



Consideration of California Environmental Quality Act Responsible Agency Findings and Amendment to Budget and Scope of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program Agreement for Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project, Phase Two

Staff Report

Grantee	Ducks Unlimited
Project ID	P1-2207
Award Year	2022
County	Yolo
Category	Implementation
Original Award Amount	\$887,516
Request	Budget, Scope

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board adopt California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) responsible agency findings, approve a budget modification to move funds from permits and fees, and associated indirect costs to the subcontractor line item, and to change the scope of work to modify one of the construction tasks, replacing the original task of constructing a new pump station with alternative improvements.

DESCRIPTION

The Grantee is requesting to forgo construction of a new pump station and instead pursue the replacement of water control structures, the modification and installation of an irrigation ditch, and the removal of an existing canal crossing with associated construction of two high-flow crossings. This change would save the project \$40,000 in permitting and fees, and the Grantee proposes to use these savings in their subcontractor budget for construction and monitoring costs. The amendment is needed because the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), a project partner, the CEQA Lead Agency, and cost-share provider, is not supportive of the pump station due to its long-term costs of operations and maintenance. If the Conservancy does not approve this amendment, improvements to the drainage and water supply system at the project site will be incomplete and the full project benefits to habitat will not be realized.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

This implementation project is considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act. On January 8, 2018, CDFW as the CEQA Lead Agency, submitted a Notice of Determination based on the results of an Initial Study (IS) that found potential significant project impacts on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, and hydrology and water quality; determined all of the identified impacts can be reduced to insignificant levels through implementation of Mitigation Measures outlined in the

IS; and prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project to satisfy the requirements of CEQA.

On January 24, 2018, the Conservancy Board voted to approve resolution 2018-01, which adopted responsible agency findings for the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and Drainage Improvements Project and staff filed the corresponding [Notice of Determination](#). These CEQA actions fulfilled the Conservancy's role as a responsible agency for both phase one (P1-1503) and phase two (P1-2207) of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and Drainage Improvements Project.

On June 12, 2025, CDFW as the CEQA Lead Agency, completed an Addendum (see Agenda Item 7.4) and filed a corresponding [Notice of Determination](#) to account for the project updates described in this report. Through the Addendum, CDFW determined the proposed project change would not result in any environmental impacts beyond those analyzed in the original IS/MND and that all potential significant impacts were accounted for in the measures described in the original IS/MND. Conservancy staff have reviewed the Addendum and advise the Board to adopt Board Resolution 2026-01, which makes responsible agency findings that the Addendum to the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration is complete and sufficiently demonstrates that the project changes will not result in any new adverse environmental impacts. Based on that conclusion, staff requests that the Chair sign the attached Notice of Determination (see Agenda Item 7.2).

Updated permits are needed to support the work proposed in this amendment. Staff understands that CDFW, United States Army Corps, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board are in agreement to amend existing permits for the proposed project modifications; permitting with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board is underway.

BACKGROUND

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project, Phase II (Project ID P1-2207) is an implementation project to construct the remaining two components of a five component multi-phase project that will improve the existing drainage and water supply system in the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. This project was awarded \$887,516 of Proposition 1 funds to the Grantee in 2023. This is the Grantee's first amendment request requiring Board consideration. Conservancy staff have reviewed and approved one prior amendment request to extend the grant term. The project is on track to be completed by February 15, 2027, when the agreement expires. This request will have no impact on the availability of current funds as they are not set to expire until June 30, 2027.

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE

Two separate motions are required.

Move that the Board adopt Resolution 2026-01, which makes CEQA Responsible Agency Findings that all necessary mitigation measures have been included in the Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and that the Addendum to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project does not require any changes to the previously approved MND.

Move that the Board approve a budget modification to shift funds across budget line items, and a change to the scope of work to modify the construction task, replacing the construction of a new pump station with alternative plans to improve habitat and drainage at the project site.

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