

Floodplains Reimagined Program

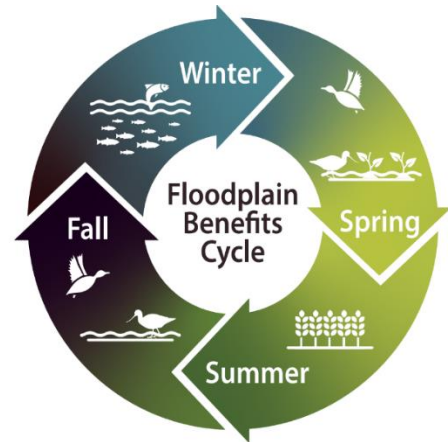
A Landscape Program for the Colusa, Butte, and Sutter Basins
(Draft for Stakeholder Input)

Context

This program will work in concert with a constellation of efforts underway in the Colusa, Butte, and Sutter Basins in the Mid-Sacramento River Valley region to improve the floodplain functional connectivity to support salmon, birds, and agriculture.

Vision

Improve floodplain function for multiple purposes through voluntary collaborative partnerships with private landowners, sovereign tribal entities, government, and non-government representatives.



Priorities

Floodplain functional connectivity complements the multiple priorities including: • floodplain connectivity • floodplain wildlife • ecosystem health • water supply • flood control • agriculture • water quality • indigenous cultural values • economic prosperity • recreation • community way of life • carbon as a greenhouse gas • collaboration • urgency • resiliency and flexibility. *

Phase I: Feasibility Study

RD108 has received a Prop 68 grant from the California Natural Resources Agency for Phase I, which is scheduled for August 2021 – July 2023. In Phase I, the program will evaluate the feasibility of reintroducing low flows during the agricultural off-season, onto lands owned by willing private landowners of the Butte Sink, Sutter Bypass and Colusa Basin. The Program will need to further define the agricultural off-season, which include the winter months with some potential months in the fall and spring shoulder seasons when rice fields are not under production.

The group will explore the feasibility of combinations of actions to increase floodplain function connectivity, which is reconnecting rivers to their historical floodplains. Potential actions might include modifications to multiple existing weirs, and gated outlet structures and/or construction of new structures, as well as and improving/creating flow conveyance infrastructure needed to reactivate floodplains.

** Priorities and objectives will be further described in a Priorities and Objectives document*

Program Team

The Program Team and roles are as follows:

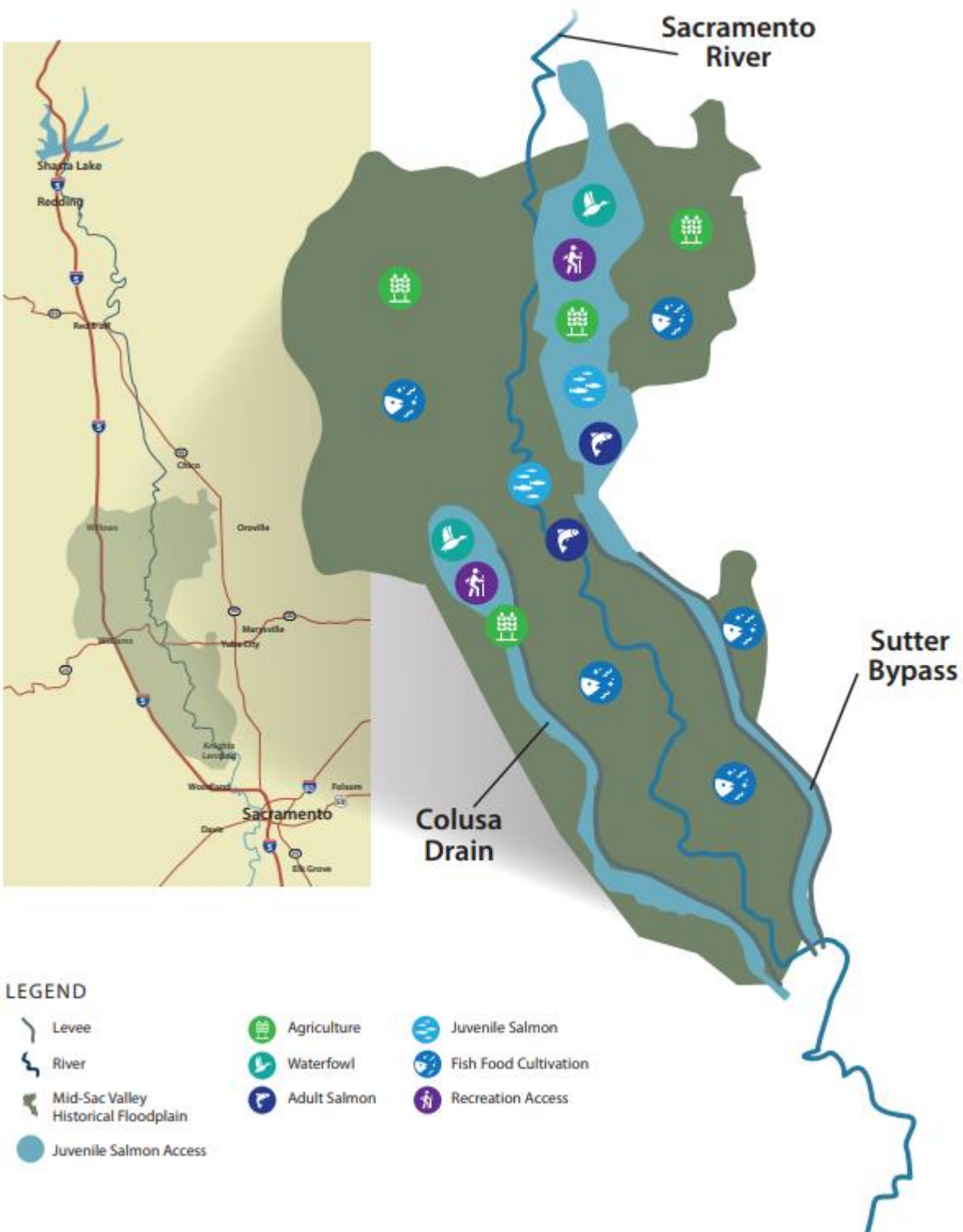
- Reclamation District 108 – Program Director and grant recipient
- KSN – Project Manager and engineering support
- Kearns & West – Stakeholder involvement and facilitation services
- Larsen & Wurzel Associates – Process advisors
- Ducks Unlimited – Decision Support Tool development and wetland stakeholder engagement
- cbec – Hydrologic & hydraulic model development
- Cramer Fish Sciences – Fisheries analyses
- Point Blue – Bird analyses
- San Francisco Estuary Institute – Habitat benefit quantification analyses

Geographic Region

The geographic scope includes the historic floodplain of the Sacramento River from the Butte Sink in the north to the top of the Yolo Bypass in the south. The basins of focus within the historic floodplain are defined by current and potential accessibility by juvenile salmon. There are two such accessible areas flanking the Sacramento River - in the west, the Colusa Basin and into the east, the Butte Basin.

- Colusa Basin
 - Defining infrastructure: Colusa Basin Drain
 - Northern most point: Delevan Wildlife Refuge
 - Southernmost point: Yolo Bypass
- Butte-Sutter Basin
 - Defined by: Upper Butte Basin, Butte Sink, and Sutter Bypass
 - Northern most point: Upper Butte Basin
 - Southernmost point: Fremont Wier where Sutter Bypass meets the Sacramento River

Geographic Area
Floodplain Benefits - Existing



Program Structure

Steering Committee

- **Membership:** The Steering Committee will be made up of eleven (11) members of the Advisory Committee.
- **Role:** The Committee will steer the program, adopt key deliverables, and work with the program team to design and provide feedback on the process, approach, and materials.
- **Decision-making:** Strive for consensus. Test for support and identify areas of convergence and divergence. Where there is disagreement, proposals and recommendations will reflect the outstanding divergence. This group does not have the authority to make decisions on the land.
- **Level of Effort:** Propose 2-hour monthly virtual meetings. 4 hours per week of generating, reviewing and commenting on materials with the project team.

Advisory Committee

- **Membership:** Broad representation of interests including: private landowners with agriculture, hunting clubs and wetlands; local, state, and federal agencies; tribes; flood managers and maintainers; water suppliers; research institutions; river, wildlife, and agriculture NGOs.
- **Role:** Advise the Steering Committee. Review proposed approach and options and make recommendations.
 - Offer a broad range of interests, perspectives, and information to inform the Ad Hoc Group development of multi-benefit options.
 - Learn about each other's interests, related efforts, and science to support recommendations that meet multiple interests.
 - Advise Steering Committee on key technical work products and Ad Hoc Group input on decision support tools, evaluation criteria, potential actions, expected benefits, and implementation strategy.
 - Coordinate with Ad Hoc Group to understand technical input and articulate interests to guide technical analysis.
- **Recommendations:** The Advisory Committee makes recommendations. The members seek to understand and learn about each other's interests. Consensus agreement on recommendations is not required. The facilitator will test for support and identify areas of convergence and divergence. Where there is divergence, the recommendations will reflect those viewpoints.
- **Desired Outcome:** Recommendations to the Steering Committee for adoption of key products including decision support tools, evaluation criteria, potential actions, expected benefits, and implementation strategy.
- **Level of Effort:** Propose 2-hour bi-monthly virtual and/or in-person meetings.

Ad Hoc Groups

- **Membership:** Technical representatives of the broad interests who can contribute to the quantification of benefits, constraints, modeling assumptions, and evaluation of potential structural and biological options.
- **Subgroups:** Topical, technical, and regional representatives will meet in subgroups as needed.
- **Role:** Provide science and technical input, make recommendations and proposals to the Advisory Committee.
- **Recommendations:** The Ad Hoc Group makes topical, technical, and regional recommendations. The Ad Hoc Group members seek to understand and learn about each other's interests. The Ad Hoc Group is not required to come to a consensus agreement to make its recommendations. The facilitator will test for support and identify areas of convergence and divergence. Where there is divergence, the Ad Hoc Group's recommendations will reflect different viewpoints.
- **Desired Outcome:** Recommendations to the Advisory Committee on priorities and objectives, performance metrics, project type options, evaluation, and proposed framework.
- **Level of effort:** Propose 2-hour monthly virtual and/or in-person meetings.