

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service
(NRCS):
Conservation Programs
and Technical Assistance**



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NRCS

➤ **Mission of the NRCS:**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

➤ The NRCS offers programs that help landowners implement on-the-ground conservation with planning, technical and financial assistance.

NRCS Service Areas

- Field Office
- Subfield Office
- * Area Office
- * Subarea Office
- ★ State Office
- ⛏ Soil Survey Office
- RC&D Office
- △ Watershed Office
- + Urban Office
- Urban Resources Partnership Office
- ↑ Plant Materials Center
- ↑ NRCS Partnership Office



Source of Data:
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Map prepared using ArcView 3.0
by NRCS Soils Staff, Davis, CA
Map ID: off_cluster 07/14/00



Conservation Programs

- **WHIP: Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program**
- **WRP: Wetlands Reserve Program**
- **Many others: EWP, EQIP, PL 534, etc.**

- **Additional Technical Assistance**
 - Watershed planning, soils, aerial photos, wetland determination, etc.
 - Southern California Stream Team
 - Biologist and Engineer, plus soils, hydro., etc

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

- **WHIP is a program designed to improve wildlife habitat**
- **Initially authorized under the 1996 Farm Bill**
- **Who is eligible? Any non-federal land owner (e.g. state parks, county parks, non-profit organizations, schools, individuals, etc...) You do not have to be an agricultural producer, but must control the land**
- **Up to 75% of costs reimbursable**



WHIP cont.

- This year, California's WHIP budget has doubled to \$800,000
- Funds distributed to all parts of the state, so that each has a relatively equal opportunity to receive funds
- WHIP funding is provided on an annual competitive basis. Applications are received throughout the year and as funding is available, projects are reviewed and ranked for funding

WHIP Priorities

- **There are several State Priorities for the WHIP program. They are:**
 - **Riparian and stream corridor habitat restoration and enhancement (Trees, trees, and more trees!). Other benefits: wildlife corridors, water quality improvement, reduction in flood damage, and more**

WHIP Priorities (cont)

- **Federal or State threatened or endangered species habitat restoration or enhancement**

- Note for these projects, you will need to work closely with either the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and/or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)



Arroyo Toad

- **Treatment or improvement of habitats in uplands (e.g. restoration of burned areas, mining lands reclamation, oak regeneration projects, forage habitat, etc...)**

WHIP Priorities (cont.)

- **Wetland habitat creation, restoration, enhancement, and management**
 - Wetlands provide habitat for fish, reptiles and amphibians, mammals, insects, and plants. They also help to cleanse surface water, recharge groundwater, and provide us with scenic, peaceful places to visit
- **“Farmland compatible” habitat development (e.g. buffer strips, grassed waterways, runoff storage ponds). These are projects that provide both agricultural and wildlife benefit**

WHIP Priorities (cont.)

- **Coldwater fisheries habitat restoration and enhancement (Steelhead, rainbow trout, mountain streams and creeks)**
- **Habitat restoration and enhancement for game species and other species (deer, quail, butterflies, etc...)**
- **These are state priorities, but that does not mean a project which doesn't fit a priority would never get funded. Perhaps you have a fantastic idea that will knock our socks off and be favorably reviewed. It doesn't hurt to try. Wildlife habitat can be one part of a larger-scale plan, like an erosion control plan, it doesn't have to be exclusive**

WHIP \$\$\$

- **WHIP agreements generally last from 5 to 10 years**
- **Up to \$30,000 per contract may be available**
- **This money is for one landowner per land tract. If you have several tracts of land, you are eligible for several WHIP contracts**
- **Payment from NRCS is for actual expenses involved with installing the wildlife habitat practices. Once a contract expires on a tract of land, you are again eligible**
 - **NOTE: WHIP monies cannot be used for mitigation purposes or on land designated as converted wetland**

WHIP Examples

- **Ojai:** Restore native oak from old Xmas tree farm and install pond
- **Thousand Oaks:** Plant native vegetation for interpretive purposes
- **Santa Paula:** Streambank restoration and vegetative buffer to citrus
- **Santa Monica Mtns.:** Stream habitat improvement and management
- **Ojai:** Valley oak planting, fencing, and signing



WHIP Pond



WHIP Pond

Potential FY 04 WHIP

- **Arundo removal and native plant reestablishment with private land owners on the Ventura River**
- **Beach dune restoration with State Parks**
- **Riparian habitat restoration and wildlife habitat enhancement with on the Santa Clara River**
- **Your project? Talk to the NRCS now!**
- **More info:**
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip/>

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

- Original Authorization in 1985 Farm Bill
- Purchase Wetlands Easements
- Cost Sharing for Wetlands Restoration
- Focus on wetlands protection, restoration
- Annual national program funding at \$10-20 million
- Almost 50,000 acres in program in CA

- **More info:**
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/>

The NRCS and these programs are here to help you conserve natural resources on non-federal lands. Please take advantage of what the NRCS is offering.



THANK YOU

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