

## Rio Vista Side Channel Habitat Restoration Project

For Immediate Release

November 13, 2019

*Note: Photos below include a before and after photo of the Rio Vista Side Channel Habitat Project, as well as juveniles inhabiting the channel. Additional pictures are available upon request.*

### **CVPIA COMPLETES RIO VISTA SIDE CHANNEL FISH HABITAT PROJECT IN TEHAMA COUNTY**

#### *Project Creates Vital Habitat and Refuge for Juvenile Salmon*

RED BLUFF, Calif. – Work on the Rio Vista Side Channel Habitat Project in Red Bluff has been completed, marking another milestone for the Upper Sacramento River Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration Program, with immediate results observed. Within one week of opening the side channel, endangered winter-run Chinook juveniles were observed making use of it ([video](#)). The program is part of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) – a federal program of the US Bureau of Reclamation and the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

The project converted a seasonal side channel (River Mile 248) into nearly one acre of new aquatic habitat by excavating down an average of 5 feet to allow Sacramento River waters to flow around ‘Ski Island’, as some of the locals call it, year-round. This habitat will be a refuge for juvenile salmonids before they migrate out to the ocean: providing protective cover, slower flows, and sources of food. The project also includes native riparian planting and other habitat features.

The Rio Vista Side Channel is the fourth side channel project to be completed through the CVPIA’s Upper Sacramento River Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration Program in the last four years, and continues the work of improving spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam. The project was funded by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and had a wide variety of partners including the California Department of Water Resources, Resource Conservation District of Tehama County, Sacramento River Forum, Geographical Information Center- Chico State University, water districts from the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors (Reclamation District 108, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District, Provident Irrigation District, Princeton-Codora-Glenn Irrigation District, Sutter Mutual Water Company, River Garden Farms, Natomas Mutual Water Company), Tehama Colusa Canal Authority, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and a cooperative private landowner.

For more information about the project or the CVPIA Upper Sacramento River Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration Program and its partners, contact Harmony Gugino at 530-529-7383 or [harmony@riverforum.org](mailto:harmony@riverforum.org) or visit the Sacramento River Forum’s website - <https://www.sacramentoriver.org/forum/index.php?id=channels>.

For more information about the Sacramento Valley Salmon Recovery Program, contact Cynde Davis at 530-934-8881 or [cdavis@gcid.net](mailto:cdavis@gcid.net)

###

## Rio Vista Side Channel Habitat Restoration Project



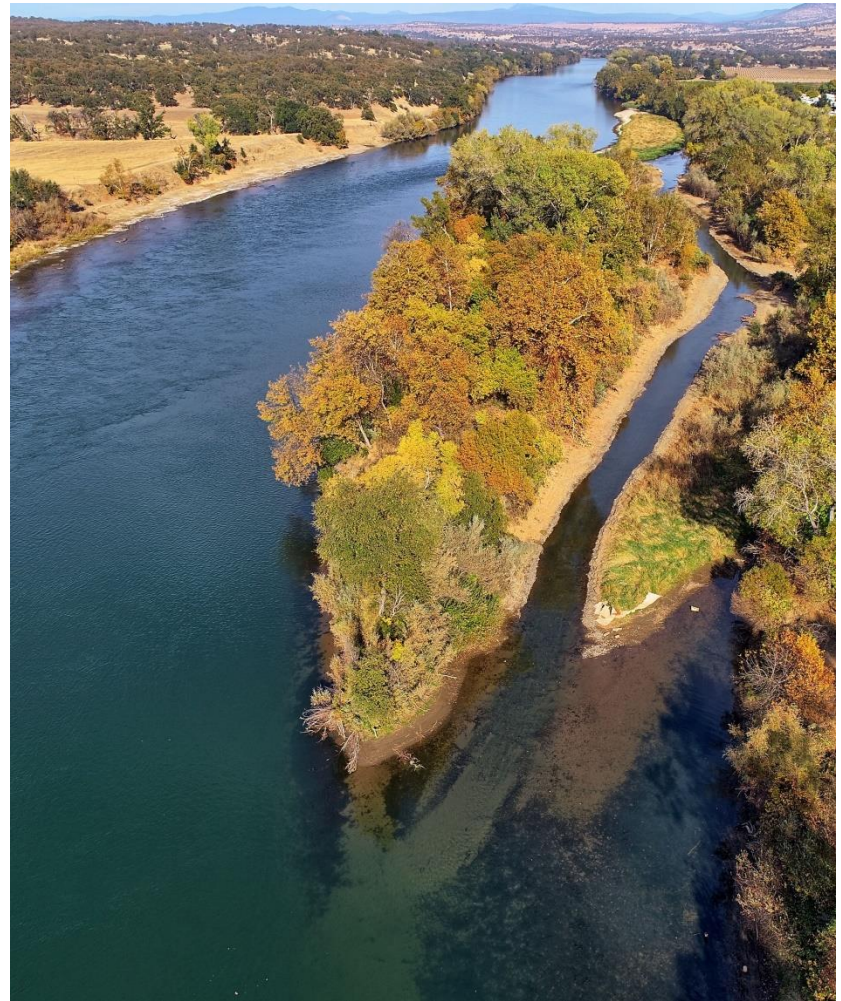
Winter-run Chinook salmon juveniles making use of habitat features placed along the side channel bank (Photo courtesy of John Hannon). A video of these salmon taken while snorkeling is available here: <https://youtu.be/TIAwbGh-yKg>

## Rio Vista Side Channel Habitat Restoration Project



Rio Vista Side Channel - Closed  
Before Construction

(photo: Google)



Rio Vista Side Channel - Open  
After Completion

(photo: John Hannon)