



HILL SLOUGH TIDAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Suisun Marsh

TIDAL HABITAT RESTORATION

The Hill Slough Tidal Restoration Project (Project) comprises approximately 850 acres within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Hill Slough Wildlife Area just south of Suisun City. The Project site, currently a collection of diked ponds and upland habitat, is adjacent to existing tidal marsh on the east, south, and west sides. When completed, the project will help create a contiguous tidal marsh of approximately 2,860 acres.

The purpose of the Project is to restore natural hydrologic processes to aid in the recovery of listed plant and wildlife species while contributing to primary productivity in the estuary. Additionally, the Project would provide tidal marsh habitat to offset the loss from lower water levels and flow during drought years.

The Project will restore 603 acres of managed seasonal wetland and 46 acres of upland to tidal wetland for a total of 649 acres of restored tidal marsh. This will be achieved by creating eight external and five internal levee breaches, lowering portions of some levees, and recontouring the interior of one pond. The Project will also improve another 192 acres of existing mixed wetlands and uplands through the addition of a swale and new water control structures.

The project provides additional benefits for recreation including a two-mile loop trail including interpretive signs and a bench providing the public an opportunity to view and appreciate the marsh. This trail is just south of Suisun City and will connect to Suisun City's Grizzly Island Trail. Grizzly Island Road, owned by Solano County, will be raised to prevent tidal overtopping and widened to add bicycle lanes.

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) owns and maintains electrical transmission lines that traverse east-west through the Project site, consisting of eight towers, three of which will be affected by tidal inundation. To ensure access to the towers, an earthen berm will be constructed under the lowest of the transmission lines to prevent boat access, and a buttress berm will be added to the middle tower to provide PG&E access.

RESTORATION GOALS / TARGETS

1. Contribute to the Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation, and Restoration Plan (SMP) goal for Region 1, which calls for 1,000–1,500 acres of restored tidal marsh.
2. Contribute to the recovery of listed species by providing connectivity to tidal marshes along Hill and Suisun sloughs where the federally endangered soft bird's-beak and Suisun thistle occur, including contributing toward goals of the US Fish & Wildlife Service's Tidal Marsh Recovery Plan for the Suisun Marsh.
3. Improve the Project site's adaptation to sea level rise and reduce levee maintenance and repair.
4. Provide additional fish habitat, particularly during droughts. The Project was specifically identified through former Governor Brown's Drought Executive Order.

LOCATION AND LANDOWNER

The Project is in the Suisun Marsh within the Hill Slough Wildlife Area, on the northern margin of Suisun Marsh.



The Hill Slough Wildlife Area is owned and operated by CDFW and consists of eight managed ponds which were constructed by CDFW in the 1970s and 1980s but have been cut off from tidal action since the 1930s.

FUNDING

The cost of permitting and construction is estimated at approximately \$10,000,000. Funding sources include California water bonds, Suisun Marsh Mitigation Agreement funds, and the Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan for the Kinder Morgan/Suisun Marsh Spill funds.

TIMELINE

- ▶ Planning and Permitting: 2015-2019 (Complete)
- ▶ Phase I (Road) Construction: 2019 and 2020
- ▶ Phase II (Habitat) Construction: 2020 and 2021

PERMITTING

- ▶ CEQA (exempt as designated Drought Project)
- ▶ USFWS Endangered Species Act-Section 7: Biological Opinion (2017)
- ▶ NMFS Endangered Species Act-Section 7: Letter of Concurrence (2015)
- ▶ US Army Corps of Engineers-Section 404 and Section 10: Nationwide Permit 27 for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Enhancement, and Establishment Activities (2018)
- ▶ Regional Water Quality Control Board-Section 401: Water Quality Certification (2017)
- ▶ U.S. Coast Guard-Consultation: Plan approval (2016)
- ▶ Solano County-Encroachment Permit (2019)

PROJECT PROPONENTS

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Bay Delta Region (Region 3)
 Sarah Estrella
 Sarah.Estrella@wildlife.ca.gov

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Bay Delta Region (Region 3)
 Greg Martinelli
 Greg.Martinelli@wildlife.ca.gov

