State platform

REDWOOD CREEK MULTI-BENEFIT ESTUARY RESTORATION AND FLOOD CONTROL

Construction of the Redwood Creek levee system by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1966 to 1968 caused major impacts to the Redwood Creek estuary. These impacts are a limiting factor for recovery of salmon and other estuary-dependent fish species in the Redwood Creek watershed and adversely affect Redwood National Park. In addition, the levee system does not meet its intended flood protection level for the economically disadvantaged community of Orick because the project design did not account for sedimentation.

A large-scale, multi-objective water resources project is needed to achieve a sustainable solution for flood protection, ecosystem restoration, and endangered species recovery in lower Redwood Creek. The project is complicated by the needs for understanding dynamic ecosystem processes, accounting for climate change and sea level rise, respecting private property rights, modifying a federal flood control project, and providing an acceptable level of flood protection for the community.

In particular, restoration of the Redwood Creek estuary would significantly advance salmon recovery and provide sustainable flood protection that alleviates backwater flooding of agricultural lands and County roads. Local private landowners, Redwood National Park, agencies, and other stakeholders agree that we need a process-based conceptual design that will improve agricultural function and advance listed salmon recovery through estuary restoration.

Estuary restoration would be competitive for federal, state and other funding due to the high potential for endangered species recovery. Upstream flood protection and ongoing maintenance could be addressed separately or comprehensively with estuary restoration, depending on the type of federal authority used to modify the Redwood Creek federal flood control project.

The county supports legislation AND administrative action to allocate state Proposition 84 funds, or other state funding to be used for planning, design, and construction for flood protection, ecosystem restoration and endangered species recovery in the Redwood Creek levee system near Orick.

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Federal platform

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