



**TULARE BASIN WILDLIFE PARTNERS**  
Creating Opportunities for Nature and People

Final Seed Grant Report to the Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley  
Integrating Land and Water Solutions in Tulare Lake Basin  
February 6, 2009

The Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners is an IRS 501 (c) 3 non-profit conservation organization which operates in the Tulare Basin hydrological area in Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern Counties in California. Its mission is to protect, enhance, and restore wildlife and their habitats in Tulare Lake Basin. The \$125,000 Seed Grant to the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners extended from July 2007 through December 2008. The primary deliverables under this grant were conservation bank site recommendations for Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG), and development and implementation of a comprehensive outreach and fundraising plan to facilitate the implementation of the highest priority conjunctive use land and water conservation projects recommended by the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners and its partners in the Tulare Lake Basin Working Group. This grant has provided the opportunity and encouragement to the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners to leverage significant new opportunities and funding during the grant period. In addition to early completion of the primary deliverables, as a result of this grant the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners accomplished the following:

- Orchestrated the October 17, 2007, meeting of the Tulare Lake Basin Working Group to review and approve Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners' highest recommendations for conjunctive use "land and water solution" Conservation Priority Projects in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.
- Continued strong focus on Conservation Priority Projects (as amended/updated at the April 14, 2008, Tulare Lake Basin Working Group meeting), with special focus on Goose Lake Ephemeral Lake acquisition and on Deer Creek (involving the scoping of a precedent-setting federal and state Safe Harbor agreement for the Southern San Joaquin Valley/Tulare Basin).
- Orchestrated the October 31, 2008, Tulare Lake Basin Working Group meeting which featured discussion and launch of a major new Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners -led outreach effort on behalf of the Tulare Lake Basin Working Group -- an evolution of the Tulare Lake Basin Working Group to two business meetings per year (May 1, 2009 and October 30, 2009), with an annual exhibit at the Tulare Ag-Expo, an annual "Land and Water Solutions Symposium" (beginning Spring 2010) to foster a land ethic among key audiences of the Tulare Lake Basin Working Group and support Tulare Lake Basin Working Group participant goals and programs, and an annual tour of important Tulare Basin sites in collaboration with the Water Education Foundation. In 2009, the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners will undertake a major, multi-year fundraising effort to support this new outreach program.
- Completed Measure R Riparian Corridor Survey and Report for Tulare County Association of Governments (February 2008) and maintained offer of further assistance if needed to Tulare County Association of Governments regarding our December 2007 conservation bank site recommendations to Tulare County Association of Governments.
- Completed the Fresno County Council of Governments Measure C Riparian-Wildlife Corridor Report, enlisting a new constituency of support among Fresno County transportation planners, city planners, and mayors.

- Reported to the Partnership Land Use, Agriculture, and Housing Work Group and Water Work Group as needed and as requested, representing the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners and its scientifically based approach as a resource to Southern San Joaquin counties and cities for Blueprint and Partnership short and long-term land use planning purposes.
- Engaged as a stakeholder in Tulare Basin Integrated Water Management Planning sub-regions and in the Tulare Basin-wide Integrated Water Management Joint Powers Agreement, achieving recognition as a resource and catalyst for integrated natural resource management in the Kings-Kaweah-Tule-Kern River watersheds -- for conjunctive use water supply projects involving ecosystem restoration and enhancement.
- Obtained new grants from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Friant Kern Canal Basin Modification & Environmental Groundwater Banking collaboration with the Deer Creek Tule River Authority -- \$100,000); from Resources Legacy Fund (Tulare Basin Regional Conservation Plan Water Supply Strategies -- \$88,000); and from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (Tulare Basin Corridor Conservation Plan for California Department of Fish and Game Conceptual Area Protection Plan completion, with supplemental funding for Plan summary completion and identification of new project opportunities for Natural Resources Conservation Service and other key agency and non-government organization partners in Tulare Basin --\$66,000).
- Cemented a partnership with UC Merced Sierra Nevada Research Institute faculty for a UC Natural Reserve System Field Station based at the BLM Atwell Island Project site and submitted a \$742,000 proposal to the Central Valley Project Conservation Program-Habitat Restoration Program to launch the @ \$2M effort to fund this important initiative.
- Completed the Draft Tulare Basin Wildlife-Riparian Corridor Plan for California Department of Fish and Game Conceptual Area Protection Plan (December 16, 2008) -- the fourth and final Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners Conservation Plan, which links the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners' Goose Lake, Sand Ridge Tulare Lake, and Buena Vista Lake-Kern Lake Conservation Plans to the most important wildlife-riparian corridors in the Tulare Basin and makes possible strategic, scientifically-based follow up action by the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners and by its partner agencies and non-government organizations.
- Completed and launched the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners Web page [www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org](http://www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org)
- Prepared new fundraising brochure, tri-fold event display, and glossy high donor outreach and fundraising "campaign piece." ([Donor Outreach Card-Inside](#)) ([Donor Outreach Card-Outside](#))

The Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners experienced two adverse developments during the grant period. A strong effort to obtain funding from Kern County for a Kern County Riparian Wildlife Corridor Survey and Report failed due to severe budget constraints in Kern County (July 2008), and a prolonged effort to obtain funding for a Kings County Riparian Wildlife Corridor Survey and Report failed to win the four out of five votes required for approval by the Kings County Board of Supervisors (November 2008).

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