Wetland Restoration of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area: Success and Failures

Rick Storre
707-444-8261 or 800-200-8969
r.storre@worldnet.att.net
Freshwater Farms
5851 Myrtle Avenue
Eureka, CA 95503 USA

Abstract

The 3,700 acre Yolo Bypass Wildlife project is the largest wetland restoration project underway in the West Coast. The project is unique in that it combines wildlife, flood control, and agriculture within an urban area.

Success and failures were defined differently by Engineers (office expectations) and Biologists (field expectations). Focus here is on riparian plant selection(s). Primary objectives were to provide habitat for wintering waterfowl and wetland management. It has been difficult to design for this because the bypass is a flood flow channel. The draughts of the 1980's turned into the historic floods of the '90's. One of the most interesting design elements to emerge from this was noticing the specific elevational requirements that riparian plants and trees have on where they will survive. The take home messages are - "Build it and they will come" or default to field expectations and - design for the animals.

Keywords

elevational requirements, off-channel wetlands, flood flow channel