LAKE CALIFORNIA SIDE CHANNEL RECONNECTION PROJECT

ABOUT THE PROJECT

As part of ongoing efforts to improve salmon rearing habitat on the Sacramento River, a side channel in Tehama County was restored in December 2017. The Lake California Side Channel Reconnection Project was completed to remove accumulated gravel at the inlet and reconnect the existing side channel to the River during the low flows of late fall and early winter. Creating a functional side channel at lower flows provides additional rearing habitat for winter-run juvenile salmonids, as well as other species.

The project is the result of a collaborative partnership of federal and state agencies, local water districts, and conservation groups, and marks the 14th project completed over the last two years to benefit salmon in the Sacramento Valley.

The project site was located just south of the gated Lake California community between river mile 269 and 270. Construction has been completed but monitoring of the site will be ongoing.

"As the project's construction manager, we are pleased with the partnership effort to improve this natural resource for salmonid species and water users. It is great to have such a meaningful project take place in our backyard with a positive local and downstream impact."

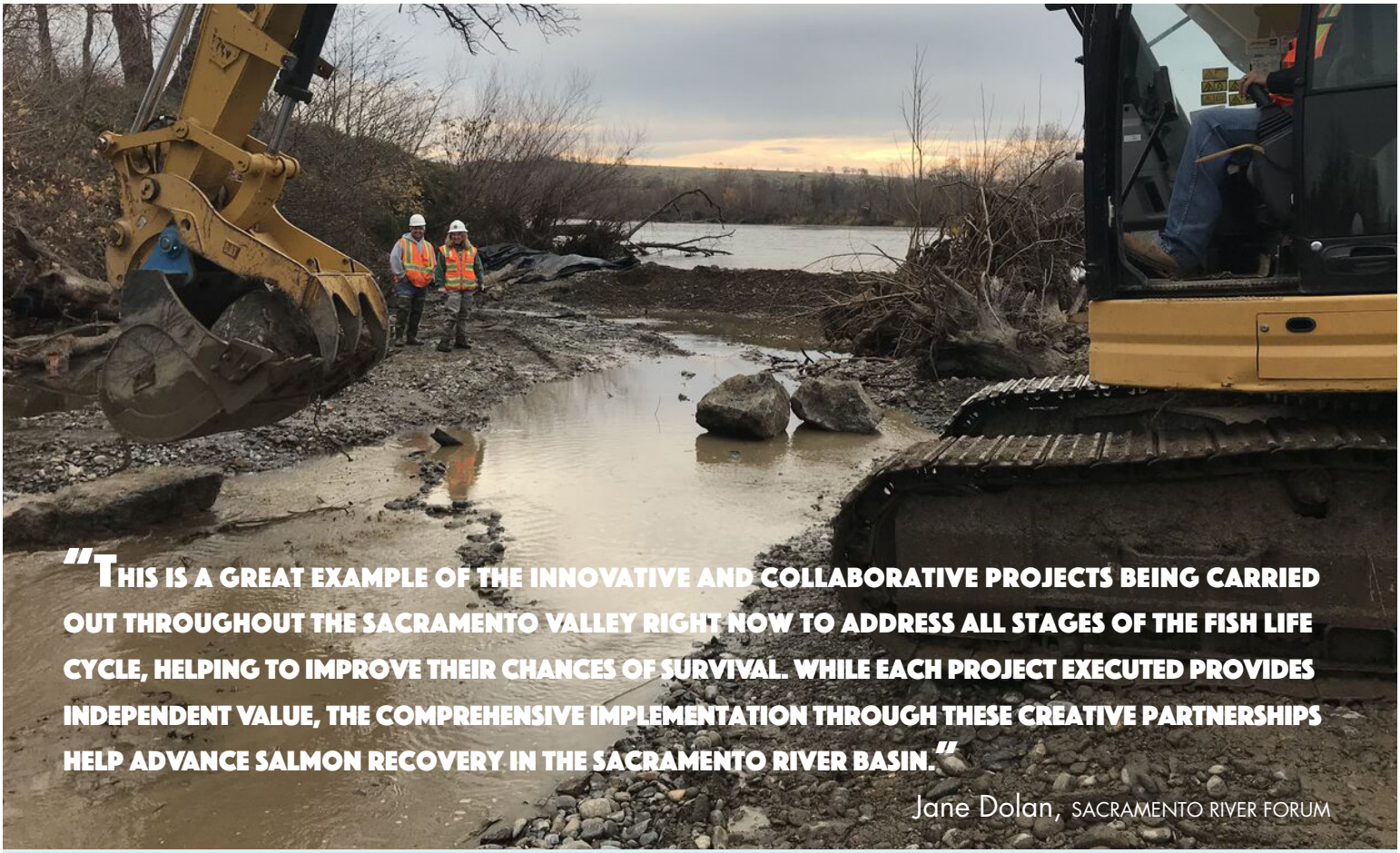
Vicky Dawley, RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF TEHAMA COUNTY

BACKGROUND

Besides creating a disconnect between the side channel and river, the gravel accumulation had also led to impacts downstream, including sediment accumulation, increased predator habitat and decreased dissolved oxygen. These changes decreased the aquatic habitat function for winter-run juveniles. By excavating the inlet of the side channel, flow volume and velocity were restored during this critical period for winter-run juveniles, increasing rearing downstream of the side channel at low flows.

"Sacramento Valley water suppliers are committed to the development of projects that will ultimately help us manage water resources in a way that satisfies the co-equal goals of water supply reliability and ecosystem benefits."

Lewis Bair, GENERAL MANAGER FOR RECLAMATION DISTRICT 108



"THIS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THE INNOVATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS BEING CARRIED OUT THROUGHOUT THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY RIGHT NOW TO ADDRESS ALL STAGES OF THE FISH LIFE CYCLE, HELPING TO IMPROVE THEIR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL. WHILE EACH PROJECT EXECUTED PROVIDES INDEPENDENT VALUE, THE COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH THESE CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS HELP ADVANCE SALMON RECOVERY IN THE SACRAMENTO RIVER BASIN."

Jane Dolan, SACRAMENTO RIVER FORUM

PROJECT DETAILS

Project partners excavated and dredged the accumulated gravel from the side channel; relocated excavated gravel; installed temporary culverts; and constructed a temporary stream crossing for channel access. The removal of the accumulated gravel plugging the mouth of the channel restored flows and ideal rearing habitat for the full 1-mile long side channel. The relocated gravel will be reintroduced to the river during high flow in the Sacramento River.

This project is part of a continuing program developed and implemented by the Department of the Interior (DOI) as part of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA). The programs purpose is to restore and replenish, as needed, salmonid spawning gravel lost due to the construction and operation of the Central Valley Project dams and other actions that have reduced the availability of spawning gravel and rearing habitat in the Sacramento River from Keswick Dam to Red Bluff Diversion Dam.

PROJECT PARTNERS

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

California State University, Chico

GIC Geographical Information Center, California State University, Chico

Department of Water Resources, State of California

California Department of Fish & Wildlife

Sacramento River Forum

Provident Irrigation District

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Resource Conservation District of Tehama County

Princeton-Cordora-Glenn Irrigation District

Steve Tussing Ecological Services

Reclamation District 108

For more information on the project, visit: **WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TCRCD**
For more information on Sacramento Valley salmon recovery efforts, visit: **WWW.NORCALWATER.ORG**