

## Cal Expo and Woodlake Crossing

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Advisory Committee of the Lower American River Conservancy Program recommend this project as proposed and recommend WCB staff present this project to the Wildlife Conservation Board for approval at a future Board meeting.

Project Title:	Cal Expo and Woodlake Crossing
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks
Amount Requested:	\$149,400
Funding Partners:	Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks
Landowner(s):	Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks
Funding:	Proposition 68
Primary Program Goals:	Public Access, Habitat
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a Severely Disadvantaged Community
Average Score:	82.38

### LOCATION

The Cal Expo and Woodlake Crossing (Project) is approximately 3 miles northeast of the State Capitol and within the Woodlake Area Plan of the American River Parkway (Parkway). The Project area is located at the lower end of a stormwater channel that is part of the City of Sacramento's stormwater system and drains low-lying areas of north Sacramento. The channel experiences intermittent, large flows during rain events and goes dry during the summer. This area has been identified in the draft American River Parkway Natural Resources Management Plan as an area for naturalization, with a specific goal of expansion of the riparian corridor and is adjacent to a large-scale ecosystem restoration project proposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Habitat along the channel is degraded due to erosion and increased use of the area by illegal campers. Trees growing near the channel include valley oaks, cottonwoods, black walnut, ash, California box elder and blue elder. Himalayan blackberry, Italian thistle, catchweed bedstraw, and grasses are found within the channel. Beaver use the channel as evident by the presence of beaver dams.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In winter of 2017-18, a high flow event washed out a culvert crossing that provided safe access across the stormwater channel for trail users and authorized vehicles. The washout made the area downstream of the culvert difficult to access, reducing the number of parkway users and making the area extremely attractive for illegal encampments. Furthermore, the off-paved trail system that was approved by the County in 2021 for the Woodlake and Cal Expo areas and uses existing dirt maintenance roads as the trail system is disconnected by the loss of the crossing and forces mountain bikers, equestrians, and authorized vehicles onto the paved bike trail to reconnect with the off-paved trail system/maintenance roads.

The Project will determine the best alternative for a new crossing that can support a 10-ton vehicle. Site surveys and consultation with the Sacramento County

Department of Transportation will determine whether a new culvert or a small bridge is the best alternative to span the channel, which is 50-80 feet wide at the top and up to 25 feet deep at its bottom.

Habitat restoration will be part of the Project and will focus on slowing flow velocities, reducing erosion, and improving degraded aquatic and riparian habitat and the quality of water that flows from the channel into the lower American River.

Planning activities will include scoping meetings with County departments, City Water, and State and federal regulatory agencies. Design plans and specifications will be completed for the crossing and habitat restoration. Conceptual designs for the USACE's ecosystem restoration project will be considered when designing the habitat restoration. Public outreach meetings will be held to receive input and comment on the draft plans. Final plans will be presented to the County Recreation and Parks Commission (RPC) for approval. All permitting and environmental review will be completed for the crossing and habitat restoration. It is anticipated that a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration will be required for the California Environmental Quality Act. All permits and permissions required to implement the project, including permits from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will be secured.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	---	\$13,650	\$13,650
Crossing field surveys and designs	\$75,000	---	\$75,000
Habitat Restoration Field Surveys and Designs	\$38,465	---	\$38,465
Outreach	\$10,000	\$31,040	\$41,040
Environmental Review and Permitting	\$25,935	14,415	\$40,350
Total	\$149,400	\$59,105	\$208,505

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grant administration, invoicing, reporting, coordinating with project team and consultants, and overseeing all aspects of project.
- Crossing Field Surveys and Designs: Environmental surveys, 100% design plans, and construction specifications for channel crossing.
- Habitat Restoration Field Surveys and Designs: Environmental surveys, 100% design plans, and construction specifications or equivalent for habitat restoration.

- Outreach: Scoping meeting, public outreach, technical review of designs and specifications by County departments, and approval of final designs by RPC.
- Environmental Review and Permitting: Prepare and certify CEQA document and secure all project permits.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it would involve only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

#### CONSISTENCY WITH AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PLAN

In accordance with Public Resources Code section 5845.5, the American River Parkway Compliance Analysis will be completed for the project at the October 2021 Recreation and Parks Commission meeting.