

**AGENDA ITEM #12**

January 14, 2005

To: Delta Protection Commission  
From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director  
Subject: Update on Acquisition of Land in the Primary Zone Since January 1, 1993 by  
Public Agencies and Nonprofit Groups  
*(For Commission Information Only)*

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**I. Fee Title Land Ownership in the Delta Primary Zone**

**Background:**

In January 1993, of the **487,625 acres** of land and water in the Primary Zone, approximately 35,324 acres were in public agency ownership. The 1,566-acre Jepson Prairie Preserve was owned by The Nature Conservancy, a nonprofit organization.

**In 1993, the total in public and nonprofit ownership was 35,324 acres or 7.2% of the Primary Zone.**

**At the end of 2004, the total in public and nonprofit ownership is 83,823 acres or 17.19% of the Primary Zone, a small increase from 83,704 (17.16%) in January 2004.**

**Fee Title Acquisitions in 2004:**

In 2004, the only fee title acquisition was of a 119-acre parcel in the Yolo Bypass by the Department of Fish and Game. This property had been held in easement title by DFG since 1991, and in 2004, DFG exercised its Right of First Refusal to acquire the property. The property will be managed as part of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.

**Land Ownership in the Delta Primary Zone as of January 1, 1993**

Land ownership described in the Land Use Background Report was:

- Ports of Sacramento and Stockton owned 4,124 acres;
- Cities and Counties owned 1,567 acres;
- Ironhouse Sanitary District owned 2,900 acres;
- East Bay Regional Park District owned or managed 603 acres;
- Department of Parks and Recreation owned 4,857 acres of land and water-covered area;
- Department of Fish and Game owned 8,080 acres of land and water-covered area;
- Department of Water Resources owned 8,545 acres [plus 193 acres by Cache Slough];

- CalTrans owned 630 acres of land, in addition to rights-of-way;
- Corps of Engineers owned 250 acres on the tip of Grand Island;
- Navy owned 1,900 acres;
- Bureau of Reclamation owned 109 acres at the Delta Cross Channel.
- Non-profit The Nature Conservancy owned Jepsen Prairie Preserve lands of 1,566 acres.

	1993 (in acres)	2004 (2004 changes in bold)
Ports (Sacramento and Stockton)	4,124	4,124
Ironhouse Sanitary District	2,900	3,700
Cities and Counties	1,567	1,659
East Bay Regional Park District	603	2,550
Department of Parks and Recreation	4,857	5,120
Department of Fish and Game	8,080	<b>24,690*</b>
Department of Water Resources	8,738	17,007
CalTrans	630	630
Corps of Engineers	250	1,890
Navy	1,900	1,900
Bureau of Reclamation	109	1,366
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	None	739
Nonprofits	1,566	18,448
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,324</b>	<b>83,823</b>

\* In 2004, DFG exercised its Right of First Refusal to acquire a 119-acre property in fee title that it had held under easement since 1991.

### **Lands Acquired Since 1993:**

(Note: Bold type indicates acquisitions in 2004)

#### **Cities and Counties:**

City of Davis: The City of Davis purchased property adjacent to Putah Creek with the intent of maintaining most of the site in agriculture and enhancing the riparian corridor.

City of Davis, Yolo County

82 acres

Sacramento County: The County purchased the land under the Community of Locke in

anticipation of subdividing the property and selling it to building owners.

Locke 10 acres (2002)

**Special Districts:**

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD): EBRPD serves Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and is funded through property taxes. EBRPD acquired a parcel on eastern Orwood Tract in Contra Costa County in 2002.

Big Break (Eastern Half), Contra Costa County 980 acres (1995)  
Big Break (Western Half), Contra Costa County 688 acres (1999)  
Orwood Tract, Contra Costa County 279 acres (2002)

Ironhouse Sanitary District (ISD):

Jersey Island, Contra Costa County 800 acres

**State Agencies:**

Department of Fish and Game: Department of Fish and Game acquired in fee title a 119-acre property in the Yolo Bypass that it had held in easement title since 1991.

Yolo Bypass, Yolo County 3,583 acres  
Yolo Bypass, Yolo County 12,808 acres (2001)  
Yolo Bypass, Yolo County 100 acres (2002)  
**Yolo Bypass, Yolo County 119 acres (2004)**

Department of Water Resources:

Sherman Island, Sacramento County 8,146 acres  
Hood, Sacramento County 123 acres (1995)

Department of Parks and Recreation:

Delta Meadows, Sacramento County 263 acres (1999)

**Federal Agencies:**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: The Fish and Wildlife Service has been acquiring property within the boundary of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Sacramento County. Acquisitions to date include:

Lodi Gun Club, Sacramento County 287 acres (1994)  
Agri-Versified, Sacramento County 227 acres (1997)

Lewis Ranch, Sacramento County	50 acres (1998)
Samra Property, Sacramento County	104 acres (2000)
Lewis Investment Company	71 acres (2003)

Note: Fish and Wildlife Service received a grant from CALFED to acquire 4,750-acre Liberty Island in the Yolo Bypass in Yolo and Solano Counties. The Trust for Public Lands acquired the land in 1999; transfer of ownership must await certification of the environmental document currently under preparation.

Army Corps of Engineers:

Little Holland Tract, Solano and Yolo Counties	1,640 acres (1999)
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Bureau of Reclamation: The Bureau purchased a parcel to use as a staging area for construction of new fish screening structures at the Tracy Pumps.

Prospect Island, Solano County	1,228 acres (1995)
Bettencourt Property, Contra Costa County	29 acres (2002)

Non-Profit Agencies:

Solano Land Trust (formerly Solano County Farmlands and Open Space Foundation): The Jepsen Prairie Preserve was *transferred* from the Nature Conservancy to the Solano County Farmlands and Open Space Foundation in 1997 (*land was already in non-profit ownership*).

<i>Jepsen Prairie Preserve, Solano County</i>	<i>1,566 acres (1997)</i>
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The Nature Conservancy, Cosumnes Preserve:

McCormack Williamson Tract, Sacramento County	1,654 acres (1999)
Staten Island, San Joaquin County	9,102 acres (2001)
Cowell Property	329 acres (2002)

Trust for Public Land:

Liberty Island, Solano and Yolo Counties	4,760 acres (1999)
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Wildlands, Inc: Wildlands Inc. is a private company that creates mitigation banks:

Kimball Island Mitigation Bank	109 acres (1998)
Pope Ranch, Yolo Bypass (Giant Garter Snake Mitigation Bank)	391 acres (2001)

American Lands Conservancy: A nonprofit entity.

**II. Conservation Easements in the Delta Primary Zone:**

Acquisition of conservation easements is another method of influencing land uses on lands that remain in private ownership. Over the last several years, programs have funded acquisition of conservation easements on several thousand acres of land in the Delta:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has acquired easements on privately owned duck clubs, largely in the Yolo Bypass.
- USFWS has acquired easements on lands in the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.
- The Wildlife Conservation Board has acquired easements that protect and enhance wetland values and that would result in restoration of wetland habitat on agricultural land.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has acquired easements through the Wetlands Reserve Program that also results in the restoration of wetland habitat on agricultural land.
- Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and San Joaquin Council of Governments (SACOG) have acquired easements that provide mitigation for impacts of development. The DFG easement provides seasonal and year round habitat values through a mosaic of agriculture and wetlands, and the SJCOG easement keeps lands in row and field crops to protect Sandhill Crane foraging habitat.

**Easement acquisitions in 2004:**

Easement title was acquired on one property in the Delta in 2004; SJCOG, Inc. which is the administrator for the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan, acquired a 404-acre agricultural easement on the eastern half of the Nuss Property.

**The total acreage of listed conservation easements is 12,656 (2.6%), slightly up from 12,252 (2.5%) in January 2004.**

Bull Sprig Outing Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1996, USFWS	119 ac
Channel Ranch	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1998, USFWS	191 ac
Correira Property	Stones Lakes NWR, Sacramento County	Easement	1999, USFWS	148 ac
Cowell	San Joaquin County	Wildlife Friendly Farming Easement	2002, American Farmland Trust	329 ac
Dawson Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1996, USFWS	159 ac
Empire Tract	San Joaquin County	Conservation Easement	1995, WCB	261 ac
Fern Headreach Island	Stockton Deepwater Ship Channel, San Joaquin County	Conservation Easement	2000, WCB	168 ac
Frelier	Holland Tract,	Wetlands Reserve	1998, NRCS	493 ac

	Contra Costa County	Program Easement		
Glide In Ranch	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1996, USFWS	852 ac
Giovannoni	San Joaquin County	Wildlife Friendly Farming Easement	2003, The Nature Conservancy	649 ac
H-Pond Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1996, USFWS	479 ac
Laurel G Ranch	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1992, NRCS	366 ac
Laurel G Ranch	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1996, USFWS	122 ac
Liberty Farms	Solano County	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	1998, NRCS	232 ac
Liberty Farms	Solano County	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	2002, NRCS	565 ac
L&L Farms	Medford Island, San Joaquin County	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	1994, NRCS	232 ac
L&L Farms	Medford Island, San Joaquin County	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	1998, NRCS	512 ac
Los Rios Putah Creek	Yolo Bypass	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	2000, NRCS	158 ac
Mandeville Island	San Joaquin County	Wetlands Reserve Program Easement	2002, NRCS	3,067 ac
Nuss Farms	San Joaquin County	Agricultural Easement (lands to remain in row and field crops)	2002, SJCOG, Inc.	380 ac
<b>Nuss Farms</b>	<b>San Joaquin County</b>	<b>Agricultural Easement (lands to remain in row and field crops)</b>	<b>2004, SJCOG, Inc.</b>	<b>404 ac</b>
Palm Tract	Contra Costa County	Conservation Easement	1994, DFG	1,076 ac
Rising Wing Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	1998, USFWS	44 ac
River Island	Tyler Island, Sacramento County	Conservation Easement	1998, WCB and NRCS	800 ac
Saxon Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	Unk.	480 ac
Skyraker Duck Club	Yolo Bypass	Conservation Easement	Unk.	340 ac
Terminus Tract	San Joaquin County	Conservation Easement	Unk.	30 ac
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>12,656 ac</b>