



**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

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**CALIFORNIA LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM**  
**Conservation of Special Status Species on Central Valley Private Lands**

**General Information**

- The California Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) is an effort to reverse the decline of special status species in the Central Valley of California through enhancement and management of private lands. The California LIP is a Department of Fish and Game program funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the coordination of which has been contracted to Ducks Unlimited. These efforts will focus on the Central Valley's three predominant historical habitat types: wetlands, native grasslands, and riparian habitat.
- The California LIP will assist landowners with enhancing these three habitat types by providing annual incentive payments in return for implementing habitat management plans that benefit special status species.
- These efforts will focus on 4 geographic regions:
  1. Tulare Basin
  2. San Joaquin Basin
  3. Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta / Suisun Marsh
  4. Sacramento Valley
- Individual projects will be selected through a competitive ranking process developed cooperatively by the LIP Partnership Committee and implemented by the LIP Ranking Committee, consisting of the LIP Coordinator (Coordinator) and representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and California Department of Fish and Game.
- The LIP Standard Agreement is a non-negotiable contract that must be signed by all program participants. Each final contract will include a detailed, site-specific management plan developed cooperatively by the Coordinator and the landowner.
- The Coordinator will meet the landowner on the property annually to assess habitat conditions and prescribe specific habitat management actions within the framework of an established management plan. This meeting and the subsequent "Annual Work Plan" provide an opportunity for the Coordinator and the landowner to discuss management objectives and to adaptively plan management activities for the current year.
- The Coordinator will conduct a follow-up site visit to examine habitat conditions and determine if the landowner complied with the Annual Work Plan. If found in compliance, the Coordinator will then authorize issuance of the incentive payment.

*Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870*

- Management agreements will focus on the following 6 specific habitat types/management practices:

<b>Management Practice</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Semi-permanent Wetlands	Flood wetlands at a depth of 6 to 30 inches from mid-March through mid-August	Provide summer-flooded wetland habitat for a host of breeding waterbirds and migrating shorebirds
Permanent Wetlands	Flood wetlands at a depth of 6 to 30 inches year round.	Provide year-round wetland habitat for special-status species, including breeding waterbirds and migrant shorebirds with the goal of meeting the habitat needs of target species during the driest time of the year.
Native Grassland Management	Use upland management tools such as mowing and herbicide application to encourage diverse stands of native grasses.	Increase the success of native grass restorations and heighten the value of these lands to special status species by providing optimum grassland management until these habitats are self sustaining.
Riparian Habitat Management	Use irrigation, weed control, and maintenance of drip lines, emitters, and protective devices, as necessary, to promote establishment of riparian vegetation.	Increase the success of riparian restorations and heighten the value of these lands to special status species by improving vegetative diversity and providing management until these habitats are self sustaining.
Post-Harvest Cropland Flooding	Flood active cropland post-harvest. Flooding will occur for a period of 30 consecutive days between August 1 and October 31 in the Tulare Basin and for 60 consecutive days after November 1 in the Delta.	Provide valuable shallow-water habitat for special status species, particularly early-fall migrating shorebirds in the Tulare Basin and wintering greater sandhill cranes in the north Delta. In the Tulare Basin, simultaneously aid in the control of Black Root Rot.
Tricolored Blackbird Management	Defer harvest (until chick fledging) of silage fields supporting tricolored blackbird nesting colonies.	Prevent loss of tricolored blackbird chicks due to harvesting of silage fields that contain tricolor breeding colonies.

- Eligibility criteria, acreage goals, contract length, incentive payments, and regional availability of management practices are found in the following table.

LIP PRACTICE	REGIONS AVAILABLE	ACREAGE GOAL	CONTRACT LENGTH	INCENTIVE PAYMENT	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
Semi-permanent Wetlands	Tulare Basin	544 acres	5 years	\$200/acre/year	1. Wetlands that have been flooded for a minimum of 90 consecutive days in each of the past 3 years; or, land enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program that was designed to function as wetlands 3. Wetland infrastructure capable of holding water 6-30 inches deep 4. Water available for flooding March 1 - August 15 5. 10 acre minimum size
Permanent Wetlands	San Joaquin Basin	500 acres	5 years	\$25/acre/year	1. Wetland infrastructure capable of holding water 6-30 inches deep 2. Water available for year-round flooding 3. Ability to periodically drain wetland for vegetation control or fish removal 4. 10 acre minimum size
	Sacramento Valley	1000 acres	5 years	\$50/acre/year	
	Delta/Suisun	500 acres	5 years	\$25/acre/year	
Native Grassland Management	Tulare Basin	350 acres	4 years	\$50/acre/year	1. Planted to a mix of native grasses within previous 3 years 2. Native grassland vegetation viable and in need of management, as determined by LIP Ranking Committee
	San Joaquin Basin	500 acres	4 years	\$50/acre/year	
	Sacramento Valley	725 acres	4 years	\$50/acre/year	
	Delta/Suisun	200 acres	4 years	\$50/acre/year	
Riparian Habitat Management	San Joaquin Basin	580 acres	3 years	\$40/acre/year	1. Planted to riparian vegetation within previous 3 years 2. Riparian vegetation viable and in need of management, as determined by LIP Ranking Committee
	Sacramento Valley	875 acres	3 years	\$40/acre/year	
	Delta/Suisun	300 acres	3 years	\$40/acre/year	
Post-Harvest Cropland Flooding	Tulare Basin	4000 acres	3 years	\$50/acre/year	1. Active, post-harvest cotton rotation cropland (i.e., planted to wheat, barley, safflower, and other small grains) 2. Water available for flooding between August 1 and October 31 3. Capable of holding water in entire field at a minimum depth of 2 inches 4. Ability to quickly drain water in the event of a botulism outbreak 5. 10 acre minimum size
	Delta/Suisun	1000 acres	3 years	\$30/acre/year	1. Only traditional greater sandhill crane wintering areas in the north Delta of Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties 2. Water available after September 1 for 60 consecutive days of flooding at a depth of 2 - 8 inches 3. Harvested corn/wheat or pasture
Tricolored Blackbird Management	Tulare Basin	120 acres	3 years	\$400/acre/year	1. Silage field with recent history of breeding use by tricolored blackbird colonies greater than 5000 individuals 2. 40 acre maximum size

## **The Management Plan and Annual Work Plans**

The proposed process for developing and monitoring LIP management plans is described below. These plans are tailored to allow for “adaptive habitat management” as habitat conditions change or new resource information becomes available.

### The “Framework Management Plan”

Upon enrollment of each property, the Coordinator will write a generic management plan appropriate for each region and management practice. These “framework” management plans typically require landowners to implement management practices as outlined in the management practice definitions above. For example, framework management plans for native grass management will include requirements for mowing and herbicide application, while framework plans for wetlands will include requirements for flooding depth, timing and duration as well as other wetland management activities (e.g., disking) as needed.

The framework plans provide an immediate and long-term habitat management direction for the property by specifying the level of habitat management ultimately required under a LIP contract. Within the limits specified in the framework plan, the Coordinator, in any give year, can establish enforceable habitat-management **requirements** as deemed necessary to meet program goals. Thus, management objectives may vary from year to year.

The framework plan works for two main reasons. First, it allows the Coordinator to adapt to changing habitat conditions by altering annual management requirements. These work requirements, once adopted, are not optional. Failure to implement required items will result in the withholding of all or a portion of the incentive payment. Second, the upper limits of habitat management established in the framework plan assure the landowner that requirements will not exceed a certain level of intensity.

### Annual Work Plans

The Coordinator will assess habitat conditions each year and prescribe specific management actions within the framework established in the management plan. The annual meeting and subsequent Annual Work Plan provide a means for the Coordinator and the landowner to deal with unforeseen habitat management problems and to reach agreement on what management practices need to be carried out that year. Upon receipt of the Annual Work Plan, the landowner is responsible for proper implementation of all required items. The Coordinator provides technical assistance as requested by the landowner. The Coordinator monitors compliance by meeting with the landowner at an appropriate time following the proposed execution of management practices to examine habitat conditions, assess the level of compliance with the Annual Work Plan, and develop tentative plans for the following year.

## How to Apply.

Applications will be reviewed semiannually on December 15 and June 15. Interested landowners should fill out the included application and submit it with a field map of their offering to:

Jeff Stoddard  
Landowner Incentive Program Coordinator  
1812 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax (916) 445-4058

If you have any questions about the program, please call Jeff Stoddard at (916) 445-3561, or email: [jstoddard@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:jstoddard@dfg.ca.gov).

\*Note: Submit separate applications for each management practice you wish to implement on your property. For example, if you wish to enroll in LIP permanent wetland management and native grass management on lands under a single Wetland Reserve Program easement, submit a unique LIP application for each practice.



**CALIFORNIA LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

**Application**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Tax I.D. # \_\_\_\_\_

Management Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Acreage: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Description: ¼ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Township \_\_\_\_\_ Range \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Designated to Sign Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (President, Secretary, Etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Ownership (Partnership, Corporation, Sole Owner, Etc): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact (If different than above): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_