



# CENTRAL VALLEY JOINT VENTURE

## Conserving Bird Habitat in California's Central Valley

March 1, 2011

**Central Valley  
Joint Venture**  
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**MANAGEMENT BOARD:**  
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*California Waterfowl  
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The Nature Conservancy  
The Trust for Public Land*

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Cuts to CVP Restoration Fund will harm California Refuges

Dear Senators Feinstein and Boxer:

On behalf of the Central Valley Joint Venture, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the language in the House Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1) that would reduce expenditures for the present 2011 fiscal year from the Central Valley Project (CVP) Restoration Fund to FY 2010 levels. The effect of this arbitrary change would be devastating to fish and wildlife resources, especially the federal and state refuges and other Central Valley wetlands that depend on acquired water purchased by monies from the CVP Restoration Fund. We urge you to restore full expenditures by the CVP Restoration Fund to match the amount of funds previously scheduled to be collected from CVP water and power users in FY 2011.

The CVP Restoration Fund was created by Congress in the 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) and it benefits the State of California in numerous ways. Because of the statutory language, the amount in the CVP Restoration Fund fluctuates from year to year and the 2010 level was one of the lowest in many years. Because 2011 was anticipated to return to a higher (and more typical) funding level, the proposed reduction of over \$14 million could have a very substantial negative impact on the State's fish and wildlife, especially at a time when State resources are already stretched.

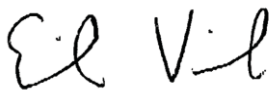
CVPIA is a mandate from Congress for the Central Valley Project to mitigate some of the negative impacts resulting from its construction and operation. Many of the most important wetlands and rivers in the Central Valley lost their historic water supplies when the CVP was constructed. The CVPIA established a modest and reasonable method for restoring these essential elements of California's natural heritage. Congress explicitly cited the Central Valley Joint Venture in its 1992 Act, and its

members are aware that state wildlife areas, national wildlife refuges, and other Central Valley wetlands are reliant on the funding levels in the CVP Restoration Fund established by CVPIA. That formula includes charging CVP contractors a modest fee for CVP water delivered, then using that money to acquire (from willing sellers) additional water supplies for internationally-recognized wetlands in the Central Valley, including national wildlife refuges.

Reducing the expenditures as proposed by H.R. 1 will not reduce the payments made by the CVP's agricultural customers. Those payments are mandated by law. It would simply block that revenue from being used for its intended purpose in California, to purchase water for fish and wildlife habitat in the Central Valley. This will cause direct and substantial harm to California's nationally and internationally protected wildlife, especially migratory birds of the Pacific Flyway.

Thank you in advance for your efforts to restore full funding to the CVP Restoration Fund when this legislation comes before the US Senate in the coming week. We look forward to continuing to cooperate with you on this immediate issue, as well as the longer term issue of securing adequate funding for these critical resources in California.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Erik Vink in black ink.

Erik Vink  
Management Board Chairman

cc: Central Valley Joint Venture Management Board