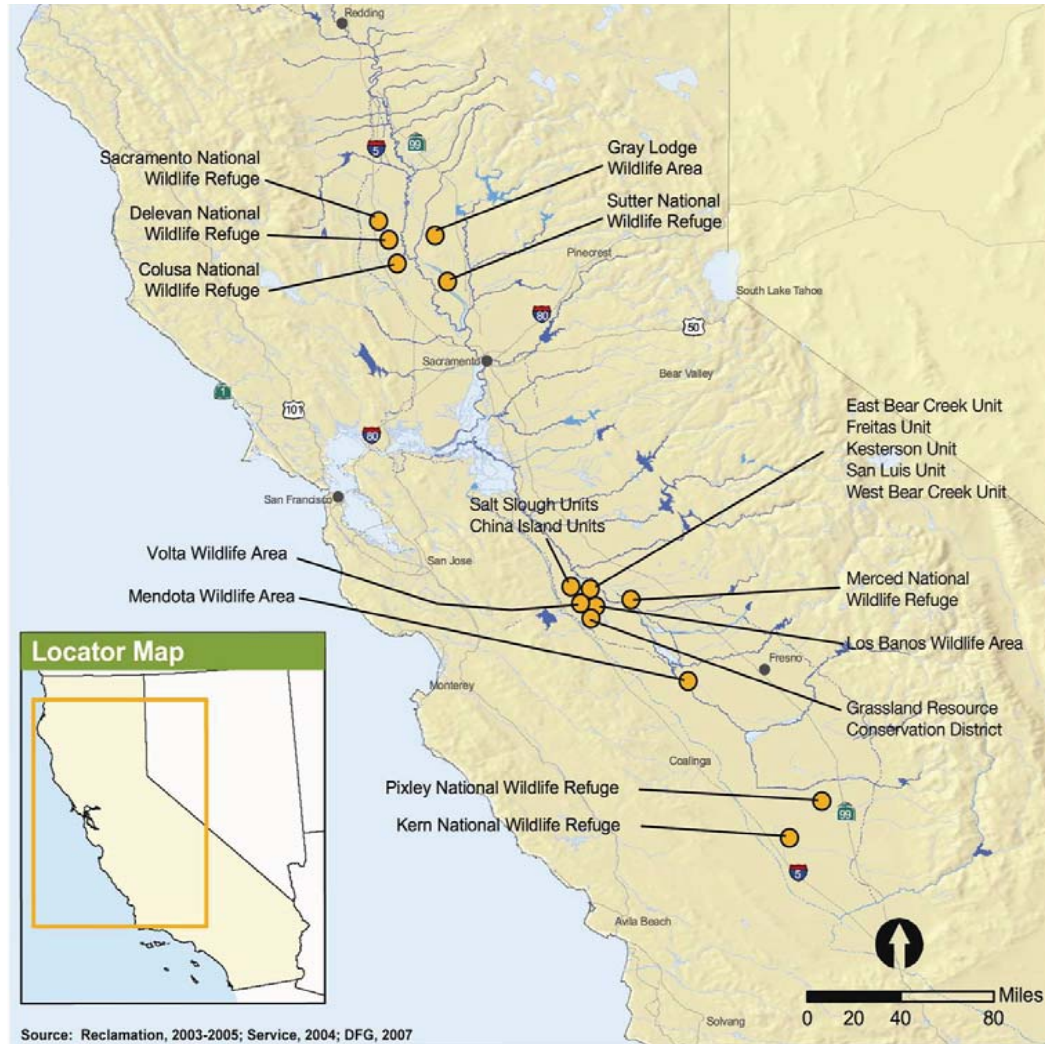


Central Valley Wildlife Refuges

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
California Department of Fish & Game
Grassland Resource Conservation District



The Central Valley Joint Venture is one of 18 Joint Venture partnerships in the United States, established under International Migratory Bird Plans.

Joint Venture Management Board:

Audubon California
California Waterfowl Association
Defenders of Wildlife
Ducks Unlimited
PRBO Conservation Science
River Partners
The Nature Conservancy
Trust for Public Land

Participating Organization

Grassland Water District

The mission of the Central Valley Joint Venture is to work collaboratively through diverse partnerships to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats for waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, and riparian songbirds, in accordance with conservation actions identified in its 2006 Implementation Plan.

For more information, visit the Central Valley Joint Venture at www.cvjv.org



KEEP THE PROMISE OF WATER FOR CALIFORNIA'S MIGRATORY BIRDS



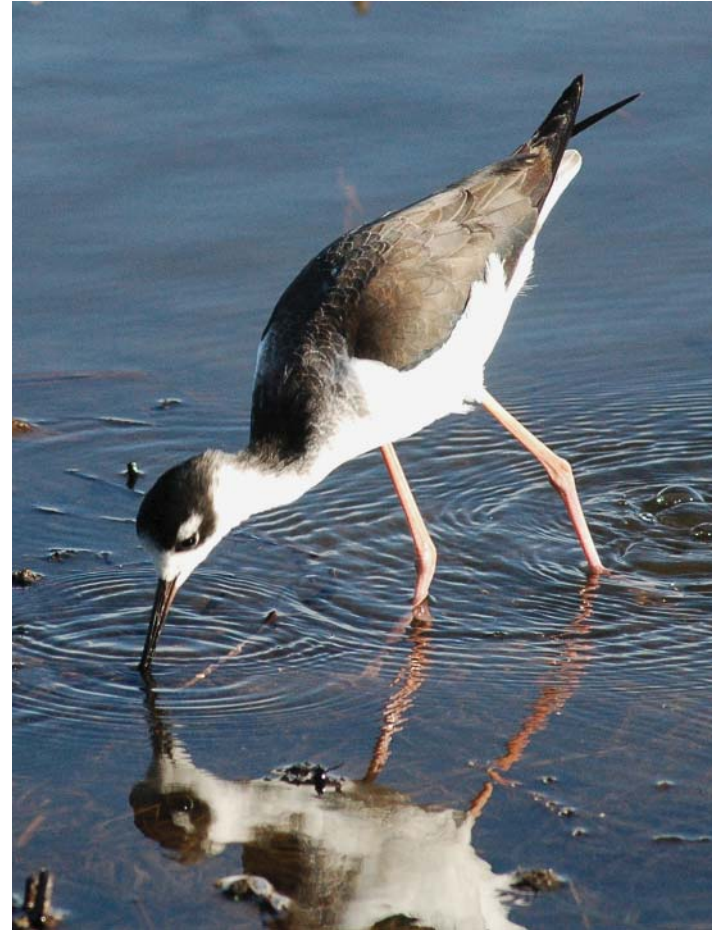
California's natural legacy of birds is under threat

California hosts more than 600 species of birds – a level of diversity that no state can match. Moreover, our state is a major stop on the Pacific Flyway, a sort of migratory superhighway for birds between Alaska and South America.

California's Central Valley supports some of the greatest concentrations of wintering waterbirds in the world – millions of waterfowl and shorebirds, and hundreds of species of birds and resident wildlife including threatened and endangered species. At certain times of the year, the sky over these spectacular Central Valley landscapes comes alive.

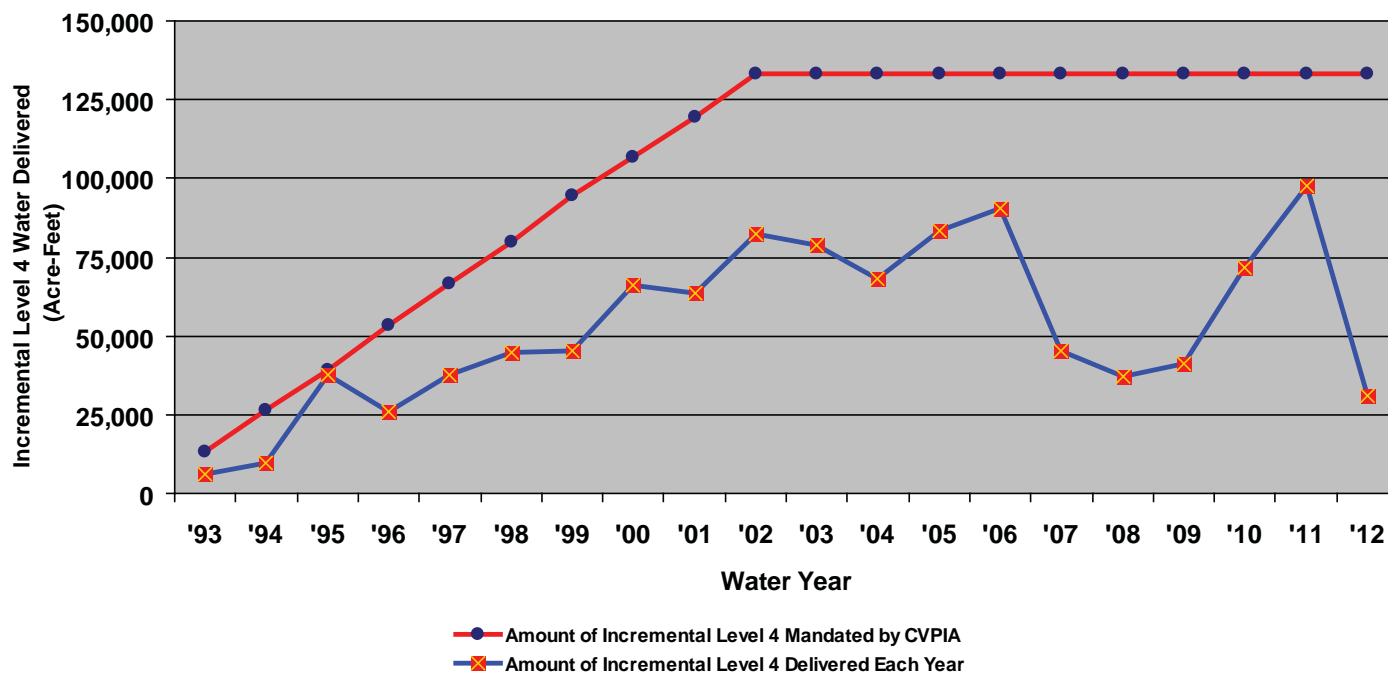
Over the last 100 years, the state's migratory bird populations have declined precipitously, and the primary reason for this is the loss of wetland habitat in the Central Valley. Land conversion coupled with tremendous demand for water – as well as drought and conveyance restrictions – have caused a great deal of environmental damage.

Great strides have been made to help bring back our migratory birds. But today much of that progress is at tremendous risk because legislatively mandated commitments for water supplies to Central Valley refuges have not been fulfilled. We haven't kept our promise to California's migratory birds – and they're paying the price.



Dale Garrison

Legally-mandated water supplies have never been delivered to Central Valley wetlands



- **133,264 Acre-Feet:** Total mandated amount of Incremental Level 4 allocated annually for all CVPIA refuges
- 2011 and 2012—estimate from US Bureau of Reclamation

WE NEED TO KEEP OUR PROMISE TO CALIFORNIA'S MIGRATORY BIRDS

The 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) was passed by Congress in part to compensate for the destruction of bird and wildlife habitat associated with the construction of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and loss of natural hydrology which historically flooded thousands of acres of wetland and riparian habitats.

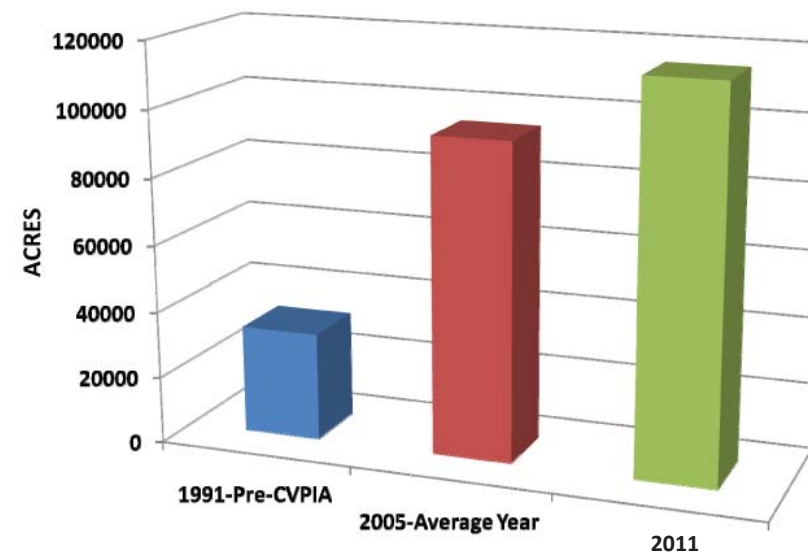
The legislation called for California's core wetland areas to receive federal water supplies. While this decision did return some of California's historic water supplies back to wildlife, this use still represents a small fraction of overall CVP water supplies. Unfortunately, even this small obligation is not being met, due to the increased cost of water, water transfers, and decreased political attention to the public trust responsibilities associated with California's wetlands.

We cannot allow these critical wetlands to return to their beleaguered condition of the 1980s. While these supplies are obligated under federal law, the Bureau of Reclamation must still compete on the open market to purchase these supplies from willing sellers. Since 1993, the average cost of an acre foot of water has increased by roughly 600%.

It is critical that Congress and the State of California take action to protect wetland water through the following actions:

- Sustain CVPIA Restoration Fund levels and develop supplemental sources of federal funding to purchase adequate amounts of water for the seasonal needs of migratory and resident wetland-dependent birds.
- Fully mitigate all federal water transfer actions to avoid wetlands becoming a "third party impact." Moving water away from wetland and agricultural regions results in less water and higher water market prices which wetlands cannot afford.
- Streamline CVPIA wetland-to-wetland water transfers to allow refuge managers to get water where it is needed most in any given year. They should be afforded the same ability as other water users to put diminishing water supplies to the best use for the needs of wildlife.
- The State of California must vigorously support its water supply obligations for state, federal and private wildlife refuges as defined in the CVPIA.
- Support the inclusion of at least \$100 million for refuge-related water supplies within all proposed funding solutions to restore the Bay-Delta system.

Water is making a difference



The increase in quality and quantity of wetlands in 2011 was made possible by the more optimal deliveries of Level 4 water. This produced numerous benefits to migratory waterbirds:

- 12% increase in acres irrigated for waterfowl food plants.
- 14% increase in acres of brood habitat maintained in the spring and summer for the benefit of nesting waterfowl and waterbirds.
- 30% increase in flooded acres available in August when the first wintering waterfowl arrive in the Central Valley.
- 150% increase in acres where maintenance water flows are sent through selected wetland units to improve water quality.