

Annual Report to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Fisheries Restoration Grant Program Projects conducted under the Department of the Army Regional General Permit No. 78 (Corps File N. SPL-2019-00120-CLH) within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District.



For the period of January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023

Prepared by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

March 1, 2024

Introduction

The Los Angeles District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) issued Regional General Permit No. 78 (RGP 78) to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP), pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act, on September 16, 2019. RGP 78 authorizes an array of instream, riparian, and upslope habitat improvement activities within the geographic purview of the USACE, Los Angeles District (Figure 1). This area encompasses the CDFW's South Coast area and a portion of the Central Coast area which includes all or part of the following six counties: Coastal San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego. The authorization applies to salmonid habitat restoration projects that are specifically funded and/or authorized under the FRGP administered by CDFW. The current authorization for RGP 78 expires on September 16, 2024.

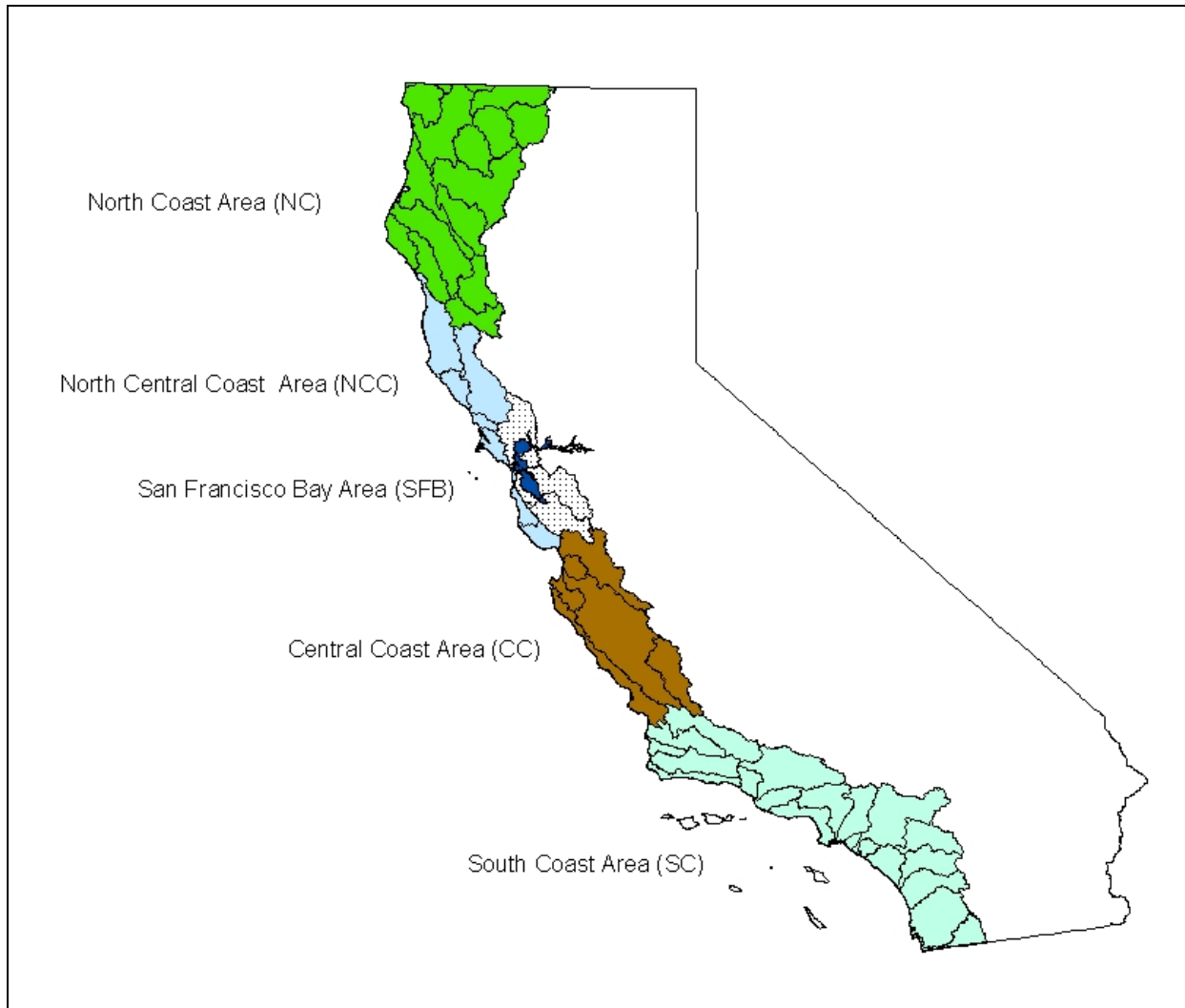
Special Condition #10 of RGP 78 (SPL-2019-00120-CLH) requires CDFW to comply with mandatory terms and conditions associated with incidental take authorized by Biological Opinions (BiOps) issued under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), dated June 25, 2019, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), dated December 9, 2008. The NOAA BiOp (section 1.3.8) stipulates that CDFW submit an annual report on the previous year's restoration activities to NOAA. This report is submitted in compliance with those terms and conditions. The annual report, required under the USFWS BiOp, was submitted separately by FRGP.

This report summarizes implementation information provided by CDFW grant managers for restoration projects with activity during 2023. The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission Fisheries Biologist provided pre-treatment and post-treatment effectiveness information. The NOAA BiOp specifies the US Geological Survey (USGS) Fourth Field (HUC 8) and Fifth Field (HUC 10) Hydrologic Unit Code for USACE RGP 78. Projects presented in this report are grouped by USGS HUC 8 (Figure 2).

Figure 1. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Districts.



Figure 2. Geographic Areas and USGS Fourth Field Hydrologic Units (HUC 8) included in CDFW Fisheries Restoration Grants Program.



Questions regarding this report should be directed to Mr. Timothy Chorey at (916) 376-8638 or via email at Timothy.Chorey@wildlife.ca.gov.

2023 FRGP Implementation Monitoring

NOAA Fisheries BiOp (Section 1.3.8) requires CDFW to notify NOAA with a list of projects, authorized under RGP 78, to be conducted each year (Notification List). Projects on the Notification List are identified by the Project ID and Grant Number, as assigned in the FRGP grant tracking database WebGrants. The descriptions of the status types used to report the work status of projects is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Project status as used for this report.

Work Status	Description
Not started	Proposal selected for funding, but grant not written yet, or grant written, but on-the-ground work has not started yet.
Ongoing	From the start of on-the-ground work to the end of work.
Completed	From the end of on-the-ground work until the grant is closed out, or grant has been closed out.

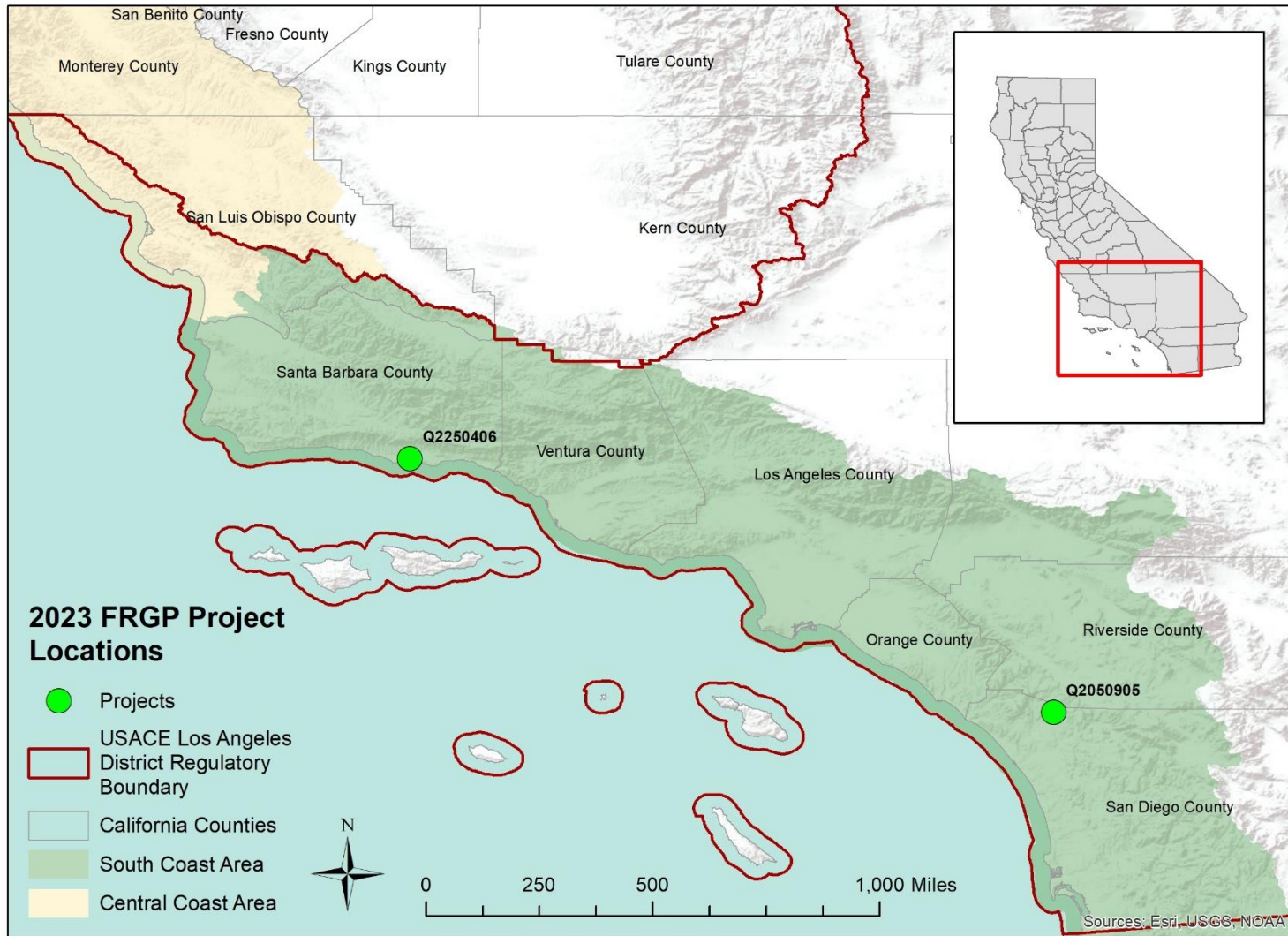
Projects that do not start during the reporting year (i.e., no on-the-ground work was performed) and subsequently have no implementation monitoring conducted are recorded as Not Started. Projects are considered Ongoing if they were started in 2023 or earlier, but not completed during 2023 and will continue work in 2024. Restoration activities for any given project could consist of one or more distinct features. Features are defined as a physical element that is intended to interact with the environment to improve anadromous salmonid habitat. For Ongoing projects, implementation monitoring was conducted only on features that were completed during 2023. For example, the objective of an instream improvement project might be to construct seven instream structures, but work was completed on only four structures during 2023; therefore, implementation monitoring for 2023 would only be reported for those four completed project features. Implementation monitoring on the remaining features would then be conducted in the year of construction. Projects with all work finished in 2023 were recorded as Completed.

A summary of the project status by FRGP Project Type at the end of 2023 is presented in Table 2. The location of projects proposed for implementation in 2023 are presented in Figure 3. Project details stratified by HUC 8 and by DPS are provided in an attached Excel file *Appendix_1_Projects_RGP78_2023.xls*.

Table 2. Status of restoration projects proposed for 2023 summarized by FRGP Project Type.

FRGP Project Type	Not Started	Ongoing	Completed	Terminated/ Cancelled	Total
Fish Passage	1	1	0	0	2
Sum	1	1	0	0	2
% Total	50%	50%	0%	0%	100%

Figure 3. Location of the 2023 proposed projects for the Fisheries Restoration Grants Program.



Implementation monitoring consists of assessing the installation of individual restoration features. Each completed feature is rated as Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Fail, based on the criteria presented in Table 3. Implementation ratings are assigned by CDFW grant managers who inspect project features throughout construction.

Table 3. Implementation feature rating criteria.

RATING	IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION
Excellent	Meets all specifications and exceeds expectations.	No action required.
Good	Meets all specifications and expectations.	No remedial action required.
Fair	Does not meet some specifications and expectations but implemented adequately.	Probably not serious enough to require remedial action.
Poor	Does not meet most specifications and expectations, implemented inadequately.	Serious enough to require remedial action.
Fail	Fails to meet specifications, implemented incorrectly, or not implemented.	Serious enough to require remedial action.

An overall implementation rating is then assigned to the project based on the criteria presented in Table 4. For example, a project would be rated as Good if 80% or more of its features sampled were rated as either Good or Excellent, with no more than 10% of the project features rated as Poor, and no project features rated as Failed.

Table 4. Overall project rating criteria based on cumulative percentage of feature ratings.

	Excellent Feature Ratings	Good Feature Ratings	Fair Feature Ratings	Poor Feature Ratings	Fail Feature Ratings
Excellent Project Rating¹	≥ 80%			0%	0%
Good Project Rating²	≥ 80%	≥ 80%		≤ 10%	0%
Fair Project Rating³	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%		<10%
Poor Project Rating⁴	≥ 50%	≥ 50%	≥ 50%		<25%
Failed Project Rating⁵	<50%	<50%	<50%	≥ 50%	≥ 50%

*These formulas should be read as:

¹80% or more of the projects features were rated as Excellent, and no project features were rated as either Poor or Failed.

²80% or more of the project features were rated as either Good or Excellent, no more than 10% of the project features were rated as Poor, and no project features were rated as Failed.

³80% or more of the project features were rated as either Fair, Good, or Excellent, no more than 10% of the project features were rated as Failed.

⁴50% or more of the project features were rated as either Fair, Good, or Excellent, and no more than 25% of project features were rated as Failed.

⁵Less than 50% of the project features were rated as either Fair, Good, or Excellent; alternatively, 50% or more of the project features were rated as either Poor or Failed.

Implementation monitoring data in this annual report is provided by CDFW grant managers, sometimes using grantee data, through WebGrants, as of February 2024. No features had work in 2023 or received implementation monitoring, so there are no implementation monitoring and ratings summarized in this report.

Annual Results

The data included in annual reports reflects information provided by CDFW grant managers and grantees. As no projects were completed during 2023 within the South Coast area, there are no annual results summarized in this report for the following metrics: the number and type of instream structures implemented within the stream channel, the length of stream bank (feet) stabilized or planted with riparian species, the number of culverts replaced or repaired, including the number of miles of restored access to unoccupied salmonid habitat, the distance (miles) of road decommissioned, or the distance (feet) of aquatic habitat disturbed at each project site.

2023 FRGP Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring by MESHHR is conducted on a stratified random selection of 10% of each project type in each USACE watershed funded each year. Effectiveness monitoring has two phases: pre-treatment monitoring and post-treatment monitoring. Pre-treatment monitoring documents baseline data on habitat conditions and selected salmonid population attributes before on-the-ground restoration treatments begin, providing a benchmark to evaluate restoration activity effectiveness. Pre-treatment monitoring is generally conducted the same year as project implementation.

Post-treatment monitoring is usually conducted three years after project completion to ensure projects experience multiple winter high-flow periods. Post-treatment monitoring may be deferred to other years, or additional monitoring may be added if appropriate and resources are available.

No pre-treatment monitoring was conducted in 2023. Pre-treatment monitoring for one of the ongoing projects was previously conducted in 2022, and pre-

treatment monitoring for the other ongoing project is scheduled to be conducted in 2024.

Post-treatment effectiveness monitoring evaluates structural integrity and function of completed restoration features at least three years after implementation. Each feature is rated as Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Failed, based on the criteria presented in Table 5. Post-treatment effectiveness feature rating criteria., followed by an overall effectiveness rating for the whole project using criteria in Table 4. Project proposals do not always list specific numeric targets for habitat improvements, which is required for an Excellent rating. As a result, the maximum rating for many projects is Good.

Table 5. Post-treatment effectiveness feature rating criteria.

RATING	GOALS	TARGETS	UNINTENDED EFFECTS	STRUCTURAL CONDITION
Excellent	Achieved all stated goals.	Met or exceeded targeted values.	No negative unintended effects. Unintended positive effects may outweigh failure to achieve a targeted value.	Excellent to Good.
Good	Achieved most stated goals.	Did not quite meet targeted values. If no targets were specified, maximum rating is Good.	No negative unintended effects.	Excellent to Fair.
Fair	Partially achieved most goals, or goals not achieved were outside the control of the feature.	Did not meet targeted values, but the feature still has some functional value.	May have minor unintended negative effects that partially offset goals.	Excellent to Fair.
Poor	Achieved at least one goal; goals not achieved were the fault of the feature.	Did not meet targeted values, feature has little functional value.	May have minor or major unintended negative effects that offsets or negates a targeted gain.	Excellent to Poor.
Fail	Achieved no goals; feature has no functional value.	Did not meet targeted values.	May have unintended negative effects that are degrading the habitat and outweigh achieved goals.	Excellent to Fail (may be completely gone).

Projects selected for effectiveness monitoring implemented 33 features. Post-treatment monitoring gave zero features (0%) Excellent ratings, 18 features (55%) Good ratings, 12 features (36%) Fair ratings, 2 features (6%) Poor ratings, and one feature (3%) Failed ratings (Table 6). Feature and overall project ratings for completed projects monitored in 2023 are in an attached Excel file *Appendix_2_Effectiveness_RGP78_2023.xlsx*.

Table 6. Feature ratings from post-treatment effectiveness monitoring.

Project Type	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Fail	Total
Fish Passage at Stream Crossings	0	18	12	2	1	33
Instream Habitat Restoration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instream Barrier Modification for Fish Passage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watershed Restoration (Upslope)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Riparian Restoration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instream Bank Stabilization	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fish Screening of Diversions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Conservation Measures	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	18	12	2	1	33
% of Total	0%	55%	36%	6%	3%	100%

In 2023, five projects received overall effectiveness ratings, in which all five projects received a Fair rating (Table 7).

Table 7. Overall project ratings from post-treatment monitoring in 2023.

Project Type	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Fail	Total
Fish Passage at Stream Crossings	0	0	5	0	0	5
Instream Habitat Restoration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instream Barrier Modification for Fish Passage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watershed Restoration (Upslope)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Riparian Restoration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instream Bank Stabilization	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fish Screening of Diversions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Conservation Measures	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	5	0	0	2
% of Total	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%

Brief case study reports that summarize project objectives and outcomes following post-treatment effectiveness monitoring are made annually. Example case studies for 2023 are presented in a separate PDF file titled *Appendix_3_Case_Studies_RGP78_2023.pdf* submitted with this report.

Fish Relocation

Restoration project implementation may require fish to be excluded from the project site to minimize harm and mortality to salmonids and other aquatic species during project construction. During 2023, no work was done within the stream channel or wetted areas in the ongoing projects so no fish relocation was required.