

## 1.0 Introduction

Section 7.0 of the Conservation Strategy presents methods for coordinating the acquisition of permits for implementation of the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP). These approaches have been initiated and are expected to be used in the future to mitigate impacts on species and habitats that result from CVFPP actions. As explained in Section 7.0, one regional permitting tool used by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is the development of advance mitigation projects.

This appendix further describes the purpose and benefits of advance mitigation, DWR's efforts to date, and the process for selecting the first set of advance mitigation projects that will support the CVFPP. Each advance mitigation project has been, or will be, carefully selected in collaboration with permitting agencies to mitigate the effects of activities that will be implemented by DWR and Local Maintaining Agencies in the Systemwide Planning Area (SPA). DWR and the resource agencies are continuing to develop the mechanisms for crediting and a process for tracking the credits. Future advance mitigation projects are likely to follow the same process described herein.

## 2.0 Background

The traditional project-by-project approach to mitigation can result in delays in project approval prompted by lengthy negotiations and/or approvals, temporal loss of habitat between the time when projects are constructed and the time when habitat is reestablished, inflated costs, small and fragmented mitigation sites, high long-term maintenance costs, lower long-term viability, and poor integration with regional conservation priorities.

In light of these issues, DWR is funding advance mitigation projects that are intended to result in mitigation credits being available well before flood projects or actions that need mitigation are permitted. Because the mitigation is purchased and habitat is restored and protected before the immediate need occurs, there is no temporal loss of habitat that can result in lower mitigation ratios, and a lower overall costs for mitigation. Advance mitigation sites provide a preapproved type and amount of habitat credits.

This coordinated mitigation effort provides a variety of benefits, both in terms of completing flood projects and in terms of improving conservation. The advance mitigation approach can increase the efficiency of the permit process for flood projects, reduce project approval delays, and reduce mitigation costs. From a conservation perspective, it can establish mitigation sites that provide better conservation outcomes. These sites can be connected or be located adjacent to existing conservation areas, contribute to improving ecosystem functions, and be more viable over the long term.