

## **Delta Working Landscapes**

The Delta Working Landscapes projects are part of the State's Environmental Restoration Program. The projects, a collaboration between the Department of Fish and Game, the Delta Protection Commission and subcontractors Hart Restoration and Ducks Unlimited, plan to improve ecosystem quality, water quality, and levee system integrity.

Six projects have nearly been completed throughout the Delta. These projects include wildlife friendly farm buffers and habitat wetland restorations. Four projects are currently being implemented and will be completed by summer 2012.

Hart Restoration is creating vegetated buffers on ditch banks and hedgerow plantings that will improve water quality by reducing runoff of sediment and pesticides before these materials reach Delta rivers and sloughs. Additionally, native grasses, sedges, and other low growing species have been planted along the Elk Slough levee in Clarksburg. The native vegetation will also control erosion, discourage burrowing animal recruitment, lessen the threat of flooding, and create wildlife friendly habitats.

Ducks Unlimited is currently working on creating wetland habitats to attract waterfowl. These habitats will include millet, watergrass, timothy, and smartweed planted along swales and potholes. Ducks Unlimited habitat projects are located on Lower Jones Track, Hood, Clarksburg and Tyler Island.

The Delta Working Landscapes projects are pilot projects intended to serve as a mechanism for adoption by other farmers on a larger scale throughout the Delta. These projects will result in a Final Report information package and article to be submitted to a science journal and an agricultural journal to ensure delta-wide distribution of the results of the projects. The package will provide information promoting the practice of devoting space to habitat and describe the cost and benefits of such practices in broad terms of intrinsic cultural and ecological value.

The DPC is in the planning process for public outreach component of the grant. Public outreach will include a workshop type meeting to release the information package and discuss with local landowners the benefits of wildlife friendly agriculture. The meeting is planned for early-fall 2012.