


CALIFORNIA  
CENTRAL  
COAST  
JOINT  
VENTURE

2022

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





***The California Central Coast Joint Venture (C3JV) Implementation Plan is the first step in provisioning a socio-ecological foundation for the activities of the C3JV and its partners.***

***The Plan identifies habitat and human wellbeing goals, priority avian species and conservation strategies that will guide the C3JV staff, Board and committees in our approach to all bird and habitat conservation. It also provides a blueprint for solidifying the Joint Venture as an informed, adaptive, inclusive, and effective partnership as we address the many factors driving species declines and the increasingly frayed connections between society and the biodiversity and ecosystems we depend upon.***

The California Central Coast Joint Venture (C3JV) is a partnership founded to coordinate and implement conservation actions at landscape scales in the Central Coast Region of California, representing portions of the Coastal California Bird Conservation Region 32 and the California Current Marine Bird Conservation Region 17. The C3JV geography spans all or portions of eight California counties, from the southern corner of San Mateo County near Pescadero Marsh, east to portions of the interior counties of Santa Clara and San Benito bounded by the Diablo Range, and southward through Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties to the far northeastern corner of Ventura County. While terrestrially, the C3JV is one of the smallest Joint Venture geographies in North America, the inclusion of portions of the California Current MBCR increases the JV six-fold.

With exceptional avian richness, habitat diversity, endemism, and conservation need, the C3JV region is an important geography for bird conservation in North America.

The C3JV planning geography encompasses both terrestrial and marine biomes, including a portion of the nearshore and pelagic waters of the Eastern Pacific off California's coast. Prime and nationally significant agricultural lands dominate the bottomlands of many watersheds, and upper watersheds are in rugged national forest lands. The area ranges climatically from the extremely wet Santa Cruz Mountains to the very arid Carrizo Plain. With some of the highest [ecoregional variation](#) in the United States, and over 500 bird species recorded in the C3JV, the Plan is divided into socio-ecological systems, each composed of unique habitats, birds, and conservation concerns reflective of the region's dynamism. Each system, or target, is discussed separately as a sub-chapter of the Plan as described below.

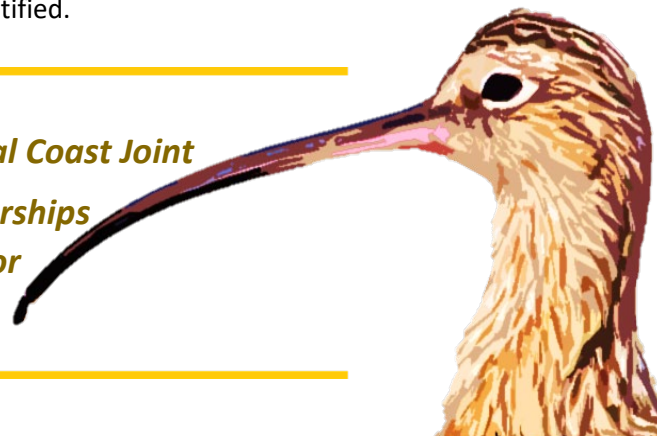
### **Conservation Approach**

Six conservation **targets** and three human wellbeing **domains** are identified in the plan that together represent a comprehensive coverage of habitats, the avifauna dependent upon them, and prioritized wellbeing needs within the C3JV region. Within each target subchapter, we completed a *threats assessment* to rate key activities or processes that directly degrade or reduce the viability of each target, resulting in a table of ranked **pressures**. These pressured informed the development of a suite of **strategies** were developed to address some of the most important threats to each target and/or wellbeing domain. Subchapters conclude with a concise selection of **benchmark goals** representing formal statements denoting the ultimate impacts we aim to achieve through the implementation of the strategies identified.

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***The **mission** of the California Central Coast Joint Venture is to work through inclusive partnerships to steward healthy and resilient habitats for birds, other wildlife and people.***

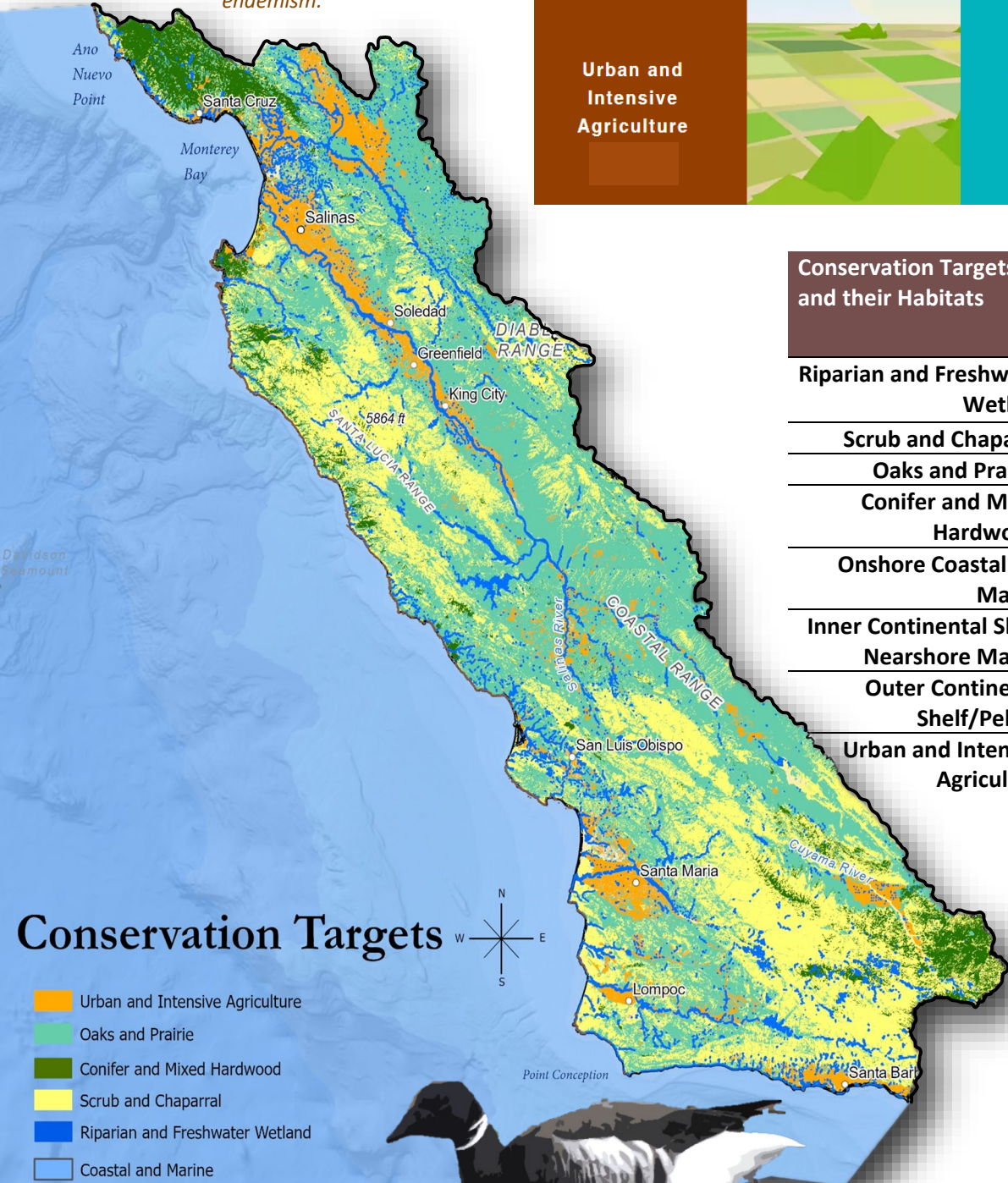
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California's Central Coast boasts superlative ecological diversity, ranging from old-growth coniferous forests, diverse oak woodlands and rich coastal prairies, to maritime chaparral mosaics, lush riparian bosque, rare and dynamic dune ecosystems, and iconic bays and estuaries. Offshore, the California Current supplies nutrient-rich waters to some of the world's most productive marine ecosystems.

The rich complexion of soil regimes, geophysical variation and climatic factors, combined with millennia of human land uses, have resulted in this complexity of natural communities, high biodiversity and recurrent endemism.



Conservation Targets and their Habitats	~Area (acres)	~% of C3JV Terrestrial or Marine Region
Riparian and Freshwater Wetland	85,500	1.5%
Scrub and Chaparral	2,275,000	32%
Oaks and Prairies	3,560,000	50%
Conifer and Mixed Hardwoods	510,000	7%
Onshore Coastal and Marine	27,600	>0.5%
Inner Continental Shelf, Nearshore Marine	1,000,000	2%
Outer Continental Shelf/Pelagic	44,000,000	98%
Urban and Intensive Agriculture	720,000	~10%

## Conservation Targets

- Urban and Intensive Agriculture
- Oaks and Prairie
- Conifer and Mixed Hardwood
- Scrub and Chaparral
- Riparian and Freshwater Wetland
- Coastal and Marine

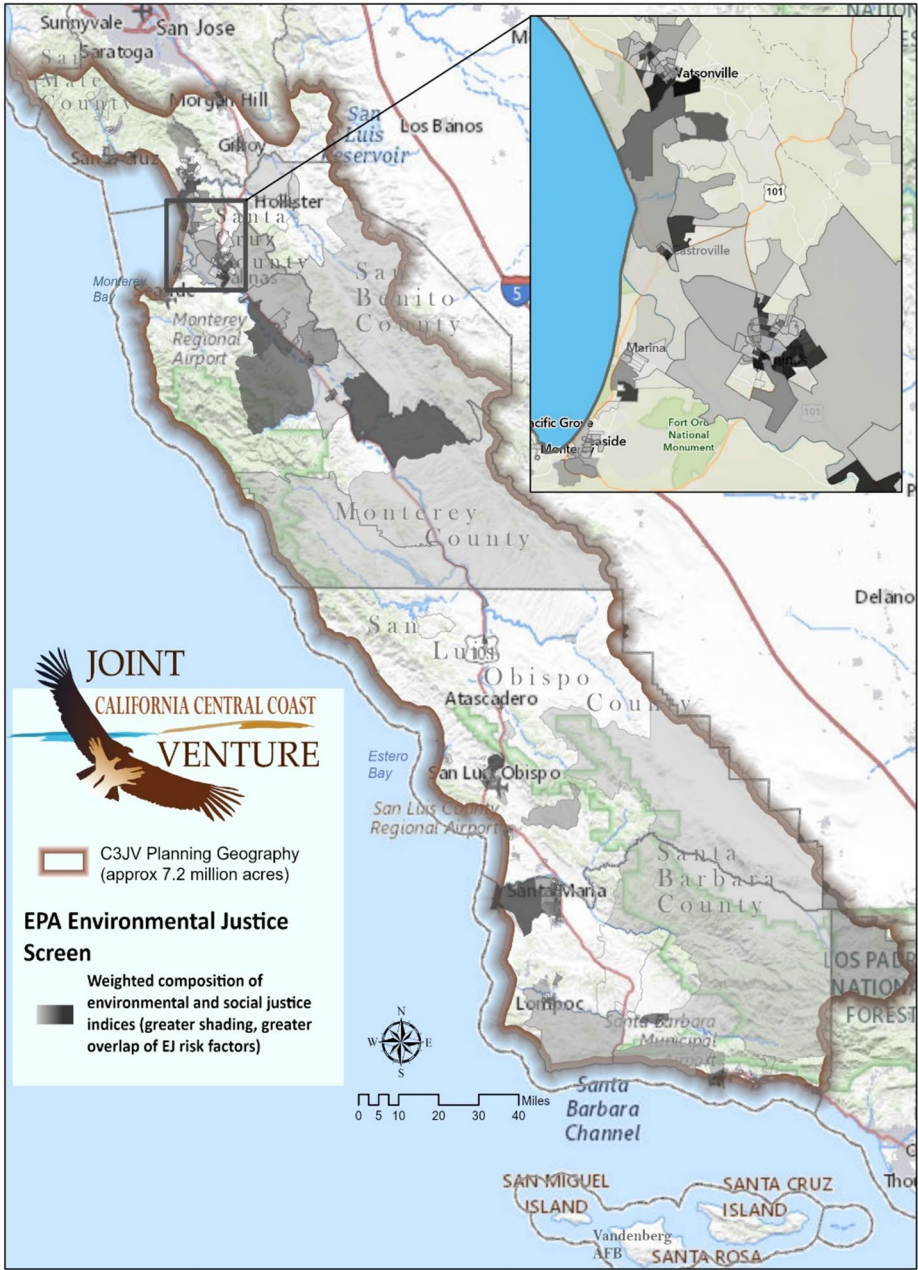




In attempts to erode the artifice of human-nature duality, **Inclusive Conservation** is one lens that may be useful in bridging human and ecological wellbeing. Inclusive Conservation is treated here as a modality of conservation that invites, enables, and indeed champions new spaces of interaction (e.g., urban), additional ways of knowing (e.g., Indigenous) and novel approaches (e.g., social justice) to expand the sphere of addressing biodiversity loss. For the C3JV, initial efforts to identify key priority needs unique to the Central Coast have resulted in three Wellbeing Domains that will help guide our approach to building inclusive conservation, including 1: *Supporting Indigenous Sovereignty*; 2: *Environmental and Social Justice in Agriculture*; and 3: *Re-cultivating Human-Nature Relationships*.



## Social, Environmental and Climate Justice In Agriculture



Supporting a vibrant agricultural economy integral to the cultural heritage of many Central Coast communities, farmworkers and their families remain some of the most underserved in the region. Poverty rates in agricultural centers such as Watsonville, Salinas, King City, Soledad, Santa Maria and others rank among the highest in the United States. Monterey County has the highest percentage of residents without legal status in California, adding to exceptional labor vulnerabilities inherent in the agricultural sector. As impacts of climate change continue to mount, these communities face some of the gravest repercussions; from drinking water contamination and coastal flooding in lower estuary communities, to heatwaves, wildlife-inflicted smoke inhalation and loss of economic opportunities. With these concerns layered upon already existing and aforementioned environmental and social injustices, the C3JV recognizes a responsibility and opportunity to design conservation strategies that marry sustainable agriculture, healthy working lands and the communities they support, and the myriad of avian and wildlife species dependent upon agricultural landscapes.



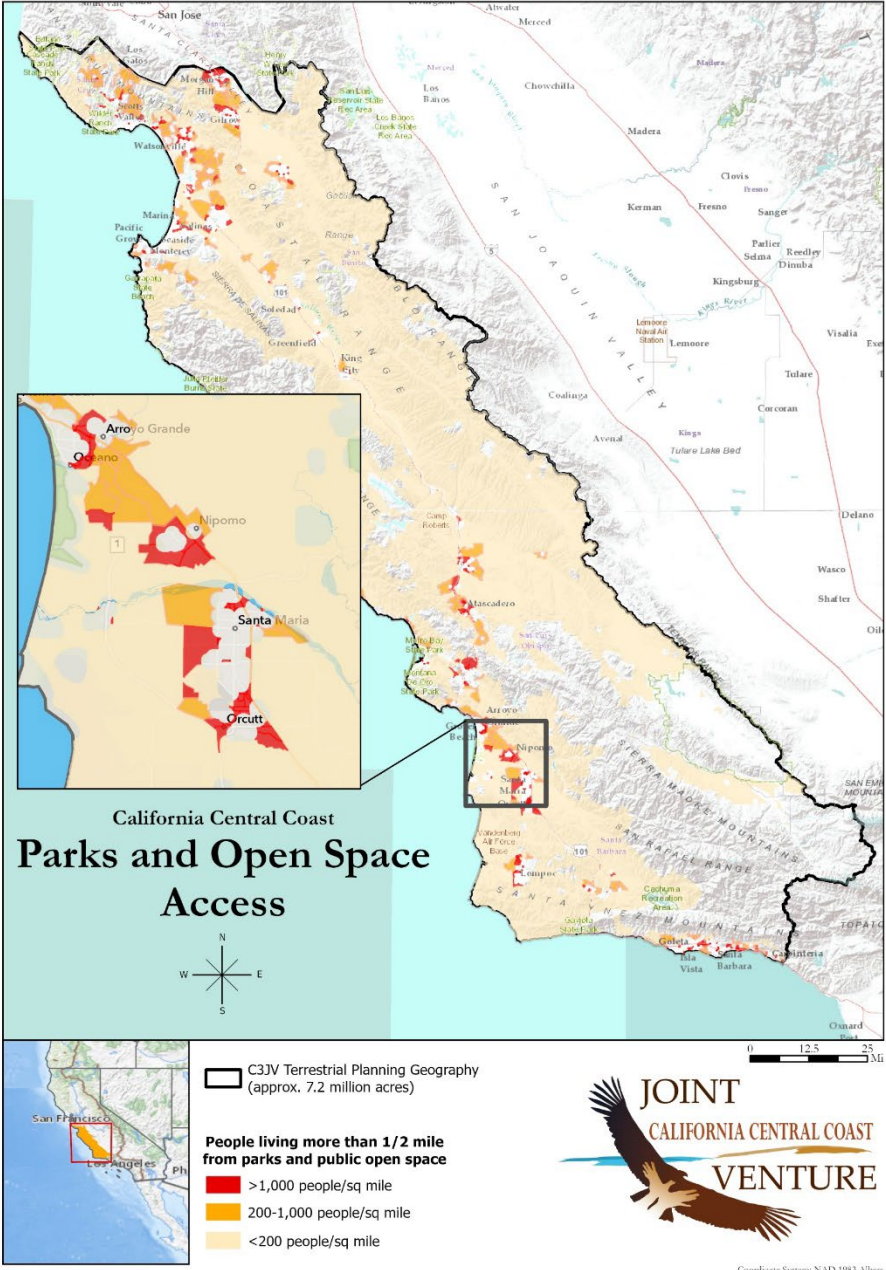
## Supporting Indigenous Sovereignty



The Central Coast is composed of at least five distinct language families or cultural affiliations, within which more than twenty different Indigenous Nations, Bands, and Communities represent unbroken lineage-to-place for thousands of years. For over two hundred years, the actions of settler colonial policies against Indigenous peoples in the Central Coast has resulted in, among other atrocities, the severing of relationships between Indigenous people and the lands for which they have stewarded for generations. In recognizing the loss, erasure and diminishment of Indigenous voices in land, water, and wildlife stewardship, the C3JV is committed to: 1) Leading in non-indigenous awareness building, creating a repository of information, training, and mentorship for non-indigenous people seeking to strengthen decolonial conservation approaches; 2) Advancing opportunities for restored stewardship responsibility by Indigenous communities; and 3) Elevating Indigenous knowledge and Ways of Knowing in conservation, restoration and stewardship.



## Strengthening Human-Nature Connections In Urban and Suburban Landscapes



Ultimately, in centering human wellbeing as inseparable from a vibrant and flourishing natural world, rekindling our connections to, respect of, and knowledge about the environments on which we depend becomes an essential domain for the C3JV. The health benefits of being in the outdoors speak for themselves, but the loss of interactions, interest, knowledge and exchange with nonhuman spheres are too pivotal to the long-term stewardship of wildlife and human communities alike. Whether it is fostering opportunities for place-based, outdoor and environmental learning, supporting community-based stewardship or a myriad of other forms, the goal is to revitalize a collective sense of responsibility and honor in caring for the lands, waters, animals and communities for which we are part. The C3JV is eager to pursue, support and partner with efforts that champion young naturalists, open doors to conservation for those that find them shut, reimagine urban greenspaces for socio-ecological renewal, and accentuate connections between community resilience and healthy landscapes.



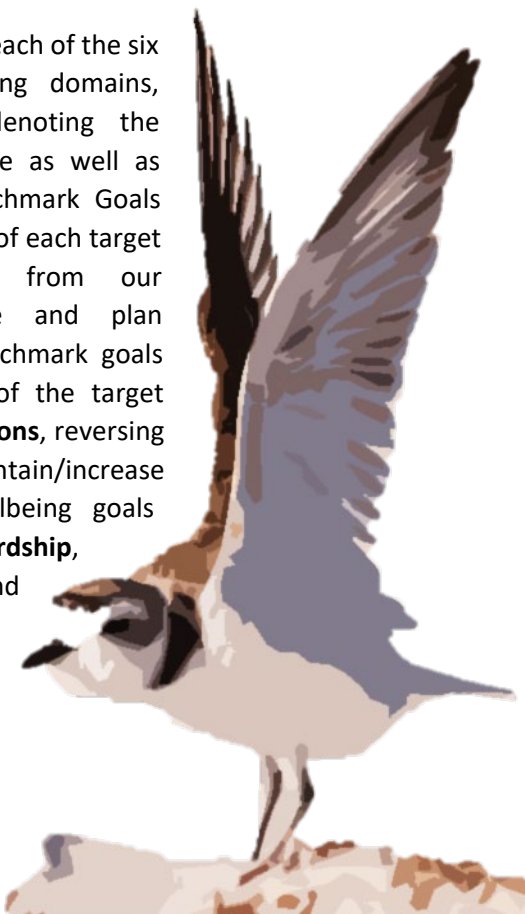
**Avian Focal Species** occupy a core element in the C3JV planning approach, in part due to their qualities as strong channels for conservation intervention. **Focal bird** species are identified, including those listed as of Conservation Concern at state or national levels, C3JV Stewardship Responsibility (i.e., species for which the region represents a significant portion of a species’ national population), as well as those that offer important indicators for key ecological or cultural processes. With the selection of 28 Conservation Priority Species, 25 Stewardship Species, and 51 indicator species, the C3JV has aimed to capture the breadth of breeding, nonbreeding, wintering, and migrant species that together represents the avian species diversity to which the Joint Venture is accountable for on the Central Coast. The focal species of the C3JV are presented on below (plus the California Condor, not pictured). In addition, the Plan calls for future research, monitoring and conservation planning needs to aid in the prioritization of geographic focal areas, species, and continually adaptive conservation strategies. The goals, objectives, and metrics for measuring the efficacy of program delivery will necessarily adapt and change as we learn more about the conservation and wellbeing needs of the central coast.

 <h3>Riparian and Freshwater Wetlands</h3>				 <h3>Scrub and Chaparral</h3>				 <h3>Oaks and Prairie</h3>			
Conservation Priority	Black Swift Ticolored Blackbird	Least Bell's Vireo Bank Swallow	Willow Flycatcher	Allen's Hummingbird Le Conte's Thrasher	Black-chinned sparrow Wrentit	California Thrasher	Yellow-billed Magpie Oak Titmouse	Lawrence's Goldfinch			
Stewardship	Pacific-slope Flycatcher			Bell's Sparrow Costa's Hummingbird	California Quail Mountain Quail	California Towhee	Acorn Woodpecker Hutton's Vireo White-tailed Kite	Band-tailed Pigeon Nuttall's Woodpecker Western Bluebird	California Scrub Jay White-breasted Nuthatch Ash-throated Flycatcher		
Indicator	Bald Eagle Common Yellowthroat Swainson's Thrush Yellow Warbler	Black-headed Grosbeak Long-eared Owl (Western) Yellow-billed Cuckoo Yellow-breasted Chat	Least Bittern Purple Martin Great Blue Heron	Common Poorwill Phainopepla Spotted Towhee	Greater Roadrunner Rufous-crowned Sparrow		Burrowing Owl Lark Sparrow Western Screech-owl	European Starling Loggerhead Shrike	Grasshopper Sparrow Mountain Plover		
 <h3>Conifer and Mixed Hardwood</h3>				 <h3>Coastal and Marine</h3>				 <h3>Urban and Intensive Agriculture</h3>			
Conservation Priority	Marbled Murrelet California Spotted Owl			Ashy Storm-Petrel Brandt's Cormorant California Black Rail Savanna Sparrow	Brant (Pacific) California Least Tern Ridgeway's Rail	Black Oystercatcher Snowy Plover Light-footed Ridgeway's Rail	Brewer's Blackbird Northern Harrier	Swainson's Hawk American Kestrel			
Stewardship	Steller's Jay			California Brown Pelican Western Gull	Western Grebe Long-billed Curlew		Anna's Hummingbird Lesser Goldfinch	Bushtit Red-shouldered Hawk	Black Phoebe		
Indicator	Black-throated Gray Warbler Chestnut-backed Chickadee Flammulated Owl Olive-sided Flycatcher Pygmy Nuthatch Western Tanager	Brown Creeper Dark-eyed Junco Golden-crowned Kinglet Purple Finch Vaux's Swift		Black-footed Albatross Common Murre Pigeon Guillemot Sanderling Surf Scoter	Cassin's Auklet Pacific Loon Red-necked Phalarope Sooty Shearwater Western Sandpiper		Barn Owl Bullock's Oriole Brown-headed Cowbird American Robin	Barn Swallow White-crowned Sparrow Killdeer			



BENCHMARK GOALS

Benchmark Goals were identified for each of the six habitat targets and three wellbeing domains, representing formal statements denoting the ultimate impacts we aim to achieve as well as measure our progress against. Benchmark Goals were derived from the key attributes of each target or domain and reflect input from our Implementation Plan Task Force and plan contributors. Thematically, our benchmark goals center on maintaining the **extent** of the target habitat, strengthening habitat **conditions**, reversing avian focal species **declines**, and maintain/increase **avian diversity**. Our human wellbeing goals highlight considerations of **land stewardship**, **water/ environmental quality**, and **human health** among others. Goals are achieved through the suite of Implementation Strategies in each of our subchapters.



Riparian and Freshwater Wetland

- By 2035, riparian and freshwater habitats increased by at least 5%, or approximately 4,500 acres.
- By 2035, riparian and freshwater habitats with high-quality markers\* increased by at least 5%, or approximately 4,500 acres.
- By 2035, riparian and freshwater habitats protected have increased by at least 5%, or approximately 4,500 acres.
- By 2040, all Conservation Priority focal species’ populations have stabilized and/or increased in the C3JV geography.
- By 2040, 90% of focal species (with expectation of occurrence) are present on 75% of monitored riparian and wetland sites.

Scrub and Chaparral

- By 2035, Coastal Sage Scrub habitats with protected status have increased by at least 5%, or approximately 30,000 acres, of which at least 25% are under Indigenous-led stewardship.
- By 2035, scrub and chaparral habitats with high quality markers\* increased by at least 5%, or approximately 100,000 acres, of which at least 25% are under Indigenous-led stewardship.
- By 2040, all Conservation Priority focal species’ populations have stabilized and/or increased in the C3JV geography.
- By 2040, 90% of focal species (with expectation of occurrence) are present on 75% of monitored scrub and chaparral sites.

Oak and Prairie

- By 2035, oak woodland habitats with protected status have increased by at least 10%, or approximately 120,000 acres, of which at least 10% are under Indigenous-led stewardship.
- By 2035, grassland habitats with protected status have increased by at least 10%, or approximately 220,000 acres, of which at least 10% are under Indigenous-led stewardship.
- By 2035, acres actively managed for low-severity fire have increased by at least 30%.
- By 2040, all Conservation Priority focal species’ populations have stabilized and/or increased in the C3JV geography.
- By 2040, 90% of desirable focal species (with expectation of occurrence) are present on 75% of monitored oak woodland, savannah and grassland sites.

Urban and Intensive Agriculture

- By 2035, bird-friendly agriculture, or agricultural habitats managed\* for birds, have increased by at least 5%, or approximately 30,000 acres.
- By 2035, Urban habitats managed\*\* for birds have increased by at least 5%, or approximately 10,000 acres.
- By 2040, Conservation Priority focal species’ populations have stabilized and/or increased in the C3JV geography.
- By 2040, 90% of desirable focal species (with expectation of occurrence) are present on 75% of monitored Urban and Intensive Agriculture sites.



Conifer and Mixed Hardwood

- By 2035, at least 90% of remaining old-growth forest patches are protected, prioritizing stands in coastal redwood, Douglas fir, and Montane Hardwood-Conifer forests.
- By 2035, at least 90% of rare closed-cone and pine forest patches, including Monterey and knobcone pine, as well as Monterey, Gowen and Santa Cruz cypress, are protected.
- By 2035, acres actively managed for low-severity fire have increased by at least 30%.
- By 2040, Conservation Priority focal species’ populations have stabilized and/or increased in the C3JV geography.
- By 2040, 90% of focal species (with expectation of occurrence) are present on 75% of monitored conifer and hardwood sites.

Coastal and Marine

- By 2035, marine habitats with protected status have increased by at least 10%, or approximately 4.5 million acres, of which at least 50% are under Indigenous-led stewardship.
- Approximately 5,000 *additional* acres of coastal marsh, coastal dunes, and other coastal habitats are protected by 2035, of which at least 5% are under Indigenous Stewardship.
- Restore, reclaim and/or create at least 1,000 acres of saltmarsh, estuarine and/or coastal riparian habitats by 2035.
- By 2035, have supported the creation of at least 25 livelihoods through the development of coastal stewardship programs, socio-ecological monitoring, Indigenous-led foodway revitalization, and/or eco-tourism enterprises among other mechanisms.
- By 2040, 90% of focal species are present on 75% of monitored Coastal and Marine Sites.
- By 2040, populations of Conservation Priority Focal Species are stabilizing and/or increasing within the C3JV geography.





