

***Appendix D. Sacramento River National
Wildlife Refuge Fishing Plan***

I. Introduction

Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) is part of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Complex) and is located in the Sacramento Valley of north-central California. The Valley is bordered by the Sierra Nevada Range and Cascade Range to the east and the North Coast Range to the west. The Refuge is composed of 26 properties (units) along a 77-mile stretch of the Sacramento River between the cities of Red Bluff and Princeton, 90 miles north of the metropolitan area of Sacramento. As of June 2005, the Refuge consists of approximately 10,304 acres of riparian habitat, wetlands, uplands, intensively managed walnut and almond orchards, and row crops in Tehama, Butte, and Glenn counties. Colusa County is within the approved refuge boundary, but the Refuge does not currently administer any properties along the river within the county.

The Valley is an extensive agricultural area, which historically vast herds of pronghorn and tule elk and millions of wintering ducks and geese. Lands that surround the Refuge are mostly orchards and irrigated rice lands with some dairying, safflower, barley, wheat, and alfalfa crops. Topography is flat with a gentle slope to the south. Predominant soil type is Columbia loam.

Riparian habitat along the Sacramento River provides important habitat for endangered and threatened species, anadromous salmonids, native resident fishes, migratory birds, native plants, and to the natural processes of the River. There has been a 98 percent reduction of riparian habitat along the Sacramento River. Habitat loss resulted from forest clearing, primarily for agriculture, dams for flood control and water storage on the main stem and tributaries, which attenuate and alter hydrology and geomorphology, and bank stabilization, such as levees and rip-rap, for flood control. The relatively small amount of remaining riparian woodland provides a strikingly disproportionate amount of habitat value for wildlife. The Refuge is managed to maintain, enhance and restore habitats for threatened and endangered species, migratory birds, anadromous fish, and native plants and vegetation. As much as possible, habitat is managed for natural diversity of indigenous flora and fauna. Riparian forests are being restored by converting flood-prone croplands along the Sacramento River in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), River Partners (RP), and local farmers.

There are a variety of outdoor activities that occur on the Sacramento River and adjacent lands. Hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, environmental education, interpretation, tubing, and canoeing are some of the commonly known activities that occur during different times of the year on some private and public lands (Figure 25, Chapter 5, CCP, USFWS 2005). Fishing is a traditional outdoor activity that is consistent with Federal and State law as appropriate.

The purpose of this fishing plan is to outline how the program will be operated within the Refuge. In addition, the fishing plan documents how the Refuge will provide safe fishing

opportunities, while minimizing conflicts with other priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses.

II. Conformance with Statutory Authorities

National Wildlife Refuges are guided by the mission and goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System, purposes for which individual Refuges were established, policies, laws and international treaties. Relevant guidance includes the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (Improvement Act), Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, and selected portions of the Code of Federal Regulations and Fish and Wildlife Service Manual. The Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, as amended, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to administer refuges, hatcheries, and other conservation areas for recreational use when such uses did not interfere with the area's primary purpose.

The Improvement Act identified a new mission statement for the Refuge System; established six wildlife-dependent recreational uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation); emphasized conservation and enhancement of the quality and diversity of fish and wildlife habitat; stressed the importance of partnerships with Federal and State agencies, Tribes, organizations, industry, and the general public; mandated public involvement in decisions on the acquisition and management of refuges; and required, prior to acquisition of new refuge lands, identification of existing compatible wildlife-dependent uses that would be permitted to continue on an interim basis pending completion of comprehensive conservation planning.

The Improvement Act establishes the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior for managing and protecting the Refuge System; requires a CCP for each refuge by the year 2012; provides guidelines and directives for the administration and management of all areas in the Refuge System, including wildlife refuges, areas for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife threatened with extinction, wildlife ranges, game ranges, wildlife management areas, and waterfowl production areas. The Improvement Act also establishes a formal process for determining compatibility of uses. Before any uses, including wildlife-dependent recreational uses, are allowed on refuges, Federal law requires that they be formally determined compatible. A compatible use is defined as a use that, in the sound professional judgment of the refuge manager, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the purposes of the refuge or mission of the Refuge System. Sound professional judgment is defined as a finding, determination, or decision that is consistent with the principles of sound fish and wildlife management and administration, available science and resources (funding, personnel, facilities, and other infrastructure), and applicable laws. The Service strives to provide wildlife-dependent recreational uses when compatible. If financial resources are not available to design, operate, and maintain a priority use, the refuge manager will take reasonable steps to obtain outside assistance from the State and other conservation interests.

The Refuge was established in 1989 by the authority provided under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986, using monies made available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. The Service proposed and Congress authorized the acquisition of 18,000 acres of land for establishment of the Sacramento River Refuge. The area considered for acquisition is located along the Sacramento River between Colusa and Red Bluff in Colusa, Glenn, Butte, and Tehama counties. A combination of fee title and conservation easement acquisitions was used to protect this habitat. The purpose of the Sacramento River Refuge is to preserve, restore, and enhance riparian habitat for threatened and endangered species, migratory birds, anadromous fish, native plants and vegetation. Compatibility determinations are included in Appendix B of the CCP (USFWS 2005).

Based upon biological impacts described in the Fishing Compatibility Determination (CD), Comprehensive Conservation Plan, and Environmental Assessment (USFWS 2005), which are incorporated by reference, fishing within the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge is a compatible use and will not materially interfere with or detract from the purposes for which the Refuge was established. Stipulations within the Fishing CD to ensure compatibility include: refuge-specific regulations, monitoring of fishing use, promoting the use of non-toxic sinkers, maintaining access facilities, and routine law enforcement patrols.

III. Statement of Objectives

Fishing is identified in the Refuge Improvement Act as a priority use for refuges when it is compatible with the refuge purposes and mission of the Refuge System. As a result the Refuge encourages fishing for legal take of freshwater game fish species. The fishing program will be of the highest quality, conducted in a safe and cost-effective manner, and to the extent practicable, carried out in accordance with State regulations, see 8 RM 6, Sport Fishing. The Fishing Plan was developed to provide safe fishing opportunities, while minimizing impacts to wildlife, plants and conflicts with other wildlife-dependent recreational uses. The Refuge fishing program will comply with the Fish and Game Code or from Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations as adopted by the Fish and Game Commission under authority of the Fish and Game Code and managed in accordance with Refuge Manual 8 RM 6, Sport Fishing.

Fishing will be permitted in accordance with State and Federal regulations and seasons to ensure that it will not interfere with the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. Therefore, sport fishing on the Refuge is in compliance with State regulations and seasons, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd-ee), and the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k).

The purpose of this fishing plan is to outline how the program will be operated within the Refuge. The objective of the fishing plan is to provide safe, quality fishing opportunities, for the visiting public. The Service has determined fishing to be a compatible wildlife-

dependent recreation (USFWS 2005). The fishing program will not detract from the purposes of the Refuge or the mission of the Refuge System nor will it interfere with other wildlife-dependent recreational uses or with wildlife management objectives. California Fish and Game Department (2004b) also has determined that fish and wildlife resources found along the Sacramento River are healthy and robust enough to support regulated hunting and fishing, complimenting the other activities available to the public in their enjoyment of their public resources.

IV. Assessment.

Evaluate the fishing resources on the refuge populations and habitat. Points to be discussed include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. Is the fishery resource capable of sustaining fishing pressure?

Yes, the fishery resource is capable of sustaining fishing pressure. The Sacramento River is currently open to fishing on other public lands surrounding the Refuge. Species that may occur on the Refuge include Pacific, river and, western brook lamprey, white and green sturgeon, threadfin and American shad, Chinook salmon (Central Valley fall, late fall, and spring run as well as winter run), coho salmon, sockeye salmon, Central Valley steelhead, rainbow and brown trout, tui and thicketail chub, Lahontan redbreast, hitch, California roach, Sacramento blackfish, Sacramento splittail, hardhead, Sacramento squawfish, speckled dace, golden shiner, fathead minnow, goldfish, carp, Sacramento sucker, black, brown, and yellow bullhead, white and channel catfish, mosquitofish, Mississippi silverside, threespine stickleback, Sacramento perch, bluegill, redear and green sunfish, pumpkinseed, warmouth, white and black crappie, striped, largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass, bigscale logperch, tule perch, and prickly, ruffle and staghorn sculpin.

Federally listed species that occur on the Refuge include: Chinook salmon, Sacramento River winter-run evolutionary significant unit (ESU) (Federal and State-listed endangered species), Chinook salmon, Central Valley spring-run ESU (Federal and State-listed threatened species), Chinook salmon, Central Valley fall-run ESU and late-fall-run ESU (Federal candidate species and State species of concern), steelhead, Central Valley ESU (Federal-listed threatened species), Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (federally listed threatened species), bald eagle (federally listed threatened species and State-listed endangered species), western yellow-billed cuckoo (Federal candidate species, State-listed threatened species, and FWS Bird of Conservation Concern), and giant garter snake (federally listed endangered species and State-listed threatened species). Critical Habitat for the Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon was designated June 16, 1993 (58 CFR 33212, June 16, 1993). Critical habitat includes the river bottom and riparian zone, which are those terrestrial areas that directly affect a freshwater aquatic ecosystem. Critical Habitat for this ESU includes the Sacramento River from Keswick Dam to Chipps Island, all the waters westward from Chipps Island to the

Carquinez Strait Bridge, all the waters of San Pablo Bay, and all the waters of the San Francisco Bay north of the San Francisco Bay–Oakland. The Section 7 consultation with USFWS (2004) and NOAA-Fisheries (2004) concluded that the CCP (and Fishing Plan) is not likely to adversely affect any of the special status species/designated critical habitat occurring on the Refuge.

Non-native bass, bluegill, crappie, and sunfish compete for habitat with native species. Competition is especially severe in oxbows and sloughs, which provide relatively scarce still-water habitats, which are dominated by non-native fishes. Non-native bass also prey on juvenile salmonids and other native.

The Refuge adopts harvest regulations set by the State, which uses the best available population information. Sources of population data for Chinook salmon include the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Fisheries Resources Offices and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

B. Does the refuge control all access to the resource? If not, can the refuge regulate sport fishing on these waters?

No, the Refuge does not control all access to the resource. With this fishing plan, the Refuge will provide consistent regulations with the State and NOAA NMFS and will provide additional enforcement of these regulations.

C. Is a fishery management plan needed?

No, a fishery management plan is not needed. Management of the fishery resources already occurs through the Fisheries Resource Offices and other agencies, including CDFG and NOAA NMFS.

V. Description of Fishing Program

A. Areas of the refuge that support the fishery resource.

Game fish species occur in open water on the Refuge in the main River channel, sloughs, oxbow lakes, and on the inundated floodplain. Open water constitutes water, either standing or moving, and does not necessarily imply vegetation. Gravel and sand bars appear as open, unvegetated areas in air photos, but ground truthing reveals several annual and short-lived perennial species of sun-loving herbs, grasses and aromatic subshrubs. The vegetation cover is less than 50 percent. The above descriptions of open water, gravel and sand bar were developed by the Geographic Information Center at California State University, Chico (2002) for mapping the riparian vegetation of the Sacramento River.

A diversity of game fish species use various types of wetlands during portions of their life history, including spawning, migration, and wintering periods. The

Sacramento River, its tributaries, sloughs, abandoned channels, oxbow lakes, and ponds support freshwater wetlands. These wetland areas are described as follows.

The river channel is dynamic: it varies with meander belt position from shallows near gravel bars to deep holes below steep cut banks. Depth and flow velocity also varies with seasonal differences in runoff and with flow releases from Keswick Dam. Generally, water in the channel is relatively fast moving and cold. Oxbow lakes occur on the middle Sacramento River floodplain. They form on meandering rivers when the channel breaches a narrow gap of land in the loop and a sand plug seals the upriver arm of the loop. They vary in depth depending on siltation. Water is calm and relatively warm compared to the main channel. Sloughs and swales convey and distribute water on the floodplain. They are usually wet only during high water and flood events. Gravel pits were excavated on the Sacramento River floodplain for private and public roads and an experimental artificial salmon-spawning project conducted by the Bureau of Reclamation. Gravel pits form wetlands when the bottom contacts the water table. Large portions of the Sacramento River floodplain become temporary wetlands when inundated with seasonal runoff from the tributaries and releases from Keswick Dam.

B. Areas to be opened to the public.

The Refuge currently consists 10,304 acres of agricultural, wetland, grassland, and riparian habitats (Table 1, Chapter 1, CCP). Approximately 5,096 acres will be open by 2005 and an additional 3,165 acres within 2-10 years to total 8,261 acres (80 percent) open to fishing (Figure 28, Chapter 5, CCP). Gravel bars, sloughs, oxbow lakes, and the inundated floodplain on all Refuge units will be open to the public for fishing.

Access for fishing on the Refuge is primarily by boat access. Bank fishing can be accessed by boat or by walking onto any of the Refuge units that are not designated as sanctuary. Please refer to Figure 28 in the CCP for more information (USFWS 2005). As funding is secured, eight units (Rio Vista, Pine Creek, Capay, Ord Bend, Sul Norte, Codora, Packer, and Drumheller Slough) will have parking areas developed for pedestrian access.

C. Fishery-related species to be taken

Game fish species which will be allowed for legal take include all native and introduced species listed in the California regulations Freshwater Sport Fishing i.e. Chinook salmon, steelhead, trout, sturgeon, sunfish, shad, striped bass, carp, catfish, bullhead, crappie, bass and spotted bass. Fishing will be permitted in accordance with State and Federal regulations and seasons to ensure that it will not interfere with the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

D. *Seasons*

Fishing will be permitted in accordance with State and Federal regulations and seasons to ensure that it will not interfere with the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. For some species, fishing will occur year-round. For others like the winter-run Chinook salmon, the State seasons are designed to protect listed species. The winter-run Chinook salmon season ends in December because this species begins their run in January.

E. *Justification for permit, if one is required.*

Anyone 16 years and older must have a State fishing license to take any kind of fish. See section G Angler Requirements below.

Anglers do not need to obtain a Refuge fishing permit or pay a special user fee to fish on the Refuge. In the future, Refuge user fees may be considered. There is a fee for State fishing licenses.

F. *Procedures for consultation and coordination with State.*

- Continue to solicit input from partners and keep lines of communication open.
- Continue to attend the Sacramento River Area Forum meetings.
- Ensure accurate public information and provide news releases.
- CDFG (2004b) also has determined that fish and wildlife resources found along the Sacramento River are healthy and robust enough to support regulated hunting and fishing, complimenting the other activities available to the public in their enjoyment of their public resources.

G. *Methods of enforcement.*

- Public use signs depicting allowable uses will be placed above the ordinary high water mark and at vehicle access points.
- California Department of Boating and Waterways boating guide that depicts the unit name and river mile location, a large laminated boating guide and the Sacramento River Refuge brochure will be placed at public boat ramps and units accessible by vehicle.
- Gate parking areas to allow pedestrian access only.
- Landward boundaries are closed to discourage trespass through adjacent private lands.
- Law enforcement patrols by game wardens, park rangers, refuge officers to enforce state and federal regulations.
- Camping is allowed on gravel bars up to seven days during any 30-day period. We prohibit camping on all other refuge lands.

H. *Funding and staffing requirements for the sport fishing program.*

The following funding/annual costs (based on FY 2003 costs) would be required to administer and manage fishing activities as described above:

	One-time Costs	Annual Costs
Administration		\$2,000
Law Enforcement		\$5,000
Outreach, Education, Monitoring		\$3,000
Signs and brochures	\$3,000	\$1,000
Maintenance of facilities		\$3,000
TOTAL	\$3,000	\$14,000

Approximately 25 staff days would be required to monitor and conduct the fishing program for the Sacramento River Refuge. This would include administration, law enforcement patrol, education and outreach, and monitoring of the program. It would also include sign posting. During the first year, the Refuge would install information signs both at available parking areas as well as at access points above the ordinary high water mark, and developing a general Refuge brochure. The total cost of the program is expected to be \$14,000.00 per year. The initial setup in the first year for the hunt program is expected to cost an additional \$3,000.00. No user fees are being proposed at this time. Base funding is will need to be increased to cover costs. Currently, the Refuge has two law enforcement officers (funding for a third officer in fiscal year 2005) that patrol along the Sacramento River Refuge.

I. Consideration of providing opportunities for anglers with disabilities and youth anglers.

- All parking areas and portable restrooms are fully accessible.
- Develop parking lots at vehicle accessible fishing units (Rio Vista, Pine Creek, Capay, Ord Bend, Sul Norte, Codora, Packer and Drumheller Slough).
- Work with partners to develop fishing opportunities on refuge units and other public lands. Nearby facilities have opportunities for disabled access (see Appendix N of the CCP).

VI. Measures Taken to Avoid Conflicts With Other Management Objectives.

The impacts addressed here are discussed in detail in Environmental Assessment (Appendix A, Chapter 4) for the CCP (USFWS 2005) which is incorporated by reference.

A. Biological Conflicts.

- Open only riverine areas, oxbow lakes and ponds to fishing.
- Maintain parking areas, roads, and access facilities to prevent erosion or habitat damage (see Figure 28 of the CCP (USFWS 2005)).
- Promote use of non-toxic sinkers, split shot, and lures by providing information in refuge kiosks.
- Monitor fishing activities to ensure facilities are adequate and wildlife disturbance is minimal.
- Section 7 consultations with USFWS (2004) and NOAA-Fisheries (2004) concluded that the CCP (USFWS 2005) is not likely to adversely affect any of the special

status species/designated critical habitat occurring on the Refuge including: bald eagle, giant garter snake, winter-run Chinook salmon, spring-run Chinook salmon, Central Valley steelhead, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western yellow billed cuckoo, fall-run Chinook salmon, and late fall-run Chinook salmon.

B. Public Use Conflicts.

Reducing conflicts between fishing and hunting, non-consumptive uses, and neighboring landowners will be minimized by the following:

- Disseminate California Department of Boating & Waterways boating guide, which depicts Refuge units by river mile, at public boat ramps i.e. Red Bluff Diversion Dam, Woodson Bridge, Irvine Finch, Ord Bend, Butte City, and Sacramento River-Colusa State Park, by 2005.
- Place public use signs at vehicle access points and at the approximate ordinary high water mark on all Refuge units open to the public. The signs will depict the unit name, river mile, and public uses allowed/prohibited (Figures 26 & 27 of the CCP).
- Provide information about the Refuge fishing program by installing informational signs/kiosks, creating and distributing brochures, and utilizing the Refuge's website (www.sacramentovalleyrefuges.fws.gov).
- Law enforcement patrols by game wardens, park rangers, and refuge officers to enforce state and federal regulations.
- Landward boundaries are closed to discourage trespass through adjacent private lands.
- Restrict entry and departure times on the refuge.
- Anglers using boats (motorized and non-motorized) must abide by the boating stipulations described in the State and Coast Guard regulations on boating.

C. Administrative Conflicts.

There are no administrative conflicts with this proposal at this time.

VII. Conduct of the Sport Fishing Programs.

The following special regulations are proposed to replace the existing special regulations for Sport Fishing on the Sacramento River Refuge. The regulations will be noticed in the Federal Register and incorporated into 50 CFR 32.24, California Refuge-specific regulations.

A. Refuge-specific fishing regulations.

Sport Fishing. We allow sport fishing on designated areas of the refuge in accordance with State regulations subject to the following conditions:

1. We prohibit fires on the refuge, except portable gas stoves on gravel bars (see 50 CFR 27.95(a)).
2. We allow camping on gravel bars up to seven days during any 30-day period. We prohibit camping on all other refuge lands (see Camping and Recreational Boating Compatibility Determination (USFWS 2005)).

3. The refuge is open for day use access from 1 hour before sunrise until 1 hour after sunset. We allow access during other hours on gravel bars only (see condition 2).
4. We do not allow cutting or removal of vegetation for blind construction or for making trails.
5. On Packer Lake, due to primitive access, we only allow boats up to 14 feet (4.2m) and canoes.

B. Anticipated public reaction to the sport fishing program.

Most anglers would support the opening of the Sacramento River Refuge to fishing. Hunting and fishing have a strong traditional use on the Sacramento River. During the comment periods and public meetings for the CCP in 2001 and 2004, a variety of opinions were heard. The majority of the comments received supported increasing access to the Refuge and opening as much of the Refuge to hunting and fishing as possible (see Chapter 2 and Appendix R of the CCP). Some anglers, and other Refuge visitors, may object to boat only access to many of the Refuge units and for not installing additional boat ramps on the Refuge.

The refuge will provide opportunities for approximately 1,000 annual fishing visits. A total of 5,500 annual visits are estimated for all wildlife-dependent recreational uses.

C. Media selection for announcing and publicizing the sport fishing program.

The refuge has a standard list of local media contacts for news releases. A news release announcing the Refuge opening of 23 river miles to fishing will be sent to these contacts. A draft news release regarding the fishing program is attached. An Outreach plan is also included below.

Outreach plan

1. Issue

The Service intends to propose the opening of Sacramento River Refuge to fishing.

2. Basic facts about the issue

- Gravel bars, sloughs, oxbow lakes, and the inundated floodplain are proposed to be opened on all Refuge units.
- Twenty-three river front miles and all seasonally submerged areas below the ordinary high water mark will be opened for fishing by 2005.
- Fishing will be allowed in accordance with State and Refuge-specific fishing regulations during the legal fishing seasons and species.
- Fishing will be permitted in accordance with State and Federal regulations and seasons to ensure that it will not interfere with the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

- Method of enforcement and control will take place through boundary and public use signs, information kiosks at boat ramps and routine patrol by CDFG wardens and refuge officers.
- Landward boundaries are closed to discourage trespass through adjacent private lands.
- Entry and departure times on the refuge will be restricted.

3. Communication goals

- Continue to solicit input from partners and keep lines of communication open.
- Continue to attend the Sacramento River Area Forum meetings.
- Ensure accurate public information and news stories.
- Continue to solicit input from local/county Fish and Game Commissions.
- Utilize the Refuge's website to provide information (www.sacramentovalleyrefuges.fws.gov).

4. Message

A quality, compatible and safe fishing program can be implemented and maintained on the Sacramento River Refuge.

5. Interested parties

State fish and wildlife agencies; Tribes; conservation groups; hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation groups; educators; farmers and ranchers; other federal agencies; Members of Congress; state and county representatives; news media; and many members of the public.

6. Date

March 2005

D. Angler application and registration procedures (if needed)

Anglers are required to have a valid State fishing license to fish on the Refuge. See section F Angler Requirements below.

E. Description of angler selection process (if needed)

At this time, there are no restrictions or limits on the number of anglers permitted on the Refuge.

F. Angler requirements

(1) Allowable equipment

All fish may be taken only by angling with one closely attended rod and line or one hand line with not more than three hooks nor more than three artificial lures attached thereto.

(2) Use of open fires

We prohibit fires on the refuge, except portable gas stoves on gravel bars (see 50 CFR 27.95(a)).

(3) Licensing and permits

Anyone 16 years and older must have a State fishing license to take any kind of fish. Every person, while engaged in taking any fish, shall display their valid sport fishing license by attaching it to their outer clothing at or above the waistline.

(4) Creel census.

There will be no reporting requirements of anglers unless required by CDFG.

(5) Reporting requirements

There will be no reporting requirements of anglers unless required by CDFG.

(6) Angler training and safety

Anglers are not required to successfully complete a course in order to purchase a State sport fishing license.

(7) Other information (use of boats, motors, etc.)

On Packer Lake, due to primitive access, we only allow boats up to 14 feet (4.2m) and canoes.

VIII. Compatibility Determination.

See Appendix B in CCP (USFWS 2005)

IX. Appropriate NEPA Documents

See EA (Appendix A, CCP (USFWS 2005))

X. Evaluation

A. Monitoring and reporting use levels and trends.

Auto counters, angler contact in the field, comments during agency and public meetings, e-mails and letters are some of the methods used to evaluate visitor use levels, trends, and needs. The visitor use will be recorded annually in the Refuge Management and Information System.

B. Surveying needs of the fishing visitor.

Through the on going research program on the Refuge, universities will be contacted to develop a survey assessing visitor needs.

C. Are we meeting program objectives?

Currently, on the Refuge only Packer Lake is open to fishing. The fishing objective to: provide high quality fishing opportunities on 23 river-front miles and all

seasonally submerged areas below the high water mark will be posted open to the public by 2005 will be met through CCP strategies. Monitoring will determine if we are meeting program objectives.

D. *Do we need to resolve any conflicts?*

Not at this time. The fishing program and outreach plans are written to minimize future conflicts.

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE -
REGION 1

Sacramento NWR Complex
752 County Road 99 W
Willows, CA 95988

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Denise Dachner
530/934-2801

Sacramento River Refuge Lands Open to Fishing

The Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) has opened fishing for species that occur in the Refuge's sloughs, oxbow lakes, and inundated floodplain and fishing from its exposed sand and gravel bars between Red Bluff Diversion Dam and Princeton. Take of all native and introduced fish species will be allowed in accordance with the State of California and Refuge-specific freshwater sport fishing regulations during the legal fishing seasons. Brochures available at most public boat ramps and posted public use signs, including the River-mile for reference, will assist anglers in determining Refuge unit locations. For further information and refuge specific fishing regulations see SacramentoValleyRefuges.fws.gov or call 530-934-2801.



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies. 02/05

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