



# Lower Putah Creek Realignment Project

**Project Description:** The Lower Putah Creek Realignment Project (ERP Grant # E1183o15) will restore ecological functions and enhance fish passage in Lower Putah Creek, from the Putah Diversion Dam through the Yolo Bypass Wildlife area (YBWA). For the purposes of project planning, Lower Putah Creek has been divided into two reaches: the Upper Reach, from the PDD to the western boundary of the YBWA; and the YBWA reach, from the western boundary of the YBWA to the Toe Drain. This project description focuses on the YBWA Reach, which lies entirely within the Yolo Bypass (the Upper Reach lies outside the bypass, except for an approximately 2.5-mile reach between the western Yolo Bypass Levee and the YBWA boundary). The 2009 National Marine Fisheries Biological Opinion RPA I.6.3 focuses on the Lower Putah Creek YBWA reach. On the YBWA reach, the project would create a new, realigned channel from the existing Putah Creek channel at the western YBWA boundary that would cross the YBWA, connect to tidal channels previously restored by CDFW at the southeast end of the YBWA, and enter the Toe Drain downstream of Lisbon Weir. The channel design would provide fish passage for salmonids, increase area of wetland habitat subject to tidal influence in the CDFW restored tidal area, and increase the area of floodplain rearing habitat for species of management concern (specifically salmonids). Project goals include the following: (1) improve passage, rearing, and emigration of adult and juvenile salmonids; (2) enhance habitat for salmonids and other Delta native species and wildlife within a realigned channel; (3) enhance ecological functions of the recently restored tidal habitats on the YBWA; and (4) preserve and enhance, where possible, existing beneficial uses including public access, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing. Currently, this project is in the planning, designing, and environmental regulation/permitting phase of development under an Ecosystem Restoration Program Grant Agreement. Implementation/construction of the project is outside the scope of the current grant agreement.

**Type of Project:** Fish passage and tidal wetlands

**Restoration Targets:** This project serves as a fish passage improvement action, as well as a habitat restoration action. In combination with the Upper Reach project, the construction phase will restore approximately 430 acres of floodplain habitat, and 90 acres of tidal freshwater wetlands, create 5 miles of new channel, improve anadromous fish access to 25 miles of stream, and restore instream habitat.

**Location and Landowner:** This project is located in the Yolo Bypass along the existing Lower Putah Creek channel, including the Los Rios Check Dam, and the realigned creek will go through the recently restored tidal marsh habitat on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area in Yolo County (site map attached). The Los Rios Check Dam is owned by CDFW and operated by Los Rios Farms. The new infrastructure would be owned and operated consistent with the current agreement.

**Funding:**

<b>Estimated Total Project</b>	
<b>Costs:</b>	\$12,260,313
<b>Total Secured Funding:</b>	\$2,260,313
<b>Estimated Total Remaining</b>	
<b>Costs:</b>	\$10,000,000

Project Task	Secured Funding	Funding Source	Remaining Costs	Potential Funding Source
Planning, Design, and environmental documentation/permitting prerequisite to construction*	\$2,260,313	Ecosystem Restoration Program Grant Agreement	\$0	N/A
Construction	\$0	unknown	\$10,000,000	DWR/USBR
*ERP secured funding includes Upper Reach and YBWA Reach				

**Permitting:** Clean Water Act Section 404: application not yet developed  
Endangered Species Act: application pending CDFW approved project description - not yet developed

Central Valley Flood Protection Board Encroachment Permit: application pending CDFW approved Project Description - application not yet developed

Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 408: application pending CDFW approved project description - application not yet developed

CA Endangered Species Act, Section 2081: application pending DFW approved project description - application not yet developed

Clean Water Act Section 401, Water Quality Certification (RWQCB): application pending CDFW approved project description - application not yet developed

CEQA/NEPA: Admin Draft IS/MND in development -- pending CDFW approved project description - not yet developed

**Estimated Timeline:** 2012-2019

- April 2012-March 2016: ERP grant term
- May 2017: earliest opportunity for construction commencement

**Known Obstacles to Implementation:** Existing gas lines.

**Project Proponent:** Yolo Basin Foundation—ERP Grantee  
Robin Kulakow: robin@yolobasin.org, (530) 756-7248

California Department of Water Resources/US Bureau of Reclamation—NMFS BiOp RPA Implementation: Karen Enstrom, DWR