



Field Activity Advisory Vegetation Monitoring Study June 11 – 15, 2012

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) Vegetation Monitoring Study will evaluate the establishment and development of riparian vegetation in response to Interim Flows within the SJRRP Restoration Area.

Friant Dam operations, agricultural development, and construction, operation, and maintenance of the Lower San Joaquin Flood Control Project modified riparian vegetation adjacent to the San Joaquin River. In 2010, SJRRP began releasing Interim Flows that rewetted several dry portions of channel and contributed to near-river groundwater.

Vegetation is a component for management of:

- Riparian Habitat. Establishment of riparian habitat along the San Joaquin River will be a key step in successful fish reintroduction (SJRRP Fisheries Management Plan). In-channel and floodplain habitat support fish at multiple life-stages by providing shade to maintain suitable water temperatures, shelter for juveniles to avoid predation, and input of terrestrial food sources.
- Channel Capacity. Vegetation growth may affect water surface elevations, and corresponding shallow groundwater levels.
- Flood Control. The change in river operations and potential for changed vegetation raises concerns for long term operations and maintenance needs to maintain flood control capacity throughout the system.

The SJRRP Physical Monitoring and Management Plan (PEIS/R, Appendix D, Part 1) describes vegetation surveys to obtain information on the establishment and recruitment of vegetation. Information gained through surveys would inform future actions related to fisheries habitat establishment, channel capacity management, and flood control system operations and maintenance needs.

Objectives

- Provide riparian vegetation recruitment and survival data to inform Friant Dam flow scheduling
- Detect spread of invasive species which inhibit establishment of native vegetation
- Understand how changes in vegetation may affect operations and maintenance needs to maintain flood control capacity

Who: Bureau of Reclamation

What: The SJRRP established approximately 20 vegetation monitoring transects in the Restoration Area (Reaches 1-5, Eastside Bypass, and Mariposa Bypass). Transects are being monitoring annually, and

added/decommissioned according to information needs. Transects were established by pounding T-posts approximately 12 inches into the ground. Reclamation temporarily installs a tape between the T-posts each year to facilitate vegetation data collection.

Vegetation monitoring data will be statistically compared over time to evaluate any significant changes in vegetation. Photos will be taken at each end of transects during every monitoring period to visually document vegetation height, density, species composition, and general site development over time.

Where: Approximately 20 transects established in 2011 will be revisited from Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River, including private landowner properties where access is granted.

When: June 11 – 14, 2012

Considerations:

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

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

Margaret Gidding, Outreach Coordinator
Office (direct line): 916-978-5461
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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