

Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study (California)

The Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study (California) is examining flood management while integrating ecosystem restoration on a system-wide basis (channels and floodplains of the two rivers and the lower reaches of their major tributaries) in the Central Valley. The system of flood management facilities, including dams, levees, weirs, and bypass channels developed in the early 1900's is being examined to address contemporary flood and ecosystem management needs. The system has allowed agricultural and urban development to flourish in the historic floodplains. Settlement of the region over the past 150 years has been responsible for loss of approximately 90 percent of the riparian and wetland vegetation from the Central Valley. Projected population growth has potential to impact water and land use in the floodplain affecting both flood management infrastructure and ecosystem health. Important ecological communities (open water, wetlands, vernal pools, riparian areas, uplands), waterfowl wintering areas, rare plants and animals are of concern. The study is using an iterative approach, supported by public input to develop alternative master plans that achieve a range of flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration outputs. Alternative master plans will be compared to identify the set of components that best meets overall study objectives and guide development of a recommended master plan. The study team is working closely with the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, agencies implementing the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, and other major programs in the region.

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