

Sample Summary for Electronic Document Submittal

15 copies of this document may be included when a Lead Agency is submitting electronic copies of environmental impact reports, negative declarations, mitigated negative declarations, or notices of preparation to the SCH. The SCH will still accept other summaries, such as an EIR summary prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123, attached to the electronic copies of the document.

SCH # _____

Lead Agency: Yolo County Resource Conservation District

Project Title: Putah-Cache Arundo Eradication Project

Project Location: Woodland

Yolo

City

County

Please provide a Project Description (Proposed Actions, location, and/or consequences).

The Yolo County Resource Conservation District (YCRCD) plans to implement a large scale invasive Arundo donax (giant reed or arundo) eradication project in the Putah-Cache Watershed in Yolo and northern Solano Counties. Arundo is a bamboo-like perennial grass up to 8m (25 ft.) tall that grows in riparian habitat, forming large dense stands and using three times the amount of water used by native riparian vegetation. Removal of arundo and other invasive species such as salt cedar, allows native vegetation to re-establish, restoring the native character of the landscape as well as saving water and reducing fire and flood risk. Arundo is a difficult plant to control and is a prolific colonizer. For this project to be successful, all the arundo in Yolo County will need to be controlled.

Populations of arundo growing in the Putah-Cache Watershed are impacting numerous physical and biological processes in the riparian area. Large stands of arundo have increased erosion of banks, trapped sediment which alters river geomorphology, created localized impacts on stream channel processes, pushed low flows into alternate channels and resulted in flooding on streamside properties and occasional farmland loss. In addition, arundo negatively impacts habitat quality and ecosystem functions for many aquatic and riparian species.

The Putah-Cache Watershed covers approximately 2,500 square miles and combines several smaller watersheds, including Cache Creek in the northwestern part of Yolo County, Putah Creek along the southern boundary of the county, Pleasants Creek in neighboring Solano County, and five smaller tributaries of the foothills in the western part of the county known as the Westside tributaries: Cottonwood Slough, Willow Slough, Union School Slough, Dry Slough and Chickahominy Slough.

Please identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

This invasive species control project will have an overall positive impact on riparian and aquatic habitats and will benefit riparian dependent wildlife. Eradicating target non-native invasive plant species will allow native plants to reoccupy portions of the project area where they were eliminated by the encroachment of the target non-native invasive plant species, particularly giant reed and salt cedar.

Direct impacts to biological resources could occur through project restoration activities. Direct impacts could occur as physical take or harassment of species (flora and fauna). To avoid these impacts work methods and activities follow strict timing and activity restrictions. The timing of work activities minimizes work when biological resources are actively reproducing and/or migrating through work areas. The type of work activity in a given time frame is designed to minimize and avoid impacts. There are general measures as well as task specific measures related to treatment, biomass reduction, planting and maintenance.

Specific measures will be taken, such as worker training, pre-work habitat surveys and work site monitoring by a biologist, using herbicides that have been proven to have low toxicity to fish and wildlife, avoiding entering flowing or standing water and not using mechanized equipment (except in the Capay Valley) for biomass reduction, and separating native vegetation from target vegetation before spraying.

In the Capay Valley where mowing activity with equipment will occur, the project will follow mitigation measures such as cultural sensitivity training for workers, cultural resources studies by archeologists, and working with the local tribe to avoid areas with known resources.

If applicable, please describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

There are many sensitive biological resources in Yolo County. The project has been designed to enhance and restore sensitive riparian habitat while minimizing and avoiding impacts to flora and fauna. many of the project partners are environmental and land-conservation organizations active in the county. The project is strongly supported by these groups. The project will be carrying out active invasive plant reduction in Capay Valley in areas known to have cultural and historic resources. The Yocha dehe tribe is supportive of this project has been consulted with to assure that sensitive resources are protected and the tribe is aware of project activities. Work will be occurring on tribal land and historical tribal land.

The project is occurring in riverine habitats that are dynamic systems that experience periodic flooding and erosion events. Both property owners and public agencies desire ways to minimize flooding and erosion risk, one of which is removing and controlling dense stands of invasive non- native species that exacerbate flooding and erosion.

Please provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

Empty box for listing responsible or trustee agencies for the project.