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Wetlands Monitoring Pilot Project Will Provide Opportunity To Guide Future Management Actions in North Bay and Delta

One of the most complex and collaborative projects ever funded by the California Bay-Delta Authority will be announced Wednesday at the State of the Estuary Conference in Oakland, CA. The \$3.7 million grant will create the Integrated Wetland Regional Monitoring (IRWM) Pilot Project to examine wetland restoration outcomes in the North Bay and Delta and to aid in developing effective and informative monitoring strategies through a comprehensive and real-time approach.

Ten institutions will examine the interconnected attributes of ecosystem processes at a large scale, including:

- monitoring physical processes, landscape ecology, vegetation, birds, fish habitats, productivity, and the links between each of them
- evaluating the consequences of restoration and other activities upon physical, biological and ecological variables
- using the newest technology, including aerial photography combined with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and automated telemetry field instrumentation, to collect data from different spatial scales in near-real time

“This approach marks an exciting difference and huge shift in monitoring,” explains Dr. Kim Taylor of the California Bay Delta Authority. “Instead of using historical data as a benchmark, the project will monitor the real-time affects that restoration projects have on the system,” said Dr. Taylor.

It is anticipated that the three-year project will allow scientists to better inform and guide wetlands resource managers as changes are occurring. “Everyone involved is optimistic that this approach to monitoring process dynamics and the subsequent development of performance assessments will provide opportunities for expanding other areas in the future,” Dr. Taylor said.

The ten institutions participating on the IRWM Pilot Project are: Wetlands and Water Resources; San Francisco Estuary Institute; University of California, Berkeley; San Francisco State University; University of California, Davis; University of Washington; University of San Francisco; PRBO Conservation Science; U.S. Geological Survey; and Philip Williams and Associates.

The Integrated Wetland Monitoring Pilot Project as well as other wetland restoration topics and poster sessions will be highlighted at the Sixth Biennial State of the Estuary Conference, Wednesday, October 22, 2003, at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, 10 Tenth Street, Oakland, CA. Reporters interested in interviewing the project lead, Stuart Siegel, please contact Jamie Cameron-Harley, CBDA, 916-445-0620, by October 21.

For more information on other California Bay-Delta Authority Programs visit the Web site: <http://calwater.ca.gov> . For conference updates, directions, and lodging information, please check the Website: http://www.abag.ca.gov/events/estuary_state

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