

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



National Wetlands Conservation Award

November 19, 2003

2:00 p.m.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Conservation Award

Welcome

Steve Thompson

Manager

*California/Nevada Operations Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

The Importance of the National
Wetlands Conservation Award

Clint Riley

*Special Assistant to the Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Presentation of Award

Clint Riley

Accepting for OCWD

Denis Bilodeau

President

Orange County Water District

Accepting for SAWA

Shelli Lamb

Chair

Santa Ana Watershed Association

Refreshments

Why OCWD and SAWA Are Receiving the
National Wetlands Conservation Award

Orange County Water District (OCWD) and the Santa Ana Watershed Association (SAWA) were nominated and selected for the National Wetlands Conservation Award (NWCA). U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established this award program in 1990 to honor individuals and groups or corporations for significant contributions to the restoration, enhancement and protection of wetlands in the United States.

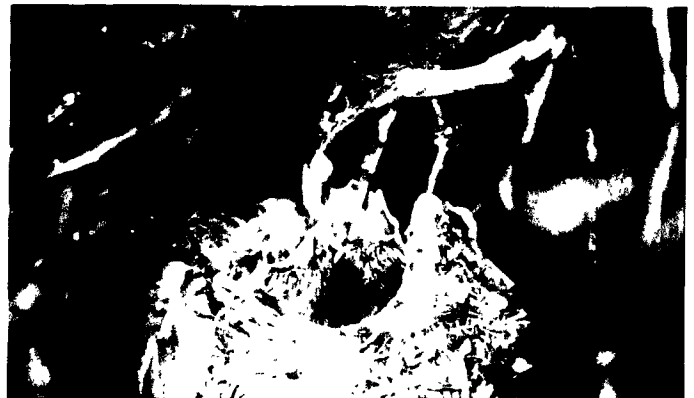
USFWS presents the NWCA awards annually, both on the national level and within the Service's geographic regions.

OCWD and SAWA have been working for many years to successfully conserve and enhance water supplies in the Santa Ana River while conserving wetlands that are valuable to plants, fish, and animals, including the federally endangered least Bell's vireo and Santa Ana sucker.

Highlights of their accomplishments include:

- Removal of more than 1,000 acres of non-native arundo—this removal project will allow the return of native habitat while enhancing the safety of property owners from floods and fire.
- Through implementation of habitat restoration and management actions, populations of the least Bell's vireo along the main stem of the Santa Ana River have increased from about 18 pairs in 1987 to more than 400 pairs today.

California has lost more than 90 percent of its historical wetlands, and it is partnerships like the one developed between the OCWD and SAWA and other local agencies and private citizens that can help restore and nurture these precious wetland resources for the citizens of California.



Least Bell's vireo—*Vireo bellii pusillus*