

Ocean Ranch

The Eel River was once one of the largest salmon producing rivers in California.

Recovery of Eel River salmonid stocks can have a significant influence on the regional fishing economy of California's north coast.

Approximately 60% of the estuary has been lost due to the construction of levees and dikes, and only 10% of the salt marsh habitats remain.

Overview

Eel River Wildlife Area's Ocean Ranch Unit, owned and managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, is located on the northwest portion of the Eel River estuary, about 13 miles south of Eureka, California. The Ocean Ranch project will restore tidal processes at the 375-acre Eel River Wildlife Area – Ocean Ranch Unit. The project will breach and/or remove levees to restore tidal prism and increase estuarine habitat for the benefit of north coast fish and wildlife, including coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

Ducks Unlimited, the grantee leading the enhancement planning process, has demonstrated competency in bringing wetland projects to fruition throughout the nation. Their work in the San Francisco Bay, particularly in the Sonoma Marsh, is highly regarded.



Partners

Ducks Unlimited, State Coastal Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Project Goals

Restore/Improve tidal exchange and biological function within an historically reclaimed but currently non-agricultural portion of the Eel River

Delta. Project objectives include expanding and improving ecological function of tidal marsh, freshwater riparian areas and other habitat types important to Pacific salmon, migratory waterfowl and other species.

Conservation outcomes

Increase estuarine habitat for Pacific salmonids, migratory waterfowl and other estuarine species.

Timeline

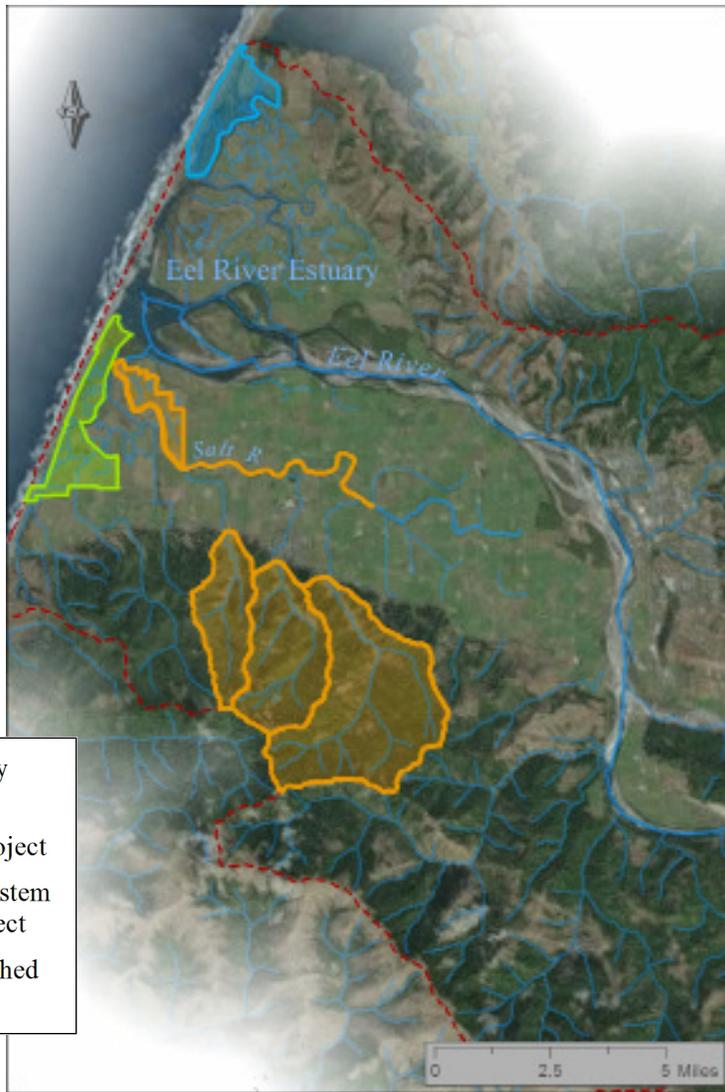
This design phase of the project is scheduled for completion in early 2015.

Monitoring

Pre-project monitoring of hydraulic function is largely complete.

Project cost

\$327,808



-  Eel River Estuary Preserve
-  Ocean Ranch Project
-  Salt River Ecosystem Restoration Project
-  Eel River Watershed Boundary



Juvenile salmon and steelhead
 Photos: John McMillan

