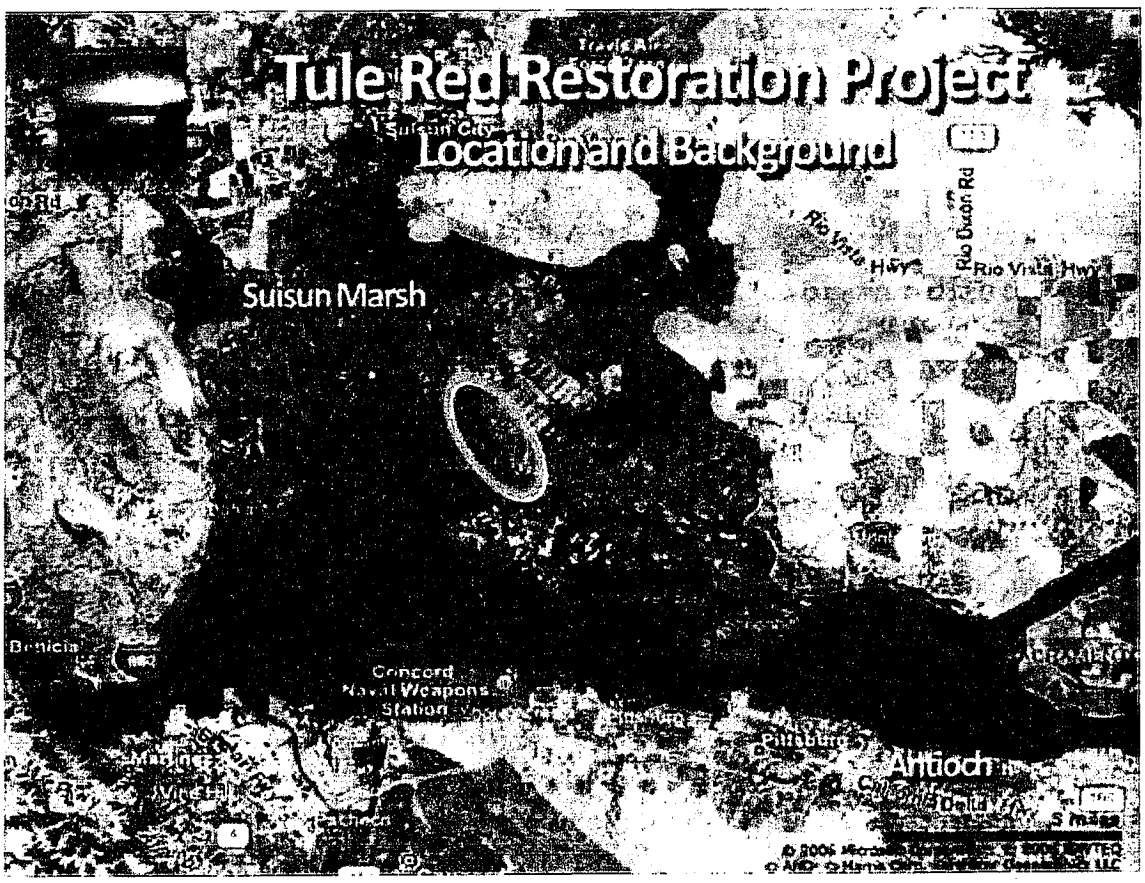
Tule Red Restoration Project

The Tule Red Restoration Project is a public-private partnership effort to restore about 350 acres of tidal wetlands in the Suisun Marsh. The project is part of both current restoration requirements for the State and Federal Water Projects and an effort to reconnect land to water in the marsh in order to promote habitat for important native fish species, such as delta smelt and salmon. The Tule Red Restoration Project is an effort by the State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA), a joint powers authority comprised of the export service contractors of the State Water Project (SWP) and the Central Valley Project (CVP). SFCWA is pursuing this and other habitat restoration projects to meet existing permit requirements to restore 8,000 acres of tidal wetlands in the Delta.

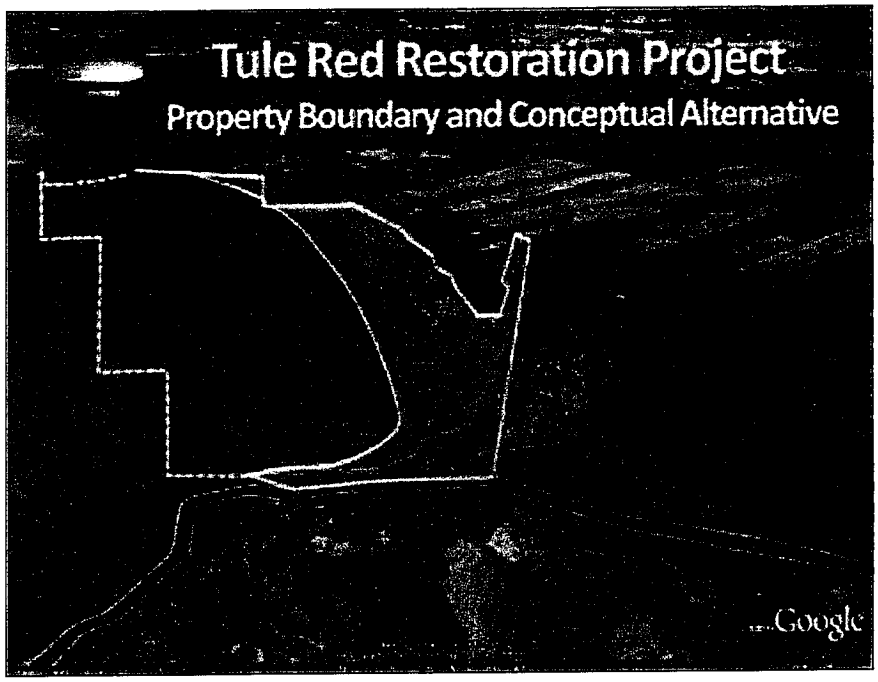


Location and Background

The 378-acre project site, a long-time duck club commonly known as the Tule Red Hunting Club, is in Solano County's Grizzly Bay region of Suisun Marsh. An environmental analysis will be conducted before any restoration work is initiated, but the project concept is consistent with the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan and will help to restore some of the tidal wetlands lost since the 1880s. Prior to being diked off to create freshwater habitat favored by game ducks in the early 1900's, this property was estuarine tidal habitat, providing tidal inundation and seasonal freshwater inundation during wet winter periods.

Westervelt Ecological Services, the current owner of the property, will be used by SFCWA to manage the design and restoration of the tidal marsh wetlands. SFCWA's agreement with Westervelt calls for SFCWA to obtain an easement for the development of tidal marshland on the property and the ability to take title to the property within five years. Ultimately, SFCWA

intends the lands be managed as tidal marsh habitat and maintained by an appropriate non-profit or government body that is in the business of habitat management. Significant potential exists to expand restoration actions on existing public lands adjacent to this property and within Suisun Marsh, consistent with the Draft Suisun Marsh Management Plan of the Suisun Marsh Resource Conservation District, the local government entity that manages the marsh. The purchase is expected to be complete by the end of 2011, with a specific restoration proposal defined for the purpose of the permit process by mid-2012.



Creating new, self-sustaining wetlands will require excavating new channels at various depths, sizes and configurations.

Suisun: West's Largest Wetland

The Suisun Marsh, located in the western region of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, is the largest contiguous brackish water marsh on the west coast of North America. Serving as both resting and feeding grounds along the Pacific Flyway, the 116,000-acre marsh represents more than 10 percent of the remaining natural wetlands area in the state. Because of its size and estuarine location, the Suisun Marsh supports a diversity of plant communities which provide habitats for a variety of fish and wildlife, including several rare and endangered species.

Recognizing the threats to the Suisun Marsh from potential residential, commercial and industrial developments, and the need to preserve this unique wildlife resource for future generations, the Nejedly-Bagley-Z'berg Suisun Marsh Preservation Act of 1974 was passed, and directed the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Department of Fish and Game to prepare the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan. This plan, which was completed in 1976, aims to preserve the integrity and assured continued wildlife use of the Suisun Marsh.

State and Federal Contractors Water Agency

The SFCWA facilitates habitat conservation measures and research related to the restoration of the Delta ecosystem as part of assuring sufficient and reliable export water supplies to its member agencies. It is pursuing additional restoration projects, including the Lower Yolo Restoration Project in Yolo County. The Tule Red Restoration Project is the most recent of these efforts and SFCWA expects to launch additional projects in 2012. For more information about SFCWA, visit our website: sfcwa.org.

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