

Charter for Development of an Implementation Plan for Suisun Marsh Wildlife Habitat Management and Preservation

Goal:

Develop a regional plan that balances implementation of the CALFED Program, Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement, and other management and restoration programs within Suisun Marsh, in a manner responsive to the concerns of stakeholders and based upon voluntary participation by private land owners.

Objective:

Prepare an Implementation Plan (Plan) to guide ongoing operations in managed wetlands and recovery actions for listed species in the Marsh. The Plan has the following intentions:

- Allow participating Agencies (defined as the National Marine Fisheries Service, U S. Army Corps of Engineers, US. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Water Resources, and Suisun Resource Conservation District) to identify and resolve issues such as those related to the Army Corps Regional General Permit and the Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement and their associated biological opinions, as well as remaining issues with past biological opinions.
- Improve coordination and collaboration among agencies on management decisions and activities within the Marsh.
- Ensure that the Plan is consistent with the CALFED Program, which includes the Ecosystem Restoration Program, Levee Program, Drinking Water Quality Program, Multi Species Conservation Strategy, Milestones, and Science Program, and is implemented in an adaptive management framework.
- Ensure that the Plan is consistent with the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act.
- Ensure that the Plan is consistent with the recovery needs of threatened and endangered species.
- Balance the habitat needs of species in managed wetlands with the habitat needs of tidal-marsh-dependent species.
- Consider developing and submitting recommendations for water quality standards in Suisun Marsh to the State Water Resources Control Board. Recommendations should be consistent with the CALFED program, the recovery needs of threatened and endangered species, and the protection of managed wetlands. All appropriate information, including the recommendations of the Suisun Ecological Workgroup, should be used in formulating recommendations.

Actions:

- Reach concurrence among the Agencies on endangered species preservation actions necessary to meet obligations for past and existing permits in the Marsh.
- Reach concurrence among the Agencies on actions which would lead to recovery of listed species within the Marsh.
- Reach concurrence among the Agencies on actions to improve managed wetlands to offset effects of tidal restoration projects.
- Develop a time line for implementation of actions for species recovery and managed wetland improvement.
- Agree on a process for development and implementation of the Plan which is responsive to the concerns of stakeholders in the Marsh, including private property owners.
- Coordinate with other regulatory agencies and Marsh stakeholders, including private property owners.
- Request review and comment by the CALFED Science Program, as appropriate.
- Develop a process for timely resolution of disagreements among the Agencies.
- Ensure that all management and restoration activities in the Marsh are in compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations, and are consistent with the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act.
- Identify funding sources and lead agency responsibilities for actions identified in the Plan.
- Undertake agreed upon interim actions prior to finalization of the Plan.
- Provide for ongoing reevaluation of Agency restoration and management activities and provide for adaptive management in the Marsh.