



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

2800 Cottage Way, Ste 2606  
Sacramento, CA 95825

**In Reply Refer To:**  
FWS/LR8/IR08/IR10

By Electronic Mail

Holly Geneva Stout, Esq.  
California Water Commission  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
[cwc@water.ca.gov](mailto:cwc@water.ca.gov)

**Subject:** United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
Submission of Comments for the November 16, 2022, Resolution of Necessity Hearing  
California Water Commission

APN 033-440-001 – DWR Parcel No. YBSH-147

H Pond LLC - FWS Easement # 19C – 480.0 (+-) acres

Dear Ms. Stout:

As provided in the October 25, 2022, Notice of the Resolution of Necessity hearing, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (“FWS” or “Service”) submits these written comments for consideration by the California Water Commission (“Commission”) and inclusion in the record for this proceeding concerning the above-referenced easement in which the United States holds an interest.

### **Federal Interest in DWR Parcel No. YBSH-147**

First, the Commission must understand that the conservation easement held here is an interest in lands held by the United States. As such, absent a waiver of sovereign immunity, a federal interest in real property cannot be condemned. *United States v. Navajo Nation*, 556 U.S. 287, 289 (2009). (“A waiver of the Federal Government’s sovereign immunity must be unequivocally expressed in statutory text, and will not be implied. Moreover, a waiver of the Government’s sovereign immunity will be strictly construed, in terms of its scope, in favor of the sovereign.”); *Minnesota v. United States*, 305 U.S. 382, 386-87 (1939), *superseded on other grounds by statute as stated in Morda v. Klein*, 865 F.2d 782, 783 (6th Cir. 1989); *Utah Power & Light Co. v. United States*, 243 U.S. 389, 405 (1917). The sole extant statutory exception to this federal preemption relating to condemning real property owned by the United States is under the Quiet Title Act (“QTA”), 28 U.S.C. § 2410(a), and this is a limited waiver of sovereign immunity. *Id.* (the United States “may be made a party” in a case “to condemn . . . real or personal property on which the United States has or claims a mortgage or other lien.”); *Block v. North Dakota*, 461

U.S. 273, 286 (1983) (“Congress intended the QTA to provide the exclusive means by which adverse claimants could challenge the United States’ title to real property.”). Moreover, this waiver as related to a mortgage or lien is narrowly construed. *See, e.g., Hussain v. Boston Old Colony Ins. Co.*, 311 F.3d 623, 629 (5th Cir. 2002) (Section 2410 “was specifically passed to waive the sovereign immunity of the United States so that private parties could get the government into court when necessary to quiet title or resolve priority of liens or mortgages”); *Village of Wheeling v. Fragassi*, No. 09 C 3124, 2010 WL 3087462, at \*4 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 2, 2010) (lease not a mortgage or lien under § 2410); *Ansonia Nat’l Bank v. United States*, 147 F. Supp. 864, 865 (D. Conn. 1956) (easement not a “lien” under § 2410).

Likewise, the doctrine of prior public use ensures that the United States’ interest, absent a contrary statutory provision enacted by Congress, triumphs over a state or local government’s effort to condemn federal lands or real property interests. The doctrine is designed to prevent courts from becoming embroiled in competing claims by governmental entities to the same property. *See United States v. Acquisition of 0.3114 Cuerdas of Condemnation Land More or Less, Located on Calle*, 753 F. Supp. 50, 54 (D.P.R. 1990) (“Without the prior use doctrine, there could be a free for all of battling entities all equipped with eminent domain power, passing title back and forth.”). Simply stated, even ignoring that the public interest of the United States may be supreme, our prior public interest reflected in the United States’ ownership of the property suffices to block any condemnation by state or local governments.

### **Procedural Background**

Our Realty Section, Refuge Staff, and the Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) participated in a meeting concerning this Project and exchanged a few communications in February-April of 2021. FWS heard nothing further until our Realty Section began receiving letters in late 2021, concerning easement parcels that were included in DWR’s Batch A Resolution of Necessity hearing process. In connection with this particular parcel, our Realty Section first received a letter dated July 19, 2022, from DWR Right-of-Way Agent Jesus Ceden, indicating that DWR intended to acquire a flowage easement on this conservation easement parcel. The FWS had submitted a letter to Catherine McCalvin of DWR dated July 7, 2022, setting forth the federal interest in this conservation easement. We request that this referenced letter and the Service’s February 14, 2022, letter to Ms. McCalvin be included in the record of this proceeding. DWR responded to the Service’s February letter on April 6, 2022.

DWR submitted written notice of the informational hearing for this parcel on September 26, 2022, to which the Service submitted its notice of intent to be heard at that hearing on October 7, 2022. DWR noticed this matter for the Resolution of Necessity (“RON”) hearing on October 25, 2022. As required within 15 days of the date of the Notice of Hearing, FWS submitted its written request to be heard regarding this Parcel.

### **H Pond Ranch Easement**

Enclosed herein as Exhibit A is the Easement by which H Pond Ranch, a partnership, granted to the United States by Grant of Easement a perpetual conservation easement over a total of 479.0 acres under authority of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of February 18, 1929 (16 U.S.C. 715, et seq. as amended), which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain lands or interests therein for waterfowl habitat. The purpose of this easement is to maintain habitat for waterfowl. The United States expended six hundred twenty-two thousand and seven hundred dollars (\$ 622,700.00) for the easement, which is a component part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and subject to pertinent National Wildlife Refuge system laws and regulations. The parcel is now in ownership to H Pond LLC.

Notably, the easement in Paragraph 6 specifically provides that the Grantor “shall not grant any additional easements, rights-of-way, or other interests in the Easement Lands, other than a fee or leasehold interest,

or grant or otherwise transfer to any other person or entity or to other lands or otherwise abandon or relinquish any Easement Waters without the prior written authorization of Grantee given through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Such authorization will be given unless the Secretary or his designated representative determines that the proposed interest or transfer will interfere with the use of the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat suitable for migratory birds or interfere with the availability of Easement Waters for the Easement Lands.” Paragraph 4 of the Easement prohibits the Grantor from altering the existing topography, or from otherwise altering or using or permitting the use by third parties of the Easement Lands for any purpose without the prior written authorization of the Service. Such authorization will only be given if the Secretary of the Interior or her designated representative determines that the proposed activity will not change the character of the Easement Lands or adversely affect the use of the Easement Lands as habitat suitable for migratory birds.

Similarly, 50 CFR 25.44 requires permits for use of easement areas administered by us where proposed activities may affect the property interest acquired by the United States. This includes instances where the third applicant is a governmental entity which has acquired a partial interest in the servient estate by subsequent condemnation. Regulations regarding rights-of-way in easement areas are found in 50 CFR part 29.21.

As required by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, before authorizing a use that affects our easement interest, the Service must first make a compatibility determination (16 U.S.C. §668dd(d)(3)(A)(i)). A compatibility determination is a written determination signed and dated by the Refuge Manager and Regional Chief, signifying that a proposed or existing use of a national wildlife refuge is a compatible use or is not a compatible use. Compatible use means a proposed or existing wildlife-dependent recreational use or any other use of a national wildlife refuge that, based on sound professional judgment, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the National Wildlife Refuge System mission or the purpose(s) of the national wildlife refuge (50 CFR 25.12(a)). In making the determination, the Refuge Manager must consider not only the direct impacts of a use but also the indirect impacts associated with the use and the cumulative impacts of the use when conducted in conjunction with other existing or planned uses of the refuge, and uses of adjacent lands or waters that may exacerbate the effects of a refuge use (603 FW 2.11B(3)). This federal compatibility determination is markedly different from the representations DWR has made that operation of the proposed Project is compatible with the existing conservation easements.

As stated in the USFWS easement, the landowner cannot grant an additional easement without the prior written authorization of the Fish and Wildlife Service. In order to facilitate this Project, we are reviewing hydrologic data provided by DWR, engaging with the landowner, and will work with DWR and the landowner to resolve identified issues. Upon receipt of an application, the Service will then engage in a compatibility determination for the Project, as required under federal refuge law and regulation. Note that the Service *cannot* make a compatibility determination on future permitted construction and operation of the fish passage and floodplain restoration projects amounting to a change in the Project not analyzed previously. Should they arise, any future changes to the Project would require additional environmental analyses. Such future projects would also require a federal compatibility determination, but this cannot occur until these projects have been sufficiently analyzed in future environmental analyses, which would allow us to ensure proposed future modifications do not impact our interest in the property.

### **Existing Purpose of USFWS Easement on H Pond LLC Parcel**

The USFWS Easement was purchased to protect wetlands and easement waters in perpetuity for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Wetlands on this property are considered managed freshwater wetlands and consist of a complex of shallow wetland impoundments contained by levees that are delivered water through managed irrigation infrastructure. Landowners actively manage the water levels

of these wetlands using water control structures to promote beneficial wetland vegetation and provide foraging habitat for wintering and migrating waterfowl. Although water depth varies with wetland topography, landowners typically manage for an average depth of 8-10 inches that provides optimal foraging habitat for most waterfowl and a great diversity of migratory waterbirds.

### **DWR's Proposed Flowage Easement**

Under DWR's proposed flowage easement, the landowner would grant a perpetual right-of-way and easement in the real property, for the purposes of seasonal floodplain fisheries rearing habitat and fish passage in the Yolo Bypass. In addition, the proposed flowage easement would provide the Grantee (DWR) the right for the flowage of water over and upon the Property as may be required for the *present and future* permitted construction and operation of fish passage and floodplain restoration projects. It is not clear if the easement would allow alteration to riparian habitat. The proposed flowage easement would also include the right to flow water and materials and by said flow erode; or place or deposit earth, debris, sediment, or other material. As noted above, the present easement prohibits such uses.

### **Anticipated Project Impacts from DWR data**

According to DWR analysis, the Big Notch Project would flood the H Pond Parcel 033-440-001 an average of 5.6 additional days above 6" within the November 1 through February 28 hunt period. The number of additional days the parcel would flood above 6" during the hunt period would range from 0 to 33 days. These days represent flood levels that could potentially impact waterfowl use and hunting quality. The parcel would flood an average of 6.3 additional days above 12" during the hunt period, with a range from 0 to 22 additional days flooded above 12". These days represent flood levels that could potentially impact landowner access in addition to waterfowl use and hunting quality. The parcel would flood an average of 7.4 additional days above 18" during the hunt period, with a range from 0 to 22 additional days flooded above 18". These days represent flood levels that could potentially impact wetland infrastructure (levees, water control structures) in addition to access, waterfowl use and hunting quality.

### **Standard for Resolution of Necessity**

The lands covered by this United States easement are already appropriated for a public use. As such, the Commission must follow certain procedures to make determinations as to whether the proposed new use is either compatible with or more necessary than the existing use.

California Code of Civil Procedure ("CCP") 1240.510 requires that the proposed use will not unreasonably interfere with or impair the continuance of the public use as it then exists or may reasonably be expected to exist in the future. As noted, this easement was acquired for the purpose of waterfowl habitat suitable for migratory birds.

Under CCP 1240.610, the Commission would need to find that use for which the property is sought to be taken is a more necessary public use than the use for which the property is appropriated.

Increased flooding over 6" in depth on these wetlands would likely have a negative impact on migratory bird foraging habitat, potentially impacting waterfowl use and ultimately hunting quality. Increased flooding over 12" would further decrease migratory bird foraging habitat and would also impact landowner access by potentially flooding roads/ levees/hunting blinds and making it unsafe for hunters to wade the wetlands. Finally, increased flooding over 18" would not only impact migratory bird habitat and landowner access, but significantly overtop roads, levees and water control structures potentially causing costly damage to wetland infrastructure. The FWS purchased a conservation easement on this

property with the understanding that landowners would continue to optimally manage their lands for migratory birds as long as they had the incentive to hunt and enjoy passive recreation on their properties. Increased flooding has the potential to decrease hunting quality, decrease landowner access, and increase infrastructure maintenance costs, all of which could be impediments to future management of the property as migratory bird habitat.

The April 6, 2022, letter from DWR states without explanation that operation of the Project is compatible with the existing conservation easements and will not unreasonably interfere with or impair the continuance of the Service's public use as it exists or may reasonably be expected to exist in the future. Citing to the Easement for the 'Upper Swanton[sic]' property, the DWR letter further indicates the Service's conservation easements specify that the "properties are subject to a nonexclusive right to flood the properties between October 15 and March 1, as an existing use.[footnote omitted]. Therefore, DWR does not anticipate the need to modify the existing Service conservation easements."

The H Pond easement provides in Paragraph 3 that "[h]owever, in any year that the Grantor does not flood the Easement Lands to the determined elevation or the historical fall and winter seasonal levels, Grantee shall have, at its sole discretion, the nonexclusive right and option, but not the obligation, to flood the Easement Lands from September 1<sup>st</sup> through March 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year." However, flooding by the United States would be for the purpose of maintaining habitat for waterfowl, which is not the same as the prospective flooding under the proposed project to the levels shown in modeling, which in certain cases exceed the historic levels that were the limit of flooding in the H Pond easement (Paragraph 2).

## **Conclusion**

The Fish and Wildlife Service has initiated contact with several easement landowners to determine if reasonable measures can be implemented to ensure landowners have access to the property and to identify other reasonable improvements, such as modifications of levees and water control structures, to ensure these properties can continue to be managed and used as private wetlands. We have had discussions with the landowners of this parcel.

As stated in the USFWS Easement, the landowner cannot grant an additional easement without the prior written authorization of the Fish and Wildlife Service, which, in determining whether to grant such authorization, will be looking at whether the proposed interest interferes with the use of the Easement lands as waterfowl habitat suitable for migratory birds. To that end, we request DWR continue to work with FWS and the landowners to implement reasonable measures to help ensure this property continues to provide the migratory bird benefits for which it was acquired, regardless of a Resolution of Necessity determination for the property. As DWR moves forward, it needs to take appropriate steps to ensure that the Project will not unreasonably interfere with or impair the vital public use to provide suitable habitat for migratory waterfowl. We look forward to cooperating with DWR and the landowners on the Project, while ensuring the US easement parcel continues to provide benefits for migratory waterfowl.

Sincerely,

CURTIS  
MCCASLAND

Digitally signed by CURTIS  
MCCASLAND  
Date: 2022.11.03 11:50:07 -07'00'

Curtis McCasland  
Assistant Regional Director, Refuges Program  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
California Great Basin Region  
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2606  
Sacramento, CA 95825

Enclosure

cc: Catherine McCalvin, DWR  
Elizabeth Vasquez, DWR  
Rachel Taylor, DWR  
Mario Manzo, BOR

# EXHIBIT A

YOLO Co Recorder's Office  
Tony Bernhard, County Recorder

DOC - 96-0015196-00  
Acct 104-Placer Title  
Thursday, JUN 20, 1996 15:05:00  
Ttl Pd \$0.00 Nbr-0000020486  
VRB/R1/11

RECORDING REQUESTED; WHEN RECORDED  
MAIL TO: Attn: Stephen M. Dyer  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Sacramento Realty Field Office  
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 375  
Sacramento, California 95825-0509

As 16/27

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

GRANT OF EASEMENT

THIS GRANT OF EASEMENT, Made this 7th day of June, 1996  
between H Pond Ranch, a partnership, its successors and assigns, hereinafter  
referred to as Grantor, and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and its assigns,  
hereinafter referred to as Grantee,

WHEREAS the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of February 18, 1929, (16  
U.S.C. 715 et seq), as amended, and since August 1, 1958, authorizes the  
Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain lands or interests therein for  
waterfowl habitat;

AND ALSO WHEREAS, the easement interest rights in the following described  
lands are being acquired for administration by the Secretary of the Interior  
(Secretary) through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the use,  
occupation and operation of the reservations retained herein shall be  
subordinate to and subject to such rules and regulations as may be prescribed  
by the Secretary governing the use, occupation, protection and administration  
of units of the National Wildlife Refuge System under and in compliance with  
provisions of Section 6 of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of February 18,  
1929 (45 Stat. 1222), as amended by Section 301 of the Refuga Revenue Sharing  
Act of June 15, 1935, (49 Stat. 381).

NOW THEREFORE, For and in consideration of SIX HUNDRED TWENTY-TWO THOUSAND  
SEVEN HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$622,700.00), the Grantor hereby grants to  
the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Grantee, a perpetual conservation easement for  
the maintenance and use of the land and waters described below (hereinafter  
referred to as "Easement Lands" and "Easement Waters") for the management of  
migratory birds on the terms and conditions stated herein. There is included  
in this Grant of Easement a right of access by designated representatives of  
the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over any and all Easement Lands and those  
lands described as excluded from the Easement Lands described below, as  
reasonably necessary for the limited purposes of entering the Easement Lands  
to verify compliance by the Grantor with the terms and conditions of this  
easement and exercising Grantee's rights under this Grant of Easement. Said  
lands contain 479.0 acres, more or less, all being located in Yolo County,  
State of California described as follows:

TRACT 19C (Agriculture Parcel No. 033-440-01):

PARCEL ONE: The North 1/2 and the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of Section 27,  
T. 7N., R. 3E., M.D.B. & M., according to the Official Plat thereof.

North Central Valley WMA (19C)

015196 JUN 20 11

Excluding except for the purpose of access to and over the Easement Lands the following lands:

TRACT (19Cz-1):

The following described tract of land is located in Yolo County, California, situate approximately 10 miles South of the city of Davis, California, and being a part of the land described in the Deed from Peter Raffetto to H Pond Ranch, a partnership, recorded in the Official Records of Yolo County, California, June 16, 1971 in Book 980, Page 607, said tract being more particularly described as follows;

All bearings and distances are based on the Lambert State Plane Coordinate System, NAD 83/91, California Zone 2; divide distances by 0.99998 for ground distances.

T. 7 N., R. 3 E., MOUNT DIABLO MERIDIAN:

A portion of the North 1/2 of section 27, above said Township and Range, more particularly described as follows:

BEGINNING at a 3 1/4" U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum monument marked "130, 1996", said point marking the Northwest corner of this tract, and which point bears South 20° 33' 17" East, 1790.79 feet from the 2" open iron pipe marking the corner common to sections 21, 22, 27 and 28 of T. 7 N., R. 3 E.; thence, North 83° 08' 26" East, 208.71 feet; to a 3 1/4" U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum monument marked "129, 1996"; thence, South 6° 51' 34" East, 208.71 feet to a 3 1/4" U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum monument marked "128, 1996"; thence, South 83° 08' 26" West, 208.71 feet to a 3 1/4" U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum monument marked "127, 1996"; thence, North 6° 51' 34" West, 208.71 feet to the point of BEGINNING, containing 1.00 acres, more or less.

The above described tract of land, containing 1.00 acres, more or less, is delineated on a map tracing designated H POND RANCH TRACT (19Cz-1) bearing the date of April 5, 1996, of record in the files of the Department of the Interior.

1. There are excepted and reserved from this Grant of Easement all minerals, including gas, oil, and other hydrocarbon substances, underlying the Easement Lands, and this Grant of Easement is subject to all existing easements and rights-of-way of record held by third parties, and to all outstanding mineral rights, including all oil and gas leases of record, held by third parties.

2. The Easement Waters consist of (i) any riparian water rights appurtenant to the Easement Lands, (ii) any appropriative water rights to the extent those rights are appurtenant to the Easement Lands, (iii) any waters, the rights to which are secured under contract between the Grantor and any irrigation or water district, to the extent such waters are customarily applied to the Easement Lands, and (iv) any water from wells that are in existence or may be constructed in the future on the Easement Lands or on

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those lands described as excepted from the Easement Lands in the legal description and that are capable of being used by the Grantor to maintain the Easement Lands in a flooded condition. The Easement Waters are limited to the amount of Grantor's water reasonably required to maintain the Easement Lands in a flooded condition to the elevation not to exceed the historical fall and winter seasonal level.

3. Grantor is not obligated to take any action or to incur any expense related to the maintenance of the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat. Nor is Grantor obligated to apply water to the Easement Lands or to maintain, repair, or construct any water distribution facilities to serve the Easement Lands. However, in any year that the Grantor does not flood the Easement Lands to the determined elevation or the historical fall and winter seasonal levels, Grantee shall have, at its sole discretion, the nonexclusive right and option, but not the obligation, to flood the Easement Lands from September 1st through March 1st of the following year. In this connection, Grantee shall have, at its sole discretion, the right and option, but not the obligation, to use any and all of the Easement Waters that Grantee deems suitable for waterfowl habitat purposes and to place on the Easement Lands and convey through Grantor's water distribution facilities any other waters Grantee may acquire or have available to it.

In connection with any flooding done by Grantee pursuant to this paragraph, (i) Grantee shall have the right to make full use of Grantor's water distribution facilities, including both existing facilities and any facilities constructed in the future and including all water wells and pumps, to the extent those facilities are capable of serving the Easement Lands, on the condition that Grantee shall pay the expenses of operating Grantor's pumps, exclusive of maintenance costs, during any period of such uses by Grantee, and (ii) Grantor shall pay any taxes, assessments, or other charges, excluding actual water costs, due to any water or irrigation district on account of the use by Grantee of Easement Water supplied by such district.

4. (a) Grantor shall not, except as provided in 5 below, (i) alter the existing topography of or cultivate agricultural crops on the Easement Lands, (ii) otherwise alter or use or permit the use by third parties of the Easement Lands for any purpose, including the exploration or development of any reserved minerals, or (iii) place any structures on the Easement Lands other than hunting blinds without the prior written authorization of Grantee given through the Fish and Wildlife Service. Such authorization will only be given if the Secretary or his designated representative determines that the proposed activity will not change the character of the Easement Lands or adversely affect the use of the Easement Lands as habitat suitable for migratory birds.

(b) Grantor and Grantee agree that the exploration, development, and production of reserved oil and gas deposits by the Grantor or authorized third parties shall be considered compatible with maintenance and use of the Easement Lands and Waters for the management of migratory birds and shall be authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Service provided (i) all exploration and development operations and, in particular, all drilling and workover activities, are conducted after June 1st and prior to September 1st of each year and (ii) Grantee, through the Fish and Wildlife Service shall have the

right to approve the locations and methods of all proposed exploration, development and production operations to insure such operations are carried out in a manner that is compatible with protection of Grantee's easement interest.

5. The provisions of Paragraph 3 hereof shall not prohibit hunting or operation of a hunting club on the Easement Lands and such use shall be deemed to be consistent with maintenance of the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat so long as such use is in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regulating hunting on privately owned lands. In this connection, Grantor may take such actions as they may deem appropriate to improve the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat and to facilitate the operation of any hunting club on the Easement Lands, including building or relocating blinds, excavating channels to blinds, irrigating vegetation, fertilizing, planting native trees and wetland vegetation, provided that such trees and vegetation are included in Exhibit A attached to and incorporated herein by reference, removing trees and vegetation to the extent they encroach on the open marsh and interfere with the use of the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat, and removing brush to the extent it encroaches on dikes and impedes access thereto for hunting and maintenance purposes.

6. Grantor shall not grant any additional easements, rights-of-way, or other interests in the Easement Lands, other than a fee or leasehold interest, or grant or otherwise transfer to any other person or entity or to other lands or otherwise abandon or relinquish any Easement Waters without the prior written authorization of Grantee given through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Such authorization will be given unless the Secretary or his designated representative determines that the proposed interest or transfer will interfere with the use of the Easement Lands as waterfowl habitat suitable for migratory birds or interfere with the availability of Easement Waters for the Easement Lands. This paragraph shall not prohibit the transfer of a fee title or leasehold interest in the Easement Lands that is subject to the terms of this Grant of Easement.

7. Upon acceptance of this Grant, the easement interest acquired by the United States shall become a component part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and shall be subject to those laws and regulations pertaining to the National Wildlife Refuge System that are applicable to the easement interests being acquired. Violation of those applicable laws and regulations may subject the violator to civil and/or criminal penalties. Laws and regulations that regulate conduct that does not affect the property interests conveyed to the United States through this Grant of Easement are not applicable. For example, regulations controlling hunting and fishing or any public use are not applicable since these rights have not been conveyed.

8. The Grantee acknowledges that adoption of laws or regulations that prohibit hunting of all migratory waterfowl on the property for a continuous period of thirty-six (36) months shall deprive the Grantor of the primary economic beneficial use of the fee estate in the property. Therefore, the Grantee, and its assigns, reserves the first right of refusal to acquire the remaining fee interest in the Grantor's property in the event that waterfowl hunting seasons in the State of California are stopped for a period of three



**CALIFORNIA ALL-PURPOSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

No. 9907

State of California

County of Sacramento

On June 6, 1996 before me, Nancy A. Henry  
DATE NAME, TITLE OF OFFICER - E.G., "JANE DOE, NOTARY PUBLIC"

personally appeared Ronald R. Rott  
NAME(S) OF SIGNER(S)

personally known to me - OR -  proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.



WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Nancy A. Henry  
SIGNATURE OF NOTARY

**OPTIONAL**

Though the data below is not required by law, it may prove valuable to persons relying on the document and could prevent fraudulent reattachment of this form.

**CAPACITY CLAIMED BY SIGNER**

- INDIVIDUAL
- CORPORATE OFFICER
- \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE(S)
- PARTNER(S)       LIMITED  
    GENERAL
- ATTORNEY-IN-FACT
- TRUSTEE(S)
- GUARDIAN/CONSERVATOR
- OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ TITLE OR TYPE OF DOCUMENT

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PAGES

\_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF DOCUMENT

\_\_\_\_\_ SIGNER(S) OTHER THAN NAMED ABOVE

SIGNER IS REPRESENTING:  
NAME OF PERSON(S) OR ENTITY(IES)

\_\_\_\_\_

015196 JUN 20 1996

**CALIFORNIA ALL-PURPOSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

No. 5907

State of California

County of Sacramento

On June 6, 1996 before me, Nancy A. Henry  
DATE NAME, TITLE OF OFFICER - E.G., "JANE DOE, NOTARY PUBLIC"

personally appeared Cyrus A. Johnson  
NAME(S) OF SIGNER(S)

personally known to me - OR -  proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.



WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Nancy A. Henry  
SIGNATURE OF NOTARY

**OPTIONAL**

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- TRUSTEE(S)
- GUARDIAN/CONSERVATOR
- OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNER IS REPRESENTING:**  
NAME OF PERSON(S) OR ENTITY(IES)

**DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT**

TITLE OR TYPE OF DOCUMENT

NUMBER OF PAGES

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SIGNER(S) OTHER THAN NAMED ABOVE

015196 JUN 20 1996

**CALIFORNIA ALL-PURPOSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

No. 9907

State of California

County of Sacramento

On June 7, 1996 before me, Nancy A. Henry  
DATE NAME, TITLE OF OFFICER - E.G., "JANE DOE, NOTARY PUBLIC"

personally appeared Robert Dorian  
NAME(S) OF SIGNER(S)

personally known to me - OR -  proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.



WITNESS my hand and official seal,  
Nancy A. Henry  
SIGNATURE OF NOTARY

**OPTIONAL**

Though the data below is not required by law, it may prove valuable to persons relying on the document and could prevent fraudulent reattachment of this form.

**CAPACITY CLAIMED BY SIGNER**

- INDIVIDUAL
- CORPORATE OFFICER
- TITLE(S)
- PARTNER(S)       LIMITED
- GENERAL
- ATTORNEY-IN-FACT
- TRUSTEE(S)
- GUARDIAN/CONSERVATOR
- OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE OR TYPE OF DOCUMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
NUMBER OF PAGES

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF DOCUMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNER(S) OTHER THAN NAMED ABOVE

**SIGNER IS REPRESENTING:**  
NAME OF PERSON(S) OR ENTITY(ES)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

015196 JUN 201

**CERTIFICATE OF ACCEPTANCE**  
State of California Code Section 27281.

This is to certify that the Secretary of the Interior, acting by and through his authorized representative, the Senior Realty Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, hereby accepts on behalf of the United States of America, the real property described within the Grant of Easement and consents to recordation thereof.

June 10, 1996

Date



Senior Realty Officer  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

015196

## EXHIBIT A

The following list contains most of the plants considered desirable for waterfowl and other wildlife in the North Central Valley Wildlife Management Area. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, and other species may be desirable under some circumstances. Plants not on this list may not be introduced on the Easement Land without written permission from the Grantee.

Scientific NameCommon NameTrees, shrubs, and vines:

Salix gooddingii	Black willow
Salix hindsiana	Sandbar willow
Populus fremontii	Fremont cottonwood
Alnus rhombifolia	White alder
Elaeagnus angustifolia	Russian olive

Aquatic-floating and submerged:

Lemna minor	Duckweed
Potamogeton pectinatus	Sego pondweed
Potamogeton species	Other pondweeds
Zannichellia palustris	Horned pondweed
Najas guadalupensis	Southern naiad
Chara species	Muskgrass

Aquatic-emergent:

Scirpus acutus	Hardstem bulrush (tule)
Scirpus robustus	Alkali bulrush
Scirpus fluviatilis	River bulrush
Carex species	Sedges
Haleocharis palustris	Spike rush
Cyperus species	Flat sedges (nutgrass)
Echinodorus berteroi	Burhead
Sagittaria latifolia	Wapato, duck potato
Sagittaria species	Arrowhead
Typha species	Cattails

Moist soil:

Echinochloa crusgalli  
Leptochloa fascicularis  
Halechloa schoenoides  
Crypsis niliaca  
Polygonum species  
Ammannia coccinea  
Paspalum distichum  
Cynodon dactylon

Watergrass  
Sprangletop  
Swamp timothy  
Prickle grass  
Smartweeds  
Redstem  
Joint grass  
Bermuda grass

Uplands:

Phalaris tuberosa var. stenoptera  
Phalaris tuberosa var. hirtiglumis  
Phalaris arundinacea  
Sorghum halepense  
Setaria species  
Distichlis spicata  
Agropyron elongatum  
Melilotus species  
Astragalus cicer  
Lotus corniculatus

Harding grass  
Perla grass  
Reed canary grass  
Johnson grass  
Bristle grass  
Saltgrass  
Tall wheatgrass  
Sweetclovers  
Cicer milkvetch  
Birdsfoot trefoil