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CALFED PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS STATEN ISLAND WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY AGRICULTURE PROJECT AS PART OF ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION GRANTS

Sacramento – As part of 50 projects given grants through the CALFED Bay-Delta Program for \$59.8 million, Ducks Unlimited (DU), the Bureau of Land Management, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will receive \$1.5 million to begin a new initiative on Staten Island.

The demonstration project will improve infrastructure within the island to enhance TNC’s ability to provide winter habitat for sandhill cranes and other waterfowl. TNC owns and operates the 9,200 acre wildlife friendly farm operation on Staten Island. The island is recognized nationally as an important site for wintering waterfowl.

“Ducks Unlimited is delighted to have this opportunity to support and improve wildlife-friendly agriculture and at the same time sustain the at-risk greater sandhill crane population and wintering waterfowl,” Valley/Bay CARE Initiative Director Ryan Broddrick said.

Broddrick noted the \$1.5 million CALFED Bay-Delta grant will allow DU to construct low interior cross levees and install a high-volume discharge pump to improve overall water quality management on Staten Island. These improvements will allow the preserve to increase the quality, quantity and duration of flooded habitat, benefiting cranes, pintails and other waterfowl.

“There are few places in the delta where we have an opportunity on a large scale to both enhance wintering waterfowl habitat and demonstrate its compatibility with sustainable agriculture,” Broddrick said. “Also, as this management plan evolves, it is important to note that historic levels of waterfowl hunting also will be accommodated,” Broddrick said.

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California

The Resources Agency
Department of Water Resources
Department of Fish and Game
The Reclamation Board
Delta Protection Commission
Department of Conservation
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development Commission

California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board
Department of Health Services
Department of Food and Agriculture

CALFED

Federal

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Geological Survey
Bureau of Land Management
Environmental Protection
Agency
Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Forest Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service
Western Area Power Administration

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Staten Island, he noted, as part of the Cosumnes River Preserve, provides a critical link to the Phil and Marilyn Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve and Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.

“This project demonstrates the Program’s commitment to promoting wildlife friendly agriculture as a key element of our ecosystem restoration program,” said Patrick Wright, Director of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

“This is another great example of our partnership working together and utilizing the best skills of each partner to help accomplish a key management objective for the Cosumnes River Preserve said BLM’s Cosumnes River Preserve Manager, Rick Cooper.

“The Nature Conservancy is delighted to have CALFED’s support for these partnership activities on Staten Island,” said Mike Eaton, Delta Project Director for the Conservancy. “The work will yield tangible and lasting benefits for Sandhill cranes, waterfowl, and the Staten farming operation.”

The Nature Conservancy purchased Staten Island in late 2001 with funding from CALFED and DWR and is committed to maintaining wildlife-friendly farming operations on the property.

A brief summary of each approved project and additional information about the Ecosystem Restoration Program is available at http://calfed.water.ca.gov/ecosystem_rest.html. General information about the CALFED Program can be found at <http://calfed.ca.gov>.

To date, over \$336 million in state, federal and stakeholder funds and cost-sharing agreements have been awarded for 326 projects under the Ecosystem Restoration Program. Federal agencies participating in the CALFED Program are expected to fund soon an additional 9 projects with \$3.4 million from the federal Central Valley Project Improvement Act.

Awards will soon be made for water conservation and groundwater management, storage and recharge projects to support water supply reliability goals for the CALFED Program.

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The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative effort of more than 20 state and federal agencies working with local communities to improve the quality and reliability of California’s water supplies and revive the San Francisco Bay-Delta ecosystem. The 30-year CALFED Plan described in the CALFED Programmatic Record of Decision is the largest, most comprehensive water management effort in the nation.

CALFED

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