from the population
- Litter size ranged from 1-14, with an average of 6.0
  - 21% of juvenile (2-6 mos.) females have been pregnant
  - 63% of subadult (6-14 mos.) females have been pregnant
  - 69% of adult (>14 months of age) females have been pregnant
  - Average litter size for adult females (> 14 mos.) in California is 6.5

**Table 6.1.** The total number of cells with nutria taken, total number of nutria taken, and average number of nutria taken per cell, by year from March 2017 to May 19, 2025.

Year	Total (unique) cells with nutria taken	Total # nutria taken	Average # nutria taken per cell
2017	7	20	2.9
2018	57	348	6.1
2019	73	492	6.7
2020	157	1,239	7.9
2021	145	701	4.8
2022	112	580	5.2
2023	120	677	5.6
2024	213	1,352	6.3
2025	91	480	5.3
<b>Total Across Years</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>5,890</b>	<b>8.7</b>

**P1-1814: Oakley Creekside Park Restoration (Planning)**

This planning grant funded efforts to develop and conduct surveys, assessments, and models needed to restore 775 linear feet of channel along Marsh Creek. The project team also conducted outreach with local landowners and the public, developed permit applications, and completed 65 Percent Design Plans. The grant term has ended, and the project team is seeking funding for design finalization and construction.



**Figure 6.3.** At the project site, Marsh Creek runs through Creekside Park in Oakley.



**NBS02: Delta Rice Conversion Program (Implementation)**

This implementation grant incentivized farmers to convert existing agricultural fields to wildlife-friendly rice to stop subsidence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the most deeply subsided areas of the Delta. A total of 10 farmers enrolled about 4,000 acres in two years: 2,548 acres will be planted in 2025, and 1,450 acres will be planted in 2026. Two of the converted sites will be monitored for bird benefits and emissions reductions for five years.



**Figure 6.4.** Agricultural field that was converted to rice in summer 2024, flooded in winter 2024/2025 for bird habitat, and will be planted in rice for first harvest in summer 2025.

**NBS03: Land Acquisition on Bethel Island (Acquisition)**

This implementation grant jointly-funded the acquisition of Hoover Ranch, a 600-acre parcel on Bethel Island, for permanent land stewardship and future habitat restoration. Conservancy funding partners included the Wildlife Conservation Board, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and the John Muir Land Trust. Escrow was completed in December 2024, and the Project is now closed.



**Figure 6.5.** Left image: Sign placed at entrance of Hoover Ranch. Right image: [Happy cattle grazing on Hoover Ranch.](#)

**BACKGROUND**

The Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation (ERCA) Grant Program refers to a collection of projects that support multi-benefit ecosystem restoration, watershed protection, and climate adaptation projects in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh. Projects in this program are currently supported through several funding sources: Proposition 1 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act; Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR); and Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR). The Proposition 1 Grant Program is designed to support multi-benefit ecosystem, watershed protection, and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities. The CAR is a General Fund allocation and promotes multi-benefit projects within the areas of climate resilience, community access, and natural resources protection. The NBS: WR is a General Fund allocation supporting wetland restoration projects in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The Grant Program requires both a concept proposal and a full proposal. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous review and evaluation process by staff and external professional reviewers (when applicable) and are recommended for funding based upon review, evaluation, and funding availability.

The table below highlights the allocations for Proposition 1 (bond funds), CAR (general funds), and NBS: WR (general funds). Each funding source has funds allocated for both administration and grants. The amount remaining to be allocated are funds available for new grants.

**Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Funding Sources. CEP refers to the Community Enhancement Grant Program (Agenda Item 7.1). Amounts listed in millions of dollars.**

Funding Source	Total Allocation	Minimum Amount Available for Grants	Total Amount Allocated for Grants	Amount Remaining to be Allocated	Allocation Date	Encumbrance Date	Program(s) Supported by Funding Source
Proposition 1	\$50.0	\$42.5	\$42.4	\$0.1	8/13/2014	Variable	ERCA
CAR	\$5.25	\$4.99	\$4.99	\$0	9/23/2021	6/30/2024	ERCA and CEP
CAR	\$6.125	\$5.82	\$5.35	\$0.02	9/6/2022	6/30/2025	ERCA and CEP
NBS: Wetland Restoration	\$36.0	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$0	9/6/2022	6/30/2025	ERCA

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