



Advance Mitigation: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Collaborative Advance Mitigation planning contributes to the fulfillment of regional conservation priorities

Caltrans Road Ecology Meetings
Jennifer Garrison
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Michael R. Harris
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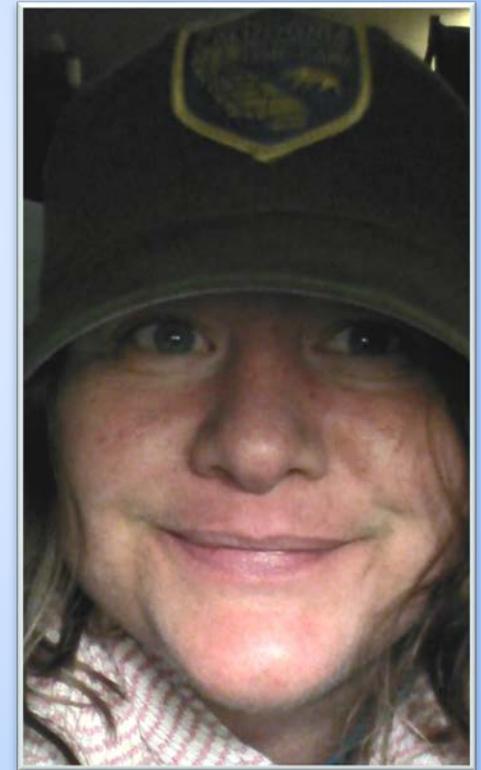
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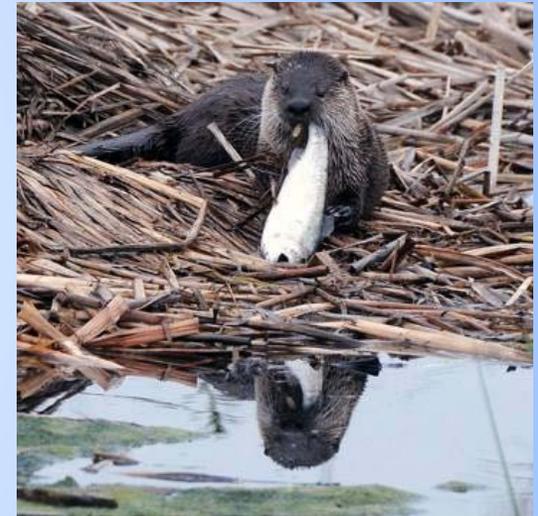
CDFW Organization

- ▶ Caltrans District staff interface primarily with Regional Habitat Conservation Planning Branch's staff (CEQA, NCCP, permitting, & banking staff)
- ▶ Regions (seven)
- ▶ Headquarters
- ▶ Branches
 - ▶ Law Enforcement (wardens)
 - ▶ Wildlife Branch (biologists, land managers, non-game Recovery Plans)
 - ▶ Fisheries Branch (Statewide Fish Forum, Fish TAC)
 - ▶ Biogeographic Data Branch (BIOS, ACE II, CNDDDB)



CDFW + Caltrans = Statewide Advance Mitigation Initiative (SAMMI)

- ▶ CDFW Headquarters liaison position (November 2013)
- ▶ Outreach: Habitat Conservation Planning Branch & other Branches
- ▶ Conducted literature review and engaged other states
 - ▶ Advance Mitigation and In-Lieu Fee programs
 - ▶ Retrofitting state transportation systems for connectivity
- ▶ Established a CDFW Statewide Advance Mitigation Policy Group (August 2014)
 - ▶ Representatives from every CDFW region
- ▶ **Caltrans has been doing Advance Mitigation for a long time (20+ years)**
 - ▶ Land acquisition and improvements: Honey Lake, Battle Creek, Elk River
 - ▶ Participation in NCCPs (Signatory, Participating Entity, TransNet & SANDAG)



Recent CDFW & Caltrans' AM Collaborations

- ▶ Advance Mitigation linked to CDFW conservation needs & priorities
- ▶ Cartago Wildlife Area
 - ▶ Caltrans approached Region 6 staff
 - ▶ Upcoming need for wetland mitigation and none to be found
 - ▶ No private land, banks, or NCCPs
 - ▶ Collaborated to mitigate on CDFW-owned land and phased implementation to develop mitigation for multiple projects
- ▶ Battle Creek Wildlife Area
 - ▶ 80 acre parcel adjacent to BCWA originally purchased by Caltrans for mitigation
 - ▶ Restoration previously completed on half of the property which was available for mitigation
 - ▶ Met with District 2 staff to discuss restoration on the remaining 40 acres for riparian mitigation
 - ▶ SHOPP 240 funding proposal

Linking CDFW Conservation Needs & Priorities to Advance Mitigation



- In what ways could Caltrans' Advance Mitigation efforts support CDFW's conservation needs and priorities?
- What are CDFW's conservation needs and priorities?
- Not easy questions to answer
 - Large state with high biodiversity across diverse landscapes and habitat types divided into seven CDFW regions
- State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) 2015 update & Transportation Companion plan
- Easier question to answer: Through SAMI, how might CDFW help Caltrans better site mitigation?

What are CDFW's Conservation Needs & Priorities?

- ▶ SWAP 2015 statewide strategies:
 - ▶ Integrated planning
 - ▶ Habitat defragmentation
 - ▶ Increase terrestrial & aquatic connectivity
- ▶ Beyond SWAP, resources to determine regional conservation priorities:
 - ▶ CDFW staff
 - ▶ Approved NCCPs or those in development
 - ▶ Recovery Plans
 - ▶ CDFW data (ACE II , CNDDDB, etc.)
 - ▶ Connectivity studies and projects (ex: CA Essential Habitat Connectivity Project, Desert Connectivity Project, South Coast Missing Linkages)



How to support CDFW conservation needs and priorities when siting per-project mitigation:

- ▶ Engage CDFW staff early in the planning process
- ▶ Coordinate with an approved NCCP or one in development
- ▶ Develop science-based mitigation projects
- ▶ Incorporate connectivity actions into transportation planning & mitigation proposals



How could Caltrans' Advance Mitigation projects support CDFW's conservation needs & priorities?

- Create a single-entity Caltrans mitigation or conservation bank (USFWS & CDFW-approved)
- When NCCPs and banks are not options, locate Advance Mitigation sites:
 - Adjacent to existing conserved lands
 - Within or adjacent to designated critical habitat
- Propose connectivity actions as mitigation
- Identify CDFW-owned land that may need improvements, enhancements, and/or restoration



CDFW's Advance Mitigation Planning Process: I-395 Pilot Project Overview

- Staff from Fisheries, Habitat Conservation Planning, Wildlife, & Data Branches in region & headquarters
- Aggregates CDFW resources (SWAP 2015, data, Conceptual Area Protection Plans, unfunded grant proposals, HQ and R1 expert information, recovery plans)
- Utilizes Caltrans information to inform the Project and collaborate with Caltrans D2 and Headquarters staff
- Expanded to Northern Region (R1) coastal staff



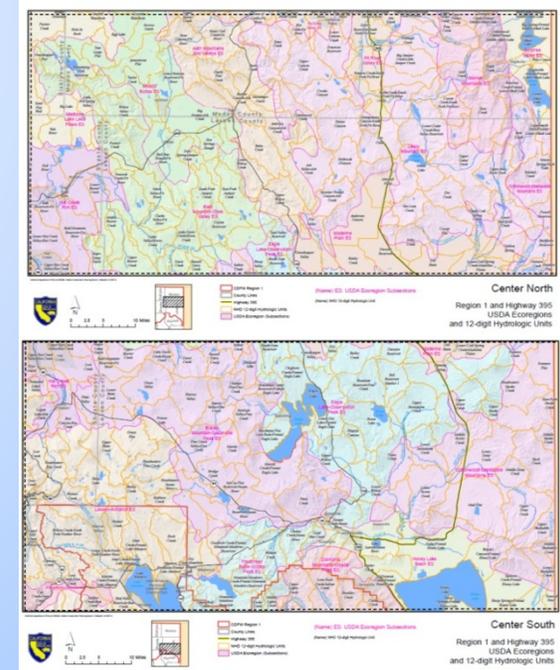
Goals of CDFW's Advance Mitigation Planning Process' I-395 Pilot:

- Identify science-based mitigation opportunities that support the Department's conservation needs and priorities at the landscape-level scale
- Incorporate aquatic and terrestrial connectivity into the process and determine where connectivity actions can serve as partial or full mitigation
- Demonstrate the process is not dependent upon special funding
- Finalize an Advance Mitigation planning process that can be replicated statewide by CDFW staff



AM Pilot Products (In Development)

- ▶ List of publicly and privately owned land
 - ▶ Prioritized for its suitability to receive mitigation actions
 - ▶ Organized by Ecoregion subsections and HUC 12 watersheds
- ▶ New Conceptual Area Protection Plans (CAPPs)
- ▶ List of 3rd-parties to hold conservation easements & endowments
- ▶ List of wildlife crossings and connectivity actions
 - ▶ Milepost, crossing type, and target species
- ▶ List of additional resources to support the process
 - ▶ Species and baseline studies
 - ▶ Vegetation mapping



Resources and References

- ▶ SB 34 Advance Mitigation Land Acquisition Grants Program Guidelines
- ▶ [Washington State's Advance Mitigation Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [North Carolina's Ecology and Enhancement Program \(EEP\)](#)
- ▶ [The Next Generation of Mitigation Linking Current and Future Mitigation Programs to SWAPs and Regional Plans](#)
- ▶ [California's State Wildlife Action Plan](#)
- ▶ Colorado I-70 work:
 - ▶ [ALIVE Memorandum Of Understanding](#)
 - ▶ [A regional Ecosystem Framework for Terrestrial & Aquatic Wildlife along with I-70 Mountain Corridor in Colorado](#)
 - ▶ [I-70 Wildlife Overpass Screening Documentation](#)
- ▶ Retrofitting state transportation systems for connectivity ([Arizona](#), [Utah](#), Colorado, [Nevada](#))
- ▶ [California Fish Passage Forum](#)
- ▶ Caltrans and FHWA Wildlife Crossing Manuals
- ▶ [Caltrans: I-395 Transportation Concept Report \(2014\)](#)

