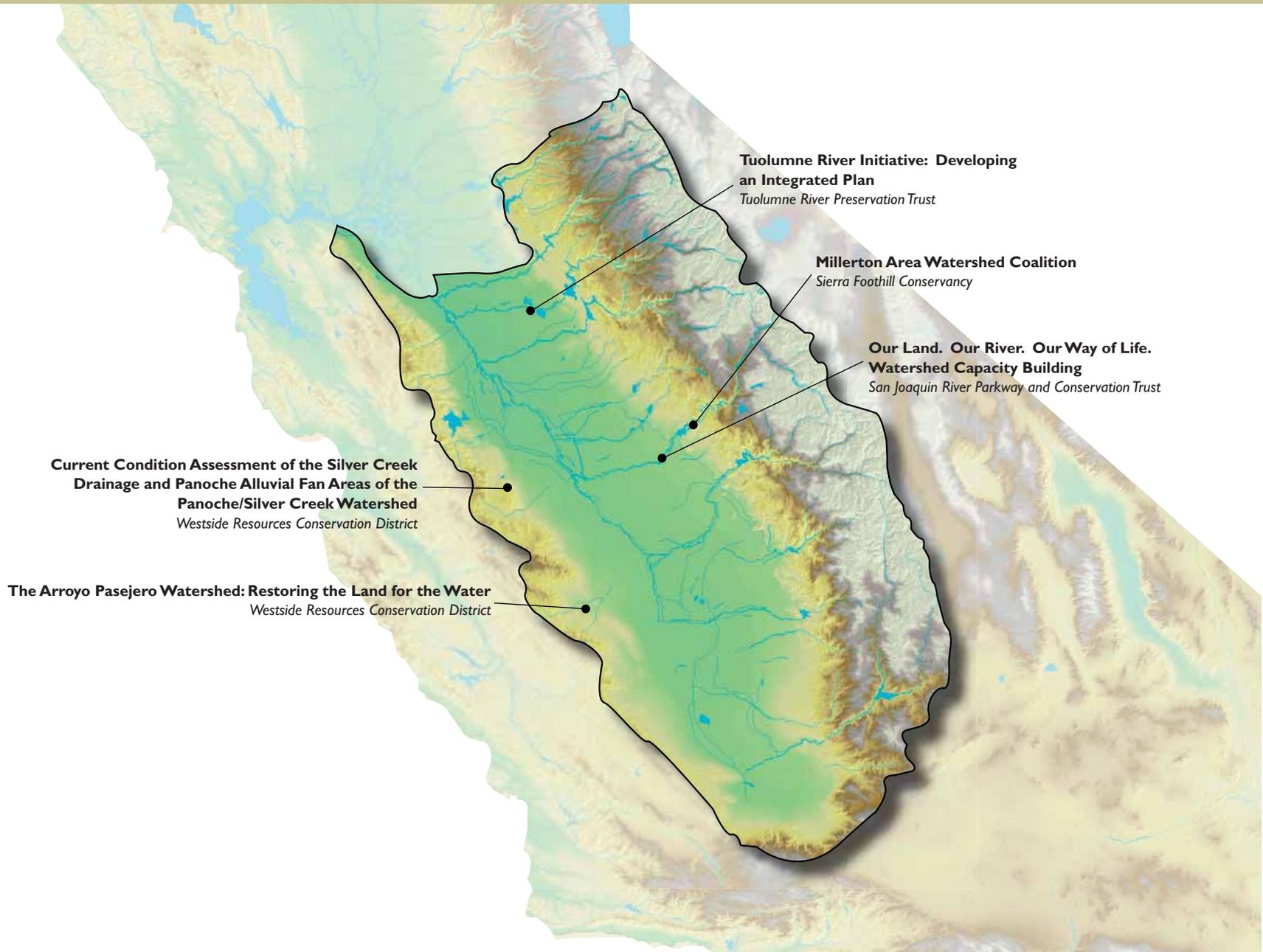
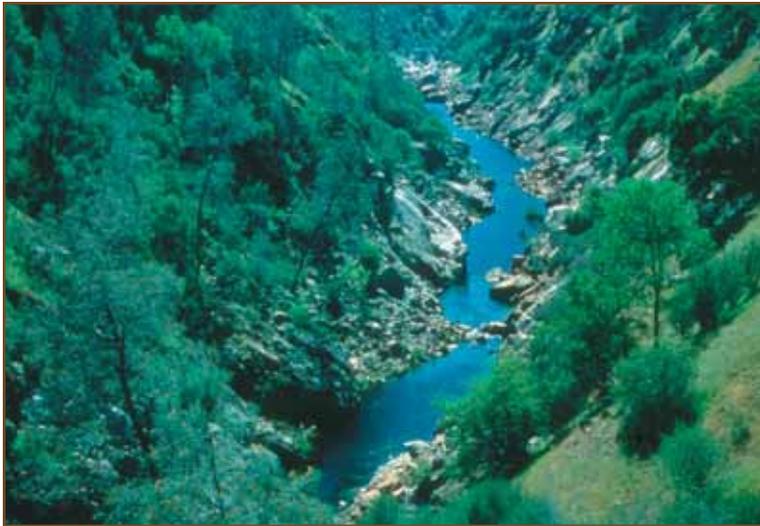


San Joaquin Valley Region



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A view of the Upper San Joaquin River, which is part of the Millerton Area Watershed.

Award Amount
\$102,154

Watershed
Portions of San Joaquin River and tributaries, above Millerton Lake

County
Fresno and Madera Counties

CALFED Region
San Joaquin Valley Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 19
State Assembly: 25
State Senate: 14

Purpose

This project expands a small watershed group-the Millerton Area Watershed Coalition-into a broad-based coalition of property owners, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the Millerton Area Watershed.

Project Goals

- Build a community-based watershed group to focus on issues of concern in the Millerton Area Watershed.
- Collect and analyze data for a watershed assessment.
- Develop a proposal for a comprehensive watershed management plan.
- Provide education programs to landowners and local stakeholders.
- Create a repository for information about the Millerton Area Watershed.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Millerton Area Watershed is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and includes multiple tributaries to the San Joaquin River. The primary uses for the land and water in the Millerton area are ranching and recreation, both of which affect water quality and the quality of the ecosystem. The Millerton Area Watershed Coalition focuses much of its attention on these land and water uses and coordinates citizen management of ranching and recreation to lessen sedimentation and improve water quality and ecosystem health, thus contributing to an objective of the Water Quality Program to reduce sediment in the San Joaquin River region. This project is also furthering CALFED Program goals by improving coordination and collaboration among government agencies, other organizations, and local landowners.

Project Overview

The Millerton Area Watershed consists of approximately 100,000 acres on both sides of the San Joaquin River. The majority of the watershed is privately owned and ranges from large cattle ranches to small-parcel home sites. The area also provides important recreational opportunities. Both ranching and recreation have potential to affect water quality as well as quality of the ecosystem. The formation of the Millerton Area Watershed Coalition is uniting local stakeholders to address issues of concern in their watershed. The Coalition is broad-based and inclusive of all interests with the ultimate goal of ensuring that water quality and quantity are sustainably managed with due consideration of economic and social issues.

Initial steps in the formation of the Millerton Area Watershed Coalition include informing all landowners and other stakeholders about the development of the Coalition. Their participation is encouraged and their input is solicited on key issues. Within the 2-year timeframe of the grant, the Millerton Area Watershed Coalition will be a fully functioning and effective body that will have accomplished the following:

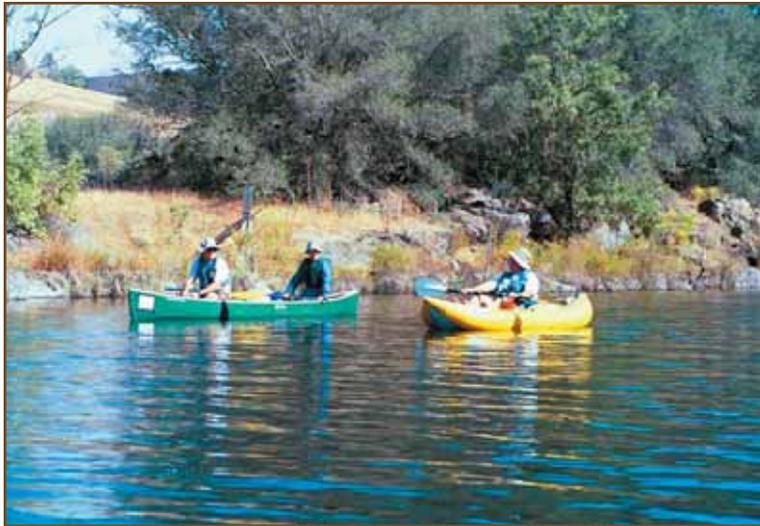
- Begin collecting and analyzing data for a watershed assessment to identify existing and potential stressors that affect water quality and quantity.
- Create a plan to fund and implement a comprehensive watershed management plan.
- Provide a minimum of four education programs to landowners and the local community focused on issues related to watershed protection and best management practices.
- Create a repository for information related to the Millerton Area Watershed.



Finegold Creek is an important water source for the San Joaquin River.

Contact Information

Jim Carl
Sierra Foothill Conservancy
PO Box 529
Prather, CA 93651
Telephone: (559) 855-3473
Email: sfcjim@psnw.com



This project is helping to enhance management of the San Joaquin River so it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Award Amount
\$373,875

Watershed
San Joaquin River Watershed

County
Fresno and Madera Counties

CALFED Region
San Joaquin Valley Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 19
State Assembly: 25 and 29
State Senate: 14

Purpose

To improve watershed planning and management along the San Joaquin River by building local community capacity.

Project Goals

- Gage the level of public awareness and interest in San Joaquin River related issues.
- Conduct a balanced outreach program to increase awareness and provide public information on the San Joaquin River and watershed activities.
- Measure the success of the outreach program.
- Identify approaches to improve stakeholder awareness and participation in San Joaquin River watershed management.

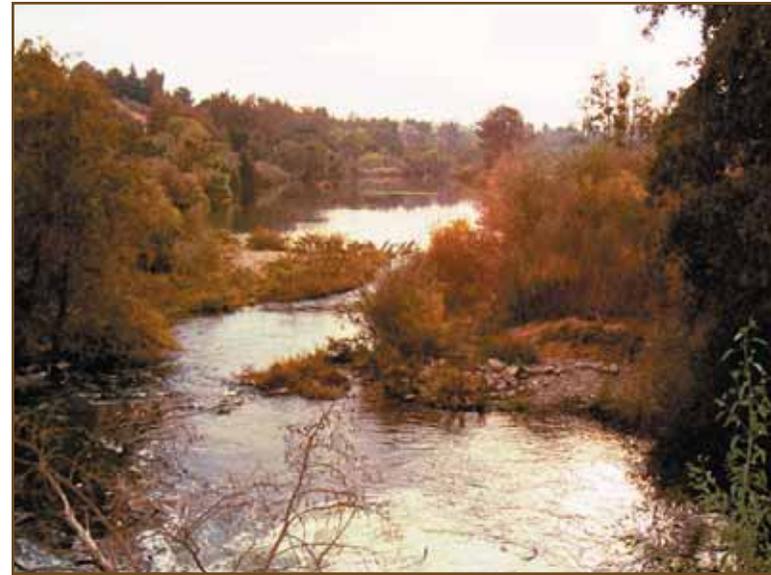
Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP) states that the ecological integrity of the San Joaquin River is critical to the ecological health of the Bay-Delta system. The ERPP vision for the river includes increased streamflows, reduction of salts and other contaminants, and maintaining a diverse, self-sustaining riparian zone. Achieving this vision is largely dependent upon the landowners and residents living in the San Joaquin River Watershed. This project increases public awareness of the dynamics of the San Joaquin River and watershed processes and increases support of improved watershed management. This project provides multiple benefits, including improved habitat and water quality, and forms the foundation needed to make improvements in the health and productivity of the San Joaquin River Watershed.

Project Overview

Although interest in restoring the San Joaquin River is increasing, there remains a lack of public awareness and understanding of the watershed. This project provides important baseline data on public awareness of San Joaquin River watershed issues to enable local watershed groups and government agencies to identify and collaboratively address issues of common concern.

The project has four phases. The first phase includes conducting a poll, in both English and Spanish, in a geographically representative area of the watershed, to gauge the level of public awareness and interest in San Joaquin River watershed issues. The second phase is the development of a multimedia outreach program to increase awareness and provide public information on the San Joaquin River, CALFED Program, and watershed activities. The program includes signage, radio, television, and printed brochures. The next step is to conduct a second poll to measure the success of the outreach program and provide a feedback loop for further action. Results of the tracking survey will be evaluated and presented in a report. Lastly, the fourth phase includes providing a media training session to assist San Joaquin River Management Program members in understanding the key watershed messages that have been developed as part of the project and to practice clear and effective communication.



Education of the public on water-related issues is crucial to bringing balanced planning to the San Joaquin River.

Contact Information

Sharon Weaver
San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, Inc.
1550 East Shaw Avenue, Suite 114
Fresno, CA 93710
Telephone: (559) 248-8480
E-mail: sweaver@riverparkway.org

Current Condition Assessment of the Silver Creek Drainage and Panoche Alluvial Fan Areas of the Panoche/Silver Creek Watershed

Westside Resources Conservation District



Taking notes at a new automatic recording rain gauge in Griswold Hills.

Award Amount
\$200,000

Watershed
Panoche/Silver Creek Watershed

County
Fresno and San Benito Counties

CALFED Region
San Joaquin Valley Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 21
State Assembly: 29
State Senate: 14

Purpose

Assess the condition of the Silver Creek drainage and a portion of Panoche Creek drainage to determine current resource conditions and help to develop best management practices (BMPs).

Project Goals

- Gather baseline information on the natural resource conditions of the two sub-watersheds.
- Incorporate the baseline data into a geographic information system (GIS).
- Issue a final baseline data report.
- Develop BMPs for the two sub-watersheds and continue monitoring resources.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Panoche/Silver Creek Watershed has some of the most dramatic resource concerns in the state and flows directly into the Delta via the San Joaquin River. The Ecosystem Restoration Program's vision for the Westside San Joaquin Basin includes improved water quality and floodplain processes. The Water Quality Program specifically targets improvement in selenium and sedimentation levels in the San Joaquin Valley. This project fosters a clearer understanding of the geology, geomorphology, soils, and hydrology of this watershed through a coordinated resource management plan program that engages landowners and other local stakeholders. This effort is vital to the establishment of proper selenium and sediment standards, as well as to properly designing a floodway and wildlife corridor.

Project Overview

Runoff from Panoche and Silver Creek Watershed (PSCW) has historically created flooding and sedimentation problems for the City of Mendota and surrounding agricultural lands. The PSCW is a principal source of selenium, salts, and other trace elements, contaminating the soils and groundwater in the Panoche alluvial fan and San Joaquin River. The PSCW Coordinated Resource Management and Planning team (CRMP) is working toward a comprehensive, collaborative watershed program. The program uses a consensus process to encourage improvement in beneficial uses and minimize damage to the watershed. The PSCW CRMP's objectives include decreasing flood damage and erosion, increasing channel stability, enhancing riparian areas and wildlife habitat, and preventing the impairment of high quality water.

Assessments have been completed in other parts of this watershed. However, owing to the size of this watershed (approximately 300,000 acres), these were done on a sub-watershed basis. This project completes the assessment of the entire watershed. It enables the CRMP and its participants to continue development and implementation of a collaborative, comprehensive watershed management plan that will address the program's objectives.

Monitoring to assess current resource conditions measures vegetative cover and rangeland use, estimates erosion from streambanks and upland areas, and delineates flood and sediment damage areas. Citizen monitoring, including areas of streambank erosion and historical flood and sediment damage, is also incorporated. These data are then incorporated into a geographic information system (GIS). Evaluation of the collected data facilitates characterization of current resource conditions that will contribute directly to improved management and decision-making regarding PSCW soil and water resources.



Surveying a channel cross section for crest stage gauge setup on Panoche Creek.

Contact Information

Sarge Green
Westside Resources Conservation District
3763 E. Robinson
Fresno, CA 93726
Telephone: (559) 698-7225
E-mail: sarge@trqid.org



Students learn what permitting and equipment might be needed to remove invasive tamarisk.

Award Amount
\$200,000

Watershed
Arroyo Pasajero Watershed

County
Fresno and Kings Counties

CALFED Region
San Joaquin Valley Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 20
State Assembly: 30
State Senate: 16

Purpose

Develop ranch plans and implement best management practices (BMPs) to improve conditions in the Arroyo Pasajero Watershed

Project Goals

- Provide assistance to landowners in southwestern Fresno and Kings Counties for the development and implementation of farm and ranch plans.
- Decrease grazing impacts on the watershed.
- Reduce erosion through implementation of BMPs, including protecting stream channels and banks.
- Reduce flooding that enters the California Aqueduct and lowers water quality and threatens the integrity of the aqueduct.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan states that stressors to ecological processes, habitats, and species in the West San Joaquin Basin include livestock grazing, nonnative species, and agricultural practices. Through the implementation of BMPs, this project aims to address these stressors. Individually tailored ranch plans include a description of BMPs such as removal of invasive plant species, improvement of grazing patterns to decrease erosion and improve water quality, implementation of measures to control agriculture runoff, and stabilization of streambanks. Implementation of this project helps achieve the Ecosystem Restoration Program goals for the West San Joaquin Basin. The project will also reduce flooding, which impairs water quality and threatens the integrity of the California Aqueduct.

Project Overview

The 529-square-mile Arroyo Pasajero watershed is located in central San Joaquin Valley. The watershed is substantially impaired as a result of natural geologic erosion, which is accelerated by the decline of grassland and riparian vegetation. The area is prone to flooding, which moves massive amounts of sediment containing naturally occurring asbestos, salts, and other constituents to the valley floor. Floodwaters may enter the California Aqueduct, impairing water quality and threatening the integrity of the aqueduct. As a result, landowners in the watershed have formed the Stewards of the Arroyo Pasajero Coordinated Management Program (CRMP), whose goal is to reduce flooding and sedimentation through the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) in the Arroyo Pasajero Watershed.

The CRMP is working with farmers and ranchers to implement BMPs through individual ranch plans in an effort to address the flooding and sedimentation problems in the watershed. This project focuses on “low-infrastructure” solutions related primarily to drainage control, rangeland management, and cropland modifications that can be consistently implemented on a watershed-wide basis and uphold the traditional land usage. The process for obtaining a farm or ranch plan consists of a landowner submitting an application to the CRMP to have a plan designed. All infrastructure construction is done according to Natural Resource Conservation Service specifications and is administered through the Westside Resources Conservation District.

The implementation of BMPs through individual ranch plans will result in improved ranch and farm operations, including better distribution of cattle. Improved ranch operations will decrease grazing impacts and better stream channel and bank protection, which will reduce erosion and flooding.



Joe DiTomasso of UC Davis leads a session on weed identification and management.

Contact Information

Sarge Green
Westside Resource Conservation District
PO Box 38
Tranquility, CA 93668
Telephone: (559) 698-7225
E-mail: sarge@trqid.com



A riffle on the Tuolumne River in Stanislaus County.

Award Amount
\$250,000

Watershed
Tuolumne River Watershed

County
Stanislaus County

CALFED Region
San Joaquin Valley Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 18
State Assembly: 17 and 26
State Senate: 12

Purpose

Integrate existing plans, activities, and projects into a single comprehensive Integrated Plan for the Tuolumne River Initiative.

Project Goals

- Maintain the Lower Tuolumne River Coalition as a forum for stakeholder coordination of projects.
- Integrate existing plans and projects with multiple objectives into a single integrated plan to improve the opportunity to maximize the benefits of each project and plan.
- Build local networks and capacity by engaging members of the community in watershed management.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Tuolumne River is the largest tributary in the San Joaquin River Basin and supports fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead trout. The Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP) states that an investment in the Tuolumne River Watershed during initial implementation will provide direct benefits to the river and dependent fish and wildlife resources, and help set the stage for subsequent implementation phases. Implementation of this project is successfully coordinating watershed management activities for the lower Tuolumne River. This coordinated effort will help to ensure success for individual organizations and for the ERPP and CALFED Program.

Project Overview

Many entities have developed plans and are implementing projects related to ecosystem restoration, recreational opportunity enhancement, and flood management of the Tuolumne River. Although these plans are generally mutually supportive, the Tuolumne River Initiative (Initiative) is working to ensure coordination of the various efforts and create one overall plan that will provide guidelines for future related projects. The Tuolumne River Technical Advisory Committee's Habitat Restoration Plan for the Lower Tuolumne River Corridor forms the scientific and technical basis for this integrated plan.

The Tuolumne River Watershed presently offers the surrounding community limited opportunities to learn about the river, its habitats, and its watershed. Energy and ideas for watershed management lie untapped within the community because of the lack of a forum to engage individuals or entities. This project creates a forum to share ideas and coordinate efforts.

The project has several goals. The first goal is to maintain the Initiative as a forum for coordination of projects along the river and collaborate with the involved entities and individuals for support and guidance in implementing projects. The second goal is to engage more members of the community in watershed management in the Lower Tuolumne River Watershed and in this way to build local networks and capacity.

The most tangible outcome of this project is the integrated plan itself, which contains a "roadmap" for ongoing and potential projects and management in the Tuolumne River corridor. It also creates a functional network of local entities with interests and responsibilities related to the Tuolumne River and its watershed. The network and connections also include other watersheds that are undertaking similar processes or addressing similar goals.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Cranes on the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge, where 12,887 acres have been set aside as year-round wetland habitat.

Contact Information

Jenna Olsen
Tuolumne River Preservation Trust
914 Thirteenth Street
Modesto, CA 95354
Telephone: (209) 996-4652
E-mail: jenna@tuolumne.org