

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
 (916) 445-8448
 FAX (916) 323-0280



State of California
 The Resources Agency
 Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Conservation Board

Minutes
 August 19, 1999

1.	Roll Call	1
2.	Funding Status - Informational	3
3.	Special Project Planning Account - Informational	5
4.	PROPOSED CONSENT CALENDAR (Items 5-14)	5
*5.	Approval of Minutes - May 20, 1999 Meeting	6
*6.	Recovery of Funds	6
*7.	Heeser Drive Fishing Access, Mendocino County	9
*8.	Lokern Ecological Reserve, Exp. #3, (Kern County Valley Floor Habitat Conservation Plan), Kern County	10
*9.	Kinsman Flat Wildlife Area, Expansion #5, Madera County	12
*10.	San Joaquin River (San Joaquin River Conservancy-Caglia Development), Fresno County	14
*11.	Lakeside Linkages, Expansion #3, San Diego County	16
*12.	Riparian Habitat Restoration, Laguna de Santa Rosa, Sonoma County	18
*13.	Riparian and Stream Habitat Restoration, Department of Fish and Game, Multiple Counties	20
*14.	Scott Creek Conservation Area, Mendocino County	25
15.	Goleta Fishing Pier Improvements, Santa Barbara County	27
16.	Lower Sherman Island Public Access, Sacramento County	29
17.	San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion #10, Riverside County	31
18.	Wetland Habitat Restoration (American Basin Farms), Butte County	35
19.	Wetland Habitat Restoration (Four Mile Ranch), Colusa County	39
20.	Riparian Habitat Restoration, Mouth of Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area, Shasta County	42
21.	Riparian Habitat Restoration, Amargosa and Mojave Rivers, Inyo and San Bernardino Counties	44
22.	Rodman Slough Wildlife Area, Lake County	47
	Program Statement	50

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
(916) 445-8448
FAX (916) 323-0280



State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes
August 19, 1999

The Wildlife Conservation Board met at the State Capitol, Room 113, Sacramento, California on August 19, 1999. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Mr. Richard Thieriot, President, Fish and Game Commission. He expressed his pleasure in serving the Board and sharing in its accomplishments. Referring to a recent newspaper article, he noted that various municipalities are also joining the effort to protect natural resources throughout the state. Introductions were made at this time.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Richard T. Thieriot, Chairperson
President, Fish and Game Commission
Annette Porini, Chief Deputy Director
Vice, B. Timothy Gage, Member
Director, Department of Finance
Robert C. Hight, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kristie Halstenrud,
Vice, Assembly Member Mike Machado
Maureen Rose,
Vice, Assembly Member Howard Wayne

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

W. John Schmidt

Staff Present:

W. John Schmidt, Executive Director
Jim Sarro, Assistant Executive Director
Georgia Lipphardt, Assistant Executive Director
Frank Giordano, Senior Land Agent
Jerry Heminger, Senior Land Agent
Debra Townsend, Senior Land Agent
John Donnelly, Senior Land Agent
Scott Clemons, Riparian Program Manager
Marilyn Cundiff, Wetlands Program Manager
Peter Perrine, Field Agent
Terri Muzik, Staff Services Analyst
Jan Beeding, Office Technician
Maureen Rivera, Executive Secretary

Others Present:

Sidney LaGrande
Leo LaGrande
Tim Griffiths, California Waterfowl Association
Tom Egan, Bureau of Land Management
James Decker, Bureau of Land Management
Peter Windrem, Lake County Land Trust
Mary Tulanian, Lake County Land Trust
Kenyon Webster, City of Sebastopol
Greg Lowther, Mystic Lake
Jennifer Rofnem, California State University, Chico
Michael Bird, Department of Fish and Game
Mike Ammon, Department of Boating and Waterways
Laura Svendsgaard, Sacramento County Parks
James DiGiorgio, Department of Boating and Waterways
Roy Lanza, American Basin Farms
David Lanza, American Basin Farms
Gordon Stromer, American Basin Farms
Tom Paulek, Department of Fish and Game
Brian Hunter, Department of Fish and Game
Banky Curtis, Department of Fish and Game
Nancy Schaefer, The Conservation Fund
Bob Treanor, Fish and Game Commission

2. Funding Status as of August 19, 1999 Informational

(a) 1999-00 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Land Acquisition \$200,000.00
Governor's Budget - Minor Projects \$955,000.00

(b) 1998-99 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Land Acquisition \$200,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (134,999.09)
Unallocated Balance \$65,000.91

(c) 1997-98 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Land Acquisition \$275,000.00
Plus Budget Revision-Reimbursement 247,710.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (522,710.00)
Unallocated Balance \$0.00

(d) 1999-00 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget \$18,932,000.00

(e) 1998-99 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget \$17,960,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (8,591,065.05)
Unallocated Balance \$9,368,934.95

(f) 1997-98 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget \$16,598,000.00
Plus Mid-year Adjustment 250,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (15,872,316.98)
Unallocated Balance \$ 975,683.02

(g) 1997-98 Environmental License Plate Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget \$341,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (341,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$0.00

- (h) 1997-98 Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Fund, River Parkway Subaccount Capital Outlay Budget
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Governor's Budget | \$9,800,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations | (6,808,150.00) |
| Unallocated Balance | \$2,991,850.00 |
- (i) 1999-00 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget \$34,100,000.00
- (j) 1998-99 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Governor's Budget | \$4,850,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations | (1,850,000.00) |
| Unallocated Balance | \$3,000,000.00 |
- (k) 1999-00 Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund
- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Governor's Budget | \$1,050,000.00 |
|-------------------------|----------------|
- (l) 1999-00 Forest Resources Improvement Fund
- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Governor's Budget | \$2,600,000.00 |
|-------------------------|----------------|

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

<u>Wildlife Restoration Fund</u> (a), (b) and (c)	\$1,220,000.91
<u>Habitat Conservation Fund</u> (d), (e) and (f)	\$29,276,617.97
<u>Environmental License Plate Fund</u> (g)	\$0.00
<u>Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Fund, River Parkway Subaccount</u> (h)	\$2,991,850.00
<u>General Fund</u> (i) and (j)	\$37,100,000.00
<u>Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund</u> (k)	\$1,050,000.00
<u>Forest Resources Improvement Fund</u> (l)	\$2,600,000.00

Mr. Schmidt asked if there were any questions regarding the above item. There were none.

3. Special Project Planning Account Informational

The Board has historically used a special project account to provide working funds for staff evaluation (appraisals, engineering, preliminary title reports, etc.) of proposed projects. Upon Board approval of a project, all expenditures incurred and recorded in the Special Project Planning Account are transferred to the Board approved project account which reduces the Special Project Planning Account expenditures. This procedure, therefore, acts as a revolving account for the pre-project expenses.

Some appropriations now made to the Board do not include a specific budgeted planning line item appropriation necessary to begin a project without prior Board authorization. Pre-project costs are a necessary expenditure in most all capital outlay projects. The Special Project Planning Account would be used for these costs.

The Board, at the May 6, 1986 meeting, authorized the Executive Director to use up to 1% of a budgeted appropriation to set up and maintain an appropriate planning account with the provision it would be reported to the Board as an information item at the next meeting. Accordingly, the planning accounts have been set up as follows:

General Fund	\$33,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$20,000.00
Wildlife Restoration Fund	\$2,000.00

*4. PROPOSED CONSENT CALENDAR (Items 5 - 14)

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Consent Calendar consisted of Items 5 - 14. Staff recommended that the Board approve the Consent Calendar as presented, absent any objection. There were no comments or objections.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS 5 THRU 14, AS PROPOSED IN THE INDIVIDUAL AGENDA EXPLANATIONS, INCLUDING FUNDING AS NOTED THEREIN.

MOTION CARRIED.

*5. Approval of Minutes - May 20, 1999 Meeting

Approval of the minutes of the May 20, 1999 meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board was recommended.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 20, 1999 BOARD MEETING BE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

MOTION CARRIED.

*6. Recovery of Funds

The following projects previously authorized by the Board have balances of funds that can be recovered and returned to their respective funds. It was recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

\$30,969.06 to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**

\$41,851.15 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Battle Creek Wildlife Area Public Access, Shasta County

Amount Allocated	\$25,400.00
Expended	<u>-19,019.46</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 6,380.54

Donner Lake Fishing Access, Restroom Facilities, Nevada County

Amount Allocated	\$15,865.00
Expended	<u>-15,750.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 115.00

Donner Lake Public Access, Nevada County

Amount Allocated	\$131,327.00
Expended	<u>-131,063.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 264.00

Eckley Fishing Pier, Contra Costa County

Amount Allocated	\$125,218.00
Expended	<u>-125,218.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 0.00

Fresno Slough Public Access Renovation, Fresno County

Amount Allocated	\$100,620.00
Expended	<u>-81,945.48</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 18,674.52

Humboldt Bay Wildlife Area, Lower Janes Creek, Humboldt County

Amount Allocated	\$137,000.00
Expended	<u>-135,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 2,000.00

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Exp. #21, Del Norte County

Amount Allocated	\$36,000.00
Expended	<u>-32,465.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 3,535.00

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund Recoveries \$30,969.06

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Napa Marsh, Camp Two North, Sonoma County

Amount Allocated	\$127,000.00
Expended	<u>-123,037.56</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 3,962.44

Purrington Creek Riparian Restoration, Sonoma County

Amount Allocated	\$12,186.00
Expended	<u>-10,981.36</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 1,204.36

Stony Creek Watershed Restoration - Fruto Valley Unit, Glenn County

Amount Allocated	\$91,000.00
Expended	<u>-81,274.55</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 9,725.45

Terwer Creek Riparian Restoration, Del Norte County

Amount Allocated	\$9,994.00
Expended	<u>-9,994.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$ 0.00

Wetland Restoration (Kern Flyway Ranch), Kern County

Amount Allocated	\$28,740.00
Expended	<u>-1,781.10</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$26,958.90

Total Habitat Conservation Fund \$41,851.15

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD RECOVER FUNDS FOR THE PROJECTS LISTED ON PAGES 6 THRU 8 OF THIS AGENDA AND CLOSE THE PROJECT ACCOUNTS. RECOVERY TOTALS INCLUDE \$30,969.06 TO THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND AND \$41,851.15 TO THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND.

MOTION CARRIED.

*7. Heeser Drive Fishing Access, Mendocino County \$1,000.00

This proposal was to consider the transfer of control and possession of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Heeser Drive Fishing Access site to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for operation and management. The site is located in Mendocino County, along the coast, just northwest of the City of Mendocino, and can be accessed from Heeser Drive, a public street.

Between 1957 and 1968, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) acquired 26± acres of land with approximately 2 miles of ocean frontage on the Mendocino coastline adjacent to the City of Mendocino. This site, called Heeser Drive Fishing Access, included a 5-acre donation from Mr. A.A. Heeser for a road right-of-way. An access road, parking area, walkways and sanitary facilities were developed by the Board in 1958 after which the project was operated and maintained by the County of Mendocino under a Cooperative Agreement with the Board.

Over the years, the fishing access area has been a popular public use area, providing access to rock fishing in addition to use by the public to view, photograph or otherwise enjoy the scenic beauty of the coastline. The State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) acquired much of the adjacent property in the early 1970's and these lands, now known as the Mendocino Headlands State Park, surround the fishing access area. In 1978, the DPR took over the operation and maintenance of the fishing access area, together with the site improvements. The County had been having problems with vandalism and maintenance of the site, in part because the area was remote from the County center of operations in Ukiah. The DPR expressed a willingness to operate and maintain the site in conjunction with the activities of the adjacent state park and entered into a long-term agreement with the Board, which expired in March 1998.

The DFG has indicated that it does not have the funds to manage the site, which needs continual attention because of heavy public use, and has further indicated that it would be in the best interest of the DFG to transfer it to DPR, at no cost, with the provision that DPR continue to operate and maintain the access for public use, including the fishing access it provides. The DPR has agreed to accept the control and possession of the property, at no cost, and to manage it as it has been doing. The transfer will assure that the property remains open to the public for coastal fishing and wildlife viewing at no cost to the DFG.

There are no funds involved in this transfer other than the administrative costs incurred through the review by the Department of General Services, which is estimated to be \$1,000.00. Additionally, as this is a transfer of control and possession from one state agency to another and there is no significant effect on the environment, the transfer is exempt from CEQA.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the transfer of control and possession of the site, as proposed; allocate \$1,000.00 from the General Fund to cover review costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF CONTROL AND POSSESSION OF THE SITE, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$1,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO COVER REVIEW COSTS; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*8. Lokern Ecological Reserve, Expansion #3, \$2,500.00
(Kern County Valley Floor Habitat Conservation Plan), Kern County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of a parcel of land totaling 2.5± acres as an addition to the Lokern natural area, located approximately 30 miles west of Bakersfield. This proposed purchase is a very small part of a larger program involving a number of different public and private entities to protect rare natural communities in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

This larger area is known as the Lokern Natural Area (LNA), an area generally bounded by the community of Buttonwillow to the east, the Temblor Mountains to the west, and extending in a narrow, irregular pattern approximately 20 miles in a north-south direction, with Buttonwillow lying approximately midway. It is crossed by several roadways including Highway 33, Highway 58 and Lokern Road. The subject acquisition is the fourth of many proposed by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to be brought to the Board as part of the state's participation in this protection effort.

While the LNA name has been chosen for the overall program, several of the participating entities have elected to use their own internal identifying names depending on individual policies. For example, all Board proposed acquisitions will be classified as Lokern Ecological Reserve projects, while Bureau of Land Management (BLM) acquisitions will be referred to as falling within their Lokern Area of Critical Concern. The point is that each entity acquiring property under this program will be helping to meet the goals of the LNA. At this time the participants in this habitat protection program include the City of Bakersfield, Kern County, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Energy Commission, BLM, DFG and the Board.

The primary purpose of acquisitions in the proposed 40,000-acre LNA is to protect rare natural communities and the threatened and endangered plant and animal species that are found in this area. In 1992 a report was completed by the San Joaquin Valley Biological Technical Committee (composed of various agency representatives) entitled "A Biological Framework for Natural Lands and Endangered Species in the Southern San Joaquin Valley," which described the value of preserving lands in this area. In developing this document, the participants proposed a strategy of core reserves of existing habitat with connecting corridors throughout the San Joaquin Valley, which would form a regional conservation program to ensure that sensitive natural communities and listed species would survive over time. The Lokern area was identified as one of the primary preserve areas for this purpose. This part of the valley has one of the highest concentrations of listed species in the continental United States. It is estimated that only 5 to 10 percent of the land base on the valley floor remains in the natural vegetative communities endemic to the area. The Lokern area of western Kern County contains some of the highest quality natural habitats left in the entire valley. The primary sensitive species found in this area include the San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, Tipton kangaroo rat, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, Kern Mallow, Hoover's woolly star and alkali larkspur. These species are all known to exist in the proposed LNA.

This area is also of significant interest to local government, specifically the City of Bakersfield and Kern County, both of which are involved in the preparation and implementation of large, regional Habitat Conservation Plans, which address the acquisition of endangered species and their habitats over the next 20 years. These plans include measures to provide offsite compensation for the loss of endangered species habitat to development. Both plans include the LNA as a primary preserve area in which 90 to 95 percent of the existing habitat would be protected in perpetuity.

To date the Board has received funding from two separate sources to assist in the acquisition efforts of this program. The Board's fiscal year 1997/98 budget contained \$1 million specifically earmarked for this program, while a contract with the Department of Water Resources has made an additional \$825,000.00 available in mitigation funds to assist these efforts. The DFG has now identified a plan for using these funds and it is anticipated that acquisitions will be proposed on a regular basis to the Board until the program is completed.

Most of the lands in the Lokern area are still natural vegetation communities, having never been cultivated. Some areas have been farmed to row crops, some of which are now being allowed to revert to their natural condition. Portions of the area have been developed for oil and natural gas production purposes. Basically, however, the LNA is relatively undisturbed in character. Threats to the area include future development potential as well as overgrazing by sheep and haphazard use by off-road vehicles, all of which could adversely affect this fragile habitat.

The parcel under consideration for acquisition is a 2.5± acre unimproved, relatively level site located approximately one-half mile north of Lokern Road. Property to the north and south is owned by The Nature Conservancy. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved appraised fair market value of \$1,250.00. It is estimated that an additional \$1,250.00 will be necessary to cover costs including Department of General Services' fee, and title and escrow costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$2,500.00. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions (acquisitions for wildlife conservation purposes).

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition of this parcel, as discussed above; allocate \$2,500.00 for the purchase and related costs from the Habitat Conservation Fund, as specifically appropriated for this program; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THIS PARCEL, AS DISCUSSED ABOVE; ALLOCATE \$2,500.00 FOR THE PURCHASE AND RELATED COSTS FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, AS SPECIFICALLY APPROPRIATED FOR THIS PROGRAM; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*9. Kinsman Flat Wildlife Area, Expansion #5, Madera County \$62,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of an 18.7± acre parcel adjoining the existing Kinsman Flat Wildlife Area located approximately 40 miles northeast of the City of Fresno. In five separate actions between 1975 and 1994, the Wildlife Conservation Board authorized the acquisition of 570± acres for protection of the Kinsman Flat deer winter range.

While this proposed purchase will provide additional access and parking for users of the wildlife area, the primary purpose of the acquisition is to provide added protection for the deer winter and migration range for the San Joaquin Deer Herd. Deer occupy Kinsman Flat primarily between October and May, depending on the severity of the winter. The population of the San Joaquin herd has declined since the early 1960's from a population of 5,000-6,000 animals to the present estimated population of 2,500-3,000 animals. However, the Huntington segment of the herd may be increasing based on harvest figures that were markedly higher for the 1996 and 1997 hunting seasons compared to the average for the previous ten years. The subject parcel would provide additional habitat for this potentially increasing segment. The parcel also contains blue oak grassland habitat that would provide important winter forage not available from dense brush fields that currently exist on the area.

Eleven of fourteen small parcels (20± acres each) located near the proposed acquisition have been developed or partially developed, while the subject undeveloped parcel is currently on the market. Its acquisition would further reduce development of the deer winter range. Any development in this area has the potential of bringing in dogs and other domestic animals that disturb and threaten deer, a possibility that certainly exists if the subject parcel is purchased by a private party.

If this parcel is acquired by the state, it could be a stepping stone toward the acquisition of some of the adjacent parcels in the future that would add additional contiguous habitat. These parcels are the only remaining private property in the vicinity of Kinsman Flat as the Sierra National Forest and the wildlife area surround the private land. This acquisition would also protect additional habitat for animal species commonly found in this habitat type, as well as protect additional oak-gray pine woodland habitat.

Current management of the Wildlife Area consists of periodic monitoring to ensure that habitat remains attractive to deer, experimental planting of native vegetation for deer use, and construction of brush piles for quail. Land for public use would be increased by this acquisition, as the area is open for upland game hunting for quail, dove, wild turkey, pigeon and rabbit. Deer are taken infrequently in most years because they usually have not migrated from their summer range before the end of the hunting season.

The owners have agreed to sell this property to the state for its approved fair market value of \$57,000.00. It is estimated that the appraisal, closing costs, appraisal review charges and Department of General Services' review costs will require \$5,000.00, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$62,000.00.

The proposed acquisition is within Class 13 of categorical exemptions from CEQA requirements. Class 13 consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, including fish and wildlife habitat.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; allocate \$62,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [P-117/Section 2786(a)] to cover the purchase price and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS ACQUISITION AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$62,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [P-117/SECTION 2786(A)] TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*10. San Joaquin River (San Joaquin River Conservancy-Caglia Development), Fresno County \$93,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to assist them in restoring and developing a parcel of land acquired pursuant to earlier Board action. The Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) 1999/00 budget contains \$5,000,000 in funding from the General Fund, with control language directing that these funds be used for SJRC "projects and acquisitions". Consistent with the intent of the budget act, the SJRC Board has requested that the WCB grant them \$93,000.00, of the funds provided, to match a \$369,000.00 federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to complete preliminary engineering, to complete studies to meet federal environmental and historical preservation act requirements and to perform on-site protection measures identified as necessary by these studies, on a 6.8± acre parcel of land approved for acquisition at the November 3, 1998 WCB meeting. The property has subsequently been acquired and transferred to the SJRC through a "Transfer of Control and Possession" agreement.

The purpose of the acquisition was to provide an opportunity to accomplish some habitat restoration, an area for parking and an area to be used as a "put in" location for canoes and kayaks for short trips to Lost Lake Park, a joint Fresno County/WCB Public Access project, or for those wanting to extend their trips to "take out" areas located further down the river. The site, which could provide parking for up to 75 cars, if needed, currently provides undeveloped parking for river fishing. The SJRC will be considering other potential uses for the property, which could include restrooms and interpretive facilities.

The SJRC applied for, and received approval of, an ISTEA grant in the amount of \$369,000.00 which was intended to be used toward the acquisition and development of this property. Fresno County has also approved a grant to the SJRC for \$363,000.00 for development at this site. The federal government will not allow the completed acquisition to be used as a match since the purchase was, and had to be, completed prior to federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance being obtained. Appropriate state CEQA documentation had been filed prior to WCB action, but it was not accepted as meeting federal requirements. Therefore, in order to obtain the federal grant for development, the SJRC must now meet all federal requirements, and be able to provide the 20 percent (\$93,000.00) match in cash, instead of in-kind as was originally proposed. As noted earlier, all funding for SJRC projects was included in the WCB budget to be used in furtherance of their mission along the San Joaquin River Parkway.

Funds received from the ISTEA grant and the WCB grant will be used by the SJRC for environmental documentation as required by NEPA. In addition, the SJRC will be contracting with California State University-Bakersfield for a review and report to determine if the property contains historical values, as required under the National Historic Preservation Act. Both of these reports will have to be completed prior to any development of this site

being permitted. In addition to the studies, funds may also be used for riparian planting along the river for erosion control, while some funds may be used to protect historical resources, as deemed necessary by the historical study. The exact funding amount necessary to carry out this work will be difficult to determine until the reports are actually completed. Should funding requirements fall below the allocation being requested, surplus funds will be recovered at a subsequent Board meeting.

The WCB has had a long history of working along the San Joaquin River. In 1988 the Board began an acquisition program along the river, between the Friant Dam and Highway 99, using funds specifically designated for this purpose in Proposition 70, a voters' approved bond act. The first purchase under this program, the 286± acre Milburn Unit, was completed in November, 1988. Since that time the Board has approved, and staff has completed, direct acquisitions, or made grants to enable the purchase of an additional 709± acres of habitat in this area. These purchases, when combined with the WCB's purchase of the 75± acre Lost Lake property in 1957, brings the total WCB protected area along this stretch of the San Joaquin River to 1,070± acres. In addition, the WCB has been involved in a number of riparian restoration projects in this area. The project proposed at this site is consistent with WCB's ongoing efforts of protecting habitat and providing public access along the San Joaquin River.

As noted above, the San Joaquin River Conservancy Board has passed a motion recommending that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the use of these funds to provide the necessary match to enable them to receive the federal ISTEPA grant funds. Based on their recommendation, staff recommended that the Board allocate \$93,000.00 for a grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy, as proposed above, from the General Fund account established in the 1999/00 Wildlife Conservation Board budget; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this work; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT WE ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY BOARD AND APPROVE THE ALLOCATION OF \$93,000.00 FOR A GRANT TO THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY, AS PROPOSED ABOVE, FROM THE GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT ESTABLISHED IN THE 1999/00 WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD BUDGET; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WORK; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*11. Lakeside Linkages, Expansion #3, San Diego County \$85,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the County of San Diego to be applied toward its acquisition of a 9.1± acre property, located in the community of Lakeside. The proposed acquisition would protect some of the last remaining natural habitat linkage connecting major populations of the California gnatcatchers in the southern San Diego County area and allow for management of this habitat in a manner consistent with other lands already included in the County's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Reserve. The acquisition would further implement the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) efforts in the County.

As noted above, this proposal is for a grant to the County of San Diego, which has agreed to a partnership with the Board on the purchase of the parcel. Not only would the County fund 50 percent of the total cost for the purchase, but it would also accept title to the land and provide future management of the site. The proposal therefore represents the type of partnership envisioned with the creation of the NCCP program.

The MSCP recognizes the importance of and need for connectivity between major blocks of conserved habitat. In particular, the DFG has identified the Lakeside Linkage as very important to the continued existence of the California gnatcatcher populations in San Diego County. This linkage may ultimately comprise a series of semi-isolated but nearby "islands" of habitat. These semi-isolated patches of habitat would enable gnatcatchers and other flying and wind-dispersed species to remain as interbreeding populations. The subject property supports coastal sage scrub, grassland and riparian vegetation communities, as well as known breeding sites for the California gnatcatcher and other sensitive animal and plant species.

Lakeside is an unincorporated portion of San Diego County, north of the City of El Cajon and about 20 miles east of the San Diego Airport. The area of the property proposed for acquisition is bounded on the south by Interstate 8, on the north and west by State Highway 67, and on the north and east by Lake Jennings Park Road. The subject property, together with the properties previously acquired by the County and the Board, comprises the Lakeside Linkages, which winds through the community of Lakeside from the DFG Crestridge Ecological Area and Conservation Bank, that is south of Interstate 8, to Lake Jennings to the northeast. These properties (some joined by existing open space easements on developed property) form the backbone of the last remaining habitat in the area.

The subject property, consisting of vacant land totaling 9.1± acres, is located north of Interstate 8, at the south end of Petite Lane. It contains natural habitat (medium to high coastal sage scrub) and its primary value is as part of the linkage of natural habitats. Specifically, the property offers connectivity to holdings directly north and south and is also quite important to the overall linkage.

The property owners have proposed a subdivision for the site for rural residential purposes placing it at risk for development. They have, however, agreed to sell the land at its approved, appraised fair market value of \$160,000.00. The proposed grant to the County will provide \$80,000.00 toward the acquisition.

The County's management objectives for the subject property would be to preserve the key open space habitat on the site, continue the process of protecting a critical wildlife corridor and protect rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species that currently use this habitat. The plan also calls for some limited habitat restoration within the property. Long-term management goals may include some foot trails that traverse the area to provide for passive uses by the public. The DFG will have no management responsibilities and will not have any obligation to provide funds for management of the subject property.

In addition to the proposed \$80,000.00 grant, it is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses, including Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the total allocation for this proposal to \$85,000.00. The proposal is exempt from CEQA, under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff will review all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into an escrow or escrows. The grant will also require that maintenance and monitoring of the properties be accomplished by the County in conformance with its MSCF Framework Management Plan and relevant Area Specific Management Directives.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant to the County of San Diego to be applied to the acquisition of a 9.1± acres, as proposed; allocate \$85,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/NCCP (\$80,000.00 for the grant and \$5,000.00 for administrative costs); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE GRANT TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO BE APPLIED TO THE ACQUISITION OF A 9.1± ACRES, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$85,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/NCCP (\$80,000.00 FOR THE GRANT AND \$5,000.00 FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS); AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*12. Riparian Habitat Restoration, Laguna de Santa Rosa, Sonoma County \$34,450.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the City of Sebastopol (City), for a cooperative project to restore 4± acres of riparian habitat on land lying along the Laguna de Santa Rosa, downstream from State Highway 12. The Board's partners in this proposal include the City, the Department of Fish and Game (Department), the Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Board, Circuit Rider Productions (a private environmental consulting firm), the local Boy Scout troop, the California Conservation Corps and a large number of volunteers.

The Laguna de Santa Rosa is one of the most significant remaining wetlands and riparian habitat areas in Northern California, supporting a variety of fish and wildlife species, including several rare, threatened and endangered species. The Laguna de Santa Rosa currently supports a diverse population of fishes, including largemouth bass, catfish, carp, anadromous steelhead trout and a few coho salmon. More than 250 species of birds, including representatives of most of the migratory diving ducks found on the Pacific flyway, visit or live in the Laguna de Santa Rosa habitat areas, along with many other native species of wildlife that are dependent upon riparian and wetland habitats. The Department and the Board have been actively involved in projects in the Laguna de Santa Rosa for several years, including the acquisition of 480± acres of land located along the stream that comprise the Department's Laguna de Santa Rosa Ecological Reserve. The City adopted a Master Plan for the area in 1992, with the participation of the Department, that provides the blueprint for an ambitious array of habitat protection, restoration and public recreation projects, including the creation of the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve, a 75-acre City-owned site. The proposed riparian restoration project is a small, but significant, element of the Master Plan.

Agricultural and urban development have adversely impacted the Laguna de Santa Rosa over the last century. Riparian forests and oak woodlands have been cleared, past flood control activities have removed vegetation, and waste disposal practices have affected water quality. According to the March 1997 Russian River Action Plan, published by the Sonoma County Water Agency, there is a need for "...preservation, restoration, and enhancement of riparian, oak/vernal pool/grassland, and historic wetland habitat in the Laguna de Santa Rosa area." In 1998, the City began preparation of a Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve Implementation Plan for City-owned land and began work on the first elements of the Preserve in November 1998. The City has received major financial support for development of the City's Laguna Master Plan and its implementation through generous donations to the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation which have helped the City start several key projects, including a major addition to the existing trail system, restoration of a wetland area and the creation of a natural wetlands stormwater treatment system. A portion of the donated funds will be used for volunteer outreach, an interpretive program and administration.

The Department's most recent addition to the Laguna de Santa Rosa Ecological Reserve, the "pilot channel" section, consists of the channel and a narrow strip of mature riparian forest on both sides of the channel. This forest area extends approximately 2,000 feet downstream from State Highway 12 and is immediately adjacent to the City's preserve. The proposed project will add to and connect with existing riparian habitat by planting five sites on City property on both sides of the channel. The plantings will include valley oak, Oregon ash, box elder, hawthorne, local varieties of willow, California rose, elderberry, native blackberry, California wild grape and native grasses. Large oak logs will be installed to provide wildlife habitat at the ground level.

The City will oversee the project, with assistance from the Department, Circuit Rider Productions and the California Conservation Corps. This proposed project has local support from many, including individual citizens, school teachers and schoolchildren, governmental organizations and private non-profit organizations. The terms of the proposed grant agreement provide that the project will be implemented over a three-year period with the planted areas continuing to be managed and protected by the City until August 19, 2024, but it is anticipated that the City will continue to maintain and manage this valuable habitat in perpetuity.

Cost estimates for this project, which have been reviewed and approved by staff, are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Project design, training and supervision of Volunteers	\$ 1,950.00
Mailings to volunteers	125.00
Labor	2,500.00
Plant materials	10,000.00
Irrigation system	20,000.00
Bird nest boxes and bat houses	900.00
Debris/exotic plant removal, planting, preparation of interpretive materials	47,289.00
Administration	9,040.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$91,804.00</u>
<u>Proposed Funding Breakdown:</u>	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$34,450.00
City of Sebastopol (cash and in-kind)	57,354.00
<u>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</u>	<u>\$91,804.00</u>

The Department has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The City has approved a Negative Declaration for the City's Master Plan, and has filed a Notice of Exemption for this project, under Section 15304, as a minor enhancement of land for the benefit of fish and wildlife.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$34,450.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Section 2786 (e/f)]; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$34,450.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [SECTION 2786 (E/F)]; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *13. Riparian and Stream Habitat Restoration, Department of Fish and Game, Multiple Counties \$632,073.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation of funds for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (Department) for the enhancement and rehabilitation of salmon and steelhead spawning and rearing habitat on fourteen (14) waterways in California.

The anadromous fishery resource in California has suffered a severe decline over the past 30 years. For example, records indicate that the chinook salmon population in the Klamath River Basin has declined from a historic level of 500,000 to 180,000 by 1963, 115,000 by 1978, 55,000 by 1984 to 33,000 by 1991. One of the major causes for this decline is degradation of natural habitat due to stream and watershed disturbances from logging, road construction, mining and other activities associated with modern development. There has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of artificially produced fish returning to the Klamath system since 1985. In 1994, 76,000 fish were recorded in the Klamath River Basin. Returns of naturally produced salmon are still very low, however, due to the recent drought and widespread loss of habitat.

In addition, the 1964 flood, which produced record high flows in many waterways in Northern California, caused serious damage or completely destroyed miles of productive salmon and steelhead habitat.

This flooding, coupled with the watershed disturbance from logging, road construction, mining and other activities associated with modern development, has reduced the numbers of pools and provided little, if any, spawning or rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead. Some streams have usable spawning and rearing habitat that is blocked by a rock or log barrier. Modification of these barriers can open miles of good habitat that currently cannot be reached by anadromous fish. This flooding and other disturbances to the watershed has also caused the loss of bank stability and associated streamside shade canopy which is needed to maintain cooler summer water temperatures required for survival of juvenile salmon and trout. Since anadromous fish spend the juvenile portion of their life cycle in their natal stream, the need for adequate rearing habitat is a significant factor relative to the overall status of a population.

Streambanks lacking cover generate increased sedimentation which smothers spawning gravel and fill pools needed for rearing habitat. The lack of streambank riparian growth also results in higher water temperatures, less hiding cover and a reduced food source. Stream habitat modifications are also necessary to protect, enhance and restore populations of threatened or endangered species of fish.

The following stream restoration projects have been recommended by the Department. The Department will review all projects and an appropriate environmental document will be filed for each one. The projects listed in this item are intended to correct or enhance situations identified above. The Department will, in all cases, either administer projects themselves, or monitor the work of public agencies or nonprofit organizations. It is proposed that the Board enter into one contract with the Department to accomplish this project. The Department will then enter into separate agreements with each project sponsor to carry out the on-site enhancement and restoration work.

Site specific information for each of the fourteen (14) proposed habitat enhancement projects is briefly provided below:

- (A) Chorro Flats Instream Habitat Improvement Project, \$30,000.00
San Luis Obispo County

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District, a public agency, for the enhancement of steelhead trout fishery in Chorro Creek, a tributary to Morro Bay. All project work will be done in a 1,500± foot section of the creek located within the Chorro Flats Enhancement Project. The enhancement work will consist of installing root wads, boulder clusters, and wing deflectors to increase the number and depth of pools, and improve steelhead trout summer rearing habitat. The project will be completed by Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(B) Scott River Riparian Restoration Project III, Siskiyou County \$50,906.00

This proposed cooperative project between the Department and the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District, a public agency, is for the enhancement of chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout fisheries in the Scott River, a tributary to the Klamath River. The project is intended to enhance a 1.5± mile portion of Scott River by installing 1,300± feet of bank stabilization/in-stream structures, planting 16± acres of riparian trees to trap sediment, confine the channel, and establish riparian overstory species. A fish screen will also be installed. The project will be completed by the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(C) Forsythe Creek Golden Rule Riparian Restoration Project, \$46,274.00
Mendocino County

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and Bioengineering Associates, a private entity, for the enhancement of salmon and steelhead fisheries in Forsythe Creek, a tributary to the West Fork Russian River. Habitat restoration work will consist of stabilizing eroding bare vertical banks by planting indigenous plants and trees along the creek banks. The project will be completed by Bioengineering Associates, under the direction of the Department.

(D) Green Valley Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project, \$5,019.00
Sonoma County

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, a public agency, for the enhancement of coho salmon and steelhead fisheries in Green Valley Creek, a tributary to the Russian River. The project is intended to improve fish passage in a reach of the creek through the removal of a concrete barrier and the installation of jump pools. Work will be completed by Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(E) Wilder Creek Restoration Project, Santa Cruz County \$138,030.00

This proposed cooperative project between the Department and Watershed Science, a private landowner, is to enhance coho salmon and steelhead fisheries in Wilder Creek, a tributary to the Pacific Ocean. The project is intended to stop ongoing stream and habitat destruction by removing a sediment detention basin and an earthen dam; and increase and improve the anadromous fish habitat throughout the creek by restoring the stream channel and removing a concrete spillway. The project will be completed by Watershed Science, under the direction of the Department.

(F) Dutch Bill Creek Fish Habitat Improvement Project No. 3, \$8,820.00
Sonoma County

This is a proposed cooperative project between the Department and Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, a public agency, for the enhancement of steelhead in Dutch Bill Creek, a tributary to the Russian River. The project is intended to improve fish habitat by increasing pool cover and frequency. This will be accomplished by installing 9 cover log structures and 4 rock weirs in a 2,000± foot reach of stream. Work will be completed by Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(G) West Fork Russian River Riparian Restoration, Mendocino County \$41,028.00

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and Bioengineering Associates, a private entity, for riparian restoration on the West Fork Russian River, a tributary to the Russian River. The project is intended to stabilize 1,400± linear feet of vertical bank in a 2,380± foot section of the river. The project, which is intended to enhance chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead trout fisheries, will be completed by Bioengineering Associates, under the direction of the Department.

(H) Wolf Creek Salmonid Habitat Improvement, Mendocino County \$50,000.00

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and InterTribal Sinkiyone Wilderness Council, a nonprofit organization, for the enhancement of coho salmon, chinook salmon, and steelhead trout fisheries in Wolf Creek, a tributary to the Pacific Ocean. This project will consist of stabilizing 250± feet of eroding streambanks with log revetment structures that are intended to deflect flows and create pools and cover. It will also include stabilizing and revegetating 2 inner-gorge slides; and modifying approximately 22 large woody debris sites to reduce bank erosion, sedimentation and improve fish passage. Work will be completed by the InterTribal Sinkiyone Wilderness Council, under the direction of the Department.

(I) Bull Creek Instream Habitat Improvements, Humboldt County \$20,000.00

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and California State Parks, for the enhancement of chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout habitat in Bull Creek, a tributary to the South Fork Eel River. This project is intended to improve the instream habitat structure and complexity of the creek, from the confluence of Cuneo Creek to the confluence of the South Fork Eel River, by placing approximately 20 complex log/boulder structures. The project will be completed by California State Parks, under the direction of the Department.

(J) Garcia River Riparian Fencing, Mendocino County \$11,130.00

This proposed cooperative project between the Department and the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, is for the enhancement of chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout habitat in Garcia River, a tributary to the Pacific Ocean. Five thousand (5,000±) feet of exclusionary fencing will be installed on property owned by Stornetta Brothers, which is intended to allow riparian vegetation to become reestablished and provide stream bank stability, shade, and cover for fish and wildlife. Work will be completed by Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(K) Hilton Creek Fish Passage, Santa Barbara County \$50,300.00

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board, a public agency, for enhancement of steelhead trout fishery in Hilton Creek, a tributary to the Santa Ynez River. This project is intended to improve access to an additional 2,600± feet of stream by installing boulder weirs and baffles to modify a rocky cascade and bedrock chute. The project will be completed by Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board, under the direction of the Department.

(L) Arana Creek Restoration Project, Santa Cruz County \$40,500.00

This proposed cooperative project between the Department and the Coastal Watershed Council, a nonprofit organization, is for the enhancement of steelhead trout and the Red-Legged Frog habitat. Enhancement work is intended to improve instream habitat for spawning and rearing steelhead by removing existing sediments sources, providing native plant cover, and improving channel capacity for sediment transport. Work will be handled by the Coastal Watershed Council, under the direction of the Department.

(M) Grass Valley Creek Watershed Restoration, Trinity County \$89,388.00

This proposed cooperative project between the Department and the Trinity County Resource Conservation District, is for enhancement of chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout fisheries in Grass Valley Creek, a tributary to the Trinity River. The project will consist of reduction of sediment entering the creek and continued reforestation work in the Grass Valley Creek watershed by planting 150,000± tree seedlings in a 100± acre watershed area which now has scarce vegetation and high erosion. The project will be completed by the Trinity County Resource Conservation District, under the direction of the Department.

(N) San Jose Creek Restoration Project, Monterey County \$49,303.00

This proposal is for a cooperative project between the Department and Stevenson Brown, a private entity, for enhancement of steelhead trout fishery in San Jose Creek, a tributary to the Pacific Ocean. The project will consist of the installation of 700± linear feet of quarried boulder bank armor with a 600± foot willow mattress construction; and the installation of 3 complex and 3 simple log/boulder structures, as well as 4 boulder wing deflectors. In addition, a concrete dam will be removed, and the disturbed areas will be revegetated. The project will be completed by Stevenson Brown, under the direction of the Department.

The total cost for these fourteen proposals is \$630,698.00. An additional \$1,375.00 will be required to cover the Department of General Services' contract review costs for a total allocation of \$632,073.00 necessary to accomplish the described work.

Staff recommended that the Board approve these fourteen (14) salmon, steelhead and resident fish projects as one item, as proposed; allocate \$632,073.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Section 2786(e/f)]; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THESE FOURTEEN (14) SALMON, STEELHEAD AND RESIDENT FISH PROJECTS AS ITEM, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$632,073.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [SECTION 2786(E/F)]; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*14. Scott Creek Conservation Area, Mendocino County \$100,000.00

This proposal was to consider a cooperative project with the State Lands Commission to purchase a conservation easement over 75± acres of land for the protection and preservation of old growth Douglas fir trees and habitat for old growth-dependent species. The property, which does not have legal access, is a portion of a larger ownership located in the northeast portion of Mendocino County, 10± miles east of the town of Willits, near the intersection of Canyon and Tomki County Roads.

The State Lands Commission is in the process of marketing this 320± acre ownership, and has been working with the Department of Fish and Game to preserve the subject 75± acres, which contains nearly all of the old growth Douglas fir trees on the property. As the property would no doubt be logged, when sold, both agencies felt that they have a unique opportunity to preserve their old growth forest by allowing the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) to purchase a conservation easement over the 75± acres, to preserve the trees. The easement would also protect habitat essential for bald eagles, osprey and other raptors, as well as habitat for rare, threatened and endangered plants such as Baker's meadowfoam and north coast semaphora grass.

The state has made an appraisal of the timber value on the subject, which has been reviewed and approved, and values the conservation easement within a range of \$100,000.00 to \$140,000.00. The State Lands Commission has agreed to sell the easement for the lower figure of \$100,000.00 which will help offset the loss in value they would suffer by selling this property without the right to log the old growth timber.

The terms and conditions of this proposed easement purchase provide that both the State Lands Commission and the Board staff shall review all proposed documents and appraisal and process the final easement under Board authority. The proposal is exempt from CEQA, under Class 13 of Categorical Exemption, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the purchase of the conservation easement over the 75± acre area, as proposed; allocate \$100,000.00 from the General Fund to cover the purchase price; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT OVER THE 75± ACRE AREA, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$100,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO THE APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

15. Goleta Fishing Pier Improvements, Santa Barbara County \$110,250.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a cooperative project with the County of Santa Barbara to rehabilitate and improve the Goleta Fishing Pier, a longstanding Board fishing access project. The pier is located in the community of Goleta situated on the Southern California coast approximately 10 miles northerly of the City of Santa Barbara. The original 630 foot-long pier was used for military purposes during World War II and later acquired by the County in 1953. In order to enhance fishing opportunities on this pier, the Wildlife Conservation Board partnered with the County in 1979 and contributed funds towards extending it to its current 1,490 foot length thereby providing access to deeper waters. The County leases the land to the state and operates and maintains the pier under a Lease and a Cooperative Agreement with the state that both expire in 2004. Following Ms. Georgia Lipphardt's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

The pier is a popular destination for anglers and tourists, with an estimated 1 million visitor use days each year. While anglers fish from the pier, they can also use the pier's boat launch crane to launch small vessels. No commercial use of this crane is allowed. Neighboring University of California Santa Barbara Marine Sciences Department uses the pier for marine research programs and activities, including marine life monitoring, boat launching, diving instruction and water current monitoring. Over the years, the County has performed normal maintenance by replacing piles as they became lost due to high wave or storm activities, as well as periodically replacing pier decking or handrails.

In 1997, the County conducted a structural inspection, both above and below water, and determined that major rehabilitation on the pier and on the boat launch crane support structure was needed. In addition to the need to replace piles, the inspection revealed that structural cross bracing and loading crane deck supports were degraded and in need of replacement. The County has initiated and completed a portion of the repairs and has asked the Board for assistance to complete the balance of the identified rehabilitation work. The estimate of the total cost of the repairs as well as a breakdown of the work completed and additional work needed are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Actual Costs</u>	<u>Estimated Costs</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Work Completed by County:</u>			
Structural Inspection and Report	\$ 32,465		
Replacement of 11 piles and braces	48,284		
Engineering and design	4,000		
Project Administration	<u>2,500</u>		
Subtotal	\$ 87,249		\$ 87,249

Work Proposed to be Funded by WCB:

Engineering and design	\$ 10,000		
Replace support bracing and strut members	50,000		
Replace pile caps	20,000		
Boat hoist crane work	8,000		
Replace joist, decking and pile caps on fishing landings	10,000		
Hardware	2,000		
Administration	<u>10,000</u>		
Subtotal	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	

Work Proposed to be Completed by County:

Upgrade electrical system	\$ 11,500		
Engineering and design	4,000		
Project Management	<u>3,000</u>		
Subtotal	\$ 87,249	\$ 18,500	<u>\$ 18,500</u>

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS

\$ 215,749

The County is requesting \$110,000.00 from the Board to complete the repairs, a request that is in keeping with the Board's policy of requiring matching funds for pier projects. An additional \$250.00 will be required for General Services' review costs for the project, bringing the total allocation necessary for the Board's portion of this project to \$110,250.00. The County has agreed to extend the Cooperative Agreement and the existing land lease for 20 years from the current Board action or to August 19, 2019. The County will prepare the appropriate environmental documentation as required by CEQA and will obtain any permits needed to install the improvements.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$110,250.00 from the General Fund for project costs and General Services' review fees; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Thieriot asked if there were any questions. There were none. Mr. Hight commented that he has visited this pier several times and complimented the project.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. ROBERT HIGHT THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$110,250.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND FOR PROJECT COSTS AND GENERAL SERVICES' REVIEW FEES; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

At this time, Mr. Schmidt welcomed Ms. Maureen Rose, representing Assembly Member Howard Wayne, the newest member of the WCB legislative advisory committee, who was unable to attend.

16. Lower Sherman Island Public Access, Sacramento County \$200,250.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a cooperative project with the California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW), the County of Sacramento (County) and the Department of Fish and Game to replace the existing boarding float, rehabilitate the parking area and access road, and construct restroom facilities at the Lower Sherman Island Public Access site. The site is located approximately ten miles southwest of the City of Rio Vista on the Sacramento River at the extreme west end of the Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta. Following Mr. Peter Perrine's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

Lower Sherman Island, owned by the Department of Fish and Game, is a maze of slough channels and tidal marshes and has long been popular for hunting and fishing. Formal public access to the site, which included a boat ramp, parking area and sanitary facilities, was first developed as a cooperative project between the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) and the County in 1966. Since that time, maintenance and operation has been provided by the County under an operating agreement with the Board. The Board also funded improvements in 1979 and 1983 to provide erosion protection and to repair washouts on the access road.

This site, located as it is in the Delta at the confluence of California's two longest rivers, is a very popular public access site, with approximately 47,800 visitor use days reported in 1998. Many of these visitors to the southerly boat ramp portion of the island come to fish for striped bass and sturgeon, as some of the best fishing holes in the rich waters of the Delta are found nearby. In addition, the access area is used by waterfowl hunters in the fall and winter to boat to the numerous duck blinds scattered throughout the tule marsh as well as wind surfers, who utilize the northerly portion of the area during the summer months. With the continued high use of this aging boat launch area, the County has requested that the Board and the DBW replace the weathered boarding float, rehabilitate the existing parking lot and access road, install sanitary facilities and construct additional amenities for the

fishing and hunting public. The DBW, under a separate agreement with the County, is planning to provide parking, restroom facilities, and amenities for the wind surfers at the northerly portion of the area. These two projects, together, will provide efficient access for all users of the site.

Cost estimates for this project, which have been developed by DBW staff, reviewed and approved by WCB staff, are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Mobilization	\$15,000.00
Replacement of float and piles	59,000.00
Clearing and grubbing	5,000.00
Remove old asphalt/new base and asphalt	103,325.00
Concrete work (apron, curbs, pads and low-flow crossing)	80,500.00
Striping	6,000.00
Partnership sign, signage	8,000.00
Shade ramadas	20,000.00
Restroom	25,000.00
Entry improvements	22,500.00
Lighting	5,000.00
Relocated cable barrier	4,000.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$353,325.00</u>

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$200,000.00
Department of Boating and Waterways	153,325.00
<u>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</u>	<u>\$353,325.00</u>

In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$250.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the Board's portion of the project to \$200,250.00.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The County is preparing the appropriate documentation as required under CEQA and has agreed to maintain and operate all improvements on the site for 25 years through an Operating Agreement. The Department of Boating and Waterways will handle the contract administration for the proposed construction.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$200,000.00 from the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund (specifically budgeted for this project) for project costs and \$250.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund for General Services' review costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$200,000.00 FROM THE HARBORS AND WATERCRAFT REVOLVING FUND (SPECIFICALLY BUDGETED FOR THIS PROJECT) FOR PROJECT COSTS AND \$250.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR GENERAL SERVICES' REVIEW COSTS; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Thieriot commented on the uniqueness of this project in that it supports a broad range of constituencies, including hunters and fishermen, as well as visitors enjoying watersports nearby. Mr. Thieriot encouraged the promotion of such projects.

17. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion #10, Riverside County \$3,197,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider authorizing the exercise of the third and final phase of an option, to acquire approximately 305± acres of vacant land as a further expansion of the Department of Fish and Game's (Department) San Jacinto Wildlife Area, in western Riverside County. The acquisition will allow for the protection of freshwater wetlands at Mystic Lake and its associated upland habitat for the numerous sensitive plants associated with the Lake, and the over 240 bird species that have been recorded using the Mystic Lake area. Following Ms. Debra Townsend's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

The project area is located in the San Jacinto Valley of southern California, approximately 18 miles southwest of downtown Riverside, and just north of the community of Lakeview. To the northwest is the City of Moreno Valley, whose current authorized sphere of influence wraps around the northern and northeastern borders of the wildlife area. The western boundary of the 6,245± acre wildlife area is contiguous with the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, placing a total of 14,245± acres under public ownership and protection.

Initial land acquisitions for the wildlife area were completed during the period of 1981-82 as part of a mitigation package developed to compensate for wildlife habitat losses resulting from the construction of the State Water Project. As opportunity and circumstances allowed, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) acquired additional properties. In 1995-96, the Board acquired 175± acres of the 921± acre Mystic Lake property, located on the easterly side of the wildlife area, under an option acquired by the Trust for Public Land (TPL). TPL's option subsequently lapsed and, in 1997, staff of the Board negotiated a three-phase option with the landowner for the remaining 746± acres. In November, 1997, the Board authorized staff to exercise the first phase of the option, allowing the state to acquire a 208± acre portion of the property, having a fair market value of \$2,300,000.00. Completion of the 1997 acquisition triggered an extension of the option for at least one more year allowing the state to purchase all or a portion of the remaining 538± acres. In November, 1998, the Board authorized staff to exercise the second phase of the option, allowing the state to acquire another 245± acre portion of the property at the fair market value of \$3,000,000.00. Exercise of the second phase of the option again triggered a final, one-year extension of the option allowing the state to purchase the 305± acre remainder.

Acquisition of the remainder is critical to the wildlife area as it will place the last of the lake bed within the subject property under protection and provide added access from Gilman Springs Road. When completed, the Mystic Lake acquisition will place approximately two-thirds of the old San Jacinto lake bed in public ownership. The lowlands comprise an historic sump of the San Jacinto River, which in the past formed an extensive freshwater wetland at this location. An early attempt at flood water diversion has largely deteriorated, and at the present time substantial flood flows often break out of the diversion and enter the historic lake bed. Placement of this area in public ownership will facilitate restoration of the historic flows back into the lake bed for wetland restoration.

The low-lying areas within the floodplain of the San Jacinto River include examples of the alkali sink scrub, freshwater marsh and southern willow scrub. The hills surrounding the lowland flood plain are dominated by Riversidian sage scrub. Intermixed with the sage scrub community are patches of non-native grasslands; these are found in both the upland and alkali flat areas. There are numerous sensitive plants associated with the Mystic Lake area, including the thread-leaved brodiaea (state listed endangered and federally proposed threatened), San Jacinto saltbush (federally proposed endangered) and spreading navarretia (federally proposed threatened). The wildlife area and adjoining lands support 38 species of amphibians and reptiles. The high number is attributable to the location at the northern end of the Peninsular range which allows both coastal and desert flora and fauna to contribute to the area's biodiversity. Mammal species are well represented and range from the desert shrew to the southern mule deer. The Stephens' kangaroo rat (state listed threatened and federally listed endangered) is a resident mammal of the wildlife area.

Over 240 species of birds have been recorded on, or adjacent to, the wildlife area since 1982. Twenty-two over-wintering raptor species are known to utilize the San Jacinto Valley, including the osprey, ferruginous hawk, Cooper's hawk, golden eagle and short-eared owl. The San Jacinto Valley consistently ranks in the top 1 to 2 percent in species diversity for the North American Christmas bird counts. Historically, the San Jacinto Valley has always been an important southern California wintering and nesting area for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. Three species listed as federal or state endangered have been recorded at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. These include the state listed endangered and federally listed threatened bald eagle, which is a regular winter visitor, Peregrine falcon and California brown pelican, both of which are state and federally listed endangered.

The Department has identified the entire Mystic Lake property as being within a Significant Natural Area and has recommended the purchase of the property, which would be incorporated into and managed in conjunction with the existing wildlife area. It is anticipated that the area will offer both non-consumptive and consumptive recreational uses, as the habitat is maintained and developed in conjunction with the wildlife area. The property owner has offered a donation to the Department, in the amount of \$500,000.00, to be used for operation, maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the wildlife area. Although not a condition of sale, this donation will be placed directly into an endowment account concurrently with this acquisition.

There are no claims of sovereign state land ownership within the property, since the area is within a former Spanish land grant. The proposal is exempt from CEQA, under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

The owner has agreed to sell the property to the state for the approved appraised fair market value of \$3,688,750.00. It is anticipated that an additional \$14,560.00 will be needed for administrative costs, which include escrow, title insurance and Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the total for this proposal to \$3,703,310.00. However, a portion of the funds required to purchase the property, in the amount of \$506,310.00, will be placed directly into escrow by the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (\$72,310.00) and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Cajalco Project) (\$434,000.00), in satisfaction of mitigation conditions required under three Streambed Alteration Agreements, leaving a remaining balance of \$3,197,000.00. Specifically, the Agreements provide that the District contribute the funds to the Board for acquisition of wetlands property at Mystic Lake.

Mr. Schmidt reported that in addition to the funding breakdown, as shown in the agenda, the Board recently received notice that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation may have a minimum of \$187,500.00, and possibly more, available to put toward this acquisition.

Staff therefore recommended that the Board approve the exercise of the option to acquire the subject 305± acres; allocate \$3,197,000.00 for the project: \$1,600,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [P-117, Ssec. 2786 (b/c)] and \$1,597,000.00 from the General Fund, to cover the purchase price and costs; accept \$506,310.00 from the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Cajalco Project) to be applied directly into an escrow account for the purchase; authorize staff to accept a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation should one become available, funds which would be placed directly into the escrow account for this purchase; authorize the acceptance of a \$500,000.00 donation to the Department of Fish and Game for placement into a special department endowment fund for the operation, maintenance and restoration of this wildlife area; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned. Any funds which may be received from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation would be used to offset the \$3,197,000.00 allocation made by the Board for the above noted purchase, an amount which would be recovered at a future Board meeting.

Mr. Schmidt noted that letters of support had been received from the California Waterfowl Association, Endangered Habitat League, Riverside Land Conservancy, San Bernardino Audubon Society, Friends of Northern San Jacinto Valley and the San Geronio Chapter of the Sierra Club. A letter of concern was also received from Mr. Jonathan Motte, an adjacent landowner. He requested that his letter be read at the meeting and that members respond to his concerns. He also requested that his letter be included in the meeting minutes (see attachment) and that a copy of the meeting minutes be sent to him. Mr. Schmidt read the letter and added that the Board and the Department of Fish and Game have responded to his earlier concerns, those which he has again expressed and continues to express throughout all phases of this project. No comments were made to this letter by Board members. Mr. Schmidt then advised that Mr. Tom Paulek of the Department of Fish and Game, and Mr. Greg Lowther, representing the landowner, were in the audience should there be any questions.

At this time, Mr. Schmidt presented a beautiful picture of the Mystic Lake area, donated by the landowner, Mr. Reinhold Pfahler, and his representative, Mr. Greg Lowther, to the Department of Fish and Game to be hung on the wall in the Wildlife Area. Mr. Tom Paulek accepted the picture on behalf of the Department and expressed his appreciation to the landowner and the Board for their efforts.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. ROBERT HIGHT THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE EXERCISE OF THE OPTION TO ACQUIRE THE SUBJECT 305± ACRES; ALLOCATE \$3,197,000.00 FOR THE PROJECT: \$1,600,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [P-117, SEC. 2786 (B/C)] AND \$1,597,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND, TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND COSTS; ACCEPT \$506,310.00 FROM THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER

CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (CAJALCO PROJECT) TO BE APPLIED DIRECTLY INTO AN ESCROW ACCOUNT FOR THE PURCHASE; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION SHOULD ONE BECOME AVAILABLE, FUNDS WHICH WOULD BE PLACED DIRECTLY INTO THE ESCROW ACCOUNT FOR THIS PURCHASE; AUTHORIZE THE ACCEPTANCE OF A \$500,000.00 DONATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME FOR PLACEMENT INTO A SPECIAL DEPARTMENT ENDOWMENT FUND FOR THE OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION OF THIS WILDLIFE AREA; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED. ANY FUNDS WHICH MAY BE RECEIVED FROM THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION WOULD BE USED TO OFFSET THE \$3,197,000.00 ALLOCATION MADE BY THE BOARD FOR THE ABOVE NOTED PURCHASE, AN AMOUNT WHICH WOULD BE RECOVERED AT A FUTURE BOARD MEETING.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Thieriot acknowledged staff's dedication and hard work on the project, which has resulted in the successful development of this wetland area, with the hope that, in the future, the area may be expanded to include even more acreage.

18. Wetland Habitat Restoration (American Basin Farms), Butte County \$292,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation of \$292,000.00 for a grant to California Waterfowl Association (CWA), to restore 1,447± acres of wetlands and associated upland nesting habitat in Butte County. Consistent with the goals and objectives of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture (CVHJV) plan, this project is designed to contribute to the CVHJV objective of protecting and restoring 120,000 acres of wetlands. Following Ms. Marilyn Cundiff's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

This proposed partnership restoration project will be accomplished on privately owned property, locally known as the American Basin Farms. Besides the Board, other partners included in this proposal are the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the landowners, CWA and the Department of Fish and Game. NRCS has already completed their role in the project by purchasing a conservation easement over the entire property, thereby assuring that it will be maintained as wetland habitat in perpetuity. This proposal is intended to restore the property into quality wetland and associated upland habitat.

The project site is in the CVHJV American Basin, east of the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, Oroville Wildlife Area and Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area. The site is approximately 11 miles north of Marysville at the historic town of Craig. The American Basin, as defined by the CVHJV plan, lies east of the Sacramento and Feather Rivers and west of the Sierra foothills, between Oroville on the north and the American River on the south. The Basin contains approximately 600 square miles (60 miles long and about 10 miles wide).

Historically, water from the American, Yuba, Feather, Sacramento and Bear Rivers flooded the area. However, as with most wetlands remaining in the Central Valley, construction of flood control reservoirs and levees now prevent most flooding in these historic wetland areas, including the American Basin.

Until recently, there were only about 12,000 acres of wetlands, consisting of approximately 3,200 acres of natural wetlands, and about 8,800 acres of flooded rice fields. Because of the area's importance to migrating waterfowl, especially Canada geese, this area has become the number one priority area for the CVHJV protection and restoration objectives. The CVHJV plan for the American Basin calls for the protection (in fee or easement) of approximately 2,000 acres of existing wetlands and the protection and restoration of an additional 10,000 acres of restorable wetland acres. Contributing to the high priority ranking is the rapid loss of critical agricultural operations beneficial to migrating waterfowl. Historically a rice and cereal grain producing area, the American Basin is experiencing a transition from cereal grain operations to crops such as vineyards, cotton, orchards and into residential development.

This proposed project contributes toward the CVHJV American Basin objective and compliments previous work the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) has approved along the Honcut Creek area. To date, the Board working with its many partners, has protected and restored approximately 782 acres of wetland habitat. In addition, to protect the wetland areas and provide a critical food source for migrating waterfowl wintering in this area, the Board has protected (with agricultural easements) approximately 933 acres of agricultural ground.

This restoration project will provide a mosaic of diverse and moist soil habitat and provide quality vegetation for wintering waterfowl, wading birds and shore birds. In addition, nesting areas and brood ponds for breeding waterfowl and other resident wetland-related wildlife will be provided. When completed, the project will benefit mallards, gadwall, American green-winged teal, cinnamon teal, northern pintail, northern shoveler, American wigeon, white faced ibis and the long billed curlew.

While vernal pools and upland habitat are scattered throughout the 1,447± acre area, the inability to properly manage the water has undermined the quality of the vegetation, the amount and diversity of waterfowl food crops, and utilization of the area by migrating waterfowl and resident wetland species.

The restoration and enhancement effort will provide between 50 and 150 acres of brood water (depending on rainfall conditions and natural flooding of vernal pool communities), more than 600 acres of upland nesting habitat, and nearly 600 acres of seasonal wetlands designed and managed to provide high quality wintering habitat. New drainage channels and ditches will be constructed so that each of the wetland units can be independently managed and water properly controlled. New levees and channels will be constructed and screw gates and new water control structures will be installed.

Construction of the new water delivery and drainage system will require the following:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Levee Base Preparation and Construction (71,308 cu. yds.)	\$212,313.00
36" x 48" flashboard risers (17)	17,500.00
36" x 36" flashboard risers (56)	39,600.00
18" A.D.S. polyethylene pipe (2,920 ft.)	46,720.00
Vegetation Restoration	18,000.00
CWA Administration and Management	23,389.00
Contingencies	24,555.00
Wetland Easement Acquisition	2,579,914.00
CWA Design and Engineering	8,197.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$2,970,188.00</u>

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Natural Resources Conservation Service	*\$2,196,061.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	292,000.00
Landowners	307,127.00
CWA	175,000.00

TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING **\$2,970,188.00**

* conservation easement already purchased

In total, the protection and restoration of the American Basin Farms will cost \$2,970,188.00, of which the WCB has been requested to provide \$292,000.00. To protect the state's investment, the landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the property to benefit waterfowl and other wetland dependent species for 20 years in accordance with a detailed management plan. If during the 20-year life span of this project, the landowners determine they are no longer able to manage and maintain the property to benefit wetlands and waterfowl, they have agreed to reimburse the state an amortized cost of the project.

Consistent with the provisions of CEQA, this project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, Class 1 (i) maintaining fish and wildlife habitat to protect wildlife resources.

Recognizing that approximately 70 percent of the remaining wetlands in the Central Valley are located on private lands, this project further exemplifies the importance of public/private partnerships and the benefits associated with providing incentives to private landowners. In addition, this project is consistent with the Fish and Game Commission's policy to provide incentives and assistance to landowners in developing wetland habitat, since most of the California's wildlife is located on non-state owned areas.

Mr. Schmidt reported that a letter of support for this project had been received from the California Waterfowl Association. He also noted that Mr. Tim Griffiths, representing the CWA, was in the audience should there be any questions.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$292,000.00 from the General Fund, as designated for the Inland Wetland Conservation Program; authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. ROBERT HIGHT THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$292,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND, AS DESIGNATED FOR THE INLAND WETLAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO ENTER INTO THE APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hight complimented the Board for continuing to enter into more partnerships and that the Joint Venture is very productive in the valley.

At this time Mr. Schmidt directed the Board's attention back to Item 17 for additional consideration. Mr. Schmidt stated that the property owners agreed to make a donation to the Department of Fish and Game in the amount of \$500,000.00 to be put into an endowment account over a three-year period for operation, management and restoration of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area site. Staff's recommendation and approved motion were then amended to reflect acceptance of this donation, as shown in Item 17.

19. Wetland Habitat Restoration (Four Mile Ranch), Colusa County \$190,320.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation of \$190,320.00 for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA), to restore 320± acres of wetlands and associated upland nesting habitat in Colusa County. Consistent with the goals and objectives of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Plan (CVHJV), this project contributes to the CVHJV objective of protecting and restoring 120,000 acres of wetlands and waterfowl habitat. Following Ms. Marilyn Cundiff's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project. Mr. Schmidt noted that the property owners, Messrs. Leo and Sid LaGrande, were in the audience should there be any questions.

This proposed partnership restoration project will be accomplished on privately owned property, locally known as the Four Mile Ranch. Besides the Board, other partners included in this proposal are the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the landowners, CWA and the Department of Fish and Game. NRCS has already completed their role in the project by purchasing a conservation easement over the entire property, thereby assuring that it will be maintained as wetland habitat in perpetuity. This proposal is intended to restore the property into quality wetland and associated upland habitat.

Four Mile Ranch is located within the CVHJV Colusa Basin, approximately three miles southeast of the town of Maxwell, next to the western border of the Delevan National Wildlife Refuge and is surrounded by rice lands and duck clubs. The Colusa Basin, as defined by the CVHJV Plan, extends from Red Bluff in the north to Cache Creek in the south, the Sacramento River on the east and the Coast Range on the west. The Basin contains more than 1,600 square miles (110 miles long and about 15 miles wide). A natural depression drains the Colusa Basin called the Colusa Trough.

Historically, overflow from the Sacramento River joined streams draining the east slopes of the Coast Range in the Colusa Trough flooding the Colusa Basin marshes in the winter and spring. The Trough drains the entire length of the Basin and re-enters the Sacramento River at Knight's Landing. Except during very wet years, flood control projects on the Sacramento River and the Colusa Basin Drainage Canal have eliminated most of the flooding, thus, restricting flows that would otherwise inundate the wetlands.

Three National Wildlife Refuges (NWR), consisting of seasonal and permanent wetlands, moist-soil wetland impoundments and crop lands, are found in the Colusa Basin natural wetland and associated uplands on the three NWR total approximately 25,000 acres. Complementing the NWR complex are about 30,000 acres of waterfowl habitat, which are mostly flooded rice fields. The natural wetland habitat is concentrated in the Willow Creek area, northeast of the Sacramento NWR and Lurline Creek area that lies between the Delevan and Colusa NWR.

The proposed restoration project will provide a mosaic of diverse and moist soil habitat and quality vegetation for wintering waterfowl. In addition, nesting areas and brood ponds for breeding waterfowl and other resident wetland-related wildlife species will be provided. When completed, the project will benefit mallards, gadwall, American green-winged teal, cinnamon teal, northern pintail, northern shoveler, American wigeon, white faced ibis, and the long billed curlew. Providing late spring and summer water will create critical habitat for wading birds, shorebirds, and other wetland dependent wildlife. Species likely to benefit include great blue herons, snowy egrets, American avocets, black-necked stilts, a variety of sandpipers, Virginia rails, and a variety of neo-tropical songbirds and giant garter snakes.

The proposed capital improvements will convert 320± acres of low productive crop land to a combination of seasonal wetlands and upland habitat. A number of levees will be constructed and existing rice checks will be removed. Laser leveled fields will be restored to a more natural pond bottom topography which will include swales, potholes, loafing berms and islands. In addition, many trees will be planted, providing additional habitat and a more natural setting.

The restoration effort will provide 30± acres of brood water, 70± acres of upland nesting habitat and 220± acres of seasonal wetlands designed to provide wintering habitat for migrating waterfowl. New drainage channels and ditches will be constructed so that each of the wetland units can be independently managed and water properly controlled. Cost estimates for the construction of the new water delivery and drainage system, coupled with the revegetation and new brood ponds have been developed by CWA and have been reviewed and approved by staff as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Levee Preparation and Construction	\$50,100.00
Excavation and Contouring	28,234.00
Delivery Ditch	6,406.00
Water Control Structures	12,600.00
Pipes	11,140.00
Vegetation Restoration	12,500.00
Well and Pump	74,600.00
CWA Administration & Management	\$6,950.00
Contingency	16,670.00
Wetland Easement Cost	576,000.00
Design and Engineering Cost	4,620.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$799,820.00</u>

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$576,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	190,320.00
Landowners	28,880.00
CWA	4,620.00

TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING

\$799,820.00

In total the restoration and protection of 320 acres of wetlands will cost \$799,814.00, of which the WCB has been requested to provide \$190,320.00. To protect the state's investment, the landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the property to benefit waterfowl and other wetland dependent species for 30 years according to a detailed management plan. If during the 30-year life span of this project, the landowners determine they are no longer able to manage and maintain the property to benefit wetlands and waterfowl, they have agreed to reimburse the state the amortized cost of the restoration project.

Consistent with the provisions of CEQA, this project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, Class 1 (i) maintaining fish and wildlife habitat to protect wildlife resources.

Recognizing that approximately 70 percent of the remaining wetlands in the Central Valley are found on private lands, this project exemplifies the importance of public/private partnerships and is consistent with the Fish and Game Commission's policy to provide incentives and assistance to landowners in developing wetland habitat, since most of California's wildlife is on non-state owned areas.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$190,320.00 from the General Fund, as designated for the Inland Wetland Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; ALLOCATE \$190,320.00 FROM THE GENERAL FUND, AS DESIGNATED FOR THE INLAND WETLAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Thieriot commented on the Board's increased budget for this fiscal year which will allow for the acquisition and protection of more land than in the past. He expressed his appreciation to Ms. Annette Porini and Mr. Robert Hight for their involvement in helping to secure this additional funding and to the Governor for approving the budget.

20. Riparian Habitat Restoration, Mouth of Cottonwood Creek \$130,000.00
Wildlife Area, Shasta County

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the California State University, Chico Research Foundation (Foundation), for a cooperative project to restore 26± acres of native riparian forest habitat within the Mouth of Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area, located in the flood plain of Cottonwood Creek near its confluence with the Sacramento River. The Board's partners in the project include the Foundation and the Department of Fish and Game (Department). Following Mr. Scott Clemons' explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

The Mouth of Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area consists of 544± acres of land located along both sides of the creek, extending from its confluence with the Sacramento River upstream approximately 1.5 miles. Large remnant stands of cottonwood/willow mixed riparian forest are found on the property, along with shrubs and understory vegetation, seasonal wetlands and former riparian forest areas, which were formerly cleared for pasture use. The proposed restoration project will occur in a pasture area located in the northeast portion of the Wildlife Area. Due to lack of funding, the Department has not been able to restore the riparian areas and has been managing the Wildlife Area in its existing condition since acquisition. Department staff identified the need for the proposed project and supports it as the highest priority among the several properties they manage along the Sacramento River.

The Foundation proposes to restore the Cottonwood Creek site to a mosaic of mixed riparian, wetland and understory species. Restoration work, including site assessment, restoration plan development, seed and cutting collection, plant material propagation, field preparation, site layout and planting will be done between early fall and late spring. The Foundation plans to contract with local farmers to complete some field preparation tasks. While the restoration work is anticipated to be completed within one year, monitoring, irrigation and pest control activities will continue for a total of three years. Plant species to be used on this project are expected to include Fremont cottonwood, arroyo willow, Gooding's willow, Oregon ash, Mexican elderberry, California rose, box-elder, valley oak, California sycamore, basket sedge, blue rye, creeping rye, mugwort, goldenrod, juncus and carex.

The Mouth of Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area is defined as part of the Sacramento River Conservation Area in the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook, prepared for the State of California Resources Agency by the Upper Sacramento River Advisory Council. As part of the handbook's defined conservation area, the project site falls within the area identified for riparian habitat preservation and/or restoration. This project will enhance and

restore habitats that benefit and support many of the fish and wildlife species found listed within the handbook, including mule deer, bats, beaver, rabbits, squirrels, mice, voles, river otter, coyote, ringtail, common garter snake, wood ducks, wild turkey, raptors, shorebirds waterfowl, and numerous species of neotropical migrant songbirds.

Cost estimates for this proposal, which have been reviewed and approved by staff, are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Site evaluation, design, layout, monitoring	\$ 27,529.00
Site preparation, irrigation installation	85,500.00
Maps, pump operations, plants, marking flags and other materials	16,358.00
Travel	5,800.00
Administrative overhead	26,000.00

<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>*\$161,187.00</u>
------------------------------------	-----------------------------

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$130,000.00
Chico State Research Foundation	31,187.00

<u>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</u>	<u>\$161,187.00</u>
---------------------------------------	----------------------------

*DFG is contributing staff time for coordination and periodic project monitoring, which has a value of \$4,120.00. This value is not included in the total estimated project cost.

The Department reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the Board. The Department has also determined that this project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, under Section 15304, a minor enhancement of land for the benefit of fish and wildlife, and has filed a Notice of Exemption.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$130,000.00 from the River Parkway Subaccount-Safe, Clean Reliable Water Supply Fund/Prop. 204; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. ROBERT HIGHT THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$130,000.00 FROM THE RIVER PARKWAY SUBACCOUNT-SAFE, CLEAN RELIABLE WATER SUPPLY FUND/PROP. 204; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hight and Mr. Thieriot complimented the Board for working with the University, thereby exposing the students to the positive work of the Board and the Department of Fish and Game and the importance of habitat preservation and restoration.

21. Riparian Habitat Restoration, Amargosa and Mojave Rivers, \$250,000.00
Inyo and San Bernardino Counties

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a cooperative project to remove exotic vegetation (tamarisk) and restore native riparian vegetation on approximately 250± acres of land at one location on the Amargosa River in Inyo County and at two locations on the Mojave River in San Bernardino County. The Amargosa River restoration area follows the river canyon downstream from just below the town of Tecopa, to an area just downstream of the China Wash, a tributary stream, and includes project work on public and private lands. The Mojave River restoration project is proposed in two separate publically owned areas. One, the Afton Canyon site, owned and managed by the BLM, is located near the northeastern terminus of the Mojave River, approximately 35 miles downstream from the City of Barstow. The other site, Camp Cady Wildlife Area, owned by the State of California and managed by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), is located approximately 20 miles northeast and downstream from the City of Barstow. Following Mr. Scott Clemons' explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

The Board's partners in this project include the BLM, DFG, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Mojave Desert Resource Conservation District, Los Angeles Conservation Corps, California Conservation Corps and Department of Forestry.

Many desert areas in Southern California suffer from tamarisk (aka saltcedar) infestations, an exotic, invasive plant that spreads and occupies wetland habitats, and has invaded riparian zones located in tributaries to major drainage systems, such as the Amargosa and Mojave Rivers. If the native vegetation is disturbed by human activities such as fire, off-road vehicles, or overuse of groundwater, tamarisk will move in and crowd out native willows, cottonwoods and mesquite. Although the plant will assume a tree form that is analogous in shape to native trees, the plant does not provide the same wildlife habitat values or the

diversity of habitat types that native trees provide. In addition, tamarisk is adapted to an arid climate, and is prone to establishing a dense monotypical stand of small shoots that use far more water in the same area than do native plants. Another negative feature of tamarisk is that each plant will produce salty conditions in the soil surface. If tamarisk stands are left to mature and spread, the soil becomes so saline that chemical treatments must be applied to allow native vegetation to be established. This plant is recognized as a species of concern, Class 1-A, by the California Exotic Pest Plant Council (Cal EPPC), the primary organization in California dedicated to removing the environmental threats posed by non-indigenous flora. The Cal EPPC Class 1-A species are in the highest category of threat and need for control. Desert riparian areas in Arizona and Utah have been invaded by tamarisk and are severely degraded. California's communities still have a healthy native plant presence, which needs to be protected from tamarisk invasion.

The BLM and other agencies have shown that tamarisk can be eradicated from selected areas and successfully restored with native vegetation. In 1992 the BLM's Barstow Field Office began a program to develop and test tamarisk control and desert riparian restoration methods. In the last few years this program has been very successful, with several hundred acres of riparian areas treated and recovering with native vegetation in place on the BLM's lands on the Mojave River, Amargosa River Canyon and Salt Creek, a tributary to the Amargosa River. For the last several years the DFG has been fighting this invasive species at their Camp Cady Wildlife Area, although on a much smaller scale.

The BLM and DFG will oversee the treatments and revegetation of native riparian habitats at the three restoration areas over the next three years. Over 4,000 trees (willow, cottonwood and mesquite) will be planted at the three areas to complement natural revegetation that is expected to occur after the tamarisk is removed. Young adults involved in the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) and California Conservation Corps (CCC), as well as inmate crews under the supervision of the Department of Forestry (DOF), will carry out many of the field activities. Follow-up maintenance to control tamarisk resprouts, or new infestations, will continue in perpetuity, but the intensity of maintenance treatments should decrease rapidly as the native habitats mature. The restoration areas will be maintained and managed by the BLM and DFG.

Cost estimates for this project, which have been reviewed and recommended for funding by the DFG, are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Contractual services (LACC, CCC, DOF)	\$305,000.00
Supplies	20,000.00
Equipment	5,000.00
Materials (herbicide)	80,000.00
Agency employees (in-kind contribution)	80,000.00
Plant materials	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$500,000.00</u>

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$250,000.00
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	100,000.00
Bureau of Land Management	100,000.00
Department of Fish and Game (in-kind)	50,000.00

TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING

\$500,000.00

The DFG reviewed this project and recommended it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, under Section 15034, minor alteration of land to benefit fish and wildlife resources.

Mr. Schmidt reported that after Mr. Tom Egan of the Bureau of Land Management provided him with a slide presentation and field review, Mr. Schmidt found the project to be more beneficial than he originally anticipated. He noted that Mr. Egan and Mr. Jim Decker, also from the Bureau of Land Management, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Schmidt reported that several letters of support of this project had been received from the Inland Empire District of the California Conservation Corps, the California Exotic Pest Plant Council, Mojave River Resource Conservation District, Society for Conservation of Big Horn Sheep, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Mojave Water Agency, California Extension University of California, California Native Plant Society and Quail Unlimited.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as requested; allocate \$250,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Section 2786 (e/f)]; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Annette Porini asked a question regarding the amount of water the plants consume and the amount that would be saved by this project. Mr. Schmidt stated that during the slide presentation that was shown to him, he viewed an area where the plants had been removed and, at the time the slide was taken, there was no water flowing in that stream. The following year, after removal of the plants, there was water flowing in the stream. Mr. Schmidt stated that the water agency in Riverside reported that the plants were costing the agency over \$1M a year in lost water revenue.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. ROBERT HIGHT THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THIS PROJECT AS REQUESTED; ALLOCATE \$250,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [SECTION 2786 (E/F)]; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS AS NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

22. Rodman Slough Wildlife Area, Lake County \$395,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of 97± acres of land, and to consider a grant to the Lake County Land Trust (Trust) to be applied toward its acquisition of an additional 133± acres of land for the purposes of protecting a mix of habitat types benefitting a host of aquatic and terrestrial species. The subject property is located approximately four miles north of Lakeport on the northwest shore of Clear Lake where numerous creeks, including Scotts Creek, Middle Creek, Clover Creek and Gilbert Creek flow into Clear Lake forming a delta. The property can be accessed from the west via State Highway 29, from the east via Nice-Lucerne Cutoff Road, and by boat from the south via Rodman Slough. Following Mr. John Donnelly's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the project.

The Rodman Slough area is one of the most significant bioregions of Lake County, consisting of a combination of oak covered hills, dense tule marsh and an extensive riparian habitat system. This habitat mix provides for a wide diversity of aquatic and terrestrial species including herons, red-tailed hawks, osprey, tri-colored blackbirds, neo-tropical songbirds, waterfowl, deer, gray fox, coyote and bobcat. The property supports 13 species of mammals and 18 species of birds identified by the Department of Fish and Game (Department) as Species of Special Concern. Rodman Slough is also important as a breeding and nursery area for numerous fish species including black bass, black and white crappie, catfish and the Clear Lake hitch, a fish species of special concern. In addition, the property supports a Great Blue Heron Rookery with over 110 nests actively being used.

This project provides the Wildlife Conservation Board and the Department with an opportunity to enter into a partnership with the Trust for the purposes of conserving and protecting significant wetland, riparian and upland habitats associated with one of the few remaining large natural areas on Clear Lake, California's largest natural warm water lake. This project would promote the Department's multi-species conservation effort while preserving public hunting and fishing opportunities as well as other public recreational activities including birdwatching, kayaking and nature study, and would provide opportunities for environmental research and education.

The Trust was able to obtain an option to purchase the subject property at a substantially reduced price. However, the terms of the option required that the Trust close escrow on the property by June 25, 1999. Consequently, they had to solicit the help of The Conservation Fund to pre-acquire the property while public agencies were securing appraisals, funding and project approvals. In addition to funds being requested from the Board, partial funding for the purchase of the 133± acre grant parcel is proposed to come from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Council.

The properties have been appraised for a total value of \$624,000.00, an amount approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The approved appraised value for the 97± acre portion of Rodman Slough area that is proposed for state ownership is \$153,000.00 while the 133± acre portion of Rodman Slough, which would be owned and managed by the Trust, has an approved appraised value of \$471,000.00. Staff proposes the Board make a grant in the amount of \$234,490.00 to be combined with other grant funds as noted above to cover the purchase price of the 133± acres proposed for Trust ownership. It is estimated that an additional \$7,510.00 will be needed for project expense including escrow, title insurance and DGS review costs. In summary, the total allocation being proposed by staff is \$395,000.00 (\$153,000.00 for the proposed state ownership; \$234,490.00 to be applied toward the grant and \$7,510.00 in administrative costs). The project is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes.

Mr. Schmidt reported that Ms. Nancy Schaefer of The Conservation Fund, Mr. Peter Windrem and Ms. Mary Tulanian of the Lake County Land Trust, and Mr. Brian Hunter, Department of Fish and Game Regional Manager, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Schmidt noted that letters of support had been received from Assembly Member Virginia Strom-Martin and the County of Lake.

Staff therefore recommended that the Board approve the issuance of a grant of \$234,490.00 to the Lake County Land Trust; authorize the acquisition of an additional 97± acres of habitat; allocate a total \$395,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Section 2786(e/f)] to cover the cost of the grant, to pay for the state acquisition valued at \$153,000.00 and provide an additional \$7,510.00 for administrative costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ANNETTE PORINI THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE ISSUANCE OF A GRANT OF \$234,490.00 TO THE LAKE COUNTY LAND TRUST; AUTHORIZE THE ACQUISITION OF AN ADDITIONAL 97± ACRES OF HABITAT; ALLOCATE A TOTAL \$395,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND [SECTION 2786(E/F)] TO COVER THE COST OF THE GRANT, TO PAY FOR THE STATE ACQUISITION VALUED AT \$153,000.00 AND PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL \$7,510.00 FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ENTER INTO APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Thieriot expressed their appreciation to the audience for their support of the projects.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,



W. John Schmidt
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on August 19, 1999, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$660,483,294.10*. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

The statement includes projects completed under the 1964 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act, the 1970 Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Bond Fund, the Bagley Conservation Fund, the State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974, the General Fund, the Energy Resources Fund, the Environmental License Plate Fund, the State, Urban and Coastal Park Bond Act of 1976, the 1984 Parklands bond Act, the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Bond Act, the California Wildlife Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988, Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund of 1988, California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990, the Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Act of 1996, the Natural Resources Infrastructure Fund, the Harbors and WaterCraft Revolving Fund, and the Wildlife Restoration Fund.

A.	Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B.	Fish Habitat Preservation, Development and Improvement	22,353,152.93
	1. Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 4,534,613.05
	2. Stream Clearance and Improvement	14,700,451.69
	3. Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	547,719.86
	4. Marine Habitat	646,619.07
	5. Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	1,923,749.26
C.	Fishing Access Projects	37,756,701.45
	1. Coastal and Bay	\$ 2,992,860.08
	2. River and Aqueduct Access	9,294,062.65
	3. Lake and Reservoir Access	7,194,318.46
	4. Piers	18,275,460.26
D.	Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
E.	Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	569,608,567.85
	1. Wildlife Areas (General)	\$190,677,460.14
	2. Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	4,633,633.74
	3. Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	207,770,977.51
	4. Land Conservation Area	28,212.20
	5. Inland Wetlands Conservation Grants & Easements	5,673,355.91
	6. Riparian Habitat Conservation. Grants & Easements	5,068,763.47
	7. Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	155,456,164.88
F.	Hunting Access Projects	484,898.57
G.	Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	10,653,879.29
H.	Special Project Allocations	1,116,464.79
I.	Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	1,806,095.63
	1. State Owned	\$917,735.63
	2. Grants	888,360.00
J.	Sales and/or exchanges	<u>550,420.04</u>

Total Allocated to Projects \$660,483,294.10*

*This total includes allocations in the sum of \$230,500,000.00 for grants to acquire the Headwaters and Grizzly Creek Forests and the acquisition of Owl Creek Forest.

Motte Ranch

August 8, 1999

RECEIVED

AUG 13 1999

Wildlife Conservation Board

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
1807 13TH Street, Suite 103
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Ms Townsend:

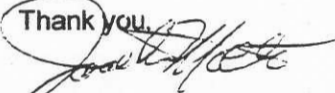
I am writing in response to your letter dated July 11, 1999 regarding the possible acquisition of property surrounding our parcels located within the San Jacinto Wildlife area, Riverside County.

Concerns are as follows:

1. Economic value for our property
2. No compensation for economic losses
3. Endangered Species Legislation. Regulatory land uses and management imposed by the Department of Fish and Game on existing lands.

Please read this letter and include it into the minutes of the meeting August 19, 1999 of the Wildlife Conservation Board and have the board respond to these concerns. Please send a final draft of the minutes of this meeting with their responses to the address below.

Thank you.



Jonathan Motte