



Bureau of Reclamation
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Field Activity Advisory Riparian Habitat Mapping Project May 13-15 and June 10-28, 2013

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) Riparian Habitat Mapping Project will map current riparian (along the banks of the river) vegetation conditions in the SJRRP Restoration Area.

Riparian vegetation in the SJRRP Restoration Area was last mapped in 2000 by the California Department of Water Resources. Since October 2009, SJRRP has been releasing Interim Flows that rewetted several dry portions of the river channel and contributed to near-river groundwater, resulting in riparian vegetation changes.

One of the SJRRP Conservation Measures from the Program Environmental Impact Statement/Report states that a riparian habitat mapping, mitigation, and monitoring plan will be developed for the SJRRP to create a crediting mechanism for increased acreage or improved ecological function of riparian and wetland habitats resulting from the implementation of SJRRP actions, including Interim and Restoration Flows. The intent of the monitoring and mapping is to document and track the changes in riparian vegetation over time. The Riparian Habitat Mapping Project is the first component of implementing this Conservation Measure.

Objectives:

- Create a map of current riparian vegetation conditions that captures both vegetation composition and quality, such as age or current stage of growth, extent of invasive species, and levels and types of disturbance
- Document how riparian vegetation has changed in response to Interim Flow releases
- Provide the basis for detecting future riparian vegetation change in response to additional years of Interim Flow and full Restoration Flow releases

Who: Bureau of Reclamation and Stillwater Sciences

What: At approximately 9-20 locations in each of the five San Joaquin River reaches of the Restoration Area, a crew of two botanists/plant ecologists will collect data on vegetation composition and condition using the California Native Plant Society and California Department of Fish and Wildlife protocol for vegetation rapid assessment (<http://www.cnps.org/cnps/vegetation/pdf/protocol-combined.pdf>).

At each assessment location, the following information will be collected: (1) the percent cover of dominant plant species in the tree, shrub, and ground layers will be recorded on a data form; (2) vegetation conditions such as height and age or stage of growth will be recorded on a data form; (3) site conditions about the substrate, and any flood indicators,

Field Activity Advisory, Riparian Habitat Mapping Project, cont'd.

levels and types of human disturbance, and/or invasive species will be recorded on a data form; (4) the location will be recorded with a GPS unit; (5) several photographs of vegetation conditions will be taken; and (6) the geographic extent of the assessed vegetation type will be delineated on an aerial photograph.

The collected data will be used to delineate, assess the accuracy of, and update the SJRRP Restoration Area riparian habitat map.

Where: Approximately 9 to 20 locations, depending upon vegetation diversity, in each of the five Restoration Area reaches. Data will be collected in parks, public properties, and private landowner properties where access is granted in advance.

When: May 13-15 and June 10 – 28, 2013

Considerations:

Questions about this activity should be directed to the study's agency point-of-contact using the information provided below.

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Bureau of Reclamation

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Questions about the SJRRP's field activities on public and private land should be directed to the SJRRP Outreach Coordinator or Landowner Coordinator using the information provided below.

Margaret Gidding

Outreach Coordinator

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Craig Moyle

Landowner Coordinator

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**Contact the SJRRP Hotline, 916-978-4398, or email
InterimFlows@restoresjr.net
if you see any problems or have any concerns.**

**For more information, please visit the SJRRP Web site at www.restoresjr.net.
Field Advisories for activities are available at
www.restoresjr.net/activities/field/index.html**