



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

California/Nevada Operations Office

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Dear Reader,

Enclosed is your copy of the final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). This CCP describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's long-range vision for the Refuge through the year 2017.

The Refuge was established in 1973 because of its "particular value in carrying out the national migratory bird management program" (16 USC 667b). The 367-acre Salinas River Refuge is located 11 miles north of Monterey, California, where the Salinas River empties into Monterey Bay. The Refuge is part of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which has its headquarters in Fremont, California. Refuge lands include a range of terrestrial and aquatic habitats, including coastal dunes and beach, grasslands, wetlands, and riparian scrub. Because of its location within the Pacific Flyway, the Refuge is used by a variety of migratory birds during breeding, wintering, and migration periods. The Refuge also provides habitat for several threatened and endangered species, including western snowy plover, California brown pelican, Smith's blue butterfly, Monterey gilia, and Monterey spineflower. Approximately 40 species that exist or are suspected to exist on the Refuge are considered sensitive by Federal or State agencies. Current recreational uses on the Refuge include wildlife observation and photography, waterfowl hunting, and access to surf fishing.

Under the management program described in the final CCP, informational signs and interpretive exhibits will be installed on the Refuge and a wheelchair-accessible trail to the Salinas River will be constructed. In addition, the existing parking lot will be improved (i.e., graded and covered with gravel). The seasonal waterfowl hunting area will be reduced by approximately 15 percent to protect roosting California brown pelicans. All of the current management activities will continue. Some activities, such as special-status species inventories, will be substantially expanded. New management tools and techniques will include: using prescribed fire to augment mowing and herbicide use in the grassland/shrubland habitat; conducting inventories of all habitats on the Refuge; managing problem avian predators of the western snowy plover; and creating a geographical information system database to track vegetation and population trends. In addition, the Service will pursue a long-term lease with the State Lands Commission to manage the beach and tidelands below mean high water.

The Service would like to thank everyone who participated in the planning and public involvement process. Your comments helped us prepare a better plan for the future of this unique wildlife refuge.

Sincerely,

Acting  
Steve Thompson, Manager,  
California/Nevada Operations

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