

## **PROJECT TO IMPROVE SPAWNING HABITAT FOR ENDANGERED WINTER-RUN CHINOOK SALMON BEGINS IN SACRAMENTO RIVER**

*Up to 8,000 tons of gravel provides critical spawning ground in Redding*

**REDDING, CA** – The Sacramento River Settlement Contractors (SRSC), led by Reclamation District No. 108 (RD 108) and funded by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), will begin laying down up to 8,000 tons of gravel to create spawning sites for the endangered winter-run Chinook salmon in the upper regions of the Sacramento River.

The project spans nearly three acres and is located under the Market Street Bridge in Redding.

“If we want to boost population numbers for the winter-run Chinook salmon, we need to provide habitat during critical moments of their lifecycle. The Market Street Gravel Project aims to provide support during a critical time when salmon are seeking safe and accessible spawning sites,” **said Roger Cornwell, Reclamation District No. 108 Board President**. “This collaborative effort is a testament of the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors’ innovation and dedication to the health and betterment of our watershed.”

Approximately 5,000 to 8,000 tons of gravel – enough to cover the equivalent of 10 football fields – is being placed into the river.

The project is a continuing effort to help meet requirements under the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, which was created to restore and replenish spawning gravel and rearing habitat for salmonid species.

**Reclamation Fisheries Biologist John Hannon**, who oversees these projects, said, “By the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors working collaboratively with local, state and federal agencies and organizations, it enables the efficient completion of these and other upcoming projects that no single organization could complete alone. These efforts provide hope that we will see a rebound in the number of salmon returning to spawn each year in Northern California.”

The spawning habitat has been reduced over time in this important river section due to water flows pushing the gravel downstream.

This is just one of several innovative interagency projects planned in the Sacramento River in early 2023 to aid the winter-run salmon.

The Market Street Gravel Project is part of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act and also follows a comprehensive effort to recover all four runs of Chinook salmon in the Sacramento Valley Watershed as part of the Sacramento Valley Salmon Recovery Program, the National Marine Fisheries Service’s Recovery Plan, the California Resources

Agency's Salmon Resiliency Strategy and the early implementation of the Voluntary Agreements/Healthy Rivers California action plan.

While this effort is led by RD 108 and funded by USBR and USFWS, the Market Street Project is a partnership with a multitude of local, state, and federal entities including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Army Corps of Engineers, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and National Marine Fisheries Service. The project will be constructed in partnership with Sacramento River Settlement Contract Members including RD 108, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District, Anderson-Cottonwood Irrigation District, Basin Irrigation and Drainage Authority, City of Redding, Reclamation District 787, Princeton-Codora-Glenn Irrigation District, and Provident Irrigation District.

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**ABOUT SACRAMENTO RIVER SETTLEMENT CONTRACTORS**

Sacramento River Settlement Contractors (SRSC) are dedicated to providing reliable, affordable water supplies to their landowners and water users, while ensuring the environmental and economic viability of the region. Among the largest irrigation districts in the Sacramento Valley and with senior water rights, they have a long history of serving farmers and the agricultural community and maintaining critical wildlife habitat. The member districts fulfill their mission of efficiently and effectively managing and delivering water through an ever-improving delivery system and responsible policies, while maintaining a deep commitment to sustainable practices. Looking ahead, the SRSC will remain focused on continuing to deliver a reliable and sustainable water supply by positioning themselves to respond proactively, strategically and responsibly to California's ever-changing water landscape.