

LOWER DEER CREEK FLOOD AND ECOSYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE 1

— a Proposition 1-funded project supporting floodplain restoration along lower Deer Creek

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to complete environmental compliance documents, supporting studies, and evaluations to advance the implementation of multi-benefit improvements on lower Deer Creek.

The project directly addresses degraded habitat—a limiting factor for Chinook salmon and steelhead passage and rearing in lower Deer Creek, and catastrophic flooding that destroys farmland and infrastructure every five to ten years.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project description is divided geographically for ease of explanation.

1. **Downstream of Stanford-Vina Ranch Irrigation Company (SVRIC) Diversion Dam:** Floodway and migration easements are proposed in two locations in this reach. These easements would protect fish migration and promote natural fluvial processes in the lower reach of the Creek. Additionally, the removal of two non-project (private) levees would increase floodplain width, and improvements to the project (USACE) levee on the south bank in this reach would combine to enhance flood protection.
2. **SVRIC Diversion Dam:** Possible improvements are under consideration at Stanford-Vina Ranch Irrigation Company (SVRIC) diversion dam. These could include reinforcements to correct ongoing erosion, fish passage facility improvements, or the installation of a movable dam to improve seasonal performance. Improved fish passage at the dam has been a focus of spring-run Chinook salmon recovery efforts.
3. **Dam to Red Bridge:** Levee setbacks on both the north and south banks are proposed here to allow for more flood conveyance. The area between the two levees would serve as a floodway easement to reduce local flooding. The levee setbacks would also encourage natural geomorphic function in this reach, and will improve rearing habitat for spring-run juvenile salmon.
4. **Red Bridge:** A proposed improvement for Red Bridge includes rebuilding to a width of approximately 450 feet and a height capable of passing design flood flows. The road leading to the bridge would also be raised to accommodate the higher bridge.
5. **Upstream of Bridge:** This section of the project includes the proposed removal of a section of project levee to allow flood waters to enter an existing easement on the north bank. Improvements to a project levee are proposed on the south bank, as well as bank protection. This would protect the current ecological function and reduce future risk of flooding to downstream landowners.

“Deer Creek Watershed. Our watershed: A special Creek.”



URL TO INTERACTIVE PROJECT MAP

<https://flowwest.shinyapps.io/deer-creek/>

DEER CREEK WATERSHED

Deer Creek is one of California’s last remaining native spring-run Chinook salmon streams. From the headwaters in the high mountains near Lassen National Park, Deer Creek flows through the rugged foothills of the Ishi Wilderness, onto the plains dotted with multi-generational family farms and ranches, and finally joins the Sacramento River on its way to the Pacific.

Deer Creek is the lifeblood of dynamic and valuable fisheries, a healthy and diverse wildlife community, and traditions of sustainable timber harvest and family agriculture dating back hundreds of years.

DEER CREEK WATERSHED CONSERVANCY

Contact Us

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Collaboration: Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy has a mission to coordinate innovative, effective solutions that benefit all of the stakeholders in the watershed, and to ensure that these stakeholders are part of the dialogue that guides the programs that affect them.

Conservation: They focus on the continued conservation of the Deer Creek Watershed through cooperative efforts between private landowners and various public and private agencies who are also dedicated to such conservation.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Activity	Duration (Days)	Date Started	Date Finished	2018				2019			2020	
				Aug-Nov	Dec-Mar	Apr-Jul	Aug-Nov	Dec-Mar	Apr-Jul	Aug-Nov	Dec-Mar	Apr-Jul
Executed Grant Date	1	7/20/2017										
CEQA/NEPA Compliance	742	8/2/2017	8/14/2019									
ESA Compliance	747	8/2/2017	8/19/2019									
Baseline Monitoring	462	8/2/2017	11/7/2018									
Draft and Final Report	74	2/17/2020	5/1/2020									
Project Closeout	1	5/1/2020										

Education: They are dedicated to educating their members and the general public about the Deer Creek watershed and the issues and projects that impact it.