

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Service Announces Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study
For the M&T Chico Ranch/Llano Seco Rancho Fish Screen Facility
Short-term Protection Project**

Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) announce the availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS), Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the M&T Chico Ranch/Llano Seco Rancho Pumps & Fish Screen Facility Short-term Protection Project. These documents have been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Proposed Project involves implementation of interim measures to protect and maintain the viability of the M&T Chico Ranch/Llano Seco Rancho fish screen and pumping facility, located on the Sacramento River (~RM 192.5 near the town of Glenn). These measures include: (1) implementation of up to two additional maintenance dredging operations; (2) a time extension for the temporary rock-toe and tee revetment to remain in place on the Service's Capay Unit of the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (SRNWR), and what is now The Nature Conservancy property immediately south of the Capay Unit until a long-term solution is developed and completed; and (3) ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the revetment, which would extend until a long-term solution is developed and completed. Implementation of these measures, in concert, are intended to sustain the viability of the M&T/Llano Seco Pumps Facility, including meeting existing fish screen criteria and water supply and delivery responsibilities, as well as to maintain the viability of a range of alternatives under consideration for a long-term solution.

The Draft EA/IS, proposed FONSI, and proposed MND will be available for a 45-day public review and comment period. Written comments on the document should be received no later than January 31, 2014. A public meeting also will be held to provide interested parties with an opportunity to submit verbal or written comments on the Draft EA/IS. Two public meetings will be held on January 10, 2014, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Chico Masonic Family Center, 1110 West East Avenue, Chico, CA 95926.

Hardcopies of the Draft EA/IS, proposed FONSI, and proposed MND are available for public review at the following locations:

- CDFW, 1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670;
- USFWS, SNWRC, 752 County Road 99W Willows, California 95988;
- Butte County Library, Chico Branch, 1108 Sherman Avenue, Chico, California 95926;and
- Willows Library, 201 N Lassen Street, Willows, California 95988.

Electronic copies of the documents are available at the following websites: Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum Website (<http://www.sacramentoriver.org/srcaf>) and Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge Website (http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Sacramento_River/). Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CDFW and USFWS will provide documentation in alternate formats to individuals with disabilities. To obtain such services, please contact Tina Johnson, CDFW Public Information Officer, at (916) 651-1214.

Written comments may be mailed to: CDFW, Attention Mr. Joe Johnson, 1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670; or USFWS, SNWRC, Attention Mr. Daniel Frisk, 752 County Road 99 W, Willows, CA 95988. Comments may also be submitted electronically to M&TLlanoSecoProject@hdrinc.com.

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The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.cno. Connect with our Facebook page at, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSPacSWest>, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws_pacificsw/