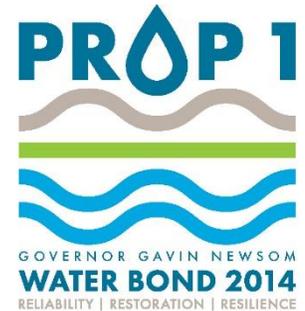


# 2021 Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs



## Proposal Solicitation Notice

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Application Deadline:  
February 19, 2021**

[WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov)



# California Department of Fish and Wildlife



*The Mission of the Department of Fish and Wildlife is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public*

## FOREWORD

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is pleased to announce funding opportunities for multi-benefit ecosystem restoration and protection projects under Proposition 1 (Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014). This Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation) for Proposition 1 Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 focuses on planning, implementation, acquisition, and scientific study projects across multiple priorities outlined herein.

This Solicitation will mark the seventh annual award cycle under CDFW's Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs since first starting in 2015. CDFW's Proposition 1 Grant Programs currently support hundreds of projects in the collective mission to protect and restore California's diverse ecosystems. This Solicitation also follows a year of unprecedented and ongoing challenges including COVID-19 and devastating wildfires throughout California.

### Cutting the Green Tape

As California continues to meet these challenges, CDFW also looks forward to new opportunities to increase the pace and scale of restoration in 2021. "Cutting the Green Tape" represents a collective effort to develop and implement improvements to our support of ecosystem restoration, including granting and permitting processes. With support by CDFW Director Bonham, California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Crowfoot, Governor Newsom, and representatives of the restoration community, CDFW will continue its implementation of several initiatives including the funding of more restoration in 2021. To this end, an additional \$9 million will be available under this Solicitation for statewide watershed restoration projects (for a total of \$33 million).

CDFW's 2021 Cutting the Green Tape efforts will also include a separate \$15 million in additional Proposition 1 Grant Program Solicitation (tentatively scheduled for Summer 2021) focusing on specific watersheds within Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma, and Marin Counties. The Cutting the Green Tape Solicitation will also incorporate an end-to-end approach to supporting restoration projects through CDFW's granting and permitting programs, with priorities lead through CDFW's [North Coast Salmon Project](#) and informed statewide stakeholder input.

Stay tuned for additional announcements and dates for the Cutting the Green Tape Solicitation through CDFW's [Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Program website](#).

# Table of Contents

1	BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1	Proposition 1 Grant Programs .....	3
1.2	Solicitation Schedule .....	3
1.3	Requirements for Awarded Proposals .....	3
2	FUNDING PRIORITIES BY PROGRAM.....	4
2.1	Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grants .....	4
2.2	Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grants .....	8
2.3	Project Categories .....	12
3	SUBMISSION PROCESS .....	16
3.1	Proposal Submission Deadline.....	16
3.2	Electronic Submission .....	16
4	REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS .....	16
4.1	Administrative Review .....	17
4.2	Technical Review .....	17
5	LINKS .....	19

## Tables

Table 1: Proposal Solicitation Process and Anticipated Schedule .....	3
Table 2: Administrative Review Criteria.....	17
Table 3: Technical Review Criteria.....	17

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

CALCC	California Association of Local Conservation Corps
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
Corps	CCC and CALCC, collectively
CWC	California Water Code
Delta	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
DGS	Department of General Services
DMP	Data Management Plan
GAMA	Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PDT	Pacific Daylight Time
PRC	Public Resources Code
Proposition 1 Solicitation	Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 Proposal Solicitation Notice
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WCB	Wildlife Conservation Board

# 1 BACKGROUND and OVERVIEW

The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ([Proposition 1](#)) provides funding to implement the objectives of the [California Water Action Plan](#) for more reliable water supplies, the restoration of important species and habitat, and a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system.

Proposition 1 authorizes CDFW to award \$372.5 million in grant funds to multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects. CDFW distributes these funds on a competitive basis through the:

1. Watershed Restoration Grant Program, and
2. Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program

The [Project Solicitation and Evaluation Guidelines for Proposition 1 Grant Programs](#) (Proposition 1 Guidelines) provide a foundation for the basic requirements for project proposals; however, the information in this Solicitation supersedes any discrepancies among the documents.

Under this Solicitation, up to \$40 million is anticipated for award:

1. Up to \$33 million for the Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grant Program; and
2. Approximately \$7 million for the Proposition 1 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program.

This Solicitation addresses priorities which will contribute to the objectives of Proposition 1, and that contribute to the implementation of [California Water Action Plan](#), [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), [Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#), [Delta Plan](#), [California EcoRestore](#), [Safeguarding California Plan](#), the [California Biodiversity Initiative](#), and the fulfillment of CDFW's Mission. This solicitation also focuses on projects that address impacts from recent wildfires throughout California.

## Award Information

1. Anticipated total available funding: up to \$40 million, dependent upon allocation in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Act.
2. Grant award notifications anticipated in May/June 2021.
3. Awarded projects may start as early as July 1, 2021.
4. Grant-funded project work must be completed by March 15, 2025. Agreements with California public universities must be completed by January 1, 2025.

## Proposal Deadline

The complete proposal application and all supporting documentation must be submitted via the [CDFW WebGrants System](#) by 4:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time, February 19,

2021.

## **Application Workshop**

CDFW will schedule one online workshop to provide technical assistance with the application. Please see CDFW [Proposition 1](#) Restoration Grant Programs website for workshop details (January 26, 2021). Workshop will be recorded and made available online.

## **Contacts**

For questions about this Solicitation please contact CDFW's Watershed Restoration Grants Branch by e-mail at [WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov).

This document, email list subscription information, and further information about the funding sources can be found at the CDFW websites for the [Proposition 1](#) Restoration Grant Programs.

For questions regarding CDFW WebGrants, please contact the CDFW WebGrants by e-mail at [Prop1Webgrants@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Prop1Webgrants@wildlife.ca.gov).

## **Eligibility Information**

Entities eligible to apply for this Proposition 1 grant are defined by California Water Code Sections (CWC) §79702[p], §79702[s], and §79712. The following entity types are eligible for funding: state and local public agencies within California, federally recognized Indian tribes and State Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, non-profit organizations, and public utilities and mutual water. Other entities that are not eligible for funding under this Solicitation may work as subcontractors for an eligible applicant.

Projects which fulfill required environmental mitigation are not eligible for Proposition 1 funding (CWC Section § 79737[e], § 79738 [f]). Projects must provide ecosystem benefits that are greater than required applicable environmental mitigation measures or any compliance obligation.

## **Grant Program Guidelines**

This Solicitation provides specifics for each grant program described in the [Project Solicitation and Evaluation Guidelines for Proposition 1 Grant Programs](#). The guidelines provide detailed information not included in this Solicitation regarding: project types, program and funding requirements, budgets, design plans and engineering, qualifications and licensed professionals, labor code requirements, long-term management, environmental compliance and permitting, water law, project monitoring and reporting, data management, the selection process, requirements for awarded grants, invoicing and payments, reporting, standard conditions, and many other general program requirements.

## 1.1 Proposition 1 Grant Programs

Proposition 1 includes provisions that govern how CDFW may allocate funds authorized by CWC [Section 79737](#) and [Section 79738](#), including the priorities identified below. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Proposition 1 to be eligible for funding by either program. Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

### Watershed Restoration Grant Program Priorities

1. Large-scale wildfire recovery response and prevention
2. Manage headwaters for multiple benefits
3. Protect and restore mountain meadow ecosystems
4. Protect and restore anadromous and other native fish habitat
5. Protect and restore coastal wetland ecosystems
6. Protect and restore cross-border urban creeks and watersheds

### Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program Priorities

1. Improve water quality
2. Improve habitats in the Delta
3. Planning for multi-benefit restoration through regional partnerships
4. Scientific studies to support implementation of the Delta Science Plan and the 2017-2021 Science Action Agenda

## 1.2 Solicitation Schedule

CDFW will advertise timeline updates through e-mail announcements, postings on the [Proposition 1](#) website, and news releases. Please sign up for email updates on either of the program websites.

**Table 1: Proposal Solicitation Process and Anticipated Schedule**

Activity	Schedule
Release Proposal Solicitation Notice	January 11, 2021
Online Application Workshop	January 26, 2021
Proposals due by 4:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time (PDT)	February 19, 2021
Deadline for CEQA completion if applicable	May 7, 2021
Proposal Evaluation	February - April 2021
CDFW Director approval/awards announced	May/June 2021
Execute grant agreements	June-October 2021
All project work completed, and final invoice submitted for payment	March 15*, 2025

\*January 1, 2025, for University of California Public or California State University grants.

## 1.3 Requirements for Awarded Proposals

Grant agreement requirements for awarded proposals can be found in Section 4.4 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#).

## 2 FUNDING PRIORITIES BY PROGRAM

All Proposition 1 grants funded by CDFW under this Solicitation must fall within the following priorities:

### 2.1 Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grants

The Watershed Restoration Grant Program will fund multi-benefit projects of statewide importance outside of the Delta. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Propositions 1, and contribute to implementation of the [California Water Action Plan](#). In addition, CDFW is seeking projects that contribute to implementation of [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), [Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#), [Safeguarding California Plan](#), [Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Conservation Strategy](#), [California Biodiversity Initiative](#), state and federal recovery plans, or other relevant state and federal plans. This solicitation also focuses on projects that address impacts from recent wildfires throughout California.

Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

#### 1) **Large-Scale Wildfire Recovery Response and Prevention**

The objective of this priority in response to the increase in frequency and intensity of wildfires and the devastating effects on watersheds, is to fund Planning and Implementation projects in fire-damaged watersheds that will contribute to restoration and recovery of stream and riparian habitats, prevent erosion, protect and improve water quality, and prevent potential future negative ecosystem effects. Example projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Fuel reduction
2. Native, fire-resistant understory vegetation restoration
3. Sediment basin construction
4. Prevention of upslope erosion
5. Restoration of riparian habitat
6. Improvement of water quality for aquatic and riparian species
7. Post-fire assessments that will inform a future implementation project

Proposed projects that address this priority may include activities that are eligible for partial or full streamlining of regulatory requirements. Any such streamlining will have its own procedural and substantive requirements. As with other laws and regulations potentially applicable to applicants' projects, applicants are encouraged to review those requirements. For example, projects that address this priority may include activities that

are eligible for streamlining of regulatory requirements under a Governor's executive order suspending certain State statutes, rules, regulations, or requirements. Those Governor's executive orders require that an individual who desires to conduct activities under such a suspension request that the appropriate Secretary from either the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) or California Natural Resources Agency, or a delegate thereof, determine that proposed project activities are eligible to be conducted under that suspension. Applicants that believe their projects may be eligible for streamlining of regulatory requirements under a Governor's executive order should contact CDFW's Watershed Restoration Grants Branch at [WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov) and Cal EPA as soon as possible and prior to submitting an application in response to this PSN.

Please note in the event a request for regulatory requirement streamlining is not granted, applicants will remain responsible for all regulatory compliance and permitting, as outlined in Section 3.5. It is important that applicants communicate with CDFW as soon as possible to begin the coordination process.

## **2) Manage Headwaters for Multiple Benefits**

Watersheds in the Cascades, Sierra Nevada and other forested areas of the state are places of origin for more than two-thirds of the state's developed water supply. Many of these crucial watersheds are in poor health. Implementing projects to restore, protect, and enhance the condition, function, and resiliency of forests, streams, meadows, and soils can contribute to several objectives, including, but not limited to:

1. Improve and protect the quantity and quality of water available year-round
2. Improve and protect habitat for wildlife, fish, and plant species
3. Reduce the risk and consequences of large, damaging wildfires
4. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stabilize carbon storage
5. Improve and protect air quality
6. Improve local socio-economic conditions and public safety

CDFW seeks projects that contribute to managing headwaters for multiple benefits by:

1. Restoring forest health through ecologically sound forest management.  
Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Thinning of overstocked forest stands to improve forest health
  - b. Treatment and prevention of forest pests and invasive species
  - c. Restoration of riparian areas and hardwood communities
  - d. Invasive species removal
  - e. Reforestation of native species
  - f. Thinning of encroaching conifers near aspen stands
  - g. Increasing carbon sequestration
  - h. Decreasing forest vulnerability to climate change
  - i. Road and culvert decommissioning and sediment control
2. Protecting and restoring degraded stream and meadow ecosystems to assist in natural water management and improved habitat

3. Protecting strategically important lands within watersheds to ensure continued or improved watershed health, function, connectivity, and resilience

Prioritization of projects to manage headwaters for multiple benefits will consider project scale and regional importance, degree to which the project addresses landscapes damaged by large, high-intensity fires, high-intensity fire in high-risk watersheds, degree to which the project reduces the likelihood of large, and the diversity and significance of the project benefits.

### **3) Protect and Restore Mountain Meadow Ecosystems**

The objective of this priority is to protect, restore, and enhance mountain meadow ecosystems in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges. Mountain meadows throughout California's high mountain ranges are in a state of degradation due to land management practices and other factors. Restoring and protecting ecological and hydrological functions to mountain meadows will decrease their vulnerability to climate change and provide many critical functions and services, including, but not limited to:

1. Increased groundwater storage;
2. Reduced and delayed peak flows on streams that flow through meadow systems;
3. Improved water quality;
4. Protection of climate refugia; and
5. Restored and expanded habitat for native species.

Applicants proposing to conduct any project that creates or enhances in-channel ponds, pools, or deep run habitat capable of capturing sediment including pond-and-plug or beaver dam analogs, should address in their applications if (i) there had been any survey or when to conduct a survey in the watershed to assess whirling disease<sup>1</sup> presence, including documentation on the presence or absence of the tubifex worm (*Tubifex tubifex*) (ii) there is any salmonid fishery or imperiled salmonid population upstream or downstream of the proposed project site. If necessary, applicants will include actions plans for whirling disease in their scope of work.

Prioritization of projects to protect and restore mountain meadow ecosystems will take into account the extent to which the project restores landscapes damaged by large high-intensity wildfires, the significance and diversity of the project benefits, and where applicable, relevance to the [Sierra Nevada Meadow Restoration Business Plan](#) (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 2010) and the [Sierra Meadows Strategy](#) (Sierra Meadows Partnership, 2016).

### **4) Protect and Restore Anadromous and Other Native Fish Habitat**

The objective of this priority is to protect, restore, or enhance anadromous and other

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<sup>1</sup> Whirling disease is a lethal parasite of salmonids and is present in some waters of the state. Ponds and still waters can increase the impact of whirling disease on trout populations, including trout native to California. Whirling disease requires a worm (*Tubifex tubifex*) as an obligate and alternate host. Ponds and still waters are preferred habitat for the tubifex worm and can result in amplification of the whirling disease parasite and greater impacts to sensitive and native salmonid populations.

native fish habitat in watersheds of California to aid in the recovery and conservation of these species. CDFW is seeking projects that address limiting factors and priority actions specified in state or federal recovery plans, the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (Chapter 6), and/or other relevant conservation plans, including:

1. Removing high priority fish passage barriers (refer to the 2019 Fish Passage Priorities List) and barriers to green and white sturgeon and Pacific Lamprey
2. Installing screens on priority unscreened diversions and repair/replacement of existing substandard screens (refer to the 2019 Priority Water Diversions for Screening)
3. Restoring or enhancing riparian, instream, floodplain, side channel, or estuarine habitat
4. Restoring instream spawning and rearing habitat
5. Restoring off-channel rearing, streambank, and riparian habitats and migratory conditions
6. Improving instream flow quality and quantity
7. Reducing erosion and instream/downstream sedimentation
8. Improving adult fish passage through the Sacramento River Flood Control Project
9. Protecting important watershed lands and riparian buffers in agricultural landscapes through acquisitions and conservation easements
10. Redesigning or improving road prisms, road surfaces and upgrading drainage structures and stream crossings to reduce the road's impact on water quality, by reducing hydrologic connectivity and sediment delivery to nearby streams.
11. Decommissioning roads in riparian areas.

Proposition 1 grant funds are also available for water conservation projects (e.g., off-channel water storage, changes in the timing or source of water supply, moving points of diversion, irrigation ditch lining, piping, stock-water systems, and agricultural tailwater recovery/management systems) that permanently dedicate 100 percent of the water saved due to project implementation for instream purposes to support anadromous fish during water limited seasons.

Projects for which the main purpose is to enhance stream flow should consider submitting proposals to the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB's) [California Stream Flow Enhancement Program](#). In instances where an applicant submits a proposal to both CDFW's Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Program and WCB's California Stream Flow Enhancement Program, the applicant should clearly define the streamflow enhancement component(s) of the project in the scope of work (task description) and budget intended to be fund by the CDFW's grant program.

Prioritization of projects will take into account the listing status of the species for which the project is designed to benefit, passage designs that benefit or provide passage for multiple migratory species, and whether the proposal: focuses on populations and geographies that play an important role in recovery, implements a high priority recovery action identified in a final or public draft recovery plan, addresses restoration activities

specified in the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (Chapter 6), and also addresses other priorities in this solicitation. Prioritization of projects that eliminate barriers to migration will be informed by CDFW's [2019 Fish Passage Priorities List \(updated 2/25/2020\)](#) and [2019 Priority Water Diversions For Screening \(updated 2/26/2020\)](#). Prioritization of projects designed to enhance stream flows will consider coordination with WCB's California Stream Flow Enhancement Program.

#### **5) Protect and Restore Coastal Wetland Ecosystems**

The objective of this priority is to implement multi-benefit projects designed to protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetland ecosystems. These projects will seek to protect and restore diversity, quality, and connectivity across the range of wetland types extending from subtidal areas to upland transition areas, including non-tidal wetlands. Restoring ecological condition and function within coastal wetlands will provide a variety of important benefits, such as improved habitat for fish and wildlife, enhanced flood protection, increased resiliency to sea-level rise and storm events, and improved water quality.

The [California Water Action Plan](#) calls upon CDFW to implement large-scale habitat projects along the California coast in strategic estuaries to restore ecological health and natural system connectivity and help defend against sea-level rise. As such, project scale, regional importance, and significance and diversity of the benefits will be considered during prioritization of these projects.

#### **6) Protect and Restore Cross-Border Urban<sup>2</sup> Creeks and Watersheds**

The ecological health of California-Mexico cross-border urban creeks and watersheds is threatened by urban and agricultural encroachment and pollution, sedimentation, trash, and other stressors. CDFW is seeking projects that address these threats. Projects under this priority should address the unique ecological, flood control, water quality, and hydrological conditions associated with urban creeks and watersheds on the California-Mexico border. Funding in this solicitation is only available to the parts of a project that are located within the State of California.

## **2.2 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grants**

The Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program will fund projects that benefit the Delta<sup>3</sup>. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Proposition 1 and contribute to implementation of the [California Water Action Plan](#), [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), [Delta Plan](#), [Delta Science Plan](#), [2017-2021 Science Action Agenda](#), [Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Conservation Strategy](#), [Delta Conservation Framework](#),

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<sup>2</sup> CWC Section 7048(e) defines an "urban creek" as "a creek which crosses built-up residential, commercial, or industrial property, or which crosses land where, in the near future, the land use will be residential, commercial, or industrial."

<sup>3</sup> Projects under this Program are not required to be physically located within the Delta; however, project activities must demonstrably benefit the Delta. Proposition 1 defines Delta as the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as defined in CWC §12220 and the Suisun Marsh as defined in Public Resources Code §29101.

and/or [California EcoRestore](#).

Applicants awarded grants for projects that are covered actions under the Delta Plan will be required to ensure that a written [certification of consistency](#) with the Delta Plan is prepared as part of the pre-implementation project permitting requirements, including an adequate adaptive management plan (Delta Plan General Policy 1); this process includes consultation with the Delta Science Program's [Adaptive Management Liaison team](#).

Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

**1) Improve Water Quality**

The objective of this priority is to plan for and implement multi-benefit projects that contribute to the improvement of water quality in the Delta to improve ecosystem condition, functions, and resiliency, including projects in Delta counties that provide multiple public benefits and improve drinking and agricultural water quality or water supplies. Examples of projects include but are not limited to:

1. Planning or implementing a specific on-the-ground water quality improvement project;
2. Developing or enhancing water quality management models and tools; and
3. Implementing Best Management Practices or other tools that contribute to improving Delta water quality.

**2) Improve Habitats in the Delta**

The objective of this priority is to plan for and implement projects that protect, restore, or enhance aquatic, terrestrial, and transitional habitats to improve the health and resiliency of native fish and wildlife species in the Delta. CDFW is seeking projects consistent with the [Delta Plan](#) that contribute to the objectives of [California EcoRestore](#) but must not be used to satisfy any regulatory compliance responsibility. If a proposal includes actions that are geographically adjacent to, or integrated with projects used to satisfy compliance responsibility, the proposal must clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities go beyond the regulatory compliance requirements, and that the associated costs can be tracked separately. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Protecting, restoring, or enhancing tidal, sub-tidal, floodplain, riparian, transitional, and terrestrial habitats
2. Protecting, restoring, or enhancing riparian and transitional uplands to improve gene flow/connectivity of wildlife between the north and south Delta.
3. Eradicating or controlling invasive species to benefit special status, at risk, endangered, or threatened species in the Delta
4. Supporting the beneficial reuse of dredged material for habitat restoration
5. Enhancing or developing managed wetlands for subsidence reversal and carbon sequestration

Habitat restoration and enhancement projects must be carried out in alignment with the recommendations in the [Delta Conservation Framework](#), [Delta Plan](#), [A Delta Renewed: A Guide to Science-Based Ecological Restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta](#) (A Delta Renewed, SFEI-ASC, 2016), and with Section 1, part II (Habitats) of the [Ecosystem Restoration Program Conservation Strategy for Restoration of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley Regions](#) (CDFW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service 2014).

### **3) Planning for Multi-Benefit Restoration Through Regional Partnerships**

The objective of this priority is to fund the development of regional planning partnerships, composed of local stakeholders, public agencies, and technical experts, and facilitate the collaborative development of regional conservation strategies or plans in the Delta. The [Delta Conservation Framework](#) describes the process and lists several example Conservation Opportunity Regions that would benefit from a facilitated planning process to develop a suite of region-specific projects for implementation in the near- and long-term. An example of a successful partnership-based regional plan developed through a similar process is the Suisun Marsh Plan. The Central Delta Corridor Partnership is an example of a novel partnership that used a facilitated process to develop a coordinated strategy for project implementation on public lands and publicly financed lands in the Central Delta, [Delta Public Lands Strategy](#).

### **4) Scientific Studies to Support Implementation of the Delta Science Plan and the 2017-2021 Science Action Agenda (2017 SAA)**

The objective of this priority is to fund scientific studies to inform water and natural resource policy and management decisions and contribute to achieving the co-equal goals for the Delta. Projects should facilitate implementation of the Delta Science Plan and the 2017-2021 Science Action Agenda. Applicants should include a specific project task for coordination with other researchers conducting related work in the Delta, and with relevant collaborative science initiatives (e.g., [Interagency Ecological Program \[IEP\]](#), Fish Restoration Program, Collaborative Adaptive Management Team [CAMT], and/or Delta Regional Monitoring Program).

Projects must address one or more of the following scientific study topic areas. Two of the three topic areas come directly from the 2017-2021 Science Action Agenda, and the subtopics represent examples of project ideas that could be developed into proposals that would be responsive to this Solicitation, as well as the Science Action Agenda. Applicants may submit proposals for projects that fall under designated topic areas but do not directly address a high priority subtopic; however, these proposals may receive lower review scores.

#### **Topic 1. Develop tools and methods to support and evaluate habitat restoration (2017 SAA)**

- 1.1. Improve understanding of how large-scale tidal wetland and seasonal floodplain restoration actions affect habitat and ecological processes supporting listed species intended to benefit from restoration.

- 1.2. Develop, integrate, enhance, or utilize existing models to improve capacity for predicting and understanding impacts of climate change on Delta habitats to inform restoration and monitoring. Examples of climate change impacts include sea level rise, increased temperatures, salinity intrusion, and changes in hydrology (e.g. changes in the amount and timing of snow melt).
- 1.3. Improve understanding of the effects of wetland restoration/enhancement on subsidence reversal, carbon sequestration, carbon emission avoidance, and mercury methylation.
- 1.4. Improve understanding of invasive aquatic vegetation ecology in the Delta and methods to manage these species. Priority non-native species include Uruguay water primrose (*Ludwigia hexapetala*) common reed (*Phragmites australis*), Brazilian waterweed (*Egeria densa*), water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), and alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*).
  - a) Effects of priority species on ecosystem services, including ecosystem function, quality, and extent of habitat for desired species, and human use.
  - b) Response of priority species to habitat restoration.
  - c) Efficacy of aquatic vegetation control activities, including testing of novel control techniques, and the effects of control on non-target organisms.
  - d) Predictive modeling comparing expected landscape-scale changes in invasive vegetation communities between different control approaches.

## **Topic 2. Habitat requirements of Delta estuarine and migratory aquatic species**

- 2.1. Improve understanding of how hydrodynamics affects Delta Smelt and salmonids, including how the time and space dynamics of water velocities affect fish movement through passive transport and active swimming, as triggers that cue migration or spawning activities, and thresholds that alter routing behavior.
- 2.2. Develop and enhance Individual Based Models that could be incorporated into a larger lifecycle model for Longfin Smelt, and Individual Based Models and Life Cycle Models for Delta Smelt and salmonids, including coupling of these models with climate change projections to understand habitat compression or other future stressors to species of interest.
- 2.3. Improve understanding of juvenile salmonid habitat requirements in the Delta, including research on juvenile salmonid growth across different habitat types, how habitat restoration improves juvenile Chinook salmon growth and survival, and how flows interact with restored habitats to benefit juvenile salmonids.
- 2.4. Establish proof of concept for tags used to track Delta Smelt in support of the Culture and Supplementation of Smelt steering committee (CASS) efforts to determine cultured Delta Smelt survival and fecundity success in the wild.
- 2.5. Improve understanding of how best to use cultured Delta Smelt in summer-fall flow actions and propagation efforts.
- 2.6. Proof of concept for new Longfin Smelt monitoring tools, especially those which inform one or more of the priorities identified in the Longfin Smelt Science Plan.

- 2.7. Improved understanding of Giant Garter snakes in the Delta, including abundance and distribution, presence in aquatic and near-aquatic habitats, and restoration designs that support Giant Garter snake habitat needs.
- 2.8. Improve understanding of the juvenile sturgeon life stage, including development and refinement of surveys and recruitment measures, mapping of rearing habitat and its attributes, and acoustic tagging to evaluate distribution and behavior.

### **Topic 3. Improve understanding of Interactions between stressors and managed species and their communities (2017 SAA)**

- 3.1. Research to better quantify the impacts of the Regional San wastewater treatment plant upgrade on nutrient transformation rates, phytoplankton (including HABs), aquatic vegetation, microbial community, or sediment.
- 3.2. Improve understanding of non-native species of fish and bivalve in the Delta, including predation, competition, and methods of management.
- 3.3. Research evaluating the impacts of stressors on food webs and native species, including:
  - a) Factors currently limiting Delta Smelt recruitment;
  - b) Effects of flow, water quality, and land use;
  - c) Effects of non-flow stressors, such as known contaminants, contaminants of emerging concern, and HABs/CHABs;
  - d) Effects of multiple, co-occurring and interacting stressors (e.g., warm temperatures co-occurring with HABs).
- 3.4. Development of physical and biological metrics for testable models of ecosystem function and managed freshwater flow.

## **2.3 Project Categories**

Eligible project categories for this Solicitation are Planning, Implementation, and Acquisition. Each project category is described below. In addition, scientific studies related to the Delta as described in Section 2.2(4) are eligible. CDFW's Fisheries Branch maintains a [list](#) of additional restoration manuals and guidelines that may be considered for salmon and steelhead habitat restoration in addition to [CDFW's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual](#).

### **2.3.1 Planning**

Planning grants provide funding for activities that lead to specific on-the-ground implementation projects. Eligible activities for Planning projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Preparing plans or supplementing existing plans (e.g., watershed and habitat assessments) that will result in a specific project or set of projects;
2. Developing monitoring, adaptive management, climate change adaptation, and long-term management plans for a specific project;

3. Coordination with partners to develop large-scale restoration or enhancement projects;
4. Coordination with partners to develop standardized monitoring procedures;
5. Performing necessary studies and assessments, collecting baseline data, and developing project designs related to a specific site or physical project;
6. Obtaining the services of licensed professional (refer to Section 3.8 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#) for guidance on when licensed professionals are required);
7. Acquiring permits;
8. Preparing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) documents; and
9. Conducting stakeholder and public meetings.

### 2.3.2 Implementation

Implementation grants fund construction and monitoring of shovel-ready restoration and enhancement projects and new or enhanced facilities. Applicants should demonstrate that CEQA will be complete by **May 7, 2021** (see Sections 2.2 and 3.11.2 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)), and submit 65% or higher design plans, Basis of Design Report, and technical studies (see Section 3.7 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)).

Eligible activities for Implementation projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Preparation of bid packages and subcontractor documents;
2. Development of final engineering design;
3. Acquiring permits;
4. Construction;
5. Habitat restoration and enhancement;
6. Pre- and post-project monitoring and adaptive management;
7. Finalization and initial execution of a long-term management plan; and
8. Communication of project results to stakeholders and the public.

### 2.3.3 Acquisition

Acquisition grants fund purchases of interests in land or water. Property must be acquired from willing sellers at a price that does not exceed fair market value, as set forth in an appraisal prepared by a licensed real estate appraiser and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) Real Property Services Section. A completed appraisal, approved by DGS, is not required at the time of proposal submission; however, if awarded, the appraisal must be submitted and approved by DGS prior to the request for distribution of acquisition funds. Costs associated with preparation of the appraisal are ineligible for reimbursement through an awarded grant. Appraisal review by DGS can take up to 4-8 weeks and can cost up to \$10,000; applicants should consider including this cost as a line item within their proposed budgets.

If a signed purchase option agreement is not available for submittal with the application, a Willing Seller Letter is required from each landowner (see Section 3.6 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)). Once funds are awarded and an agreement is signed with

CDFW, another property cannot be substituted for the property specified in the application. Therefore, it is imperative the applicant demonstrate the seller is negotiating in good faith, and that discussions have proceeded to a point of confidence.

Properties acquired can be transferred to a federal, state, local, or nonprofit entity to ultimately own, manage, and steward consistent with the purpose of the grant. CDFW will not hold title to interests in land or water, nor will CDFW enter into forbearance agreements with applicants or other entities. A separate entity must be identified at the time of proposal submission.

Eligible activities and expenses for Acquisition projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Acquisition of fee title or perpetual conservation easements;
2. Water acquisitions that include permanent, long-term, or short-term water transfers, leases, or dedications;
3. Project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review, monitoring plan and/or long-term management plan;

Ineligible costs include:

1. Appraisal preparation;
2. Environmental Site Assessment;
3. Mineral Rights Assessment;
4. Other fees and costs to accomplish the transaction and the conveyance and acquisition of the property; and
5. Title escrow and closing costs.

The following information is required at the time of application:

1. Parcel numbers, acreage, and willing seller information;
2. Acquisition schedule;
3. Description of existing improvements, if any;
4. Copy of the signed purchase option agreement or willing seller letter(s);
5. Appraisal or estimation of fair market value;
6. Current Preliminary Title Report; and
7. Map showing lands to be acquired, including parcel lines and numbers.

Applicants must disclose any known or suspected hazardous material release, threatened release, or other adverse environmental condition associated with the property. Prior to execution of a grant agreement for acquisition of an interest in real property, CDFW will assess the risk posed to the intended conservation purposes by the environmental conditions of the property, including any recognized environmental conditions that could occur on the property. As part of that risk assessment, CDFW may require the surface estate landowner or project proponent to provide CDFW and any third parties with a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment. Costs associated with preparation of the Environmental Site Assessment and related activities are not eligible

for reimbursement. Successful applicants should consult with CDFW for specific requirements prior to initiating work on an Environmental Site Assessment. If CDFW determines that the risk is not acceptable, and the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then CDFW will rescind the grant award.

All grant awards for acquisition of an interest in real property are contingent on a CDFW determination that the risk posed to the conservation values of that property by mineral exploration, development, and related consequences is acceptable. Prior to execution of a grant agreement, CDFW will assess the risk that future mining activities could occur on the property. As part of the risk assessment, CDFW may require the surface estate landowner or project proponent to provide CDFW and any third parties with an interest in the minerals with a mineral assessment report. Costs associated with preparation of the mineral assessment report and related activities are not eligible for reimbursement. Successful applicants should consult with CDFW for specific requirements prior to initiating work on a mineral assessment report. Based on its risk assessment, CDFW will determine whether the risk of mining and the related consequences for intended conservation purposes is acceptable. If CDFW determines that the risk is not acceptable, and the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then CDFW will rescind the grant award.

CDFW may restrict grantees' authority to conduct or allow commercial activity on real property purchased in fee simple through these grant programs. CDFW may require that income generated from property purchased with CDFW grant funds (Project Income) only be used to offset the costs of owning, managing, or restoring the real property purchased with CDFW grant funds. CDFW may also require that so long as the grantee is receiving Project Income or Project Income remains unspent, the grantee must provide CDFW with a basic annual accounting of Project Income. Finally, CDFW may impose restrictions on the use of water rights associated with fee simple property interests acquired with CDFW grant funds.

### **2.3.4 Scientific Studies (Delta Proposals Only)**

Scientific Studies grants fund projects to support future restoration projects, assess the condition of natural resources, inform policy and management decisions, or assess the effectiveness of grant projects and programs within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Eligible activities for Scientific Studies projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Data collection, analysis, and management
2. Development of resource management tools and technologies
3. Building capacity for collaborative science
4. Reporting, publishing peer-reviewed journal articles, and other means of communicating findings

## 3 SUBMISSION PROCESS

### 3.1 Proposal Submission Deadline

**Online submission of proposals must be received before 4:00 PM, PDT on February 19, 2021.**

Proposals are subject to Public Records Act requests and may be made publicly available upon such requests.

### 3.2 Electronic Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically through CDFW WebGrants online at <https://watershedgrants.wildlife.ca.gov>. The name of this Solicitation in WebGrants is “2021 Proposition 1 - Proposal Solicitation Notice.” To access the application, applicants must register an account in WebGrants. The WebGrants Help Desk is staffed Monday–Friday (9:00AM–4:00PM). Questions regarding the CDFW WebGrants website should be directed to the CDFW WebGrants Help Desk e-mail at [Prop1Webgrants@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Prop1Webgrants@wildlife.ca.gov).

The Proposal Application in WebGrants consists of multiple forms. WebGrants includes dropdown menus, text boxes, multiple-choice selections, tables, and attachment upload links. Once submitted, applicants cannot alter their proposal or submit additional information without first contacting the WebGrants Help Desk. Applicants are encouraged to allow sufficient time to submit proposals to avoid last minute errors and omissions.

## 4 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated using the multi-step review process described in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#). An overview of the administrative review and technical review criteria are described in this section. Engineering-Geological review will be completed on Planning and Implementation proposals as applicable, including designs and project team qualifications. See the [Engineering-Geological Review Scoring Criteria](#) for more information. The project selection process is described in more detail in Section 4.3 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#), including the Selection Panel process and Director’s final approval. CDFW will determine the funding program that best fits the submitted proposals and may conduct separate evaluations for each program.

## 4.1 Administrative Review

Administrative review determines if the proposal is complete. Proposals which receive a “No” for one or more of the Administrative Review Evaluation Criteria (Table 2) will be considered incomplete and may not be considered for funding under.

**Table 2: Administrative Review Criteria**

Criteria	Score
Application is complete	Yes/No
Applicant is an eligible entity	Yes/No
Proposed project is applicable to Solicitation Priorities	Yes/No
Proposed project is not required mitigation	Yes/No
California Conservation Corps and Certified Community Conservation Corps consultation form is complete	Yes/No
CEQA will be complete prior to award (as applicable)	Yes/No
Applicant has submitted: intermediate (65%) or higher design plans, a basis of design report, and supporting technical studies (as applicable)	Yes/No

## 4.2 Technical Review

Technical reviewers evaluate each proposal in accordance with technical review criteria (Table 3) and make narrative comments that support their scores. Each criterion is assigned a point value between zero and five and multiplied by the applicable weighting factor to calculate the criterion score. The sum of the criteria scores produces the total score for the proposal. Individuals selected to serve as technical reviewers will be professionals in fields relevant to the proposed project (CWC §79707[f]). See the [detailed technical review criteria](#) for more information.

**Table 3: Technical Review Criteria**

Criteria	Weighting Factor	Maximum Score
Project Team Qualifications	2	10
Community Support and Collaboration	2	10
Purpose and Background / Scientific merit	2	10
Project Outcomes	2	10
Climate Change Considerations	1	5
Approach, Feasibility, and Scope	3	15
Schedule and Deliverables	3	15
Monitoring and Reporting	1	5
Durability of Investment and Long-Term Management	1	5
Applicant Budget	1	5
Budget Justification	2	10
Total Possible Points		100

Where standard scoring criteria are applied, points will be assigned as follows:

1. A score of 5 points will be awarded where the criterion is fully addressed and supported by thorough and well-presented documentation and logical rationale.
2. A score of 4 points will be awarded where the criterion is fully addressed but is supported by less thorough documentation or less sufficient rationale.
3. A score of 3 points will be awarded where the criterion is less than fully addressed and is supported by less thorough documentation or less sufficient rationale.
4. A score of 2 points will be awarded where the criterion is marginally addressed, or the documentation or rationale is incomplete or insufficient.
5. A score of 1 point will be awarded where the criterion is minimally addressed, or no documentation or rationale is presented.
6. A score of 0 points will be awarded where the criterion is not addressed.

## 5 LINKS

Links within the body of this Solicitation are provided below for your convenience. Please see the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#), and the CDFW, WRGB's [Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs](#) webpage for additional resources.

### **State Departments and Programs:**

#### **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

[2019 Fish Passage Priorities List](#)

[2019 Priority Water Diversions for Screening List](#)

[CDFW's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual](#)

[Additional Restoration Guidelines and Manuals that may be Considered for Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Restoration in California](#)

[Ecosystem Restoration Program Conservation Strategy for Restoration of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley Regions](#)

[Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs](#)

[Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs - Resources for Grantees](#)

[State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\)](#)

#### **Consulting with the California Conservation Corps**

[California Conservation Corps](#)

[California Association of Local Conservation](#)

[Corps Consultation Form](#)

[Corps Consultation Process](#)

#### **California Natural Resources Agency**

[Bond Accountability Proposition 1](#)

[California Biodiversity Initiative](#)

[California EcoRestore](#)

[California Water Action Plan](#)

[Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Conservation Strategy](#)

[Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update](#)

[Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#)

#### **Delta Stewardship Council / Delta Science Program**

[Delta Plan](#)

[Delta Plan Covered Actions](#)

### **Enabling Legislation**

[Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 \(Proposition 1\)](#)

### **Mutual Water Companies**

[California Corporations Code §14300](#)