



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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CALIFORNIA LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM
Agricultural Riparian Buffers Initiative

What is the California LIP?

The California Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) is an effort to reverse the decline of at-risk species on private lands in the Central Valley by playing a key role in the restoration and management of the region's riparian habitat.

Why Work in California's Central Valley?

Private lands are vital to California's wildlife. Approximately 94% of the Central Valley is privately owned. Furthermore, the Central Valley has lost 99% of its historic riparian habitat from extensive habitat modification. Working to restore and actively manage riparian buffers, California's LIP seeks to increase populations of at-risk species through voluntary landowner incentives.

Benefits to Fish, Wildlife, and Farmers

The Department of Fish and Game's 2006 State Wildlife Action Plan highlights the importance of restoring and managing riparian habitat, stating that no other habitat type is more critical to California's wildlife. More than 225 species depend on California's riparian habitat, including 42 at-risk species in the Central Valley. These species use riparian habitat for migrating, nesting, feeding and rearing young.

In addition to providing fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas control soil erosion, filter pollution and regulate stream flows. Riparian buffers help local farmers meet water quality standards by capturing excess runoff, composed of sediments, nutrients, and fertilizers before they reach waterways. Stabilizing streambanks with riparian vegetation reduces soil erosion, helping to protect adjacent cropland and improve water quality in Central Valley streams. Moreover, these buffers capture and reduce the amount of flood debris deposited on adjacent farmland and also reduce costs associated with clean up.

Program Objectives

The California LIP is a voluntary, incentive-based program that: 1) provides funding to restore marginal or flood-prone farmland to riparian buffers, 2) disburses annual incentive funding to assist with costs of sustained habitat management and the loss of income associated with idling farmland, and 3) provides technical assistance to restore and manage riparian buffers.

Program Eligibility

- Properties must be within the Central Valley and located directly adjacent to the Sacramento or San Joaquin Rivers, or their major tributaries.
- Properties must have been grazed or planted cropland or orchard in three of the previous five years.
- Properties must be able to provide a minimum width of 50 feet adjacent to the river/stream for riparian buffer restoration. A maximum width of 200 feet will be considered for enrollment.

- Cattle producers must be willing to exclude cattle from the project site (off-site watering devices and fencing can be included in the restoration design).
- Landowners must be willing to enter into a 10-year agreement to protect and manage the restored riparian buffers; conservation easements are also available for longer-term protection.
- Individual projects will be selected through a competitive ranking process and selection will be based on potential wildlife benefits.

Program Administration

Restoration - Riparian restoration will be funded 100% by the Wildlife Conservation Board’s Riparian Habitat Conservation Program (RHCP). Restoration plans will be developed by LIP biologists, RHCP and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel, and the private landowner. Restorations will be completed by local non-governmental organizations, Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), or other government entity. These entities will be responsible for hiring all contractors to construct the restoration project including; earth moving, irrigation construction, and planting native vegetation.

Incentive Payments - Annual incentive payments will help offset costs of idling agricultural land and supporting newly restored habitat. Payments are based on current agricultural land rental rates and habitat management costs for particular sites. Depending on crop type and rental rate, annual incentive payments can approach a maximum of \$400/acre/year for the ten year duration of the program.

2007 LIP Riparian Buffer Incentive Payments			
Crop Type	Land Lease Values*	Management Payment	Annual per acre LIP Incentive
Irrigated Field Crops	\$175	\$50	\$225
Orchards	\$350**	\$50	\$400
Vineyards	\$350**	\$50	\$400
Rangelands	\$20	\$50	\$70
Rice	\$225	\$50	\$275

*Source: ASFMRA 2006 Land & Lease Values; County Agricultural Commissioners' Data, Calendar Year 2006.

**\$350/acre/year allowable maximum

Technical Assistance & Management Plans - Following the restoration, LIP biologists will meet on-site with landowners to develop annual habitat management plans. Landowners will be responsible for implementing habitat management activities to ensure the successful establishment and maintenance of riparian habitat. Habitat management may include; mowing and herbicide spraying for weed control, irrigating newly-planted trees and shrubs, excluding livestock and maintaining project infrastructure. Landowners must comply with the habitat management plan to receive the annual incentive payment provided by LIP.

How to Apply

Interested landowners should submit a completed application and a field map of their offering to:

Jeff Stoddard
Landowner Incentive Program Coordinator
1812 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax (916) 445-3561
jstoddard@dfg.ca.gov



CALIFORNIA LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Riparian Buffers Program Application

Date: _____

Legal Property Name: _____

Federal Tax I.D. #: _____

Five-year Crop History: _____

Adjacent River/Tributary Name: _____

County: _____

Proposed Restoration Acreage: _____

Legal Description: ¼ Section: _____ Township _____ Range _____

Legal Description: APN: _____

Name of Contact (If different than above): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Person Designated to Sign Contract: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Ownership (Partnership, Corporation, Sole Owner, Etc): _____

This property is enrolled in the following:

- Williamson Act
- Super Williamson Act
- Agricultural Easement
- None of the above