Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
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Final Meeting Agenda

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 21, 2019, 10:00 a.m.

Natural Resources Building, First Floor Auditorium
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Agenda Summary

PERSONS WITH DISABILITES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department's EEO Officer at (916) 653-9089 or EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. Accommodation requests for facility and/or meeting accessibility and Requests for American Sign Language Interpreters should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. Requests for Real-Time Captioners should be submitted at least four weeks prior to the event. These timeframes are to help ensure that the requested accommodation is met. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the EEO Officer immediately.

1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members

Charlton H. Bonham, Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Alina Bokde, Public Member
Keely Bosler, Member
Director, Department of Finance
Diane Colborn, Public Member
Mary Creasman, Public Member
Fran Pavley, Public Member
Eric Sklar, Member
President Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Andreas Borgeas
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Henry Stern
Assemblymember Laura Friedman
Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi –Alternate
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago –Alternate
Assemblymember Monique Limon
Assemblymember Marc Levine -Alternate

Executive Director

John P. Donnelly

2. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda

An opportunity for the general public to share comments or concerns on topics that are not included in this agenda. The Board may not discuss or take action on any matter raised during this item, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting. (Sections 11125, 11125.7(a), Government Code)

3. Funding Status

Informational

The following funding status depicts total Capital Outlay and Local Assistance appropriations by fund source and fund number:

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND (0447)	**$1,000,000.00**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$1,000,000.00**
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	**$85,857,093.29**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(8,014,489.00)
Total Project Development:	(10,075,400.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$67,767,204.29**
SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 12) (0005)	**$1,264,936.00**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(65,000.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$1,199,936.00**
CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	**$8,190,927.17**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,949,725.00)
Total Project Development:	(1,298,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$4,943,202.17**
WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	**$24,071,800.83**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	(10,083,129.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$13,988,671.83**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	**$31,043,859.32**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(937,800.00)
Total Project Development:	(14,588,500.00)

Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$15,517,559.32**
WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	**$63,367,539.60**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(375,690.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$62,991,849.60**
THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	**$202,160,000.00**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(15,534,750.00)
Total Project Development:	(15,767,600.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$170,857,650.00**
GENERAL FUND (0001)	**$12,220,000.00**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,745,000.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$10,475,000.00**
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	**$15,482,325.00**
November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,431,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(4,346,500.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$9,704,825.00**
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	**$444,658,481.21**
Grand Total - November 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(30,053,454.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(56,159,129.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	**358,445,898.21**

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004 (through 6/30/08)	$48,598,734.00
Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective 1/1/10)	$8,662,500.00

4. Strategic Plan Direction and Reporting

5. Approval of Minutes – August 28, 2019

6. Recovery of Funds

The following projects previously authorized by the Board are now completed, and some have balances of funds that can be recovered and returned to their respective funds. It is recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

Table 1 - Recoveries by Fund

Fund Name	Amount
Habitat Conservation Fund	$293,326.28
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	$198,094.00
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	$7,332.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	$224,533.12
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	$4,874,148.00
Total Recoveries for All Funds	**$5,597,433.40**

Table 2 - Habitat Conservation Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Badger Almond Wetland Enhancement	$722,000.00	$699,106.82	$22,893.18
Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion 4	$715,000.00	$710,138.10	$4,861.90
Carson River Enhancement	$360,000.00	$359,686.59	$313.41
Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, Clifton-Lamb Property	$5,000.00	$3,976.00	$1,024.00
Denk Mountain	$84,200.00	$76,684.00	$7,516.00
Grasslands and Mendota Wildlife Areas Enhancement	$853,000.00	$765,224.07	$87,775.93
Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Phase II	$750,00.00	$701,238.83	$48,761.17
John Henry Ranch	$3,215,000.00	$3,212,851.00	$2,149.00
Kern National Wildlife Refuge Recirculation Project	$1,308,000.00	$1,254,834.24	$53,165.76
Lower Kern River Panorama Vista Preserve Riparian Restoration	$900,000.00	$875,869.23	$24,130.77
Morongo Basin, Exp. 5 (Thomas)	$38,100.00	$30,156.00	$7,944.00
Portal Ridge (Ford)	$170,000.00	$160,000.00	$10,000.00
Portal Ridge, Expansion 1 (Fischer/Ramey)	$330,000.00	$324,828.00	$5,172.00
Santa Cruz Integrated Watershed Restoration	$531,000.00	$530,989.84	$10.16
Western Riverside MSHCP (Chappell)	$1,087,000.00	$1,077,000.00	$10,000.00
Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 9 (Houston)	$169,000.00	$161,391.00	$7,609.00
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			***$293,326.28***

Table 3 - California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Whiskey Hill Conservation Easement	$764,000.00	$570,386.00	$193,614.00
Willow Creek Ranch	$610,000.00	$605,520.00	$4,480.00
Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund			***$198,094.00***

Table 4 - Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Los Angeles River - Taylor Yard G2	$20,050,000.00	$20,042,668.00	$7,332.00
Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002			***$7,332.00***

Table 5 - Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Barry Point Fire Forest Restoration	$2,500,000.00	$2,293,548.99	$206,451.01
Big Creek Reserve Facility Improvements, Phase II	$2,558,270.00	$2,546,940.01	$11,329.99
Blue Oak Ranch Reserve Facility Improvements	$4,252,000.00	$4,251,999.99	$0.01
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Olesen/Duke)	$110,000.00	$104,402.00	$5,598.00
Independence Lake Forest Enhancement	$410,000.00	$408,845.89	$1,154.11
Sanhedrin Ranch Restoration	$180,000.00	$180,000.00	$0.00
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			***$224,533.12***

Table 6 - Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Russ Creek Stream Flow Enhancement	$4,874,148.00	$0.00	$4,874,148.00
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			***$4,874,148.00***

Consent Items

7. Recovering and Sustaining Monarch and Pollinator Populations Amendment
To consider a clarifying amendment to this project that was previously approved at the August 28, 2019 Board meeting, for the allocation for a grant to the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) for a project to administer a block grant to Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) throughout California for the implementation of monarch and pollinator habitat improvements located in various counties along California's coast and the Central Valley. This is to clarify that projects will be located on private and public lands.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this amendment to allow CARCD to provide grants for projects on public lands as well as privately-owned lands; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

8. California Monarch Recovery Project
Various Counties
$612,270

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Xerces Society (Xerces) for a cooperative project with California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) and Cambria Community Service District that will aid in the recovery and sustainability of monarch butterflies and other pollinators by addressing the multiple threats that are leading to their decline, in various coastal and central Counties.

LOCATION

Each fall, western monarchs travel to forested groves along the California coast, where they remain through the winter. Coastal development has degraded overwintering habitat; in the past few decades, more than 50 overwintering sites have either been destroyed or made unsuitable for monarchs. Most overwintering sites are made up of aging trees and there is a significant need for active management and restoration that considers the needs of monarchs.

To address this problem, Xerces will evaluate the habitat condition of 27 overwintering sites and communicate general management and restoration needs to their land managers. At seven of these sites, Xerces will partner with site managers and other local experts to develop and implement restoration plans. These seven sites are: Point Mugu and Leo Carillo in Ventura County, Andrew Molera in Monterey County, San Clemente State Beach in Orange County, Sonoma Coast State Park in Sonoma County, and Pismo State Beach and Fiscalini Ranch Preserve in San Luis Obispo County. In addition, Xerces will host two workshops for overwintering site managers to expand the reach of this project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will occur in various counties throughout California and has three major objectives that will work in tandem to best conserve monarchs in California: 1) Restore and enhance key overwintering sites; 2) Provide technical assistance to farmers to restore, enhance and manage key early season nectar plants and milkweed and late season nectar plants; and 3) Increase commercial availability of early emerging native milkweeds and early- and late-blooming nectar plants.

Monarch butterflies have declined across their North American range in recent decades, the western population has experienced losses that far outpace those of the larger, eastern population. Western monarchs have declined by more than 99 percent in just over three decades and face a high probability of near-term extinction.

Western monarch researchers hypothesize that the drivers of this population reduction are likely due to factors including: a shortage of fall, winter, or early spring nectar resources, a reduction in both the quality and quantity of California overwintering habitat, and a decline in milkweed available in early spring. Monitoring of overwintering colonies between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day

for the past three years revealed losses of 36-49 percent over this roughly six-week period, presumably due to mortality. Preliminary analyses of monitoring data from the 1970s suggest that overwintering survival was considerably higher than it is currently. Overwintering sites continue to be destroyed annually, and many are dominated by aging, drought-affected, exotic Eucalyptus trees that are frequently in poor condition and no longer provide the microclimatic conditions that wintering monarchs need. Many site managers lack both technical guidance and resources to enhance the condition of even the most important overwintering sites. While research is ongoing to better understand the drivers of mortality within the western population, there are actions that can be taken to recover monarchs by restoring the most important overwintering sites and increasing early- and late-season foraging, egg laying and migratory habitat throughout the Central Valley, adjacent foothills of the Sierra Nevada, and Coast Range. With dedicated resources to improve the condition of western monarch's fall, overwintering and early spring habitats, the population has a chance at recovery.

In response to the dramatic decline of the western monarch, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) targeted monarch conservation for the past two years through its Declining Species Wildlife Habitat Initiative. As a result, a growing number of farm and ranch landowners are taking advantage of technical and financial assistance from the NRCS to plant or protect milkweed and important nectar sources. Technical support for NRCS, Regional Conservation Districts, and farm and ranch owners is needed in the key early breeding and overwintering areas of western monarchs. To address this need, Xerces will provide direct technical assistance to restore or enhance appropriate nectar resources for migrating monarchs in the fall and early emerging nectar plants and milkweed for breeding monarchs in the early spring. Xerces aims for this expanded work to add at least 500 acres of protected and improved monarch habitat.

To support efforts in restoring nectar forage near overwintering sites and breeding habitat for the first generation of monarch to leave these habitats, Xerces and partners have documented the need for greater availability of early-emerging milkweed species, as well as early- and late-blooming monarch nectar species, from the native plant nursery and seed industry. Xerces will build from its long-term partnerships with native seed and plant producers to increase the availability of early-emerging milkweed species and other important plant materials for restoration.

Beyond monarchs, this project will benefit a broad suite of pollinators. Many of the wildflowers and shrubs used in monarch habitat restoration projects will also provide valuable resources for a broad range of bees and butterflies as well as other pollinators such as hummingbirds. Beyond recovery of monarch butterflies, a secondary goal is to ensure that a diversity of pollinators can access resources throughout the Central Valley and along the coast.

Addressing climate change in restoration is also needed. Intense drought associated with climate change is already increasing the difficulty in getting plants to establish in new pollinator habitat plantings. Xerces selected alternate, drought-

tolerant plants for restoration, and will field-test new methods for plant establishment.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program and meets the program's goal of recovering and sustaining populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

- Restore pollinator habitat within working lands to increase habitat for pollinators
- Enhance habitats on working lands by restoring habitat on agricultural lands

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.2 – Invest in projects that have a primary purpose of conserving or restoring native pollinator habitat in locations that provide a measurable ecosystem services benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Both the overwintering and breeding/migratory habitat restoration project portions of this proposal will utilize an adaptive management approach. Xerces staff will monitor project progress on an ongoing basis and communicate early and often with land managers, so that changes can be made if needed. The implementation project is designed within an adaptive management framework, which includes the following process:

1) Assess 27 overwintering sites
2) Design 7 site restoration and management plans
3) Implement 7 site restoration and management plans
4) Monitor implementation sites
5) Evaluate elements that worked well and those that could be improved so that future overwintering site restoration plans can be adjusted and implemented most effectively and efficiently; communicate these lessons learned to overwintering site managers through two workshops

All overwintering restoration sites will be revisited at least once following implementation of habitat enhancements to report on the status of the treatment. The data collected during this site visit will vary by site and will be defined in each

site management and restoration plan. For example, if native wildflowers are planted at an overwintering site to enhance winter nectar resources for monarchs, Xerces staff will evaluate whether the plants survived and note whether they are being used by monarchs or other pollinators at the post-implementation site visit.

For the 36 monarch habitat conservation plans developed for farmers and ranchers by the Xerces-NRCS partner biologists, NRCS conservation planners, biologists, or Xerces partner biologists will return to restored sites to reevaluate the site and to document that the conservation plan was adequately implemented and that the quality of the habitat is improved using the monarch habitat evaluation guide. In addition, as conservation plans are developed for farmers and ranchers by the Xerces-NRCS partner biologists, they are being implemented by landowners. Xerces and NRCS staff and are available to provide ongoing technical assistance to help with habitat project implementation, decision-making, adaptive management, and long-term management. Benefits to monarchs will be documented during and beyond the project time period through existing community-science programs that Xerces manages and is committed to managing into the future.

From past work with scientists from California and across the United States, Xerces knows that when appropriate plant materials designed to provide pollen and nectar are established successfully, that pollinator numbers increase. All nectar and breeding plants chosen for monarchs are also documented to provide significant benefits for other pollinators. By monitoring the successful establishment of habitat projects supported by Xerces-NRCS conservation planners, Xerces will be documenting that the plants needed by monarchs and pollinators are in place and, therefore, that pollinators will be benefiting.

If at any time during the five-year life of the project, Xerces does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Cost Share	Total Cost
Site Assessment	$61,336	$26,740	$88,076
Develop Management Plans	$96,627	$42,127	$138,754
Technical Assistance	$46,128	$20,111	$66,239
Implement Management Plans	$103,073	$44,937	$148,010
Restore Key Agricultural Landscapes	$254,460	$110,937	$365,397

Project Task	WCB	Cost Share	Total Cost
Ensure Appropriate Materials are Available for Restoration	$50,646	$22,080	$72,726
TOTAL	$612,270	$266,932	$879,202

Project costs will be for the restoration and enhancement of key monarch overwintering sites; providing technical assistance to farmers to restore, enhancing and managing key early season nectar plants and milkweed and late season nectar plants; and increasing commercial availability of early emerging native milkweeds and early- and late-blooming nectar plants.

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source that allows for one or more of the following objectives: restore or enhance California prairie and other appropriate breeding habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators, restore or enhance overwintering monarch butterfly habitat, provide technical assistance to grant recipients, provide grants for seasonal or temporary habitat improvements, or provide block grants in which sub-allocations are made by the grant recipient. [Fish and Game Code Section 1374; General Fund, Budget Act of 2018, Chapter 29.]

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

The project was evaluated and scored by technical reviews from CDFW and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, both of which recommend this project for funding by WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $612,270 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2018, Chapter 29; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


California Monarch Recovery Project
Various Counties
WCB
State of California
Wildlife Conservation Board
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
Mt Shasta
Eureka
Redding
Chico
Reno
Carson City
Elko
Sacramento
Vacaville
Fairfield
Napa
Concord
Antioch
Stockton
San Francisco
Modesto
Livermore
Fremont
San Jose
Salinas
Fresno
Visalia
Bakersfield
San Luis Obispo
Santa Maria
Lompoc
Santa Barbara
Santa Clarita
Oxnard
Los Angeles
Long Beach
Anaheim
Santa Ana
Lancaster
Palmdale
Victorville
Riverside
Cathedral City
Palm Desert
Indio
Oceanside
San Diego
Mexicali
Yuma
Las Vegas
Henderson
Lake Havas
Mt Whitney
Salton Sea
Project Site
8 WCB 11/21/2019
Content may not reflect National Geographic's current map policy. Sources: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

9. China Hill, Expansion 4
Siskyou County
$65,000
This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

10. CAL FIRE Forsyth Conservation Easement
Humboldt County
$0

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a conservation easement (Easement) over 49± acres by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The Easement is being conveyed as a condition of a grant from CAL FIRE to the city of Arcata (City) under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007, with funding provided by the California Climate Investment Fund. The Easement will protect significant scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, cultural, carbon sequestration, and environmental values.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES
The property (Property) is located near Bayview and East 17th Street in the City, Humboldt County. The Property borders Humboldt State University on the west and the rest of the Property is surrounded by the Arcata Community Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The Property is within the Jolly Giant Creek watershed and provides critical habitat for a variety of special status fish, wildlife, and plant species. The Property will link the 2,302-acre Arcata Community Forest to Humboldt State University. The Easement will permanently preserve a working redwood forest, contribute to the protection of water quality in the Humboldt Bay region, protect the significant biological resources of the Property, and expand the recreational and educational opportunities for residents and visitors to the area. The Easement provides an excellent opportunity to match the guiding principles of the Forest Legacy Program with the California Climate Investment Fund.

The Property is comprised mainly of coast redwood and Sitka spruce. The primary groupings of plant species within the forest are the redwood-oxalis, the redwood-sword fern, and the redwood-salmonberry types. Redwood oxalis generally occurs on the lower 1/3 slope position characterized by concave topography and moist conditions. In addition to redwood in the over story, this type contains grand fir, Douglas fir, and Sitka spruce. The herb and fern layer is dominated by redwood sorrel with other common, although less abundant, associates including wild ginger, redwood violet, trillium, and lady fern.

Redwood sword fern occurs on the middle to upper 1/3 slope position where conditions are drier and warmer than that of the oxalis sites. Canopy associated with redwood include grand fir, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, and on occasion Western hemlock. The shrub layer of this plant grouping consists of evergreen huckleberry, salal, and rhododendron. Sword fern is the dominant species in the herb layer.

The forest, creeks, and streams that run through the Property serve as critical habitat for a variety of species, many of them rare, threatened, and/or endangered. Several state and federally listed endangered or threatened species that may exist

or are known to exist on properties adjacent to the Property include steelhead trout, coho salmon, tidewater goby, northern spotted owl, and bald eagle.

The Property also contains high-quality habitat for the following state-listed species of special concern: southern torrent salamander, northern red-legged frog, Del Norte salamander, foothill yellow-legged frog, coastal cutthroat trout, osprey, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, Pacific fisher, red tree vole, and the fully protected ring-tailed cat.

The City will incorporate the Property into the Arcata Community Forest and the City's Community Forest Management Plan, which is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified for sustainable forestry practices. The Arcata Community Forest was dedicated in 1955 and has functioned as a recreational, educational habitat and timber resource for the community and its residents. It is the first community forest in California and the first municipal forest granted FSC certification in the United States.

WCB AND CAL FIRE PROGRAMS

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007 (CFLPA). CFLPA (Public Resources Code Section 12200, *et seq*.) allows CAL FIRE to accept lands and interests in lands to protect environmentally important forestlands that are threatened by present or future conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is to be given to lands that can be effectively protected and managed and that have important scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural and environmental values. Under the CFLPA, WCB may acquire conservation easements on behalf of CAL FIRE (Public Resources Code Section 12240).

Proposals under the CFLPA are evaluated and recommended for funding by CAL FIRE staff based on criteria established under CFLPA. Eligible properties may be working forests where forestland is managed for the production of forest products and traditional forest uses are maintained. These forest uses include both commodity outputs and non-commodity values. The purpose of the Easement is to maintain the forest intact and to provide such traditional forest benefits as timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and increased carbon sequestration through increased growth and inventory and long-term management of the timberlands.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CAL FIRE will enter into the Easement with the City and monitor the Property for compliance with the terms of the Easement. The Easement allows access by CAL FIRE or its agents annually for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The City has agreed to grant the Easement to CAL FIRE as a condition of a grant for the purchase of the Property. Staff of the WCB will review and approve all title

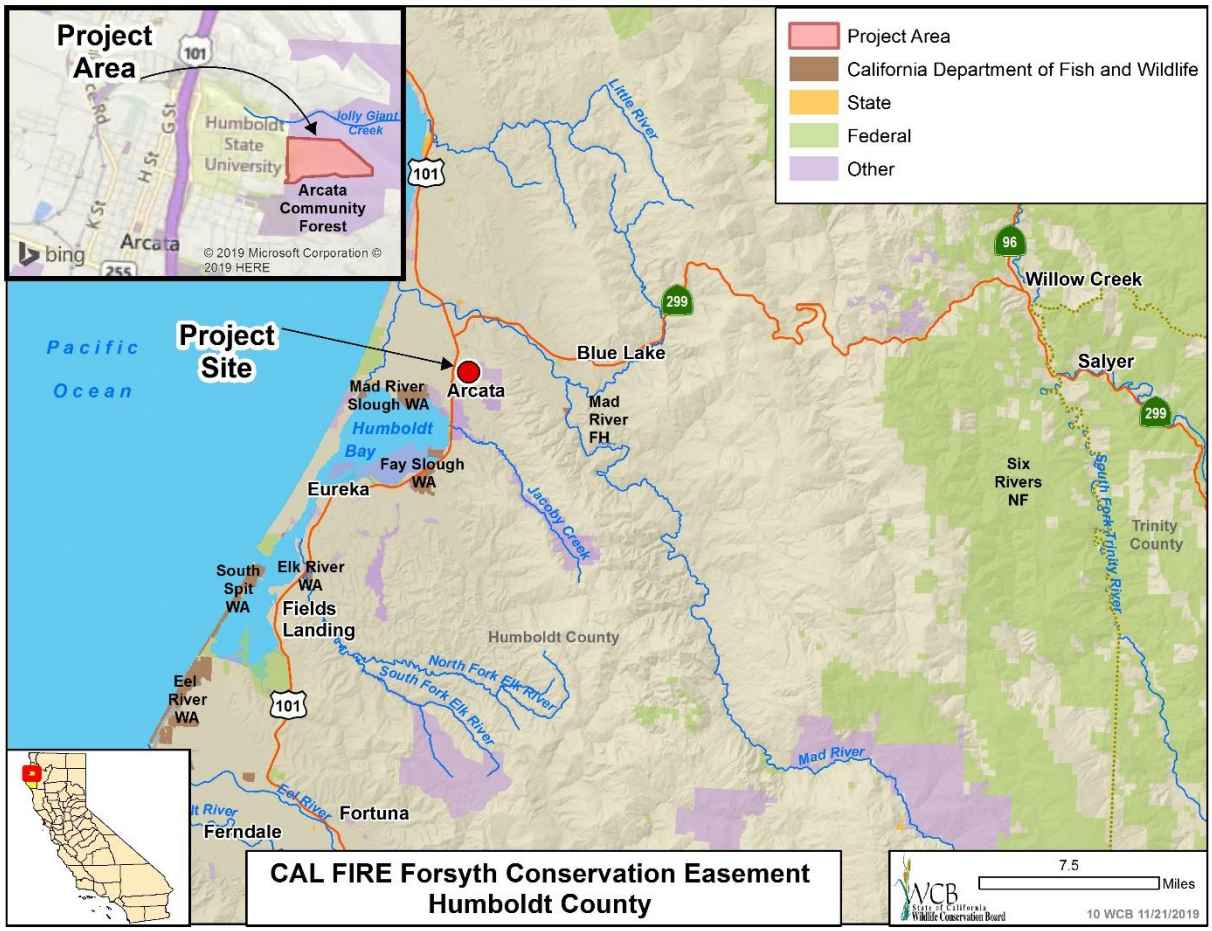
documents, preliminary title reports, the Easement, and instruments of conveyance.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitat. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed;, approve the acceptance of the Easement over 49± acres on behalf of CAL FIRE under CFLPA; authorize staff and CAL FIRE to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff, CAL FIRE, and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



11. Dye Creek Low Water Crossing Fish Passage Planning
Tehama County
$375,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Resource Conservation District of Tehama County (RCDTC) for a cooperative project with CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to complete planning, design, and environmental review to remove a fish passage barrier located at the Shasta Boulevard Dye Creek Bridge crossing located approximately three miles north of Los Molinos in Tehama County.

LOCATION

Dye Creek is located in Tehama County on the east side of the Sacramento Valley in the Mount Lassen foothills. The project site is located approximately one mile east of State Route 99E, 12 miles south of Red Bluff, and three miles north of Los Molinos. It is just west and downstream of The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Dye Creek Preserve (Preserve) and approximately one mile east of the confluence of Dye Creek and the Sacramento River.

The entire Dye Creek watershed upstream of the project is within the 37,540-acre Preserve. The conservation area managed by TNC contains the largest undeveloped parcel of land within the Dye Creek watershed. The Preserve is located within the foothills of Mount Lassen and contains extensive stands of blue oak woodlands, foothill grasslands, and volcanic buttes. The landscape is dissected by Dye Creek Canyon and other fissures that contain vertical cliffs as well as annual and perennial streams with diverse riparian forests. Dye Creek is one of a cluster of western Sierra tributaries (including Deer, Mill, Pine and Big Chico creeks) that were noted in the 1996 Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (U.S. Forest Service) as having exceptional value for the conservation of aquatic species.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Various plans and studies have documented the value of Dye Creek as rearing habitat for salmonids as well as the impediments to fish passage in the watershed. Under a State Water Resource Control Board grant in 2010, the RCDTC prepared the Tehama East Watershed Assessment. In that document, Dye Creek was one of the many intermittent tributaries that was assessed, and the document recommended that the impediment to upstream and downstream fish migration at the road crossing at Shasta Boulevard be remedied. The National Marine Fisheries Service designated approximately one stream mile upstream of the barrier as Critical Habitat for Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon as well as eight stream miles upstream as Critical Habitat for Central Valley steelhead.

In addition to impeding salmonids, the proposed project site also acts as an impediment to migration of other native fish species, including Pacific lamprey, Sacramento sucker, Sacramento squaw fish, speckled dace, and hardhead. The low water crossing over Dye Creek also presents a hazard for other aquatic and riparian species, such as western pond turtles and river otters, which must pass

over the roadway to move upstream or downstream. Local wildlife species which prey on fish, including bald eagle, osprey, belted kingfishers, and river otters would benefit from increased fish populations in Dye Creek.

Currently, during late spring, summer, and early fall, when Dye Creek stream flows are low, the two to three-foot head differential and poorly operating culverts within the creek's low-water crossing prevent marginal surface flows from entering Dye Creek's lower watershed below the crossing structure. As a result, this portion of the stream channel is often dry, which also limits the amount of riparian vegetation that can develop along the stream channel. Consequently, the abundance of mammalian, avian, and insect species that may inhabit this portion of the watershed is reduced. Once flow passage is improved at the Shasta Boulevard low water crossing, it is expected that surface flows will continue for a longer portion of the year into the lower watershed between the crossing structure and Dye Creek's mouth with the Sacramento River. As a result, these extended flows will benefit riparian vegetation which provides habitat for the Foothill yellow-legged frog, yellow-billed cuckoo, bank swallow, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, along with various species of listed bats.

Intermittent tributaries such as Dye Creek play an important role for juvenile salmonid survival. Studies show that juvenile salmonids that utilize intermittent tributaries for non-natal rearing grow faster and are in better condition than fish reared in the Sacramento River's mainstem. Additionally, enhanced tributary access is of equal importance to improving salmonid survival as the development of side channel and floodplain habitat along the Sacramento River's mainstem, based upon the behavior patterns of salmonids. Through the removal of barriers between non-natal rearing and spawning habitat, Dye Creek has the potential to provide significant additional habitat for Chinook salmon and steelhead. The construction of an improved crossing structure will result in unimpeded upstream fish passage and eliminate barrier-induced mortality of fish emigrating to the cooler Sacramento River and out to ocean habitats.

RCDTC will work with partners to develop a final engineered project design that addresses the fish passage impediment. RCDTC will be responsible for the project management, landowner outreach, and coordination among the project partners and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). TAC consists of DWR, Tehama County Public Works, TNC, CDFW, and USFWS.

The project will also complete hydrological and hydraulic assessments, develop alternative designs, and create a preferred alternative for TAC to consider. TAC will approve a preferred alternative, and engineering plans and cost estimates including 30, 60, and 100 percent designs will be completed. Staff will conduct baseline field studies to include botanical, biological, cultural, and jurisdictional wetlands/waters. Project work will also include environmental document and permit preparation, compliance with CEQA/NEPA, Clean Water Act Sections 404 and 401, Fish and Game Code Section 1600, Central Valley Flood Board, and federal and state endangered species acts.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

- Restore passage conditions on Dye Creek within the Preserve, a protected and habitually sensitive preserve that supports numerous endangered, threatened, and other rare species.
- Improve sustainable habitat for listed anadromous species and provide alternative sites for rearing and spawning.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.2 – Invest in projects that contribute to connectivity as highlighted in the California Terrestrial Connectivity Map, or linkages as mapped in regional assessments.

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project, as proposed, is as follows:

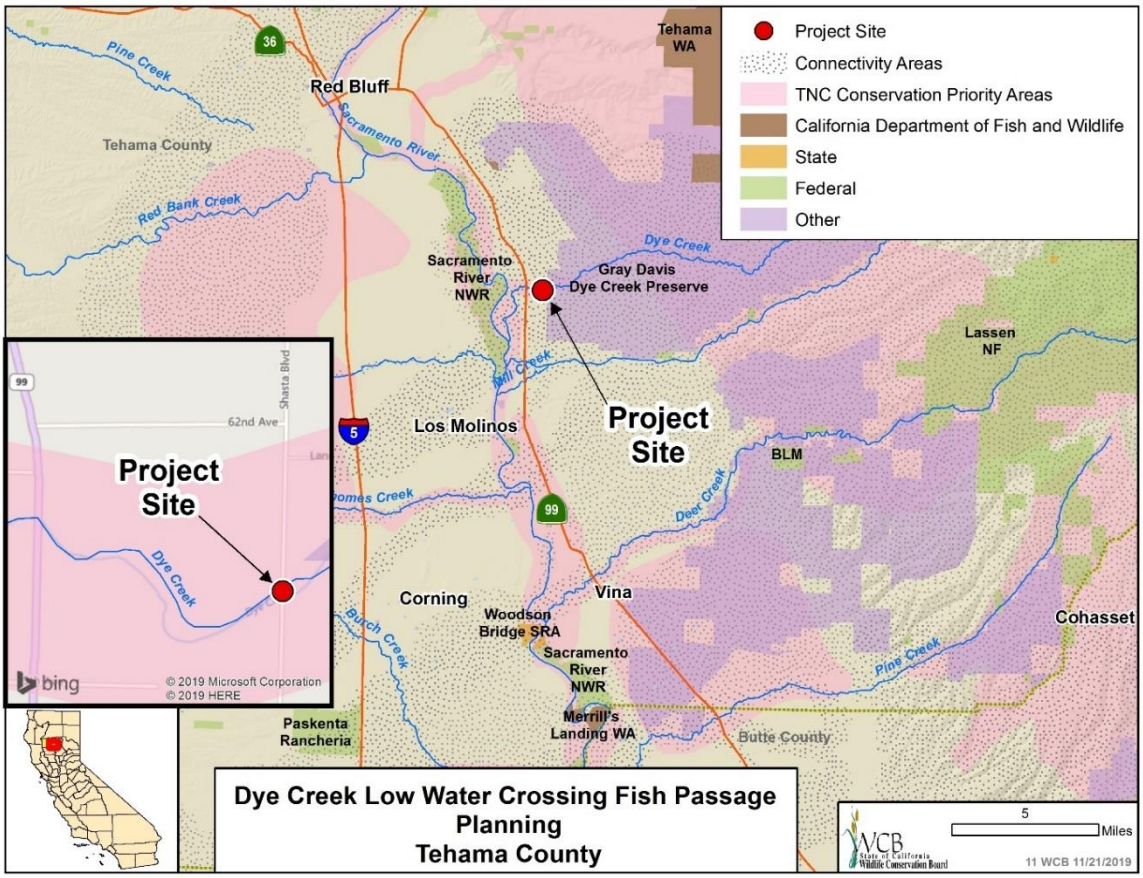
Project Task	WCB	Cost Share	Total Cost
Project Management	$44,415	-	$44,415
Stakeholder Coordination	$7,877	$26,000	$33,877
Alternatives Evaluation and Selection	$98,907	-	$98,907
Engineering Design	$98,907	-	$98,907
Environmental Regulatory Compliance	$124,894	-	$124,894
TOTAL	$375,000	$26,000	$401,000

Project costs will be for project management, stakeholder coordination, alternatives evaluation and selection, engineering design, and environmental regulatory compliance.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code Section 80132(e)(1), which allows projects to construct, repair, modify, or remove transportation or water resources infrastructure to improve passage for wildlife or fish.

CEQA COMPLIANCE
The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262), as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $375,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code Section 80132(e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Site
Connectivity Areas
TNC Conservation Priority Areas
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Red Bluff
Tehama County
Tehama WA
Pine Creek
Red Bank Creek
Sacramento River
Sacramento River NWR
Gray Davis Dye Creek Preserve
Dye Creek
Mill Creek
Los Molinos
Project Site
Lassen NF
BLM
Deer Creek
Butte Creek
Corning
Vina
Woodson Bridge SRA
Sacramento River NWR
Merrill's Landing WA
Paskenta Rancheria
Butte County
Cohasset
Pine Creek
62nd Ave
Shasta Blvd
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation
© 2019 HERE
bing
Dye Creek Low Water Crossing Fish Passage Planning
Tehama County
5
Miles
WCB
11 WCB 11/21/2019

12. Big Valley Wetlands, Expansion 1
Lake County
$675,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Lake County Land Trust (LCLT) to acquire in fee 201± acres of land for the protection of shoreline freshwater wetland, riparian woodland, and wet meadow habitats that support the state threatened Clear Lake hitch along with the western pond turtle, a state species of special concern, and to provide the potential for future wildlife-oriented public use opportunities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property, known as the Wright property (Property), is located on the southwestern shore of Clear Lake in Lake County (County). The County contains approximately 1,329± square miles and is situated in a rural and mountainous region comprised of the eastern portion of the coastal mountain range with elevations that peak at 7,000 feet. It is estimated that 48 percent of the County is federally or state protected lands. A few of these lands include the Mendocino National Forest, Clear Lake State Park, and the Cache Creek and Clear Lake Wildlife Areas. The most prominent feature of the County is Clear Lake, which contains 43,785 surface acres with 100 miles of shoreline and is the largest natural freshwater lake in California. Due to the large quantity of public recreational protected areas and the presence of the state's largest freshwater lake, the County has evolved into a prime tourist destination and resort area.

The Property is situated in an unincorporated neighborhood known as Big Valley, located just southeast of Lakeport. Lakeport is nestled on the southwestern shore of Clear Lake at the foot of nearby mountain ranges with a topography that is predominately level and provides favorable development opportunities. Access to Lakeport is provided by Highways 29 and 175, which run parallel along the western shore of Clear Lake. Lakeport is 2.5 square miles and has a lakeshore frontage of 2.5 linear miles. Lakeport's waterfront location and numerous docking facilities allow convenient access by water from other towns situated on the shores of Clear Lake. The Big Valley Rancheria, a reservation for the federally recognized Pomo and Pit River Indians, is located just east of the Property. The Rancheria includes the Konocti Vista Casino Resort, Marina and RV Park. The majority of Lakeport is improved with large acreage rural residential and agricultural properties with several small lot residential developments adjacent to Clear Lake's shoreline.

The Property is identified in CDFW's Big Valley CAPP. In August 2016, WCB provided a grant to LCLT to support the first Big Valley CAPP property acquisition of the 34± acre lakefront Melo property, located less than one mile east of the Property. Habitats targeted for protection include wetlands and riparian woodlands in areas where the shoreline and adjacent creeks are still undeveloped and constitute the most significant remaining unprotected natural wetlands and near-shore riparian areas on Clear Lake. These wildlife habitats provide breeding, nesting and foraging grounds for many bird species as well as nursery habitat for

the state threatened Clear Lake hitch, a large minnow endemic to the waters of Clear Lake.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregular in shape with gently sloping to level topography. The Property is bounded by 3,000 feet of Clear Lake shoreline to the north, orchards to the south and unimproved private lands to the east and west. Improvements on the Property include perimeter fencing and a dilapidated barn. For the last 20 years the Property has been leased for grazing cattle during the drier summer months of May through October. The Property is situated between two seasonal creeks that run northerly and drain into Clear Lake. Manning Creek runs along portions of the Property's west edge and Thompson Creek runs through neighboring properties to the east. Marshy wetlands inhabit the northern end of the Property and contain shoreline freshwater wetland, riparian woodland and wet meadow habitat characterized by bulrush, water lilies, cattails, tules, cottonwood, valley oak, buttonbush, sedges and rushes. The southern section of the Property is mostly annual grassland, shrubs and oak woodlands.

The proposed acquisition will ensure the protection of the Property by eliminating any disturbance to the wetlands caused by the potential ongoing pattern of agricultural and lakeshore development in the Big Valley area. Further, this Property is a high priority within the Big Valley CAPP, supporting the protection of near-shore wetlands for the Clear Lake hitch and the western pond turtle. The Property also contains suitable habitat for black tailed deer, California quail, gray squirrel, wild turkey, wading birds, osprey, and migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq*.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to the Director of CDFW and, if approved, later transmitted to WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.2 – Fund projects and landscape areas that conserve, protect, or enhance water resources for fish and wildlife.

This project will protect the Property's near-shore wetlands which provide habitat for the Clear Lake hitch and the western pond turtle.

Goal A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW.

The project is identified in the CDFW Big Valley CAPP. The CAPP aims to protect 27,951± acres of natural shoreline, near-shore areas, and tributaries in Lake County's Big Valley.

Goal C.1 – Support a wide range of recreational activities in conjunction with other land uses and without degrading environmental resources.

Public recreation will be allowed and implemented through CDFW's Shared Habitat for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Program.

Goal E.1 - Maximize expenditures of remaining bond funds and identify opportunities to leverage existing funds as effectively as possible.

LCLT is contributing $100,000 towards the fair market value purchase price of the Property.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.1 – Increase habitat for sensitive species to support biodiversity through statewide protection or restoration of oak woodlands, riparian habitat and grasslands on conserved lands.

Objective SI 3.3 – Invest in projects that provide hunting or fishing opportunities.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
LCLT will own and provide long-term monitoring and management to protect the natural conservation values of the Property. LCLT plans to breach existing levees to encourage passive restoration of native wetland vegetation, restore valley oak woodlands and manage invasive species. Access to fishing and hunting from the water side of the Property will be allowed and encouraged. Land-side recreation will be managed for limited public access through CDFW's SHARE Program and will include special hunts and potential access for hand-launched boats and fishing.

TERMS
The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $775,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value of $775,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to LCLT provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the state or another entity approved by the state and seek reimbursement of funds.

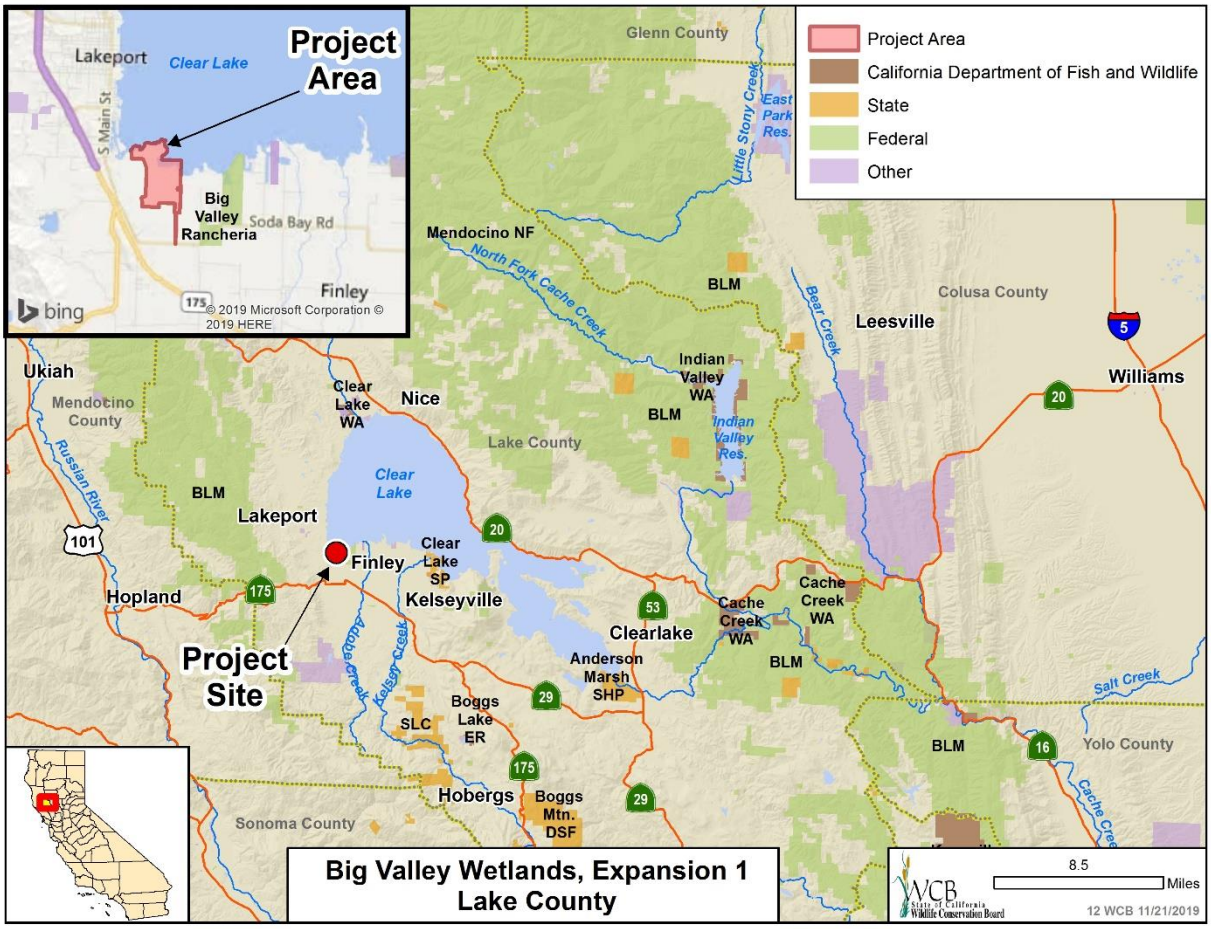
PROJECT FUNDING

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	675,000
Lake County Land Trust	100,000
Total Purchase Price	*775,000*
Total WCB Allocation	*$675*,000

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands outside the Central Valley. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley.]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $675,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117) Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Lakeport
Clear Lake
Project Area
S Main St
Big Valley Rancheria
Soda Bay Rd
Finley
bing
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation © 2019 HERE
Glenn County
Little Stony Creek
East Park Res.
Mendocino NF
North Fork Cache Creek
BLM
Bear Creek
Colusa County
Leesville
Williams
Ukiah
Mendocino County
Clear Lake WA
Nice
Indian Valley WA
Indian Valley Res.
Lake County
Russian River
BLM
Lakeport
Clear Lake
101
Finley
Clear Lake SP
Kelseyville
Hopland
Project Site
Cache Creek
Kelsey Creek
Clearlake
Cache Creek WA
BLM
Anderson Marsh SHP
Salt Creek
Boggs Lake ER
SLC
BLM
Yolo County
Hobergs
Boggs Mtn. DSF
Sonoma County
Big Valley Wetlands, Expansion 1
Lake County
8.5
Miles
WCB State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
12 WCB 11/21/2019

13. Garden Bar Preserve Riparian and Wetland Restoration
Nevada County
$226,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Bear Yuba Land Trust (BYLT) for a cooperative project with Sierra Streams Institute (SSI) to restore 3± acres of riparian and wetland habitat on the Garden Bar Preserve (Preserve) located approximately seven miles west of Highway 49, southwest of Grass Valley in Nevada County.

LOCATION
The Preserve sits on the northern boundary of the Bear River in Nevada County. In 2013, BYLT acquired the Preserve in fee title with WCB funding. The Preserve is a 652-acre working cattle ranch located at an elevation of 420 feet in southwestern Nevada County. The Preserve consists of non-native annual grassland, blue oak woodland, mixed foothill riparian woodland, and riverine habitat. It stretches along two miles of the Bear River and contains over two miles of ephemeral and perennial drainages, including Little Wolf Creek. Just east of Camp Far West Reservoir, the Preserve is within the Spenceville Conservation Area Protection Plan, designated by CDFW and within the Blue Oak Rangeland Priority Focus Region which BYLT has designated as having high priority for conservation and restoration.

The Preserve has been operated for agricultural production for over 150 years. It has only minimal infrastructure, including a temporary corral and a well; however, the impacts of cattle grazing are apparent in the loss of riparian woodland, decreased blue oak regeneration and soil compaction on the north bank of Little Wolf Creek. Emergent wetlands on the north bank of Little Wolf Creek are largely dominated by upland non-native pasture species. Many decades of grazing, along with grading to develop the site for a farm building, have substantially impacted the wetland's hydrology. Nevertheless, remnant functions and values of the aquatic resources and terrestrial habitat are still present on this site.

The Preserve is home to a large array of wildlife, including state-listed species of special concern yellow-breasted chat, yellow warbler, and western pond turtle, as well as mountain lion, bear, bobcat, wild pig, river otter, and coyote. The proposed project site is dominated by non-native annual grasses and invasive perennials, including yellow star-thistle, dallisgrass, goat grass, and medusahead, which provide poor wildlife habitat value. Native species on site include deer grass and sedges and are found immediately adjacent to Little Wolf Creek but do not persist on most of the site. Surveys determined that based upon its location and topography, the area should support verdant wetland and riparian plant communities.

In 2016, BYLT developed the *Garden Bar Preserve Grazing Lands Management Plan* which guides overall site management with a focus on regenerative agricultural practices to improve soil health, plant and wildlife communities and soil carbon storage. The *Garden Bar Preserve Riparian and Wetland Habitat*

Restoration Plan is an element of the overarching grazing management plan. The restoration plan identifies wetland habitat north of Little Wolf Creek, a lower perennial tributary of the Bear River, as a top priority. Restoration of this site will improve wetland function, especially groundwater recharge and pollutant filtration, and will provide suitable habitat for the fully protected California black rail and other wildlife present in the region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed restoration site is approximately three acres and is situated within the floodplain of Little Wolf Creek. Past grazing practices, which have impacted the hydrology of the site, led to compacted soils which limit water infiltration and groundwater recharge at the site. With grazing on the site for 150 years and no alternate livestock water available, cattle had congregated on the creek for the majority of the grazing season which further degraded the wetland and riparian areas. To address these impacts, BYLT secured funding in 2016 from Bella Vista Foundation to drill a well and install water tanks and troughs on the hilltop of the Preserve. This sustainable management technique will move the cattle away from the riparian areas and improve overall rangeland health through more even grazing regimes.

The restoration site is on the gently sloped upper floodplain terrace on the north side of Little Wolf Creek. Project objectives are to restore and expand riparian and wetland habitat on the Little Wolf Creek floodplain and provide suitable habitat for the state-threatened California black rail and state-listed species of special concern including the yellow-breasted chat, yellow warbler, and western pond turtle. In collaboration with SSI and the USFWS, BYLT will implement the restoration of riparian, wetland and open water habitat on two acres of seasonal and perennial wetland. The seasonally moist to inundated palustrine emergent wetlands, located on the active floodplain and mid-terrace, contain a mix of native and non-native grasses and forbs. The upland areas will also be planted with native forbs and grasses. In total, the project area will be approximately three acres and delineated by a wildlife-friendly fence to exclude cattle.

A healthy and functioning wetland at this site is important for the entire watershed because Little Wolf Creek runs through many agricultural lands in southern Nevada County before reaching its confluence with the Bear River just southwest of the Preserve. A functioning wetland at this point of the stream will allow pollutants and other toxins flowing into Little Wolf Creek from upstream agricultural and residential uses to be filtered before entering the Bear River. Additional habitat restoration benefits expected from the project include enhancing groundwater recharge and infiltration rates, increasing soil carbon sequestration, increasing plant and wildlife species diversity, and improving ecosystem functions.

Within the first year, the project team also proposes to construct beaver dam analogs (BDAs) on the downstream side of the restoration area which will assist in the restoration of approximately two acres of wetland habitat. The BDAs will be placed on the downstream end of existing pools, effectively raising the creek

elevation during high flows promoting overbank flows into the wetland habitat. BDAs act as starter dams consisting of vertical posts with willow weave and fill material between them. The North American beaver is present at other ponds in this area and the goal is to attract beavers to the restoration site via the pooled water system. Even without beavers, this project will successfully enhance wildlife habitat through active restoration of wetland function.

The compacted soil allows for invasive annual plants to outcompete natives through aggressive seed dispersal. Reduction of the seed bank through herbicide application, weed-eating and hand-pulling will successfully reduce the dominance of these plants. Before native plants are installed, BYLT will work to reduce the cover of invasive species within the planting area to 10 percent relative cover or less. Results will be monitored over the 25-year project management period, and additional treatments made as needed.

Planting will occur in the wetland edges as well as the upland and riparian zones in the restoration site. Seeds and starts will be sourced from local nurseries or from on site. Watering will be done by hand for the first two years on a bi-monthly basis during the dry months. BYLT has a 275-gallon water tank that will be transported in a truck bed and filled from Little Wolf Creek or at the well on the Preserve.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

- Restore wetlands and riparian habitat, which will improve water quality, increase carbon sequestration, and support native biodiversity and wildlife corridors;

- Enhance and expand water resources for fish and wildlife; and

- Enhance native habitats on working lands.

Goal B.5 – Provide opportunities for greater public involvement in restoration projects.

- Engage the community with stewardship of the site through volunteer events, citizen science days, and organized workshops; and

- Promote participation in restoration and monitoring activities by leading hikes and planned public events which showcase the restoration project activities.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.2 – Invest in projects that contribute to connectivity as highlighted in the California Terrestrial Connectivity Map, or linkages as mapped in regional assessments.

Objective SI 2.1 – Increase habitat for sensitive species to support biodiversity through statewide protection or restoration of riparian habitat, grazing land, and grassland habitat on conserved lands.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
As the habitat steward for this project, BYLT will maintain the restoration area through various volunteer workdays and will utilize in-house staff to ensure stewardship continues to protect the physical and biological enhancements. BYLT will fund ongoing maintenance through an endowment fund which anticipates a base level of involvement and does not include funding for major unplanned projects. Access Control - the wildlife-friendly fence surrounding the restoration site will be checked regularly to ensure it is keeping out cattle and wild pigs.

- Monitoring and Maintenance - BYLT staff or trained volunteers will be on site monthly for the first year to monitor the worksite after the project is complete. After the first year BYLT staff will determine if quarterly visits would be adequate. A field monitoring form will be created to cover all important aspects of the function and flow of the enhancements to the riparian and wetland characteristics. A series of photo points will be created and updated at each visit.

- Rangeland Monitoring Network - Point Blue Conservation Science will lead monitoring of the site for soil carbon sequestration, vegetation and bird populations. Their data collection started with a baseline survey in March 2019 and will continue once every year.

- Access Control - the wildlife-friendly fence surrounding the restoration site will be checked regularly to ensure it is keeping out cattle and wild pigs.

- Landowner/ Public Relations - BYLT will be responsible for all information and communication between neighbors, public agencies and the public at large.

- Recreation - BYLT will lead guided tours of the site throughout the year. No public recreation is permitted at the Preserve.

- Education - BYLT and SSI will work with local school groups and organized parties to host workshops at the site to teach about BDA and the importance of wetlands.

- Invasive Species Control:

    - PLANTS: The first two years BYLT will use herbicides and other control measures to reduce the invasive plant populations. After that time, BYLT and SSI will lead organized volunteer workdays to remove invasive species by hand.

    - ANIMALS: BYLT will continue to keep a depredation permit in place for the Preserve through California Department of Fish and Wildlife. This allows control of wild pigs through hunting and has proven to be successful. Coordination with the Nevada County Trapper for wild pigs will also continue.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the BYLT does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

Project Task	WCB	Grantee	Local Sources*	Total Cost
Project Management	$41,800	$0	$0	$41,800
Permitting and Site Preparation	$62,587	$30,000	$3,000	$95,587
Habitat Restoration	$61,155	$4,500	$5,000	$70,655
Maintenance & Monitoring	$38,961	$12,000	$0	$50,961
Indirect	$21,497	$0	$0	$21,497
TOTAL	$226,000	$46,500	$8,000	$280,500

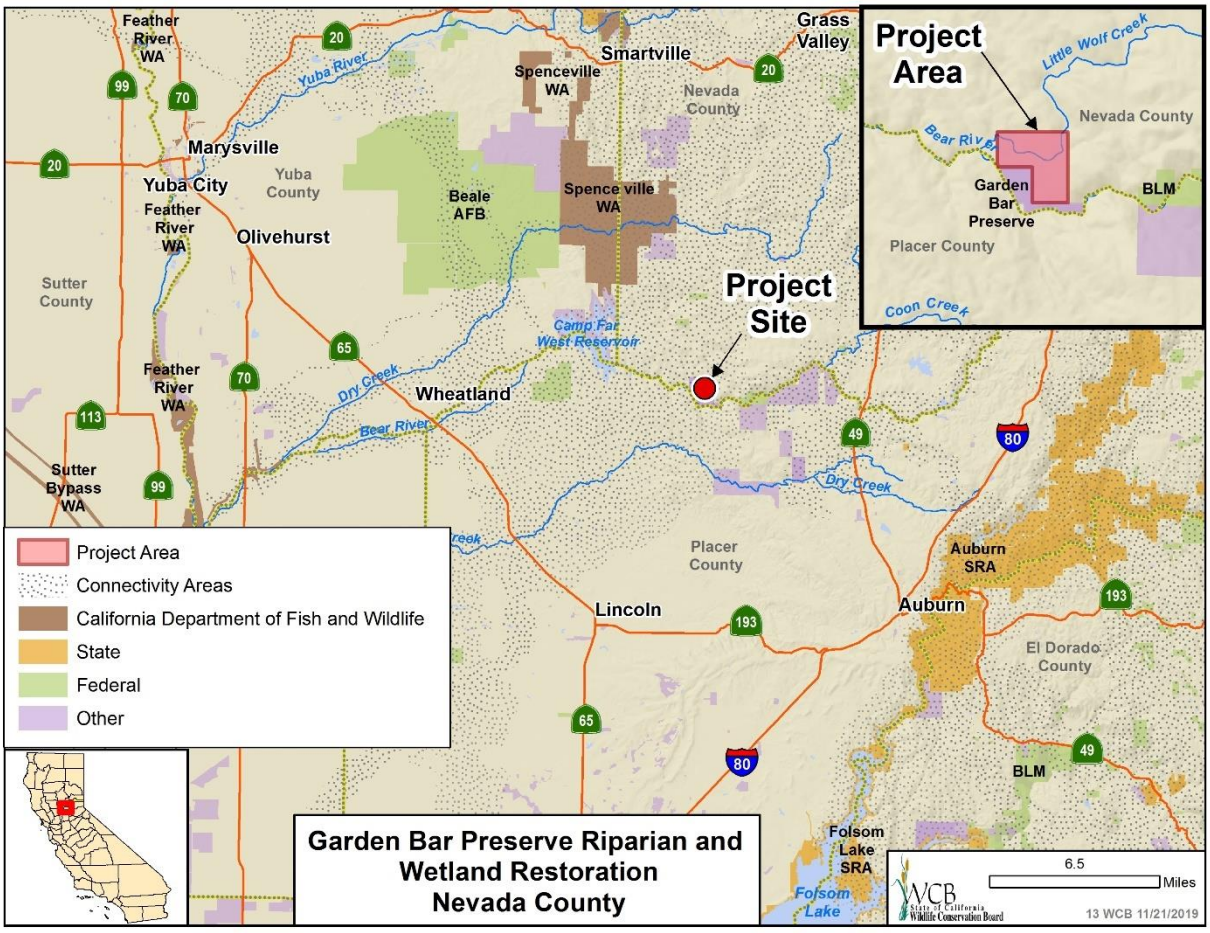
*Local funding sources include contributions from Sierra Stream Institute and Nevada County Resource Conservation District.

Project costs will be for project management, permitting, BDA materials and installation, wildlife-friendly fencing, invasive plant removal, native plant installation and maintenance, and monitoring.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f), which provides funding for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The project is proposed as exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15333, Class 33, Small Habitat Restoration Projects). Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $226,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



14. Lake Tahoe Fishing Access Transfer
Placer County
$0

This proposal is to consider the transfer of 8± acres of land by CDFW to the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) to own, operate, and maintain the Lake Tahoe fishing access property in perpetuity for purposes of public access, angling access, and public recreation.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is 8± acres and is located about two miles northeast of Tahoe City in Placer County. Access to the Property is provided by a road off Lake Forest Road, approximately one-fourth mile southwest of State Route 28. The first portion of the access road off Lake Forest Road is jointly shared by the U.S. Coast Guard facility, which is located immediately east of, and adjacent to, the Property.

The Property is on the western side of Lake Tahoe, a large freshwater lake in the Tahoe Basin and Sierra Nevada mountain range. The California Nevada state border crosses through the eastern third of the lake; two thirds of the shoreline is in California. The highest point in the Tahoe Basin is Freel Peak at 10,881 feet. The deepest part of Lake Tahoe is near Crystal Bay, measuring a water depth of 1,645 feet.

Lake Tahoe is a major tourist destination with popular attractions throughout the year. World class downhill ski resorts and casinos attract winter tourists. The temperate climate, panoramic beauty, and summer recreational activities draw crowds during the warmer months. Bicycling, fishing, boating, hiking, and photography are among the activity opportunities in Tahoe.

To the north of the Property is Lake Forest Drive and 23± acres of open space; to the east is a U.S. Coast Guard facility; to the west is open space and a sports field; and Lake Tahoe is to the south. The surrounding vicinity is predominantly similar lake-front property with single-family residences, vacation rentals, and small businesses.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of two irregular shaped parcels that are operated as a boat ramp and camping facility on Lake Tahoe.

The northern parcel is 4± acres and is operated as a campground. The site has mostly level topography with vegetation consisting of pine trees, various willows, and other riparian vegetation including meadow grasses. The parcel is currently improved with a basic campground consisting of 20 campsites and gravel access roads. Toilets are provided by portable units.

The southern parcel is 4± acres and is operated as a boat ramp. The parcel has approximately 200 lineal feet of frontage on Lake Tahoe and a good quality concrete boat ramp. The site has level to gently sloping topography. The

northwesterly portion of the Property involves a very wet region, while the southerly portion of the property is improved with parking for the boat ramp. The Property has a toll booth and restroom facility.

The Property was originally acquired as part of the Lake Tahoe Fish Hatchery in 1951 and was later designated as CDFW angling access, managed by Placer County. TCPUD took over management in 1973 and has managed the Property under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CDFW as a fishing access and boat launch to Lake Tahoe. Between 1961 and 1994, WCB provided $571,000 for repairs, improvements, dredging, and renovations of the public access improvements on the Property. While providing angling access meets the objectives of CDFW, the Property requires significant active management including maintenance, staffing on site, and collection of use fees. CDFW does not have the internal staffing or funding available to manage and operate this high-use facility. As the long-term recreational operator and manager, TCPUD is uniquely positioned to seamlessly take over fee title to the Property and continue operations and management of the site. As a condition of the transfer, the Property will be managed in perpetuity for public access, angling access, and public recreation. In addition, WCB and TCPUD hold a joint lease through 2030 with the State Lands Commission for the boat launch and pier that extend into Lake Tahoe. WCB will transfer all rights under this lease to TCPUD.

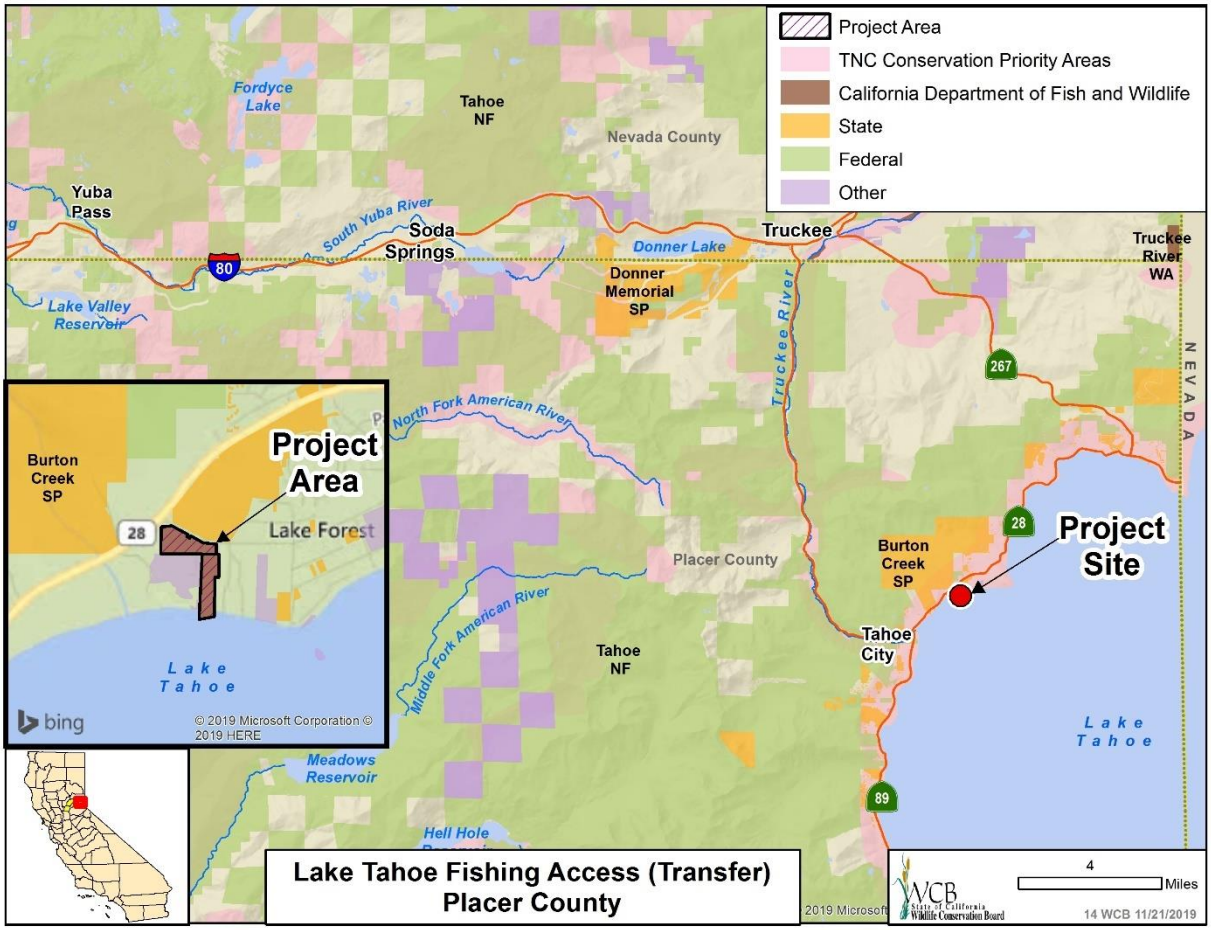
WCB PROGRAM
The proposed transfer of this Property is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. Under Fish and Game Code Section 1348(c)(2), WCB may authorize the transfer of real property or rights in real property held under the jurisdiction of CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which prepared a Land Conversion Evaluation (LCE) report to provide justification for the transfer. The LCE must be approved by subdivisions within CDFW, including the land acquisition coordinator in the Regional Office, as well as the Lands Program, Regional Manager, and Deputy Director for the Wildlife and Fisheries Division. The LCE is then submitted to the Director for final approval and submitted to WCB for consideration and final approval. CDFW approved the Lake Tahoe Fishing Access Land Conversion Evaluation on November 19, 2018 and recommends the proposal for approval.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Management of this high-use area has been under the jurisdiction of TCPUD under an MOU with CDFW since 1973. The MOU expired 01/01/ 2018; however, CDFW granted a temporary Right of Entry (ROE) permit to TCPUD which allows them to manage the property for another five years. The site was originally acquired as public angling and recreation access. If at any point in the future TCPUD fails to manage the property for public access, angling access, and public recreation, the state will have the ability to retake title to the Property.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
This proposal is a no-cost transfer.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15301, Class 1, as operation of existing public facilities, Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this no-cost transfer of state-owned land to TCPUD as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



15. Cedar Roughs Wildlife Area, Expansion 1
Napa County
$365,000

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of fee of 87± acres of land by CDFW to protect deer and mountain lion habitat, increase protection of regional wildlife habitat corridors, and provide potential future wildlife-oriented, public-use opportunities as an expansion of CDFW's Cedar Roughs Wildlife Area (CRWA).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located ten miles northwest of the city of Napa in northern Napa County just east of the community of Pope Valley. The Property is situated along Pope Canyon Road and lies directly adjacent to the westernmost boundary of CDFW's existing 414-acre CRWA which is adjoined to the 6,500 ± acre Bureau of Land Management Cedar Roughs Wilderness Area property. In addition, the Property is near the Lake Berryessa Recreation Area. The northwest end of Lake Berryessa is just three miles east of the Property. The area is characterized by low density residential and agricultural development.

The Property ranks as a high priority within CDFW's Blue Ridge-Berryessa CAPP. The main objectives of the CAPP are to conserve and enhance migration corridors, restore habitat, and protect lands that will likely increase or enhance nature-based recreational opportunities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of two parcels totaling 87± acres with elevations ranging from 500 to 925 feet. The majority of the Property has 30 to 75 percent slopes. Access is provided from Pope Canyon Road. A driveway or other access road extending from the main road onto the Property would be needed for complete interior access.

The Property is characterized as oak woodland and riparian habitat along Pope Creek transitioning to upland scrub and chaparral habitats. The project area hosts several upland game species Including dove, quail, rabbit, wild pig, and deer. Non-game wildlife that may be found on the Property include bobcat, gray fox, raccoon, golden eagle, wrentit, yellow-rumped warbler, and acorn woodpecker. Pope and Maxwell creeks provide potential aquatic habitat for white catfish, bluegill, western pond turtle, foothill yellow-legged frogs, and many species of invertebrates.

The Property is actively listed for sale. Land uses by a new owner may not be compatible with CDFW management goals for the adjacent CRWA.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or

nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/CAPP (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Director for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund Projects and Landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

The proposed acquisition will increase the protection of the area's wildlife habitat corridors with the adjacent protected lands. The Property offers various elevation gradients and will allow for anticipated habitat and wildlife migration in the face of climate change.

Goal A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW.

The Property is adjacent to the Cedar Roughs Wildlife Area and is part of the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area CAPP.

Goal C.1 – Support a wide range of recreational activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, camping, photography, etc.) in conjunction with other land uses and without degrading environmental resources.

The Property will support a wide range of recreational uses under CDFW management including hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, and photography.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 3.3 – Invest in projects that provide hunting or fishing opportunities.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The Property will be managed as a Type "C" Wildlife Area and provide expanded opportunity for hiking, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. The acquisition also will

improve user access to the existing CRWA by providing additional staging points and increased points of access. Available game species include waterfowl, upland game, large mammals, and predators.

TERMS
The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $365,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. WCB and DGS will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

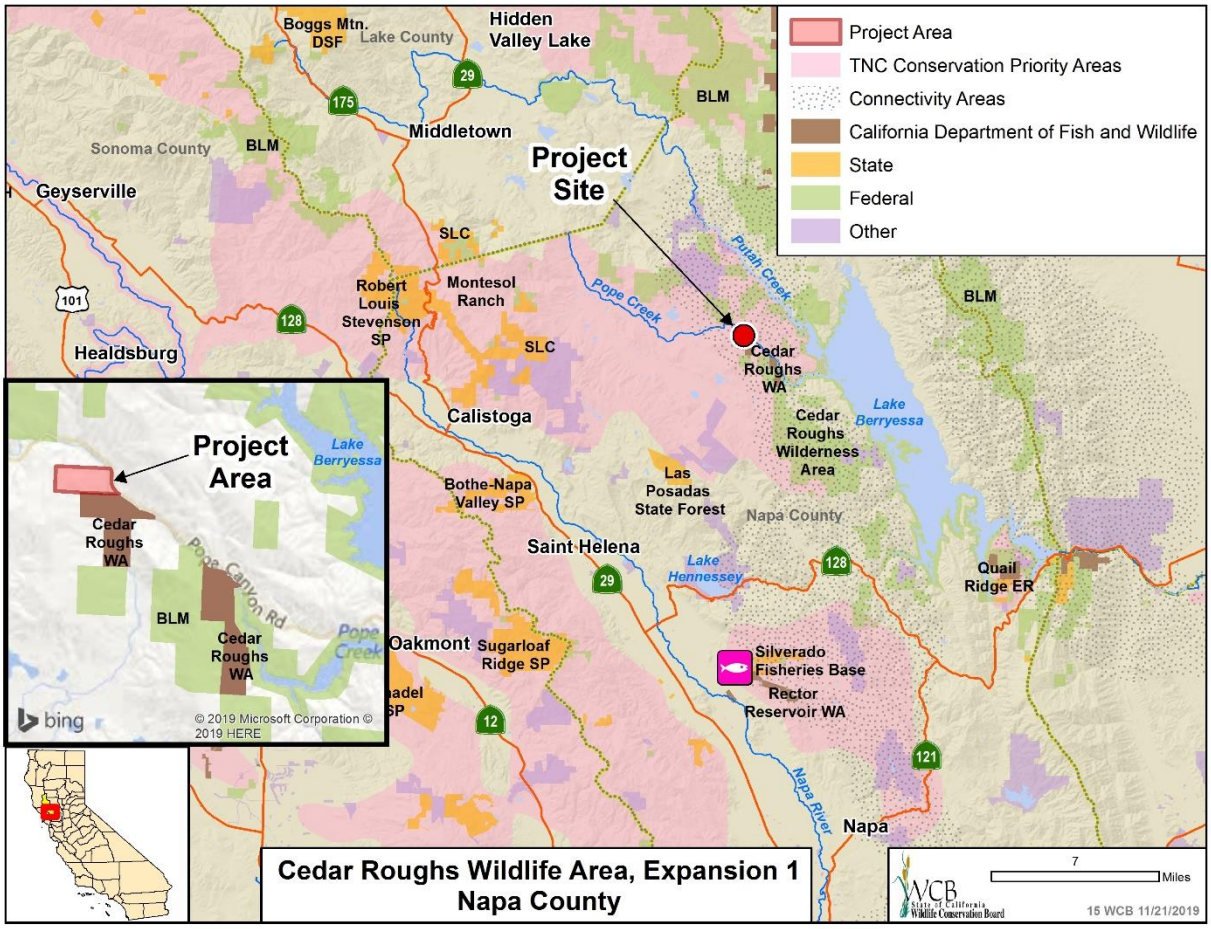
PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	**$365,000**
TOTAL Purchase Price	$365,000
TOTAL ALLOCATION	$365,000

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat, including native oak woodlands, to protect deer and mountain lions. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a).]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $365,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
TNC Conservation Priority Areas
Connectivity Areas
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Project Site
Project Area
Cedar Roughs WA
Cedar Roughs Wilderness Area
Lake Berryessa
Lake Hennessey
Napa County
Saint Helena
Calistoga
Middletown
Hidden Valley Lake
Boggs Mtn. DSF
Lake County
Sonoma County
Geyserville
Healdsburg
Robert Louis Stevenson SP
Montesol Ranch
Bothe-Napa Valley SP
Las Posadas State Forest
Oakmont
Sugarloaf Ridge SP
Silverado Fisheries Base
Rector Reservoir WA
Quail Ridge ER
Napa
Napa River
Pope Creek
Putah Creek
Pope Canyon Rd
BLM
SLC
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation © 2019 HERE
Cedar Roughs Wildlife Area, Expansion 1
Napa County
7
Miles
15 WCB 11/21/2019

16. Monarch Wings Across California
Merced County
$329,400

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Pollinator Partnership (P2) for a cooperative project with USFWS, Bowles Farming, Inc., Gabel Farm Land Co., Inc., and Namakan West Fisheries to enhance and monitor pollinator habitat located on three privately-owned land project sites within 10 miles of Los Banos in Merced County.

LOCATION
Monarch butterfly migration paths from overwintering grounds on the California coast to the Sierra Nevada pass through the San Joaquin Valley. This project will establish and monitor pollinator habitat at three privately-owned sites in this monarch butterfly migration path. All three sites have also been participants in the USFWS Partners Program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Over the past two decades, numbers of North American monarchs have suffered a steep decline of approximately 90 percent for the central migration and up to 99 percent for the western population that overwinters in California. In 2014, USFWS was petitioned to protect the monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act (with a listing decision expected in 2020). Researchers are working to determine the causes of this decline; some theories include:

- Loss of milkweed needed for monarch caterpillars to grow and develop, due to habitat conversion and adverse land management;
- Drought conditions in California and other areas in the western United States resulting in lower milkweed biomass and reduced availability of milkweed late in the summer;
- Insecticide and herbicide use to control insects and weeds, with unintended consequences for monarchs;
- Overwintering habitat loss and degradation in California, due to development within and adjacent to overwintering groves, and decay of overwintering trees as they age; and
- Habitat loss in overwintering sites in Mexico, due to illegal logging.

WCB's Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program was created to help recover and sustain populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Monarch butterflies face a variety of threats, including loss of habitat, climate change, pesticides, parasites, predation, and disease. Protection and enhancement of overwintering and breeding habitat are strategies to help recover monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

This project utilizes proven methods and tools from several successful P2 projects focused on the monarch butterfly's eastern migration: Monarch Wings Across Ohio, Monarch Wings Across the Eastern Broadleaf Forest, and Project Wingspan. Cumulatively, these programs enhanced over 30,000 acres of monarch habitat in the midwestern United States, trained over 300 seed collectors and countless land managers. Monarch Wings Across California supports the western migration through strategic habitat enhancements and novel research. P2 will conduct a series of migratory habitat enhancements and monitoring along the California State Route (SR) 152 corridor, which runs through Merced County. Data produced by monitoring of the habitat enhancement sites can be used to guide future restoration efforts and inform our understanding of the monarch's western migratory patterns and requirements. Data collection protocol will align with the Monarch Conservation Science Partnership's standards, the Monarch Larva Monitoring Protocol, and will be perfected based off of P2 previous monitoring efforts in the Midwest and California.

This project will create and enhance breeding habitat in the monarch butterfly migration path to help recover and sustain monarch butterflies as well as other pollinator species. In addition, P2 will monitor the project, analyze the data, and share their findings to help promote monarch butterfly and pollinator recovery elsewhere.

Project tasks will include:

- Habitat Establishment: Establish monarch butterfly and pollinator habitat sites at three privately-owned locations, benefiting approximately 2,200 acres.
- Monitoring: Conduct pollinator monitoring with a focus on plant-pollinator interactions.
- Analysis: Prepare a Habitat Implementation Technical Guide to analyze and present findings of monarch migration patterns and forage requirements.
- Outreach: Provide education and technical support for public and private land managers by hosting workshops at the long-term habitat sites.

The project aligns with goals listed in the SWAP and the California Climate Adaptation Strategy/Safeguarding California Plan.

State Wildlife Action Plan (2015):

- Goal 1 – Abundance and Richness: Maintain and increase ecosystem and native species distribution in California while sustaining and enhancing species abundance and richness.

- Goal 2 – Enhance ecosystem conditions: Maintain and improve ecological conditions vital for sustaining ecosystems in California.

- Goal 3 – Enhance ecosystem functions and processes: Maintain and improve ecosystem functions and processes vital for sustaining ecosystems in California.

California Climate Adaptation Strategy/Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk Plan (2009):

- Strategy 2: Management of Watersheds, Habitat, and Vulnerable Species. Develop and find opportunities for habitat restoration on working landscapes including controlling invasive species, restoring natural processes, reducing sediment, managing fuel load, protecting water resources, and connecting floodplains.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program and meets the program's goal of recovering and sustaining populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

- Restore pollinator habitat within working lands to increase habitat for pollinators

- Enhance habitats on working lands by restoring habitat on agricultural lands

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.2 – Invest in projects that have a primary purpose of conserving or restoring native pollinator habitat in locations that provide a measurable ecosystem services benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Project sites will be maintained by the landowners pursuant to Monarch and Native Pollinator Habitat Management Agreements between P2 and the participating landowners. P2 staff will also provide the landowners with maintenance recommendations and advice regarding adaptive management based on monitoring findings and pre-defined success criteria.

If at any time during the five-year life of the project, P2 does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the grant agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB funds*	Total Cost
Project Management	$90,980	$10,000	$100,980
Restoration and Monitoring	$229,322	$55,000	$284,322
Administration	$9,098	-	$9,098

*Non-WCB funding sources include contributions from Pollinators Partnership ($10,000), USFWS ($30,000), Bowles Farming Co. ($10,000), Gable Farm Land Co. ($10,000), and Namakan West Fisheries ($5,000).

Project costs include:

- Habitat establishment at three sites
- Pollinator monitoring
- Habitat Implementation technical guide
- Field tours and technical workshops

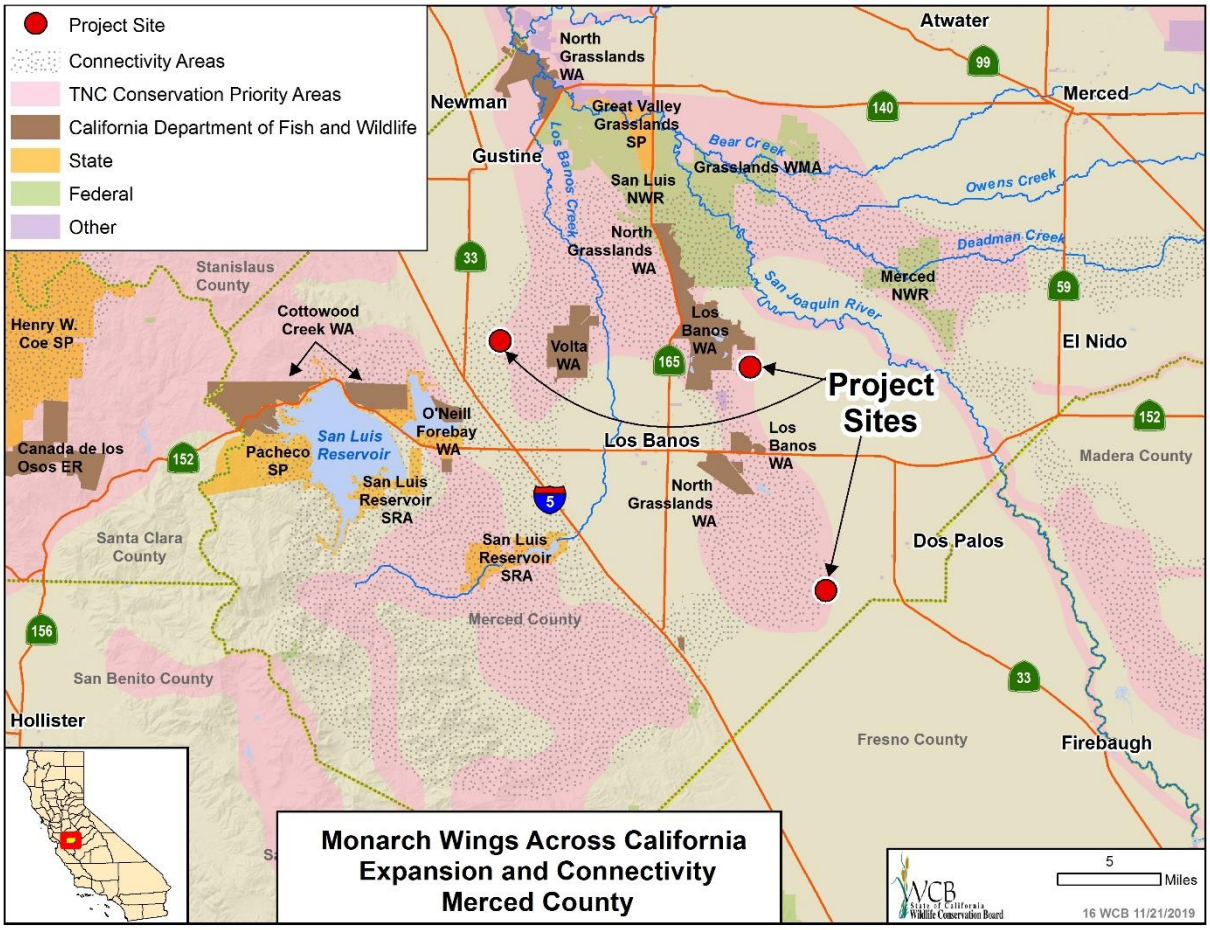
FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source that allows for one or more of the following objectives: restore or enhance California prairie and other appropriate breeding habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators, restore or enhance overwintering monarch butterfly habitat, provide technical assistance to grant recipients, provide grants for seasonal or temporary habitat improvements, or provide block grants in which sub-allocations are made by the grant recipient. [Fish and Game Code Section 1374; General Fund, Budget Act of 2018, Chapter 29.]

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

The project was evaluated and scored by technical reviews from CDFW and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, both of which recommend this project for funding by WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $329,400 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2018, Chapter 29; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



17. San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch Planning and CEQA
Fresno County
$375,690

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) and CDFW to complete habitat restoration planning and environmental analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on the SJRC 358± acre Ball Ranch property and the 293± acre Willow Unit of the CDFW San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve (SJRER) located adjacent to the San Joaquin River approximately 4.5 miles downstream of Friant Dam in Fresno County.

LOCATION
The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is defined by state law as approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two-mile-long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and SR 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources, and provide educational and recreational opportunities to local communities. The SJRC mission includes providing public access and restoring habitat within the Parkway.

The Project is located on the SJRER. Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit are adjacent and situated between the San Joaquin River and North Friant Road in unincorporated Fresno County. This 78± acre site includes the southwestern portion of Ball Ranch and the westernmost portion of the Willow Unit between Ball Ranch and the river. Both Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit are unimproved, and while the SJRC anticipates future public access opportunities for Ball Ranch, CDFW restricts public access to Ecological Reserves including the SJRER Willow Unit to conserve and manage natural resource values (California Code of Regulations Section 630).

The Property ranges from flat to gently sloping with low undulations associated with past gravel mining activity. Although natural resource values have been degraded by previous mining and establishment of invasive species, the Property contains significant habitat diversity including mixed riparian forest, valley oak riparian forest, valley oak woodland, willow scrub, non-native grasslands, freshwater marsh, and artificial open water ponds formed from past gravel mining. Little Dry Creek, a seasonal tributary to the San Joaquin River, runs through the Property. Additionally, the Property has a resident deer population and hosts a wide array of bird species. Given the large, contiguous area of Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit and the natural resource values that already occur there, the project is a critical step toward large scale habitat restoration that will benefit the Parkway and the native wildlife.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The proposed project (Project) is comprised of three primary components including completion of CEQA environmental analysis for habitat restoration planning for Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit as a whole (Property); a site-specific restoration plan for a 78± acre site encompassing adjoining portions of Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit and an irrigation plan addressing restoration throughout the Property; and hydraulic analyses and encroachment permit required by the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) for restoration, as well as a thorough permitting strategy for restoration activities throughout the Property.

Habitat restoration on Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit is a high priority for the SJRC and CDFW. The evaluation panel for the SJRC Proposition 1 Program has recognized the importance of the project goals including completing an environmental analysis and a restoration plan centered on moving forward with the next steps of restoring riparian habitat to a critical reach of the San Joaquin River. Following the proposed planning Project, restoration implementation will improve habitat diversity, wildlife corridor characteristics, and climate resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitats and native species that depend on these habitats. Restoration also has the potential to benefit federal and state-listed threatened and endangered species and state species of concern such as California tiger salamander, least Bell's vireo, Swainson's hawk, Chinook salmon, and western pond turtle.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) will be completed to satisfy CEQA requirements with the SJRC as CEQA lead agency. The site-specific restoration plan will cover the 78± acre site, while the irrigation plan will cover the Property as a whole. The hydraulic analyses, CVFPB encroachment permit, and permitting strategy will cover proposed restoration activities throughout the Property.

The proposed project is comprised of several major tasks including:

Project Management. River Partners will manage project activities, reporting, and collaboration with the landowners: SJRC and CDFW.

Restoration and Irrigation Plans. River Partners will develop habitat restoration and irrigation plans using information from existing and necessary new studies it will finish as part of the project. In conjunction with a new detailed plant community study to be completed, River Partners will compile the site-specific restoration plan focusing on planting and plant establishment for the 78± acre site. To complete a comprehensive irrigation plan for restoration across the Property, River Partners will coordinate closely with the SJRC and CDFW in assessing the practical and legal feasibility of irrigation options based on riparian and subsurface water rights.

CEQA and Stakeholder Communication. To fulfill CEQA requirements, a draft and final MND will be completed. This will identify a comprehensive set of actions which address habitat restoration for the Property. River Partners will subcontract

with an environmental firm to assist with outreach and public meetings, completion of the CEQA environmental analyses, and completion of the final document.

Permitting and Hydraulic Analyses. River Partners will subcontract with an environmental engineering firm to complete hydraulic analyses. In addition, River Partners will oversee work of the environmental engineering firm to develop an application for an encroachment permit and work together with the firm to present the project to the CVFPB for approval. Additionally, River Partners will determine all other environmental permits that will be necessary for restoration activities across the Property and for the 78± acre site and will draft all permit applications.

Completing the CEQA process, restoration and irrigation plans, encroachment permit, and permitting strategy is required before moving forward with seeking funds for implementing habitat restoration at the Property. Completion of these planning components will allow SJRC and CDFW to move forward with the next proposed Ball Ranch project, restoration of the 78± acre habitat.

WCB PROGRAM
WCB assists with the administration of project funding for the SJRC. WCB, represented by its Executive Director, holds a position on the 15-member SJRC Board along with CDFW, represented by the Central Region's Regional Manager. The SJRC Board reviews and approves projects to ensure they are viable and consistent with the goals of the current SJRC Parkway Master Plan Update (2018), prior to consideration by WCB. The SJRC Board approved this project and its submittal to WCB on September 25, 2019.

The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goals of providing for restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program and restoration of threatened and endangered species habitats.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

- Provide planning for restoration of wetlands and riparian habitat, which will improve water quality and support native biodiversity and wildlife corridors, and

- Enhance and expand water resources for fish and wildlife.

Additionally, the project meets numerous objectives of the Parkway Master Plan Update. Several specific goals of the Master Plan Update supported by the project include the following:

- Fundamental Goal (FG) 1. Preserve and restore a riparian and floodplain corridor of statewide and regional significance along the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to State Route 99.

- FG 6. Develop the Parkway in a transparent and cooperative manner among local and state agencies; nonprofit land trusts, conservation, and stewardship organizations; neighboring landowners; and other stakeholders.

- Habitat Conservation and Management Goal 2. Conserve, enhance, restore, and maintain contiguous and continuous native riparian, wetland, and upland habitat on public lands and conservation easements for wildlife movement and refuge.

- Operations, Maintenance, and Implementation Goal 6. Develop measurable objectives for projects, programs, and services provided on public Parkway lands.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Restoring the Property, especially Ball Ranch, and maintaining natural connectivity with the Willow Unit are a critical component to habitat restoration within the Parkway and along this reach of the San Joaquin River. River Partners draws on over twenty years of experience developing riparian habitat restoration projects with designs that provide the best possible benefits to the San Joaquin River ecosystem. Project completion will provide specific restoration and irrigation plans, an Encroachment Permit, and an overall permitting strategy for SJRC and CDFW to begin implementing on-site restoration projects.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB
Project Management	$22,048
Restoration and Irrigation Plans	$36,410
CEQA	$132,944
Permitting and Hydraulic Analysis	$131,088
Stakeholder Communication	$8,761
Contingency	$23,188
Indirect Costs	$21,251

* No partner funding is provided for this project.

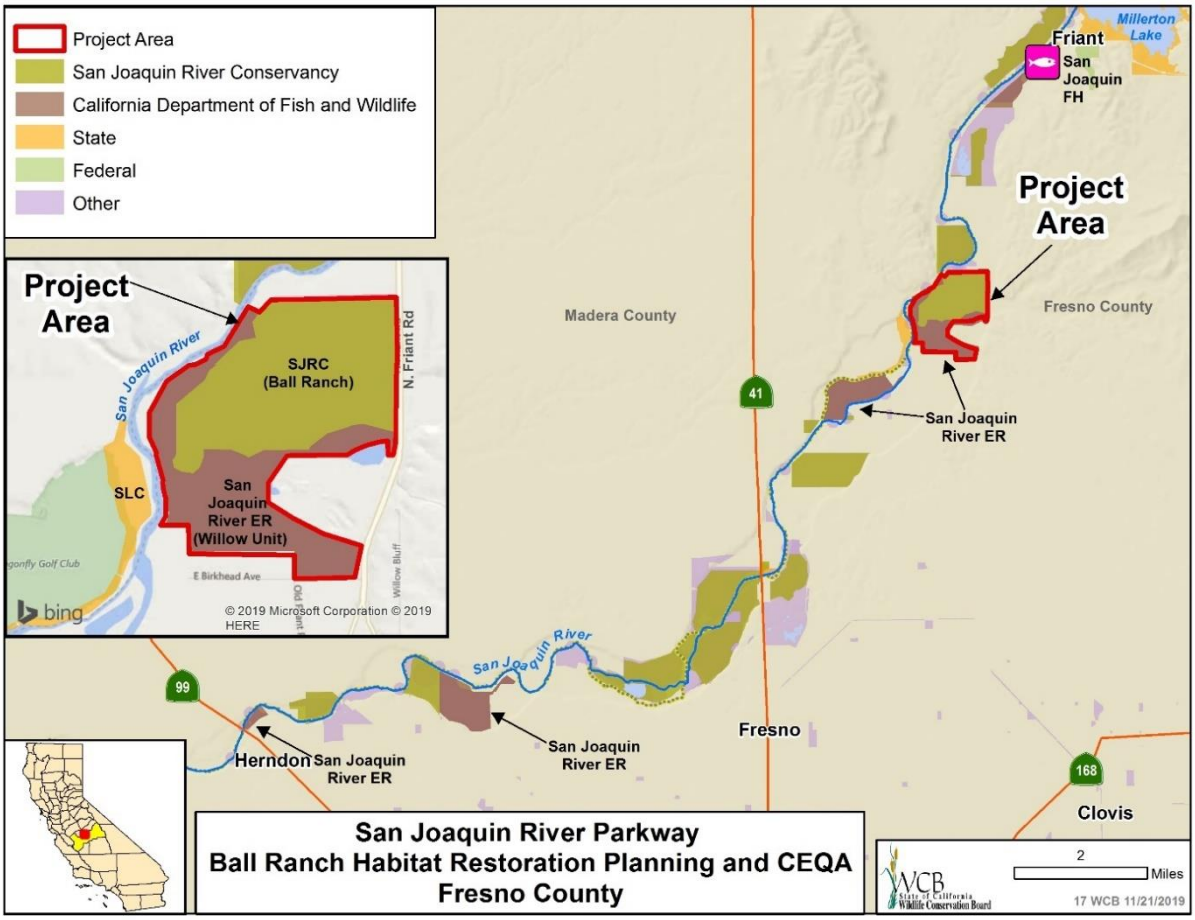
FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), California Water Code

Section 79731(g), which provides for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Parkway.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The proposed project is included among the high priority projects recommended by the SJRC Proposition 1 evaluation panel; whose role is to evaluate projects to be considered by the SJRC Board. The project was approved for submittal to WCB by the SJRC Board, which includes a representative with CDFW, on September 25, 2019.

The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262), as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $375,690 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), [California Water Code Section 79731(g)]; authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
San Joaquin River Conservancy
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Project Area
SJRC (Ball Ranch)
San Joaquin River ER (Willow Unit)
SLC
San Joaquin River
N. Friant Rd
E Birkhead Ave
Willow Bluff
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Millerton Lake
Friant
San Joaquin FH
Project Area
Madera County
Fresno County
41
San Joaquin River ER
San Joaquin River
99
Herndon
San Joaquin River ER
San Joaquin River ER
Fresno
168
Clovis
San Joaquin River Parkway
Ball Ranch Habitat Restoration Planning and CEQA
Fresno County
2
Miles
17 WCB 11/21/2019

18. Sierra Meadow Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Plan Development
Tulare County
$181,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to California Trout for a cooperative project with the USFS to create a standardized framework to assess pre- and post-restoration conditions in mountain meadows within the greater Sierra Nevada and Cascades. A planning pilot project will be conducted for Horse Meadow approximately 10 miles north of Kernville, in Tulare County.

LOCATION

The proposed project will build and test a protocol designed to track the recovery of ecological benefits that occur with meadow restoration, intended for application across the Sierra and Cascades region within California. The end product will be a Sierra Meadows Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Plan (SM-WRAMP), which will create a standardized framework for assessing pre- and post-restoration conditions. The SM-WRAMP will be piloted through the restoration planning of Horse Meadow, an approximately 20-acre meadow located within the Sequoia National Forest along the upper Kern River. Horse Meadow currently experiences moderate to severe channel incision and downcutting and, once restored, could serve as habitat for reintroduction of Kern River rainbow trout. Application of the SM-WRAMP in Horse Meadow pre and post restoration will enable a sample quantification of the expected positive effects of meadow restoration on the local watershed.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Healthy meadows provide critical habitat for an abundance of fish and wildlife species, facilitate wildlife movement through the landscape, provide critically important cool, clean water to a multitude of downstream beneficiaries, and can provide refugia for many species during wildfires. Increasingly, healthy meadows have also been recognized for providing deep and highly concentrated soil carbon reservoirs, which can aid in mediating the overall CO_2 balance, while their degraded counterparts have been shown as net CO_2 emitters.

However, recent studies show over half of the 278,160 acres (over 400 square miles) of mountain meadows in the Sierra Nevada are degraded and thus have diminished capacity to support fish and wildlife that is already under increasing duress associated with increased temperatures, altered precipitation, and wildfire. Impacts from past land uses, combined with the impacts of climate change, are causing transitions from hydric (wet) to xeric (dry) vegetation, loss of primary productivity and associated food resources, loss of soil carbon to the atmosphere, and increased downstream water temperatures and sediment loads associated with degraded aquatic habitat quality. Efforts to restore mountain meadows are underway, but given limited funds, these need to be strategically implemented and directed toward the most optimal ecological ends. Further, disparate efforts to quantify meadow restoration benefits to date are employed on a project-by-project basis, making comprehensive analysis difficult and limiting our understanding of ecosystem responses to broader climate change impacts. Restoring and

maintaining these hotspots of biodiversity is critical for building adaption and resilience to climate change, while adopting the ecosystem and multi-species approach to conservation as identified in the SWAP.

To help address these issues, this project proposes to establish a SM-WRAMP to help land managers understand current meadow habitat conditions and connectivity at site, watershed, and regional scales, provide a basis for evaluating the efficacy of meadow restoration at the project to regional scales, and improve scientific understanding of cause and effect relationships among key meadow attributes and restoration actions necessary to provide climate adaptation and resilience. This tool will provide technical assistance to land managers to maximize understanding of meadow adaption and resilience to climate change, enabling project and program managers to track site and regional benefits gained through the restoration of degraded meadow ecosystems.

The SM-WRAMP will include (1) a Guidance Document on how to select and apply specific protocols; (2) the Field Protocols with clear field application and data management instructions; and (3) development of a meadow baseline database that integrates with existing state databases and is made readily available to the public. Through this project, the modest investment required to identify and tailor a smart, effective, affordable, and commonly accepted set of protocols into a technical resource tool will be leveraged to help managers realize a greater return on restoration investment, and more certain ecological benefits in the face of climate change. The proposed project is consistent with multiple local, regional, and statewide plans. State-level plans are highlighted below:

State Wildlife Action Plan – The project moves toward achievement of two distinct Conservation Targets (Wet Mountain Meadows Conservation Target, Upper Kern River Native Fish Assemblage Conservation Target) within the Sierra and Central Valley Province, and advances Strategy #2 (Inform public of issues related to importance of aquatic and riparian habitat restoration), and Strategy #5 (Restore and enhance meadow habitat).

California Water Action Plan (CWAP) – The CWAP was developed to meet three broad objectives, all relevant to the benefits of meadow restoration: (1) more reliable water supplies, (2) the restoration of important species and habitat, and (3) a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system that can better withstand inevitable and unforeseen pressures in coming decades. This project implements a key tenet of the CWAP - to protect and restore important ecosystems in anticipation of the effects of climate change on the timing, volume and temperature of water flows.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program and meets the program's goal of providing for climate adaptation and resiliency projects that will result in enduring benefits to wildlife.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

This project will develop a monitoring framework for tracking recovery of ecological benefits that occur with restoration of degraded meadows throughout California. This project will also develop design plans for Horse Meadow as a demonstration project for this framework.

Goal B.4 – Expand project monitoring and evaluation of restoration activities to assess long-term project success, moving beyond compliance monitoring.

This project will provide a monitoring framework, with broad buy-in, that measures site specific conservation benefits to listed species, carbon sequestration, water quality and storage and other ecosystem services.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.6 – Collaboratively identify and fund five upper watershed improvement projects each year that have a primary or secondary purpose of providing resilience to climate change.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Because this is a planning/technical assistance project, there is no specific long-term management plan. However, management and monitoring plans will be developed as part of the eventual implementation phase of Horse Meadow, after design plans are completed during this phase.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Californi a Trout	Total Cost
Project Management and Administration	$17,856	$10,100	$27,956
Develop the Draft SM-WRAMP	$60,100	$57,895	$117,995
Expert Review and Field Test of WRAMP	$40,084	$55,989	$96,073
WRAMP Data Management Protocol	$15,000	$13,000	$28,000

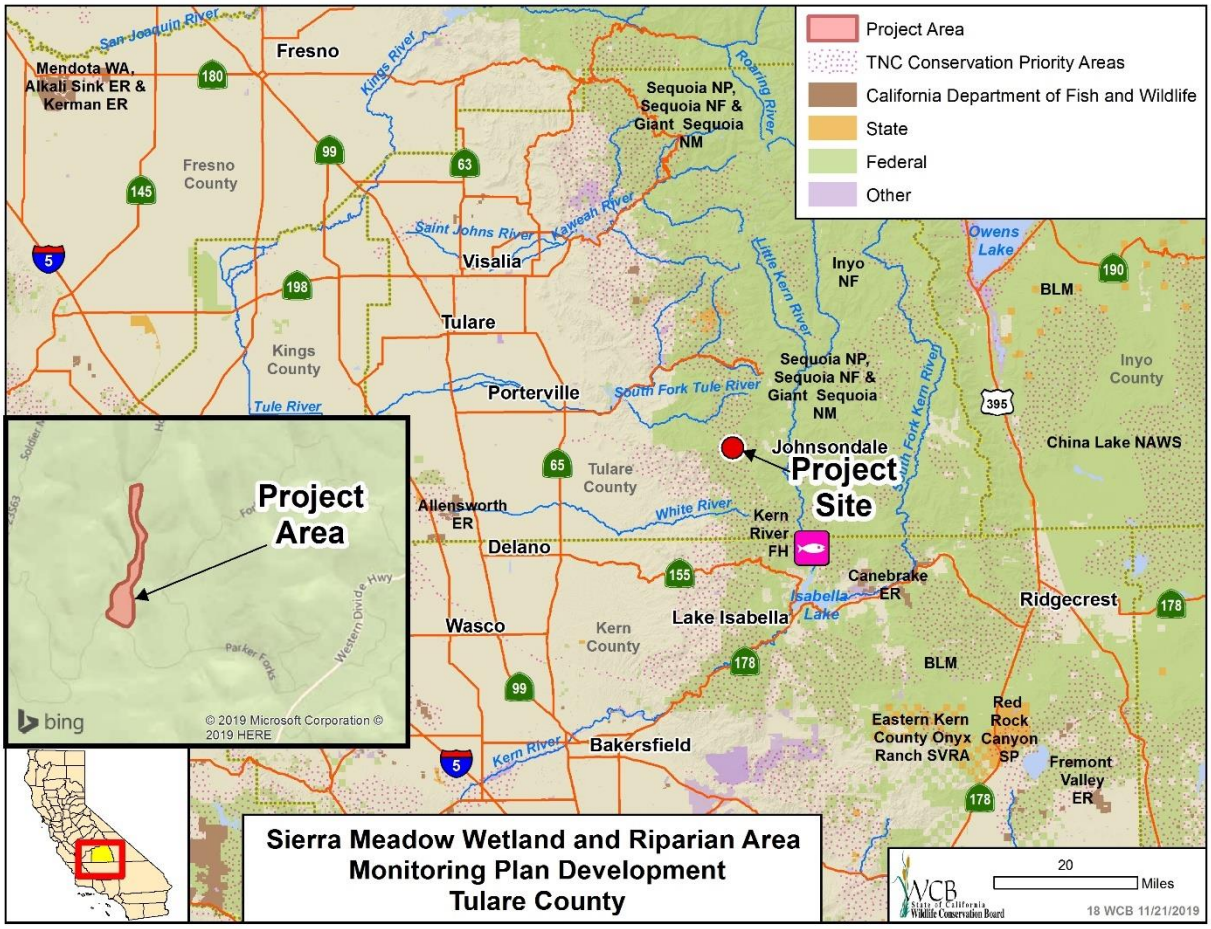
Project Task	WCB	California Trout	Total Cost
Development of Restoration Plan Design for Horse Meadow	$47,960	$48,040	$96,000
TOTAL	**$181,000**	**$185,024**	**$366,024**

Project costs will be for developing the first SM-WRAMP. Project activities include oversight and coordination, management, field work, and budgeting for the data collection, storage, and analysis needed to develop a database (SM-WRAMP database) for answering key research and monitoring questions, refine monitoring protocols, conducting expert review and field testing for the SM-WRAMP, vetting products through a SM-WRAMP Advisory Committee, and developing restoration plan designs for Horse Meadow.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Public Resources Code Section 5845 et seq. General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017, which provides funding for the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems to provide climate change adaptation and resilience, assist natural and working lands managers in adapting to and becoming more resilient to climate change, facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in natural and working lands, and provide additional social, economic, and environmental benefits, or "co-benefits". [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017.]

CEQA COMPLIANCE
The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as a feasibility or planning study for possible future actions which have not been approved. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff Recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $181,000 from the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Fund under the General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
TNC Conservation Priority Areas
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Project Area
Project Site
Johnsondale
Fresno
Visalia
Tulare
Porterville
Delano
Wasco
Bakersfield
Lake Isabella
Ridgecrest
China Lake NAWS
Inyo County
Kings County
Tulare County
Kern County
Fresno County
Sequoia NP, Sequoia NF & Giant Sequoia NM
Inyo NF
BLM
Kern River FH
Canebrake ER
Allensworth ER
Eastern Kern County Onyx Ranch SVRA
Red Rock Canyon SP
Fremont Valley ER
Mendota WA, Alkali Sink ER & Kerman ER
San Joaquin River
Kings River
Tule River
Kaweah River
Saint Johns River
Little Kern River
South Fork Tule River
South Fork Kern River
White River
Kern River
Isabella Lake
Owens Lake
Roaring River
Western Divide Hwy
Parker Forks
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bing
Sierra Meadow Wetland and Riparian Area
Monitoring Plan Development
Tulare County
20
Miles
WCB State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
18 WCB 11/21/2019

19. San Bernardino County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy
San Bernardino County
$562,210

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) for a cooperative project with San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) to develop and complete a final draft of the San Bernardino County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (SBC RCIS), covering two subareas, the Valley subarea and West Desert subarea, and the Mountain region located in San Bernardino County (County).

LOCATION

The Valley subarea is in the inland coastal plain south of the San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountains. The Valley subarea is the most populated region of the County and is in the southwest portion, extending to Riverside County to the south, Orange County to the southwest, and Los Angeles County to the west. The Valley subarea is primarily located in the Fontana Plain-Calimesa Terraces ecoregion; the Santa Ana Mountains and the Perris Valley and Hills ecoregion overlap with the southern edges of the Valley subarea.

The West Desert subarea covers the western portion of the Mojave Desert ecoregion in the County. The subarea is bounded to the north by Inyo County and the U.S. Army's Fort Irwin National Training Center and bounded to the west by Kern and Los Angeles counties. The eastern boundary of the subarea extends to the Mojave National Preserve and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. The West Desert subarea includes the Morongo Basin north of Joshua Tree National Park and the foothills of the Little San Bernardino-Bighorn Mountain and San Gorgonio Mountain ecoregion.

The SBC RCIS coordination team intends to evaluate options for the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) area that will address the geographic separation of the two subareas currently covered by the preliminary draft SBC RCIS. As part of the proposed scope of work under this grant application, the coordination team, in collaboration with stakeholders, will evaluate and develop an RCIS area for the SBC RCIS that conforms to the latest CDFW RCIS Guidelines, which states "an RCIS area should be a complete, unfragmented geographic area". The project coordination team anticipates that the SBC RCIS area will include either the entire Mountain region connecting the Valley subarea to the West Desert subarea, or a portion of the Mountain region along the Cajon Pass connecting the Valley subarea to the West Desert subarea.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project allows SBCTA/SBCOG to develop an RCIS to guide voluntary conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions for a suite of species and natural communities. The RCIS must include specific information about conservation actions necessary to adequately reduce stressors and pressures on those species, including identifying conservation priorities within the region, where appropriate. An RCIS will identify areas of conservation priority for implementation

of conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions by public agencies, conservation organizations, or private entities.

The County spans a large, ecologically diverse region of southern California with a myriad of land-use pressures and other threats to maintaining biodiversity. It lacks a coordinated, regional habitat conservation program that most other southern California regions have already developed and implemented. As a result, conservation and mitigation actions are implemented in a project-by-project manner without a regional, science-based strategy to guide these investments. Drivers for creating an RCIS include:

- In the Valley subarea, the primary RCIS driver has been to develop a coordinated strategy to conserve the remaining unique and irreplaceable resources that are subject to continuing development pressures across 15 incorporated municipalities and unincorporated County lands.
- In the West Desert subarea, the landscape is a patchwork of federal, state, and private lands that present unique challenges for coordinated, regional conservation; however, the rare and imperiled plant and wildlife species of this region continue to be subject to threats from development pressures in the Victor and Lucerne valleys, coupled with energy, transportation, communication, and water infrastructure development and other land uses such as military training, resource extraction, and recreation.
- The Mountain region is topographically and ecologically distinct and separate from the Valley and West Desert subareas and is comprised of primarily USFS lands. The higher elevation mountain regions of San Bernardino are dominated by forest communities supporting a different suite of species and are managed under an existing USFS management program.

An approved SBC RCIS will inform science-based, nonbinding voluntary conservation and habitat enhancement actions for focal species, vegetation communities, ecological processes, and habitat connectivity. It will provide nonbinding voluntary guidance on conservation priority areas and actions to enhance streamlining and predictability of land and renewable energy development processes in the Valley and West Desert regions of San Bernardino County.

Incorporated cities, the County, land trusts and conservation organizations, residential and commercial developers and industry will use the SBC RCIS to plan projects and identify conservation and mitigation opportunities in the Valley subarea, West Desert subarea, and in the Cajon Pass connection (assuming it is included in the final RCIS Area).

In addition to the drivers and anticipated users of the SBC RCIS, it will serve as an implementing mechanism for:

- The County to implement policies of the County Wide Plan (General Plan);
- Incorporated cities to implement their general plans; and

- BLM to implement resource conservation and management goals on public lands.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through the RCIS pilot program and meets the program's goal of creating the authority and process for developing a RCIS. An RCIS establishes biological goals and objectives at the species level and describes conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions that, if implemented, will contribute to those goals and objectives.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

The SBC RCIS will lead to the enhancement of wetland and riparian areas for fish and wildlife.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.2 – Invest in acquisition and restoration grants that advance habitat and natural community targets embodied in RCIS, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or regional conservation plans.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The December 2018 preliminary draft SBC RCIS addresses focal species, habitat groups, and vegetation communities and was formed around a set of Conservation Goals and Objectives (CGOs) developed for the Valley subarea and for the West Desert subarea. The preliminary draft SBC RCIS provides a full listing of draft CGOs developed for the conservation elements in the Valley subarea and the West Desert subarea. Generally, CGOs are in the following structure:

Goal: Sustain and enhance the biodiversity and ecological function of each habitat group for the benefit of the vegetation communities, focal species, and other species associated with each habitat group.

Objective A: Continue to maintain and manage habitats in existing protected areas over the next 10 years in the subarea priority area.

Objective B: Conserve vegetation communities and reduce the threat of habitat loss for focal species that utilize these habitats by acquiring/preserving currently

unprotected habitats over the next 10 years that directly benefit focal species and habitat connectivity in the subarea, focusing on the following conservation priority areas.

The general CGO structure highlighted above describes the anticipated conservation outcomes of the SBC RCIS. In existing protected areas, the SBC RCIS aims to prioritize conservation and mitigation actions that sustain and enhance biodiversity and ecological function for focal species and associated vegetation communities. In unprotected habitat areas, the SBC RCIS aims to conserve vegetation communities and reduce the threat of habitat loss for focal species by acquiring/preserving priority habitat areas. As stated in the preliminary draft SBC RCIS:

The intended use of the SBC RCIS is to provide a regional biological conservation guidebook to public agencies, the development community, environmental groups, other interested entities, and the public for science-based nonbinding and voluntary conservation and mitigation actions in the Valley and West Desert regions of San Bernardino County.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	SBCTA/SBCOG	Total Cost
Pre-award Activity	-	$278,000	$278,000
Project Initiation/Kick-off	-	$2,016	$2,016
Develop Workplan	-	$14,448	$14,448
Prepare Administrative Draft	$184,040	$11,424	$195,464
Prepare SBC RCIS	$214,790	$34,272	$249,062
Public & Stakeholder Outreach	$82,550	$20,496	$103,046
Project Management & Administration	$29,720	$6,048	$35,768
Contingency	$51,110	-	$51,510
TOTAL	$562,210	$366,704	$928,914

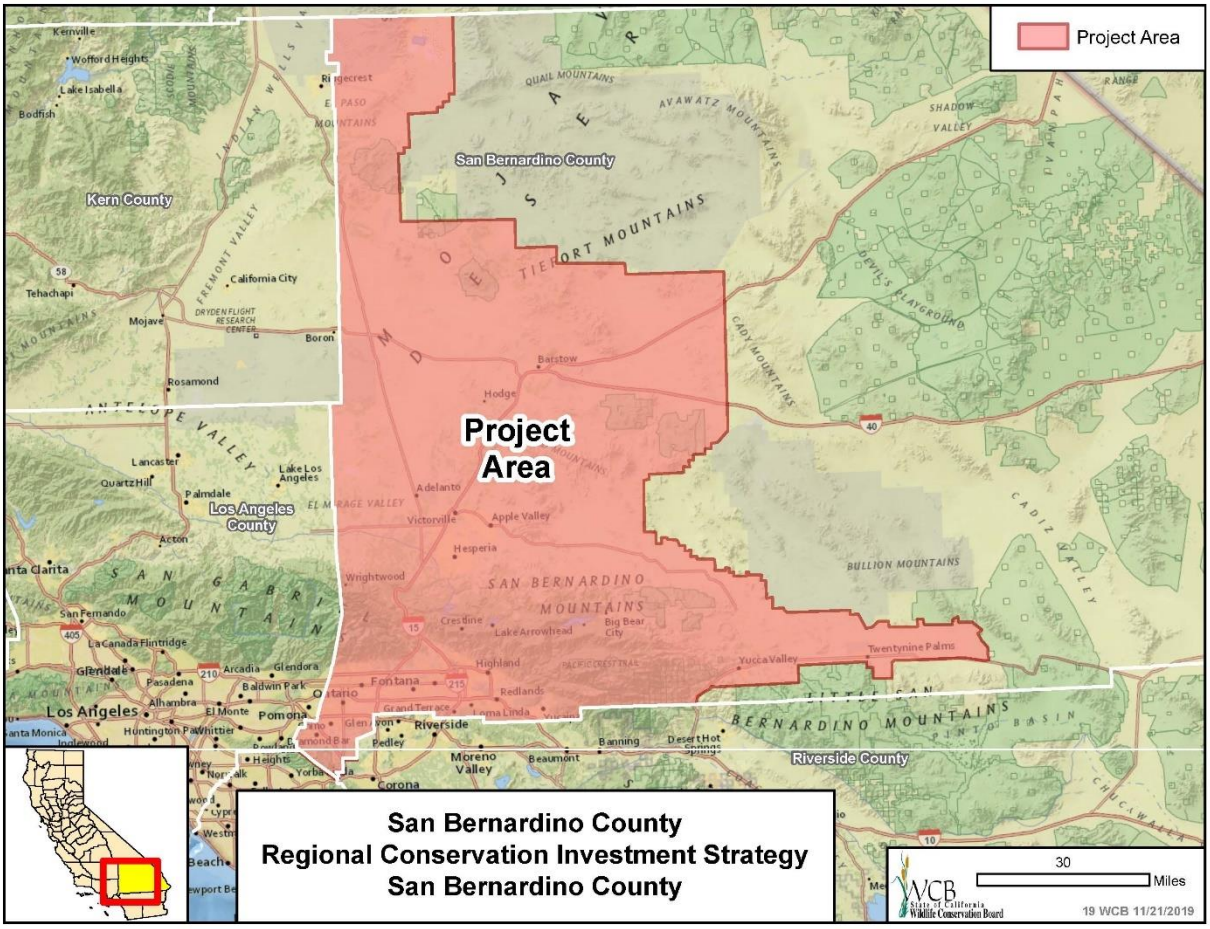
The table identifies the grant funds requested and match provided as in-kind funds from SBCTA/SBCOG. The match consists of in-kind contribution of staff time, plus cash matches of fees and consultant costs. Within the scope of work, the match includes costs for initial development of the SBC RCIS and staff time throughout completion of the SBC RCIS.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018, Public Resources Code Section 80111(a), which provides funding for the development of Regional Conservation Investment Strategies and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262, Planning and Feasibility Studies) as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $562,210 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018, Public Resources Code Section 80111(a); authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
San Bernardino County
Kern County
Los Angeles County
Riverside County
Project Area
San Bernardino County
Regional Conservation Investment Strategy
San Bernardino County
30
Miles
WCB
State of California
Wildlife Conservation Board
19 WCB 11/21/2019

20. Carpinteria Salt Marsh Infrastructure Improvement Project Augmentation
Santa Barbara County
$32,300

This proposal is to consider the allocation for an augmentation to an existing grant to the Regents of the University of California to repair Estero Road culverts, install interpretive signs and fencing, and establish native plants on the Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve in Santa Barbara County.

LOCATION

The University of California Natural Reserve System's (UCNRS) Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve (Reserve) comprises the central 120-acre portion of the 230-acre Carpinteria Salt Marsh. Representing one of the more pristine coastal salt marshes remaining in southern California, the Reserve includes intertidal estuarine wetlands, adjacent palustrine wetlands, and sub-tidal deep-water habitat.

The Reserve provides significant habitat for a rich assemblage of native plants and animals including several species of special concern. The Reserve serves as a valuable nursery and feeding ground for many species of commercial and recreationally important finfish and provides an important refuge and feeding ground for many species of migratory birds traversing the Pacific Flyway.

The Reserve supports research programs funded by state and federal agencies ranging from the National Park Service to CDFW. It also supports numerous important graduate student dissertations and thesis projects. The outstanding habitat at the Reserve includes extensive wetland, sub-tidal channel and emergent upland habitats, and provides a critical outdoor classroom in a world-class wetland. University-level courses, supporting eight university and community college campuses located throughout southern California, are held at the Reserve annually. Public use of the Reserve also includes docent-led tours for local K-12 classes, and visits by birdwatching groups, painters, and members of the California Native Plant Society.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The sole avenue of access into the Reserve for all users is the unpaved extension of Estero Road. As such, this roadway is a vital portion of the Reserve's infrastructure and supports the Reserve's mission of research, education, and stewardship. Built in 1945 and extending southward from the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, the Estero Road extension effectively bisects the Reserve and creates two separate intertidal basins: Basin II and Basin III. Unlike Basin III which maintains a natural connection to the Pacific Ocean, Basin II is isolated from natural tidal flows by the presence of several large earthen berms constructed in the early 1970s for increased flood control. Movement of ocean water into Basin II occurs from Basin III via six large culverts that run under the Estero Road extension. These culverts are heavily degraded and have begun to collapse under the roadway. Additionally, the sub-tidal channels located on either side of the Estero Road extension have deepened significantly over time and the existing culverts no longer lie on the bottoms of these channels.

In August 2017, WCB approved a grant to the Regents of the University of California to replace the existing culverts running beneath the Estero Road extension with new 30-inch, High Density Polyethylene culverts and lower the elevation of these new culverts to the same elevation as the channel beds. Additional renovations and improvements will be made to the Estero Road extension and to the Reserve fence. The project also includes the restoration and resurfacing of the Estero Road extension, using a heavier grade granite to provide a more durable, yet still permeable road surface. The final component of the project will be the retrofitting of the main Reserve fence along the northern border. This will serve to help exclude trespassers and larger animals that threaten native birds and small mammals. Once Estero Road work is complete, replanting of native vegetation along the road will restore plants in disturbed areas. A series of informational and interpretive signs will also be installed along Estero Road.

In December 2017, the Thomas Fire burned for over a month in the watershed above the Reserve and subsequent winter storms brought an estimated 15,000 cubic yards of mud, logs and other debris into the channels that move water throughout the Reserve. Channels that previously held water depths of four to six feet were almost entirely filled by mud and debris.

During the culvert replacement bid walkthrough in February 2018, the project team learned that as a result of the additional accumulated mud and debris, replacing the Estero Road culverts would require an updated topographic survey, an engineering design study and increased construction costs.

The grant augmentation will ensure that the replaced culverts are designed and constructed at optimal depths within the channels and are able to pass water and sediment as tidal action dictates. Correct functioning of these culverts is crucial to the health of the tidal marsh and the wildlife that live there.

WCB PROGRAM

The mission of the UCNRS is to contribute to the understanding and wise management of the earth and its natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected areas throughout California. Under Proposition 84, WCB received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the UCNRS for land acquisitions and the construction or development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California’s wildlife resources. To implement this funding, WCB and the UCNRS developed guidelines for identifying eligible projects and the UCNRS established an Ad Hoc Advisory Subcommittee to review and set priorities for project proposals to be submitted to the WCB for funding.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB’s Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

The project will facilitate enhanced tidal connectivity between the Reserve's salt marsh basins, which will improve climate change resiliency and enable the marsh to naturally manage sediment loads as it recovers from the impacts of fire and tidal events.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
This proposal's grant agreement requires that the UCNRS maintain the facilities for the purposes of providing space for research, administration, and educational activities for 25 years.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, UCNRS does not manage and maintain the property as required under the grant agreement, both parties shall make a good faith effort to agree to a payback amount commensurate with the period of time the property is not managed and maintained as agreed.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

PROJECT TASK	WCB Augmentation	WCB Original Grant	Matching Funds*	TOTAL COST
Culvert Replacement	$32,300	$84,700	$31,500	$148,500
Fence Retrofit	-	$7,000	$2,025	$9,025
Native Planting & Signage	-	-	$39,835	$39,835
Project-specific Administration	-	-	$26,612	$26,612
TOTAL	$32,300	$91,700	$99,972	$223,972

**Matching funds provided by the University of California, Santa Barbara*

Project costs will be for increased engineering design and construction costs for culvert replacement related to sediment accumulation as a result of the Thomas Fire.

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for grants to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for the construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources. [Safe Drinking Water, Water

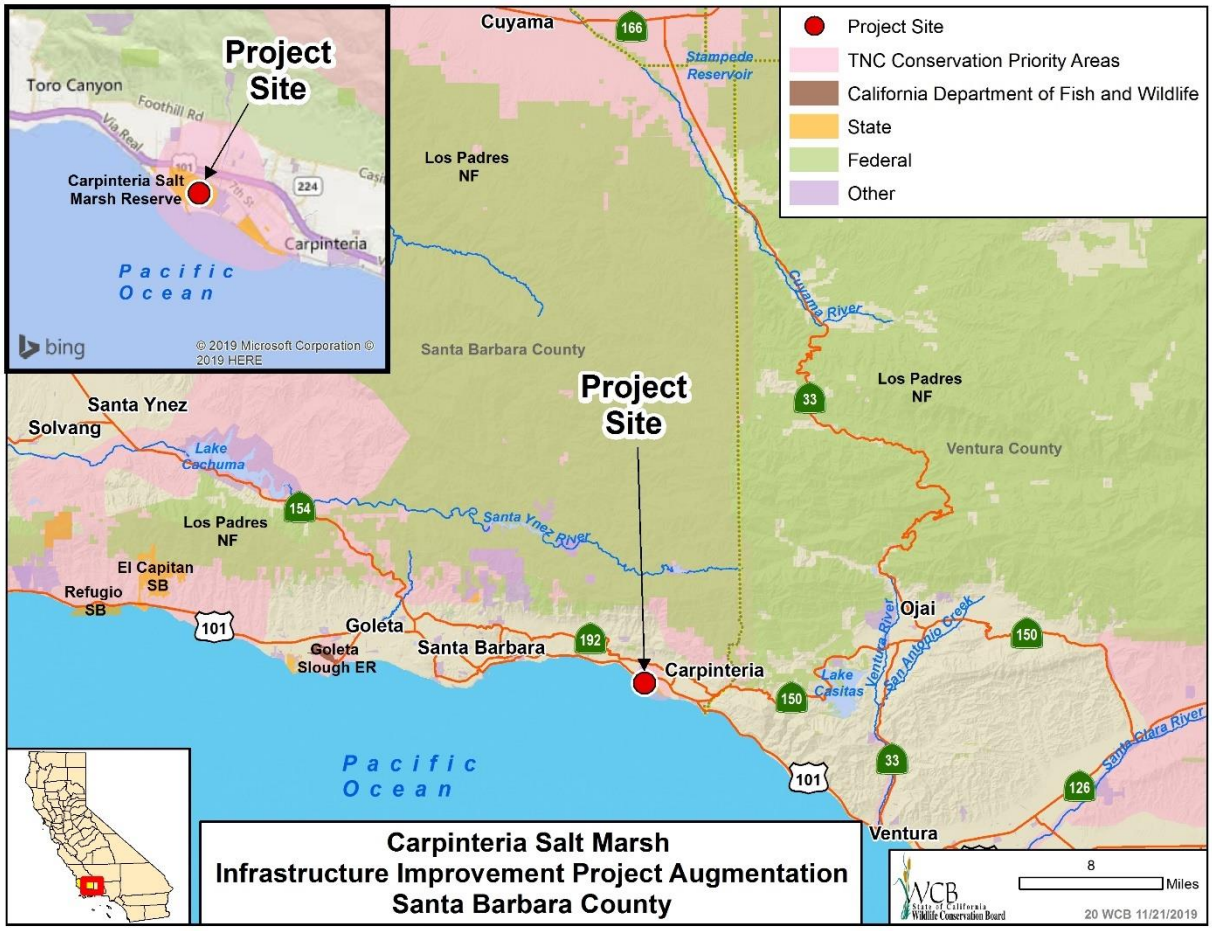
Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)(3).]

CEQA COMPLIANCE

Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, as lead agency, prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB about the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $32,300 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



21. McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve, Expansion 3
San Diego County
$775,000

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of 87± acres of land by CDFW for the protection of threatened and endangered species, to preserve biological communities supporting sensitive species, to enhance wildlife linkages, and provide future wildlife-oriented, public-use opportunities, as an expansion of CDFW's McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is 87± acres and in the unincorporated community of Jamul in eastern San Diego County (County). Jamul is 15± miles east of San Diego. More specifically, the property is north of Skyline Truck Trail and east of Jamul Vistas Drive.

The parcel is located in the McGinty Mountain/Sycuan Peak-Dehesa Biological Resource Core Area of the County's Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan (MSCP). The County's adopted MSCP is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan addressing the needs of multiple species and the preservation of natural vegetation communities in the County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, species endangerment, and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of covered species and their habitat due to the direct impacts of future development of both public and private lands within the MSCP area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of one 87± acre irregular-shaped parcel featuring steep slopes and excellent views. Access to the Property is via a recorded easement through the neighboring property, east of Jamul Vistas Drive. Habitat on the parcel consists primarily of chaparral, which hosts the common suite of chaparral species for its location.

The Property is generally located in a key linkage area between the state-owned, 411± acre McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve and the 2,300± acre Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve, which hosts a number of rare and endemic plant species including Ramona horkelia, Dehesa nolina, Lakeside ceanothus, and Engelmann oak.

The Property is actively listed for sale. Acquisition and conservation of the parcel would preserve intact habitat for rare and endemic species and add to contiguous open space, thus improving wildlife movement and overall ecosystem functionality in the area. Conservation of the parcel would also help buffer the proximate conserved lands and contribute to the implementation of regional conservation plans.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/CAPP (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Director for review and, if approved, later transmitted to WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

Acquisition of the Property will preserve corridors for the migration and movement of wildlife species and provide for habitat connectivity between habitat areas with varying elevations.

Goal A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW.

The Property is in close proximity to the McGinty Mountain and Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserves and is located in the McGinty Mountain/Sycuan Peak-Dehesa Biological Resource Core Area of the County's Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlines in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.2 – Invest in acquisition and restoration grants that advance habitat and natural community targets embodied in RCIS, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or regional conservation plans.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The CDFW will manage the Property as part of the McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve. The acquisition will provide expanded public access recreational activities including wildlife viewing and hiking.

TERMS
The opinion of value provided by DGS is $775,000. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved opinion of value. WCB and DGS will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

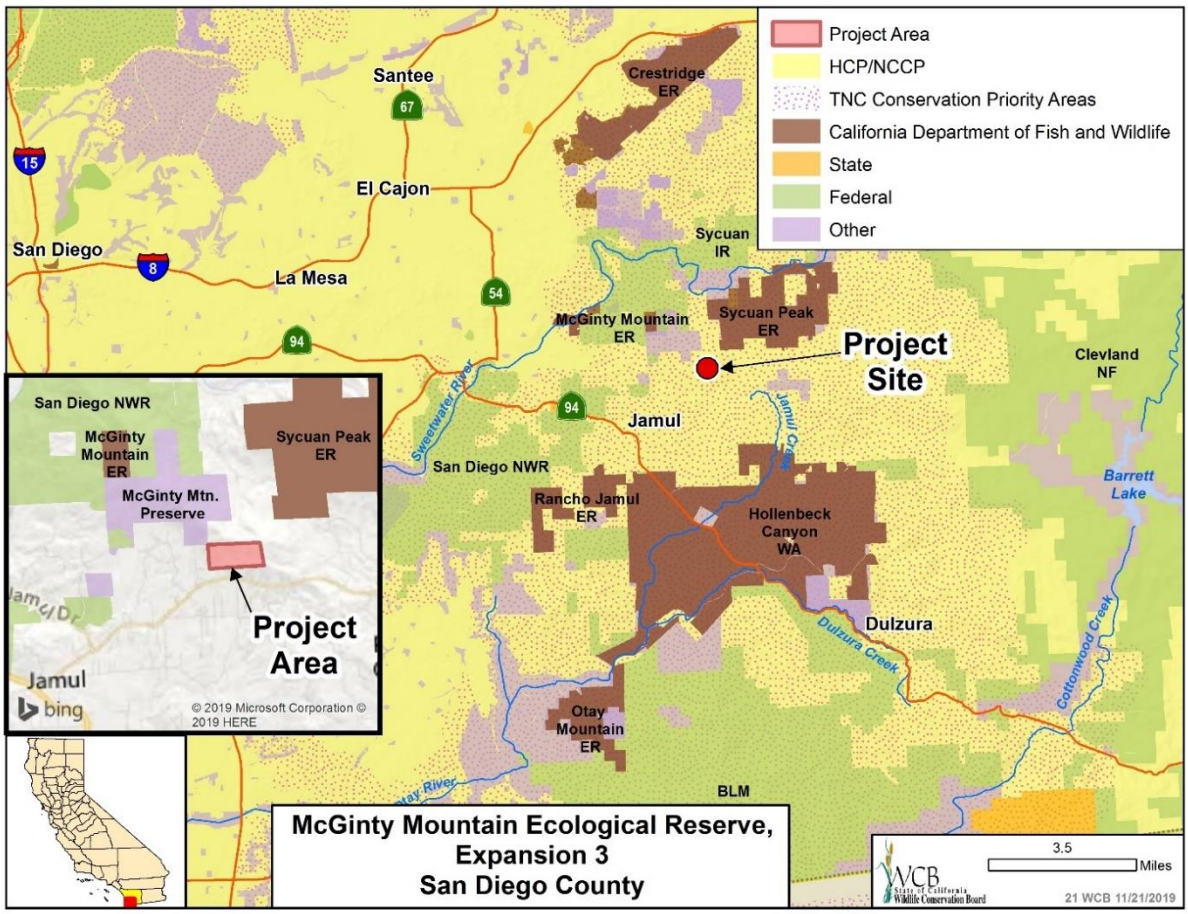
PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	$775,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$775,000
TOTAL ALLOCATION	$775,000

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and for the implementation of habitat conservation plans. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c).]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $775,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
HCP/NCCP
TNC Conservation Priority Areas
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Santee
Crestridge ER
El Cajon
San Diego
La Mesa
Sycuan IR
McGinty Mountain ER
Sycuan Peak ER
Project Site
Clevland NF
Jamul
Sweetwater River
Jamul Creek
San Diego NWR
Rancho Jamul ER
Hollenbeck Canyon WA
Barrett Lake
Dulzura
Dulzura Creek
Cottonwood Creek
Otay Mountain ER
BLM
San Diego NWR
McGinty Mountain ER
Sycuan Peak ER
McGinty Mtn. Preserve
Project Area
Jamul
bing
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation © 2019 HERE
McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve, Expansion 3
San Diego County
3.5
Miles
WCB
State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
21 WCB 11/21/2019

Proposed Items

22. Central Valley Monarch Butterfly Habitat Enhancement
Various Counties
$1,210,000
This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

23. Jameson Creek Fish Passage Improvement and Restoration
Humboldt County
$998,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the city of Fortuna (City) for a cooperative project with CDFW and private landowners to replace a culvert that acts as a barrier to salmonid migration along Jameson Creek at the Rhonerville Road crossing in Humboldt County.

LOCATION

Jameson Creek is a tributary to Strongs Creek, which is within the lower Eel River watershed in Humboldt County. The project site is located on an existing culvert crossing of Jameson Creek on Rohnerville Road within the City. In 2017, the Strongs Creek at South Fortuna Blvd crossing was remediated through culvert modifications by the City with CDFW's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP). The removal of the Strongs Creek barrier now provides access for juvenile and adult salmonids from the Lower Eel River into upper Strongs Creek and Jameson Creek up to the Rohnerville Road crossing.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project area has experienced the effects of timber harvest and agricultural practices, as well as urbanization, since the 1800s and Jameson Creek is currently comprised of a narrow riparian corridor bound by residential developments and grazed pasture lands. Salmonid habitat was historically abundant in the creek, but the availability of upstream habitat for adult spawning and juvenile rearing has been reduced by man-made barriers, such as culverts, which prevent or hinder upstream passage on Jameson Creek.

Jameson Creek is considered by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to have high intrinsic potential for both spawning adults and for both natal and non-natal rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids. The CDFW Coho Recovery Plan also recognizes the potential for salmonid restoration in the lower Eel River watershed and provides recommendations to improve coho and other salmonid populations by removing fish passage barriers, reducing sediment input, improving riparian forest composition, enhancing habitat, and controlling non-native fish.

The goals for this project are to construct a self-sustaining project that improves fish passage at the crossing for all life stages of salmonids, including resident trout, while maintaining the geomorphic function and flood conveyance capacity of the channel and crossing. This will be achieved by replacing the existing undersized culvert at Rohnerville Road and constructing a roughened channel within, upstream, and downstream of the new culvert. Specific design objectives are to increase flow depths and decrease flow velocities within the crossing, maintain adequate flow to allow for fish passage, and address height differences between the crossing outlet and receiving waters while not reducing the channel or crossing flood capacity.

An alternatives analysis was completed, and applicable fish passage design criteria provided by NMFS and CDFW were identified based on the types of fish passage improvements being considered for this project. The design phase of the work, funded by CDFW's FRGP, was completed and approved by CDFW and NMFS in March 2019. As part of the design process, seven alternatives were assessed based on the following criteria: traffic impacts, utility impacts, constructability, construction cost, flood conveyance, and fish passage. The use of a pre-cast box concrete culvert was determined by the City, CDFW, and NMFS to be the best alternative and was advanced to final design.

To construct the proposed project, the roadway will be excavated to remove the existing culvert, and the new culvert will be set approximately three feet below the proposed channel bed to accommodate backfilling with streambed material. The precast concrete culvert will be placed in sections and will require foundation preparation prior to installation. Once the culvert is placed, the roughened channel will be constructed by placing rock from both ends of the culvert or alternatively from the top, should the contractor choose removable tops allowing rock placement from above. The roadway will then be brought back up to grade, and all existing utilities will be replaced.

When complete, the project is expected to deliver sustainable benefits for fish passage for an anticipated minimum of 50 years with the ability to convey a 100-year storm event. Observations and monitoring of the project for stability will ensure the project continues to meet overall design intent and provide fish passage. To confirm that hydraulic connectivity is achieved, the project site will be included in the City's annual culvert inspection program for the service life of the project (50 years).

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration, restoration of threatened and endangered species habitats, and in-stream restoration projects that include removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and support the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife, and enhance habitats on working lands. The project will:

- Restore habitat connectivity between coho salmon populations in coastal and low-gradient inland streams.

- Increase connectivity to more cold-water habitat for salmonids and other species that will be negatively impacted by rising water temperatures due to climate change.

- Increase the flow capacity of the stream crossing to provide resiliency for potential increases in precipitation due to climate change.

Goal B.5 – Provide opportunities for greater public involvement in restoration projects:

- This project will be highlighted by the Creek Stewardship program at Fortuna High School. This program provides students with the opportunity to learn about ecology and the importance of stream corridors. The project site will be made available to the program which regularly conducts field trips to local restoration projects.

- The City will place a sign at the project site that highlights the importance of fish passage projects.

- The project will incorporate community participation by hosting a public volunteer riparian planting day.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.3 – Invest in projects that provide tangible ecosystem services benefits to local lower watershed (urban or rural) communities, and document that benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Immediately following construction, fish passage monitoring will be conducted. Monitoring will occur at a range of fish passage flows to evaluate the roughened channel and use standard United States Geological Survey field methods. To assess project benefits, depth and velocity measurements will be compared to fish passage requirements in “Culvert criteria for fish passage” published by CDFW in 2002 and by “Guidelines for Salmonid Passage at Stream Crossings” published by NMFS in 2001.

Monitoring will continue until collected data demonstrates that fish passage requirements are being met. Should post-construction monitoring indicate that fish passage is being achieved, the City will continue with annual inspections of the proposed project. Annual inspections will include making observations for any

potential signs of instabilities. Any changes in constructed conditions will be noted and annual inspection logs will be maintained.

If annual inspections indicate that fish passage is not being achieved, the City will be responsible for fish passage monitoring and analyzing the data to confirm that design criteria are being met. Should the data indicate that fish passage criteria are not being met, the City will consult with CDFW and NMFS to identify remedial measures. Remedial measures will be implemented as needed and fish passage monitoring will continue until hydraulic measurements indicate that fish passage requirements are being achieved.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the City does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the grant agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	The City	CDFW	Total Cost
Project Management	-	$6,000	-	$6,000
Pre-Bid/ Bid Period Services	$16,890	-	$12,990	$29,880
Construction Management	$11,465	-	$28,695	$40,160
Monitoring	$28,495	-	$67,485	$95,980
Biological Clearance Surveys	$2,875	-	$6,325	$9,200
Project Closeout	$7,990	-	$20,500	$28,490
Construction	$930,285	-	$1,568,995	$2,499,280
TOTAL	**$998,000**	**$6,000**	**$1,704,990**	**$2,708,990**

Project costs will be for project management, biological monitoring and construction activities that will replace an undersized culvert with one large enough to facilitate fish passage along Jameson Creek.

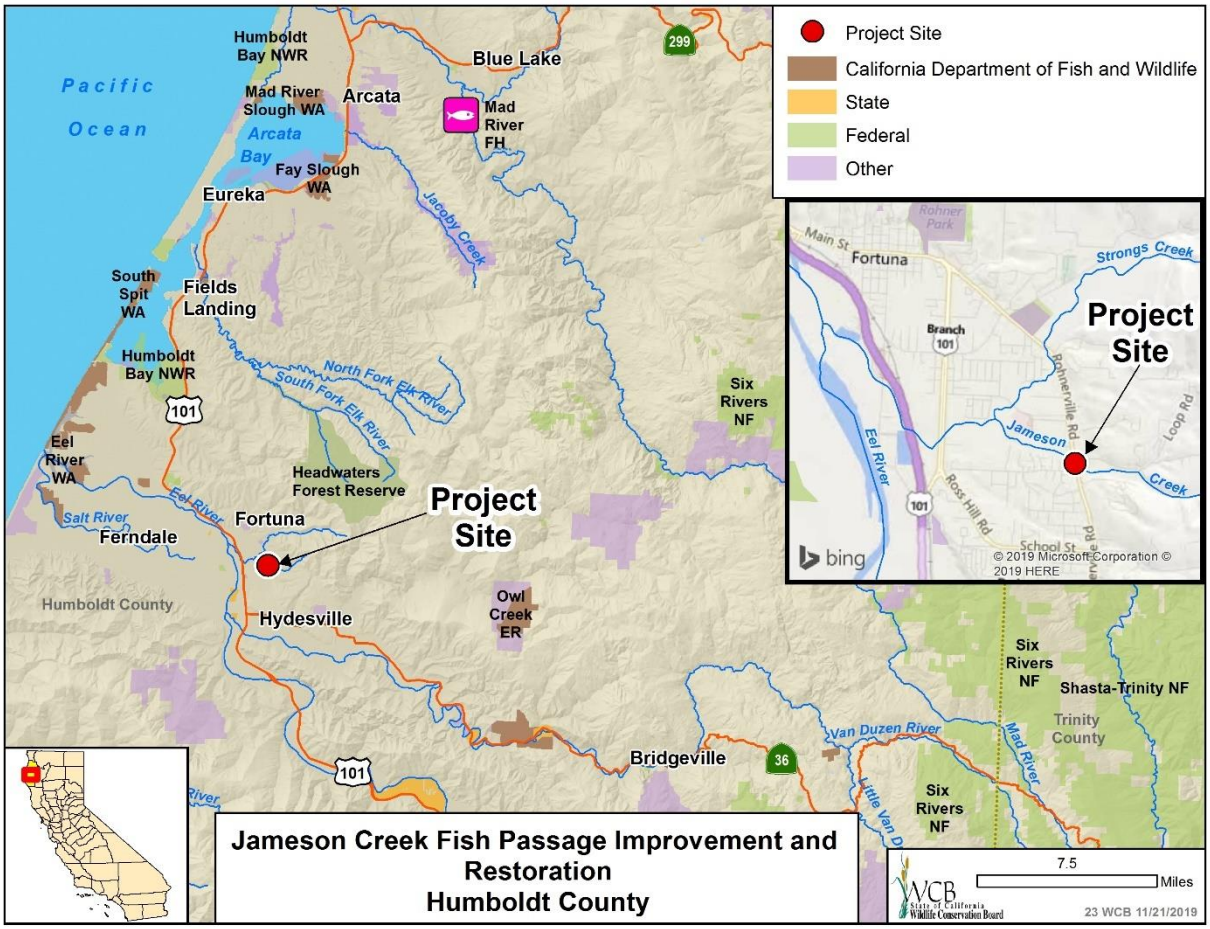
FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1) which allows for projects to construct, repair, modify, or remove transportation infrastructure or water resources infrastructure to improve passage for wildlife or fish.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced; and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as a minor alteration in the condition of land which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $998,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



24. Willow Creek Wildlife Area Water Infrastructure Improvements
Lassen County
$216,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU), for a cooperative project with CDFW and USFWS to enhance meadows and restore riparian habitat on the CDFW's Willow Creek Wildlife Area (WCWA), located 17 miles north of Susanville in Lassen County.

LOCATION
The project will occur on the WCWA in Willow Creek Valley. Willow Creek Valley is located approximately 17 miles northeast of Susanville, California and 5 miles east southeast of Eagle Lake. The WCWA is owned and managed by CDFW and is one of many state and federally protected areas in northeast California.

The Willow Creek Valley region has a long history of livestock grazing and other agricultural production, with ranching being the primary land use. This region is very important to a variety of wildlife including waterfowl, waterbirds, and shorebirds. With many of the historical wetlands in the area having been previously drained and converted to agricultural uses, high-quality wetland habitats are now very limited in the area. Furthermore, livestock grazing and conversion of upland and wet meadow habitats to alfalfa production have caused a sharp reduction in available nesting cover for waterfowl and other ground nesting species.

CDFW acquired the 2,713-acre WCWA property in 1989 from Barron Ranch with the intent of preserving, restoring, and enhancing the existing wetland and associated upland habitats. Prior to agriculture/grazing development of the property by Barron Ranch, the WCWA property supported wet meadow and riparian habitat. Review of the General Land Office's 1870 plat map of Willow Creek Valley shows the area being mapped as "swamp and overflowed" lands.

Habitats at WCWA include freshwater emergent wetland, wet meadow pasture, riparian scrub, and agricultural uplands. CDFW's primary management goals for WCWA are to optimize its wetland values to benefit migratory and resident waterfowl and other waterbirds, including the state-threatened greater sandhill crane, and to provide public recreational opportunities. CDFW's secondary management goal is to protect and enhance habitats for threatened and endangered raptors, pronghorn antelope, mule deer, upland game, furbearers, and other non-game wildlife.

Since acquisition in 1989, existing wetlands have been improved over the years to a limited extent and are managed to provide habitat for waterfowl and other wetland-associated birds. Those units that have water storage capabilities are generally flooded up in the early fall to provide fall staging habitat for migratory birds. Most of these units are at their maximum flooding in the early spring, so substantial wetland habitat is generally available for spring staging migratory birds. CDFW generally draws down water levels in most of the units in late spring. However, water is retained in some areas through the nesting season to provide

brood habitat. Some water is retained in several of the units virtually year-round as these units do not have adequate drainage capabilities. Crops currently are not grown on the area. Public uses at WCWA include waterfowl hunting and other wildlife-oriented recreation including bird watching and nature study. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the area. Public access is only by walking or bicycle. A gravel parking lot and information kiosk are present along State Highway 139 at the entrance to the area, but no other facilities are available.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will improve existing habitat management infrastructure to improve CDFW's ability to more efficiently manage habitats at WCWA. Project work will improve water use efficiency, conveyance, and distribution at WCWA. It will provide improved irrigation capacity and better vegetation management capabilities. Project work will enhance habitat conditions for a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, and landbirds. Enhancing wildlife habitat conditions will also improve recreational opportunities for the public.

The overall work will include conducting a topographic and engineering survey of the Willow Creek channel areas associated with the project and preparing an engineering design for the proposed work. The engineering survey will guide the replacement of multiple old, dilapidated corrugated metal water control structures in the Willow Creek channel with new pre-cast concrete water control structures. This will improve water delivery to wet meadow units located in the heart of the site. Specifically, work on the floodplain units will enhance approximately 1,100 acres of wet meadow habitat and 145 acres of associated upland habitat.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Inland Wetland Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400, et seq.) and meets the program's goal of assisting the Intermountain West Joint Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

The project provides water-wise wetland habitat in a very wetland-limited region in critical times for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife.

Goal C.1 – Support a wide range of recreational activities (e.g., hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, camping, photography, etc.) in conjunction with other land uses and without degrading environmental resources.

The project maintains open space and develops opportunities for controlled hunting, recreation, and research and educational uses that are compatible with the managed wetlands.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

Objective SI 3.3 – Invest in projects that provide hunting or fishing opportunities.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project will be located on the WCWA, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of the area. The improved water management capabilities associated with this project will allow CDFW managers to provide improved habitat through more efficient water delivery and drainage, and to conserve staff time.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, DU does not assure that the project improvements are managed according to the Management Plan, the grant agreement requires that DU refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Project Partners*	Total Cost
Project Management	$32,573	$40,390	$72,963
Topographic Survey	$20,476	$41,262	$61,738
Construction	$135,630	$145,562	$281,192
New Well	-	$128,787	$128,787
Project Administration	$12,808	$36,205	$49,013
Contingency	$14,513	-	$14,513
TOTAL	$216,000	$392,206	$608,206

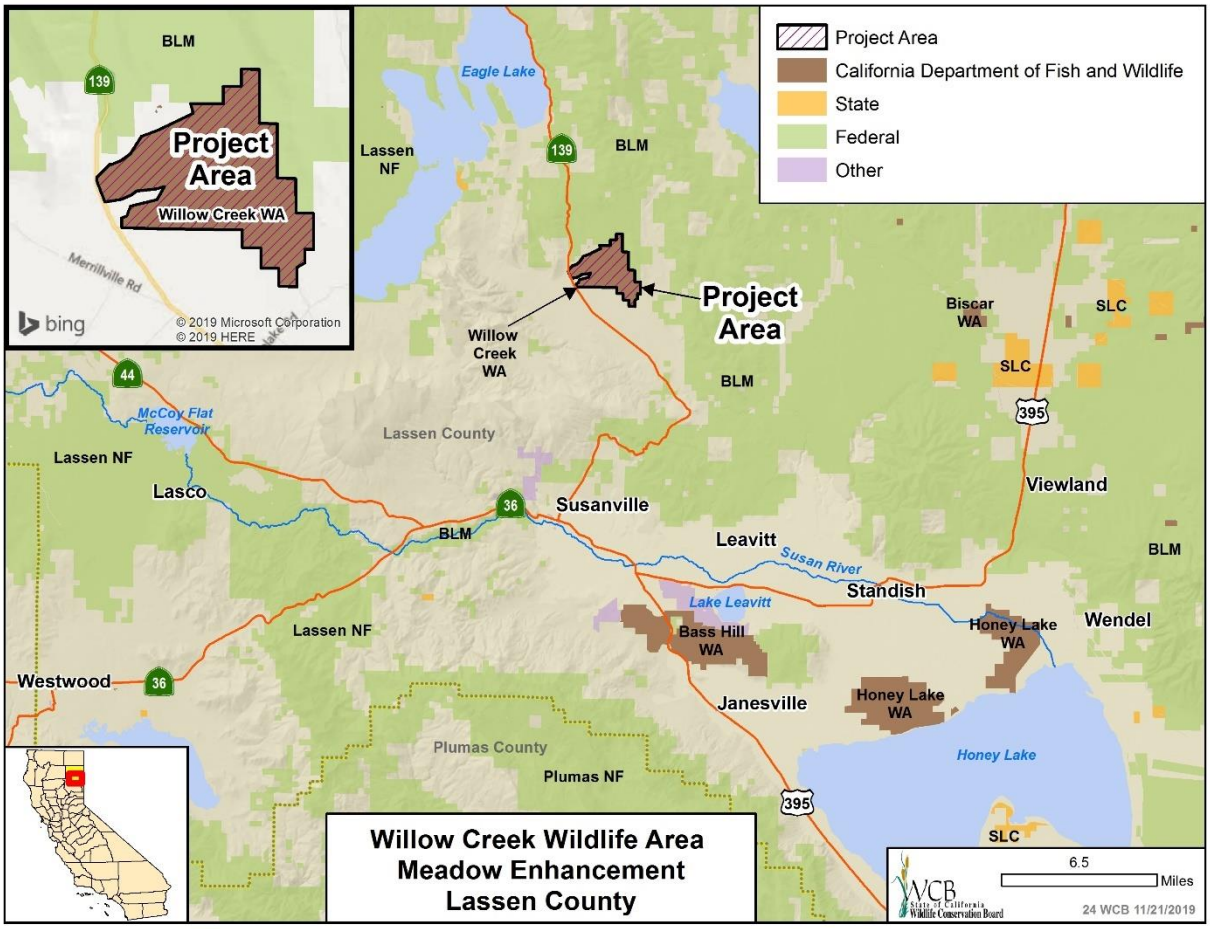
*Project partners include: DU, USFWS and CDFW.

Project components include project management and administration, topographic studies, and construction/installation of pipelines and swales.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) and 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass outside the Central Valley.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The project is proposed as categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $216,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) and 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
BLM
Project Area
Willow Creek WA
Merrillville Rd
bing
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation
© 2019 HERE
Eagle Lake
Lassen NF
139
BLM
Willow Creek WA
Project Area
Biscar WA
SLC
SLC
BLM
44
McCoy Flat Reservoir
Lassen County
395
Lassen NF
Lasco
Susanville
Viewland
36
BLM
Leavitt
Susan River
BLM
Standish
Lake Leavitt
Lassen NF
Bass Hill WA
Honey Lake WA
Wendel
Westwood
36
Janesville
Honey Lake WA
Plumas County
Honey Lake
Plumas NF
395
SLC
Willow Creek Wildlife Area
Meadow Enhancement
Lassen County
6.5
Miles
WCB State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
24 WCB 11/21/2019

25. Upper Noyo River Fish Passage Improvement and Sediment Reduction Mendocino County
$2,565,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Trout Unlimited (TU) for a cooperative project with the Mendocino Railway (MR), the Mendocino Land Trust (MLT), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to restore access to 1.15 miles of steelhead and salmon habitat and reduce in-stream sediment upstream of where the California Western Railroad (CWR) crosses the upper Noyo River in Mendocino County.

LOCATION
The Noyo River watershed is dominated by timber land. Eighty percent of the watershed is privately-owned, with nearly two-thirds managed by timber companies. The immediate project area is owned by MR, who operate the CWR, and the surrounding property is owned and managed by MLT. Built as a logging railroad in 1885, the CWR is commonly referred to as the Skunk Train. The rail line follows the coastal "Redwood Route" that once moved redwood logs to Mendocino Coast sawmills from the rugged back country. The project site is located at milepost 28.8 of the railway where the rail crosses over the upper Noyo River. The crossing consists of an undersized and failing 9-foot diameter corrugated metal pipe. Although human activities have altered the Noyo River watershed, the watershed provides crucial habitat for listed salmonid species, including perennial cold-water pools, spawning gravels, and complex instream habitats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Roads and railroads associated with timber harvesting have been in the Noyo River watershed since the 1800s. Railroad operations began in 1886, with railroad tracks operating east from Fort Bragg to the Little North Fork. Railway service was completed from Fort Bragg to Willits in 1911, including the construction of an extensive set of trestles that cross the Noyo River. This railroad line, the CWR, remains in use today and is operated by MR as a popular tourist attraction that extends from Fort Bragg to Willits, California in Mendocino County.

The CWR was initially operated as a division of the Fort Bragg mill. Then in the mid-1960s, Arizona-based Kyle Railways began managing the railroad, and eventually purchased it in 1987. In August 1996, a group comprised entirely of local Mendocino Coast investors purchased the CWR, marking the first time in its 111-year history that the line would be operated as an independent business. Today, the train is operated as a heritage passenger railroad by MR.

The rail line runs approximately 40 miles from west to east through Pudding Creek (3.5 miles), along the Noyo River (33 miles), and then into the Broaddus Creek (upper Eel River) for 3.5 miles on the eastern end. The railway originally required 113 bridges and trestles as it crossed back and forth over the river channel. That number has been reduced to approximately 30 river crossings over time. Many of the stream crossings along the railway are old and do not meet current fish passage requirements.

The historical crossing at mile 28.8, built approximately 100-years ago, was set at approximately 3 percent slope. The current crossing was installed in the 1990s after the previous culvert and fill prism failed. The 9-foot circular culvert was estimated as hydraulically undersized, with the inlet over-topping on flows with recurrence intervals greater than 22 years. The culvert and fill are in poor condition, with the downstream section of pipe separated due to undermining at the outlet. Given the condition of the culvert and fill prism, a full replacement was recommended as the most appropriate long-term solution to restore fish passage and reduce the risk of catastrophic failure and associated sediment delivery.

In 2010, TU received a CDFW grant to conduct a detailed sediment source and fish passage assessment of the entire railway. The final report was submitted to CDFW in March 2013 and provided a prioritized plan to address sedimentation and fish passage issues associated with the rail. In 2015, TU received an additional CDFW grant to develop fully-implementable designs to replace a total barrier located on the upper Noyo River rail crossing 28.8.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Coastal Multispecies Plan includes a high-priority task to assess and restore passage at barriers associated with the CWR. The recovery plan identifies the Noyo River as an essential population of the Northern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment. Recovery strategies within the plan are focused on ameliorating threats rated as High and Medium when the strategy is essential to recovery efforts. According to the North Coast Steelhead Noyo River Conservation Action Plan Threat Results, roads and railroads are considered a threat to adults and juvenile steelhead. This threat predominately impacts eggs, summer rearing juveniles, and winter rearing juveniles.

The project site was also identified in the CDFW funded 2013 Fish Passage assessment as inhibiting fish passage for both adult salmonids and all age classes of juveniles. The project will restore access for adult and juvenile salmonids to habitat upstream of the upper Noyo River railway crossing and will reduce the risk of sediment delivery from fill failure while providing a safe railway. This will be accomplished by replacing the current barrier with a new structure that meets fish passage requirements defined by CDFW and NMFS, is based on current design standards, and can convey a 100-year flood event with associated sediment and large wood.

The proposed project will benefit three species of Endangered Species Act listed salmonids: Central California Coast Coho Salmon, North Coast Steelhead Trout, and to a lesser extent California Coastal Chinook. Multiple recovery plans include tasks focused on restoring passage at barriers associated with the CWR. In addition to providing access to upstream resources, this project will further benefit salmon by preventing a considerable fine sediment load from being released into the mainstem Noyo River, which would result in significant turbidity and deposition of fine sediments instream.

In addition to fish passage priorities, the channel reconstruction work as a part of this project will address channel incision and channel stability to enhance habitat in the upper Noyo River for a variety of other focal species in this province, including several amphibian species such as the red-bellied newt, California giant salamander, coastal tailed frog, and foothill yellow-legged frog. This project is also likely to benefit predatory mammal and bird species that depend on salmonids and amphibians as a critical source of prey.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration, restoration of threatened and endangered species habitats, and in-stream restoration projects that include removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife, and enhance habitats on working lands.

The project will remove a barrier and restore instream channel conditions at the proposed rail crossing while preventing sedimentation and water quality impacts. Habitat connectivity will be enhanced, and habitat quality will be restored through the crossing.

Goal B.4 – Expand project monitoring and evaluation of restoration activities to assess long-term project success, moving beyond compliance monitoring.

To demonstrate effectiveness, fisheries validation monitoring will occur before and after project implementation.

Goal B.5 – Provide opportunities for greater public involvement in restoration projects.

Outreach materials will be generated to promote the project and assist with watershed education and public engagement.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.1 – Invest in acquisition or restoration projects that have a demonstrated and measurable upper watershed ecosystem services benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The crossing design was selected to reduce the overall need of regular maintenance. The crossing structure was designed to pass streamflow and debris during a 100-year flood event and includes a natural stream bottom. The design life for the crossing is estimated to be approximately 75 years. However, because the project is located on an active passenger rail, certain inspection and maintenance requirements are inherent per the Federal Rail Standards. MR has agreed to incorporate additional inspection tasks into their regular inspection and monitoring operations for a period not less than 25 years. If the inspector notes significant changes in conditions that may be detrimental to fish passage, a qualified fisheries biologist or fish passage engineer should conduct an evaluation and, if necessary, develop an action plan.

While it is not expected that the project will require substantial maintenance, some maintenance may be required after large storm events. Any activities that require heavy equipment or dewatering of the creek will require appropriate regulatory authority before the work is performed. Adjustments to structure rocks, addition or adjustment of the rock slope protection on embankments, and removal of large debris or sediment will require permits from CDFW, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and possibly other entities.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, TU does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the grant agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

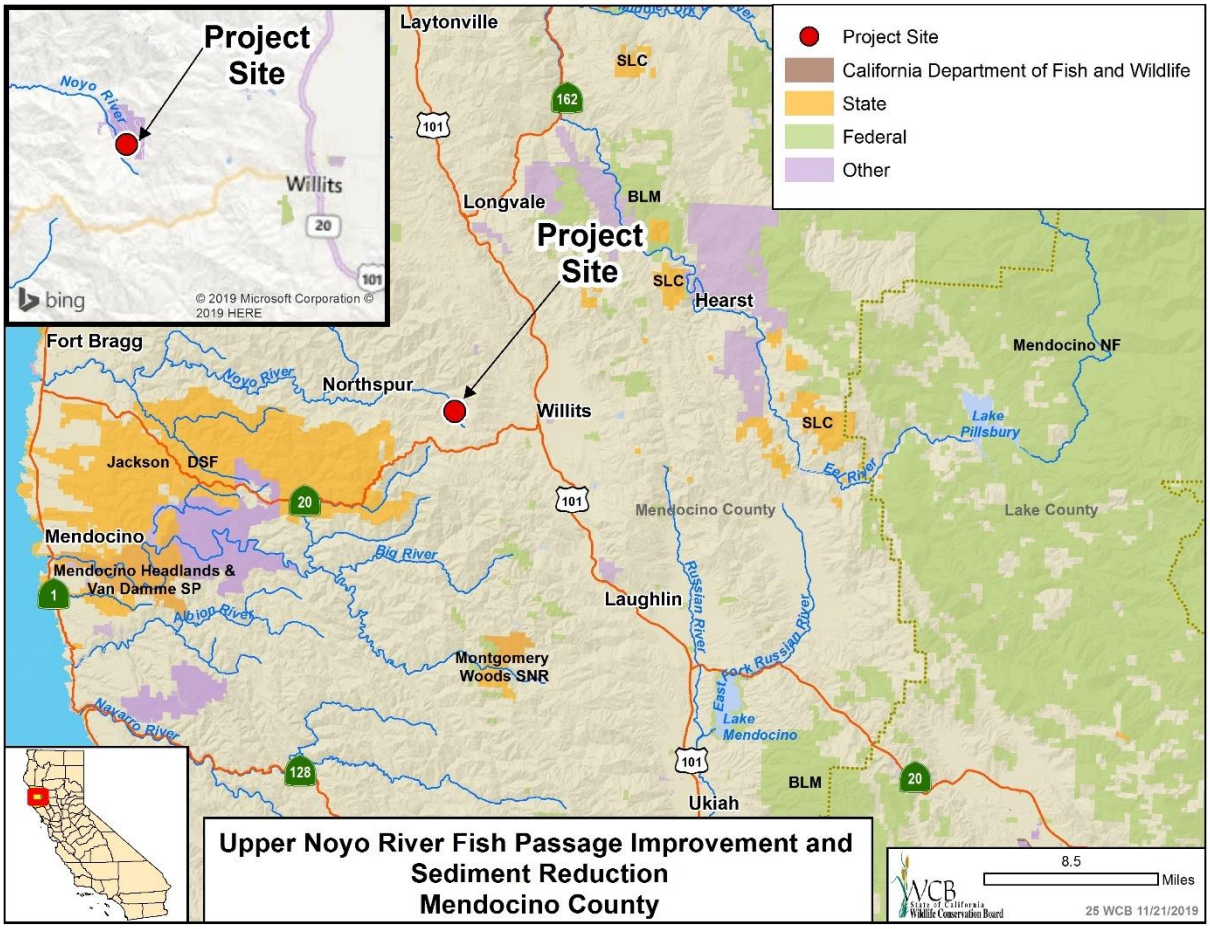
Task	WCB	TU	NOAA	Total Cost
Project Management	$117,334	$132,982	-	$250,316
Monitoring	$55,963	$195,754	-	$251,717
Construction	$2,357,915	-	$94,760	$2,452,675
Outreach	$33,788	$65,747	-	$99,535
TOTAL	**$2,565,000**	**$394,483**	**$94,760**	**$3,054,243**

Project costs will be for project management, biological monitoring, replacement of the existing culvert, and outreach to stakeholders.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1) which allows for projects to construct, repair, modify, or remove transportation infrastructure or water resources infrastructure to improve passage for wildlife or fish.

CEQA COMPLIANCE
The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced; and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as a minor alteration in the condition of land which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $2,565,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Site
Noyo River
Willits
20
101
bing
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation © 2019 HERE
Project Site
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Laytonville
SLC
162
101
Longvale
BLM
Project Site
SLC
Hearst
Fort Bragg
Noyo River
Northspur
Willits
Mendocino NF
Lake Pillsbury
SLC
Eel River
Jackson DSF
20
101
Mendocino County
Lake County
Mendocino
Mendocino Headlands & Van Damme SP
1
Big River
Laughlin
Russian River
East Fork Russian River
Albion River
Montgomery Woods SNR
Navarro River
Lake Mendocino
128
101
BLM
20
Ukiah
Upper Noyo River Fish Passage Improvement and Sediment Reduction
Mendocino County
8.5
Miles
WCB
State of California
Wildlife Conservation Board
25 WCB 11/21/2019

26. Red Mountain
$1,400,000
Nevada County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) for a cooperative project with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) to acquire 633± acres of land to help preserve alpine forests, wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, and to provide wildlife-oriented, public-use opportunities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located northwest of the town of Truckee, in the Truckee Donner area, north of Interstate 80 and west of Highway 89 within Nevada County. The Property covers 633± acres near Donner Summit. Surrounding development includes the Tahoe Donner community which consists of approximately 6,500 home sites, cross country and downhill ski areas, an equestrian center, golf course, and lodge. Carpenter Valley, which WCB helped conserve in 2017, is north of the Property. Beyond Carpenter Valley and on the north side of Carpenter Ridge, lies Independence Lake, which WCB helped fund conservation of in 2009.

The Property falls within CDFW's Sierra Valley-Truckee CAPP. The objectives within the CAPP are to protect wetland, wet meadow, riparian, bitterbrush, and sagebrush habitats for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd as well as for many other wildlife species. The population of the interstate Loyalton-Truckee deer herd has declined over the last twenty years. One of the primary threats to the viability of this deer herd is habitat conversion and fragmentation from residential or industrial development and highway construction. It is imperative to protect summer ranges and important migration corridors for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd within the CAPP area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of one rectangular assessor parcel number. Most of the Property involves steep sloping hillsides extending down into the southwest quarter of the property which involves moderate sloping topography. Red Mountain contains ideal habitat for willow flycatcher, mule deer, upland game birds, and waterfowl. The Property ranges from 6,800 feet at both the northwest corner and the southwest corners to the top of the mountain at 7,896 feet. The Property is unimproved except for several dirt roads.

The Property is in the headwaters of Prosser Creek, immediately above ecologically rich Carpenter and Euer valleys. Acquiring Red Mountain is critical to protecting the health of these immense meadow and riparian systems and to enhancing the condition, connectivity, and climate resiliency of wildlife habitat in this highly biodiverse region of the Sierra Nevada. The Property is a checkerboard square of upland habitat in the Truckee River headwaters. Its acquisition will remove the threats of subdivision, residential development and associated road building, and continued commercial timber harvest. Under TDLT ownership, the Property will be managed to protect and enhance wildlife habitat and water resources, and to provide compatible public recreation.

The Property contains a variety of habitat types including wetland, riverine, and fen habitat types, as well as high-elevation, mixed-conifer forest including red fir and Jeffrey pine. The Property supports wildlife species including black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, and various bird species and is summer range for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd. Several special status species may occur on the Property including willow flycatcher, wolverine, and Pacific fisher. Conservation of this Property will protect a valuable landscape from development, maintain habitat corridors, preserve views, and keep it available for a variety of outdoor recreation activities popular in the Truckee-Donner area.

The Property is also an essential component of a 2,914-acre Campaign to Protect Frog Lake, Red Mountain and Carpenter Ridge, a landscape-level conservation effort being implemented by TDLT, TPL, and TNC, working together as part of the Northern Sierra Partnership. Since the 1990s, these conservation organizations have worked together and with other conservation organizations, public agencies, and local landowners to acquire high-priority parcels of land and consolidate land ownership, thus allowing for comprehensive management of the landscape for wildlife habitat, forest health, natural water storage, water quality, and public recreation. In that time, more than 150,000 acres have been protected in the Northern Sierra, including 38,000 acres in the Truckee River watershed.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property, or rights in real property, on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property, or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with the acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP) then transmitted to WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This Project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

The Property enhances habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. The Property will expand the protection of wildlife linkages and provide

ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

Goal A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW.

The Property is listed in the CDFW Sierra Valley-Truckee Conservation Corridor CAPP as a priority acquisition, which will enhance a permanently protected wildlife movement corridor.

Goal E.1 – Maximize expenditures of remaining bond funds and identify opportunities to leverage existing funds as effectively as possible.

The Property is proposed to be acquired with WCB funds leveraged by matching funds from an additional funding source.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 1.6 – Collaboratively identify and fund upper watershed improvement projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of providing resilience to climate change.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
TDLT will own and manage the Property. There is an existing network of trails which the public uses. In the future, TDLT may pursue opportunities to improve the existing trail system by adding new trails, dedicated trailheads, and signage, both directional and interpretive. Vehicular access to the property will be restricted to TDLT staff and contractors for administrative purposes.

TERMS
The Property is being acquired as part of a 2,233± acre acquisition from one landowner. The proportionate value of this acquisition is $1,590,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

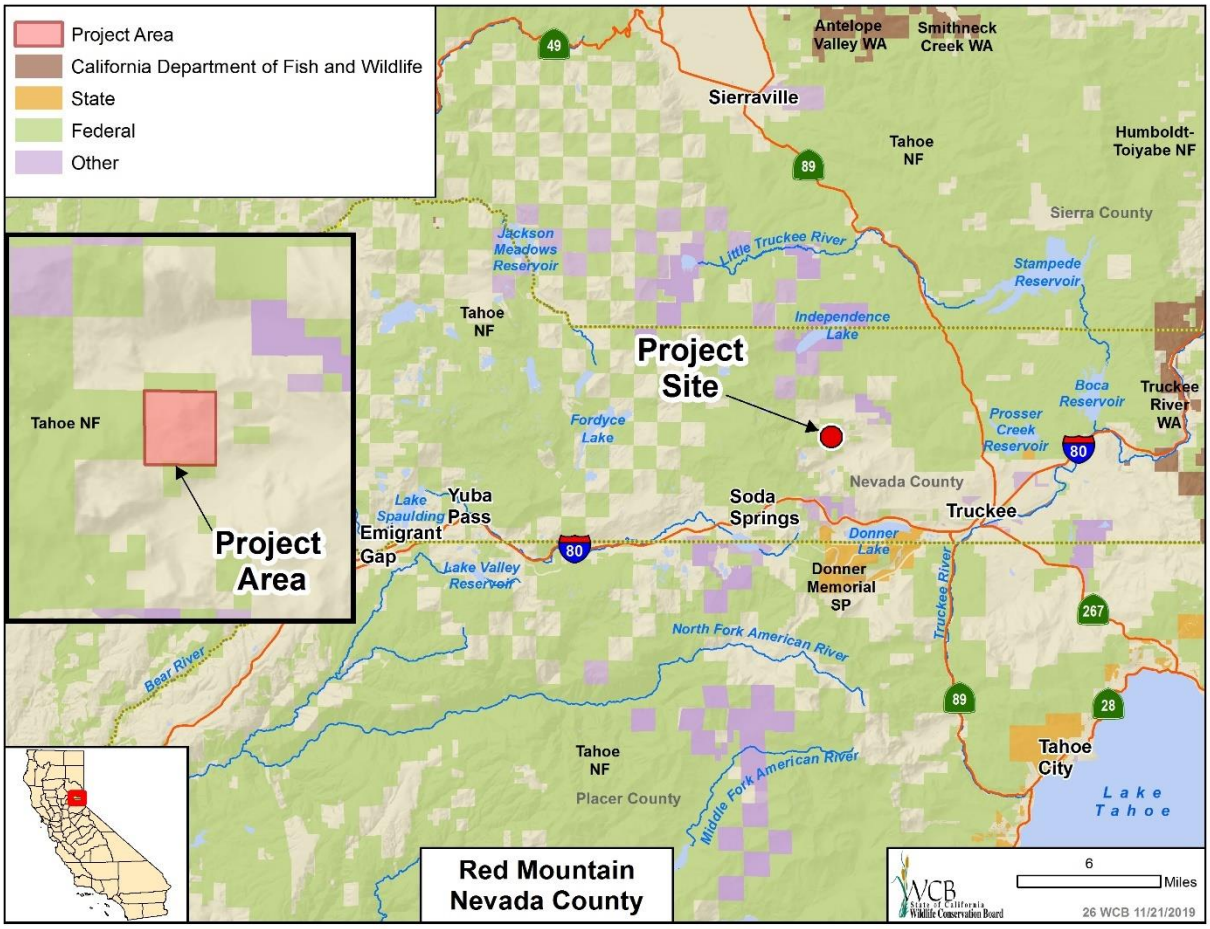
PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	$1,400,000
Private Funds	$190,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$1,590,000

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d).]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $1,400,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018, (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d); for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Tahoe NF
Project Area
Project Site
Antelope Valley WA
Smithneck Creek WA
Sierraville
Tahoe NF
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF
Sierra County
Jackson Meadows Reservoir
Little Truckee River
Stampede Reservoir
Independence Lake
Boca Reservoir
Truckee River WA
Prosser Creek Reservoir
Fordyce Lake
Nevada County
Lake Spaulding
Yuba Pass
Emigrant Gap
Soda Springs
Truckee
Donner Lake
Lake Valley Reservoir
Donner Memorial SP
Truckee River
North Fork American River
Bear River
Tahoe City
Lake Tahoe
Placer County
Middle Fork American River
Red Mountain
Nevada County
6
Miles
26 WCB 11/21/2019

28. Upper Truckee River Marsh Restoration
El Dorado County
$2,980,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) for a cooperative project with CDFW, USACE, and USFS to restore 261 acres of wetland habitat owned by CTC in South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County.

LOCATION

The Upper Truckee River Marsh (Marsh) Restoration project is the largest river and wetland restoration project in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Marsh formed where the Upper Truckee River, which drains the largest watershed within the Lake Tahoe Basin, meets the southern shore of Lake Tahoe. The Marsh is situated in the city of South Lake Tahoe, adjacent to the Tahoe Keys residential development and marina.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Development, logging, livestock grazing, roads, gravel mining, and fire suppression have greatly altered the Upper Truckee River and compromised its habitat value and ecological function. For example, construction of the Tahoe Keys residential development bifurcated the Marsh, filled approximately 700 acres of wetland habitat, and realigned the Upper Truckee River channel to follow a single, straighter channel. These changes disconnected the Upper Truckee River from its floodplain and network of side channels and lagoons, thereby disrupting what had been the largest functioning wetland and marsh in the Sierra Nevada. As a result, water quality deteriorated, groundwater levels dropped, and meadow vegetation in the Marsh declined.

Over decades, CTC acquired the properties that comprise the project area and developed restoration plans for the Marsh and the lower reach of the Upper Truckee River. In 2015, the CTC Board certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project which will enhance 250 acres of marsh habitat by returning Upper Truckee River flows to relict channels and create 11 acres of wetland habitat by regrading a portion of a marina. The Upper Truckee River is largely disconnected from its floodplain (the altered channel is incised and flows rarely overtop its banks), but the Marsh restoration project will restore hydrologic processes such that the river will reconnect with its floodplain during typical spring snowmelt flows.

This Marsh restoration project is the keystone to a >$100M interagency strategy to restore the lower nine miles of the Upper Truckee River, which is the largest contributor of fine sediment pollution degrading Lake Tahoe water clarity. SWAP states that the effects of climate change on vegetation, wildlife, and water resources will be most pronounced in the Sierra Nevada. CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) tool indicates that the Marsh is an important climate refugia location because it exhibits high biodiversity and high climate resilience. Implementing this Marsh restoration project will improve water quality entering

Lake Tahoe, raise local groundwater levels, increase meadow wetness, enhance wetland vegetation, sequester greenhouse gas, increase habitat resiliency, eradicate aquatic invasive plants, and improve wildlife habitat. In addition, CTC will construct a universal access trail to Lake Tahoe that will provide educational signage and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The project implementation has two distinct approaches, but both have similar implementation methodologies. While the pilot channel element employs a more passive approach, the Sailing Lagoon portion is a more direct, active approach to restoration. While the approaches are different, the methods of completing the construction are similar.

The pilot channel element involves constructing approximately 1,400 feet of new channel that will connect the current channel to a network of over 13,000 feet of relict channels in the center of the Marsh. The project will not dictate what happens to Upper Truckee River flows once they enter the relict channels, rather the relict channels will naturally adjust to the geomorphic setting. The basis of this strategy is that historical hydrological conditions created this network of channels and simply rewetting the channels will allow the natural processes and functions of the Marsh to occur.

The Sailing Lagoon element involves direct construction methods to restore heavily impacted areas that were formerly wetlands. The areas in and around the Sailing Lagoon were directly manipulated by the development of the Tahoe Keys. The Tahoe Keys developer filled portions to create areas to develop condominiums and dredged other areas to construct a marina. The restoration strategy is to construct a steel, sheet pile bulkhead across an arm of the Tahoe Keys marina. CTC will fill this portion of the marina with the adjacent fill material and hydrologically reconnect it to the Marsh. CTC will convert this entire area back to wetland.

While the two restoration approaches have differences, they have similar construction methodologies. The project contractor will use heavy equipment to construct project elements. Project activities will include tree removal, clearing and grubbing, temporary road construction, vegetation salvage, grading, a temporary bridge, revegetation, and irrigation. Newly restored areas will be isolated and protected until vegetation has established.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Forest Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of promoting the protection, restoration, or improvement of upper watershed lands in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountains, including forest lands, meadows, wetlands, chaparral, and riparian habitat.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB’s Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

This project will accomplish Goal B.1 by restoring high-elevation wetland habitat.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.6 – Collaboratively identify and fund upper watershed improvement projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of providing resilience to climate change.

Objective SI 2.3 – Implement projects that enhance stream flow, increase water resiliency and meet priorities in the California Water Action Plan.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.1 – Invest in acquisition or restoration projects that have a demonstrated and measurable upper watershed ecosystem services benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project is located entirely on state land owned by CTC without any easements or encumbrances. Over the last 35 years, CTC has owned and managed over 6,000 acres. CTC will prepare and implement a Maintenance Manual specific to the project. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project CTC does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB funds*	Total Cost
Project Management	$150,000	$350,066	$500,066
Restoration	$2,830,000	$7,024,000	$9,854,000
Monitoring	-	$250,000	$250,000
TOTAL	$2,980,000	$7,624,066	$10,604,066

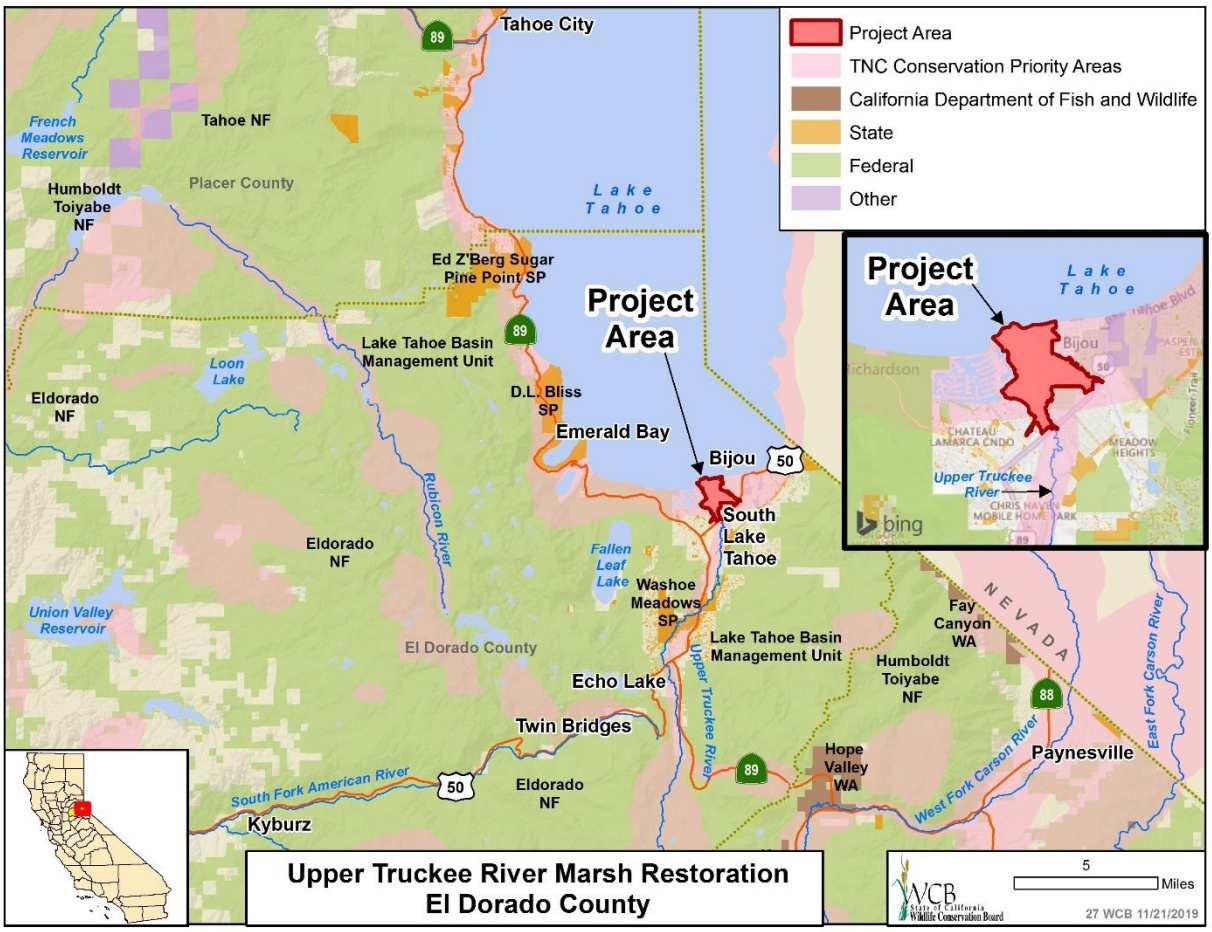
*Non-WCB funding sources include contributions from CDFW ($1,700,066), USACE ($350,000), USFS ($450,000), and CTC ($5,124,000).

Project costs include habitat restoration, construction management, environmental compliance, monitoring, and adaptive management.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Section 80132(f) which provides funding for the development, rehabilitation, restoration, acquisition and protection of habitat that accomplishes one or more of the following objectives: promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, or implements the recommendations of the California Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA COMPLIANCE
CTC, as lead agency, prepared an EIR for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $2,980,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Fund, Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
TNC Conservation Priority Areas
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Tahoe City
Tahoe NF
French Meadows Reservoir
Placer County
Humboldt Toiyabe NF
Lake Tahoe
Ed Z'Berg Sugar Pine Point SP
Project Area
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Loon Lake
Eldorado NF
D.L. Bliss SP
Emerald Bay
Bijou
50
Rubicon River
Eldorado NF
Fallen Leaf Lake
Washoe Meadows SP
South Lake Tahoe
Union Valley Reservoir
El Dorado County
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Fay Canyon WA
NEVADA
Humboldt Toiyabe NF
Echo Lake
Upper Truckee River
88
East Fork Carson River
Twin Bridges
Hope Valley WA
Paynesville
West Fork Carson River
South Fork American River
50
Eldorado NF
89
Kyburz
Upper Truckee River Marsh Restoration
El Dorado County
5
Miles
27 WCB 11/21/2019
Project Area
Lake Tahoe
Bijou
Upper Truckee River
bing

27. Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project
Contra Costa County
$1,250,000

This proposal is to consider an allocation to the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) for a cooperative project with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to restore up to 400 acres of coastal wetlands and adjacent habitats at the mouth of Walnut Creek and its tributary, Pacheco Creek, to provide climate change adaptation and resilience benefits to ecosystems deemed moderately or highly vulnerable to climate change.

LOCATION

The project area is located approximately 3 miles east of the city of Martinez, along the lowest 2.5 miles of Walnut Creek and 1.5 miles of Pacheco Creek. Land use in the project area is primarily industrial and open space. The project area is traversed by two railroads and Waterfront Road. The Tesoro Martinez Refinery is located on a promontory along the east side of Walnut Creek. Properties along the west bank of Walnut Creek include several landfills, the Conco contractor yard, the Martinez Gun Club, and other industrial land uses. The northern part of the site, north of Waterfront Road, is open space. Central Contra Costa Sanitary District operates an outfall pipeline which runs from south to north through the project area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

San Francisco Bay has lost 80 percent of its historic tidal wetlands. In the areas immediately adjacent to Walnut Creek, 85 percent of the historic tidal wetland has been lost. This reduction in tidal habitat threatens native marsh-dependent fish and wildlife species including special status species such as salmonids, salt marsh harvest mouse, Ridgway's rail, and California black rail, as well as affected plant species such as Mason's lilaeopsis, Delta tule pea, and Suisun Marsh aster. This project will restore a portion of the estuarine wetlands that have suffered large historic losses. The project addresses regional targets set by planning efforts such as the Baylands Ecosystem Goals Project, that call for tidal marsh restoration to reach a total of 100,000 acres.

The Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project will restore and enhance coastal wetlands to benefit native and special status species while also providing for sustainable flood management, public access and recreation. The project will advance regional objectives for restoration of tidal wetlands and adjacent habitats (for example USFWS 2013, Goals Project 2016) and, importantly, will do so in a way that is highly adaptable and resilient to future climate change. The project design takes advantage of regionally rare, site-specific opportunities for increasing adaptation and resilience such as undeveloped higher elevation areas, proximity to watershed supply of fresh water and sediments, and adjacency to large natural marshes. The project will remove barriers to tidal connectivity along two miles of the Walnut Creek and Pacheco Creek channels. The project will restore and enhance approximately 250 acres of brackish tidal marsh and tidal channel, 32 acres of non-tidal pickleweed marsh, 54 acres of transitional habitat such as

seasonal wetlands and grasslands and enhance approximately 40 acres of upland habitat. The project approach anticipates gradual encroachment of the estuary under sea level rise and is designed to provide high ecological value and function through the 21st century.

The project area is divided into three reaches for planning and design purposes; the South Reach, Middle Reach, and North Reach.

- The South Reach consists of tidal brackish marsh along Walnut Creek and an adjacent poorly drained basin separated from the creek by flood control levees. Walnut Creek is channelized, confined by a ridge on the east and flood control levees to the west. Remnants of the extensive historic tidal marshes still exist behind the flood protection levees; however, they are poorly drained and disconnected from the tides. These diked marshes contain patches of un-vegetated salt flats, stressed and low productivity pickleweed marsh, and seasonal wetland vegetation intermixed with non-native upland vegetation. Pacheco Creek is bordered by tidal brackish marsh and constrained by flood protection levees on both sides.

- The Middle Reach similarly consists of tidal brackish marsh with an adjacent, poorly drained basin that is separated from the creek by flood control levees. This reach will be implemented at a later phase of the project.

- The North Reach is located at the mouth of Walnut Creek. This part of the project site is subdivided by a number of remnant berms and dikes originally used to contain material dredged from the creek mouth. The North Reach was previously used for disposal of clean dredged material, creating a topographic high area up to approximately 12 feet above the surrounding tidal marsh. The remnant dikes create a series of poorly drained basins that support a similar range of plant communities as found in the diked marshes of the South and Middle reaches. The North Reach contains and abuts extensive tidal brackish marsh outside of the berms and dikes.

The District is requesting funding from WCB's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program to fund construction of the South and North Reaches.

Restoration will be accomplished by breaching and lowering levees and berms to reintroduce the tides to diked former baylands, constructing new setback levees for flood protection, and grading filled areas to create new tidal channels, tidal wetland, and lowland terrestrial areas. The project includes a pre-construction program of invasive plant species control, onsite propagation of native plant material, and revegetation with native plant species.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program and meets the program's goal of providing for climate adaptation and resiliency projects that will result in enduring benefits to wildlife.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

The project will provide climate refugia for marsh-dependent species by creating upslope areas for habitat migration under variable (+2ft and +5ft) sea-level rise scenarios, by means of converting diked seasonal wetlands to tidal wetlands and enhancing adjacent uplands.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following priorities outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 1.4 – Invest in projects that provide long-term measurable carbon sequestration benefits.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The overall goal of maintenance and management of the site is to promote the long-term trajectory of the site in providing functions and services associated with the restored habitats. The approach to adaptive management of the project will be to conduct regular site visits and monitor selected characteristics to determine the stability of the site and ongoing trends in physical and biological processes. Unexpected trends in the biological or morphological characteristics of the site will require examination to determine if they are compromising the goals and objectives of the site. Further details on adaptive management strategies will be developed in association with the development and finalization of the project design.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB funds*
Site Preparation	$1,467,940	-	$1,467,940
Earthwork	$4,113,390	$1,250,000	$5,363,390
Access Improvements	$328,520	-	$328,520
Utility Relocations	$1,222,325	-	$1,222,325
Revegetation	$1,455,429	-	$1,455,429
TOTAL	**$8,587,604**	**$1,250,000**	**$9,837,604**

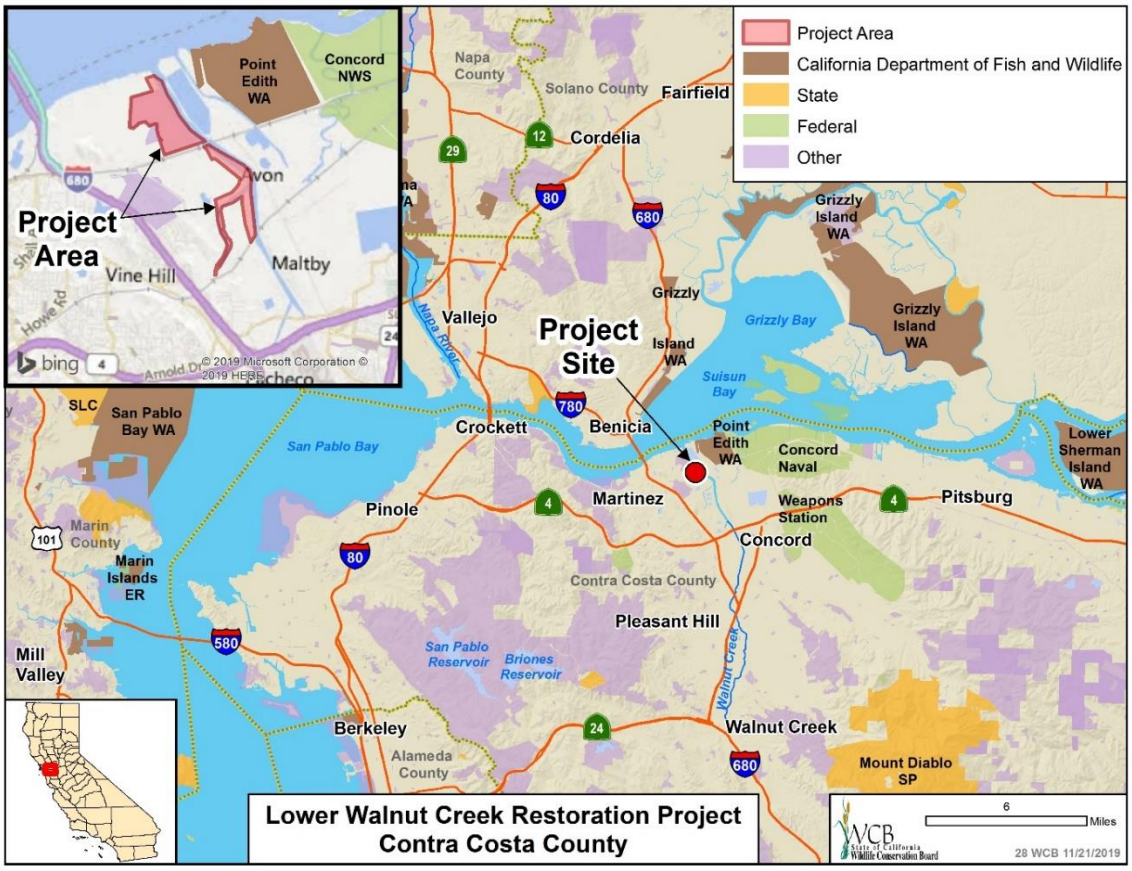
*Non-WCB funding sources include contributions from the grantee, and from the USEPA San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund.

Project costs will be applied to the earthwork necessary for removing barriers to tidal connectivity to restore brackish tidal marsh habitat on the project site during the project's active life.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017, which provides funding for the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems to provide climate change adaptation and resilience, assist natural and working lands managers in adapting to and becoming more resilient to climate change, facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in natural and working lands, and provide additional social, economic, and environmental benefits, or "co-benefits". [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017.]

CEQA COMPLIANCE
The District prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings; approve this project as proposed; allocate $1,250,000 from the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Fund under the General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Point Edith WA
Concord NWS
Project Area
Vine Hill
Maltby
Project Site
Napa County
Solano County
Fairfield
Cordelia
Vallejo
Grizzly
Grizzly Island WA
Grizzly Bay
Suisun Bay
Benicia
Crockett
San Pablo Bay
San Pablo Bay WA
SLC
Point Edith WA
Concord Naval Weapons Station
Lower Sherman Island WA
Martinez
Pinole
Pitsburg
Concord
Marin County
Marin Islands ER
Contra Costa County
Pleasant Hill
Mill Valley
San Pablo Reservoir
Briones Reservoir
Walnut Creek
Berkeley
Alameda County
Mount Diablo SP
Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project
Contra Costa County
6
Miles
28 WCB 11/21/2019

28. Deadman II Forest Resilience Project
Santa Cruz County
$885,500

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League for a cooperative project with Peninsula Open Space Trust and Sempervirens Fund to restore 552 acres of redwood and upland hardwood forests in the Deadman Gulch Restoration Reserve portion of the San Vicente Redwoods property situated in Santa Cruz County.

LOCATION
San Vicente Redwoods is a privately-owned, mixed-use open space, approximately 10 miles northwest of Santa Cruz, that protects 8,532 acres of woodlands and contributes to an almost 70,000-acre habitat complex in the Santa Cruz Mountains. This property protects portions of four coastal watersheds, including Laguna Creek and San Vicente Creek drainages which provide drinking water for Santa Cruz and the Town of Davenport, respectively. In 2011, WCB contributed $10,060,000 to Save the Redwoods League for purchase of a conservation easement over San Vicente Redwoods.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The current, degraded forest condition in Deadman Gulch is largely a result of clearcut logging practices in the 1900s and the Pine Mountain Fire of 1948 which altered forest community composition and shifted the forest structure from large, widely spaced old growth trees to smaller, dense regrowth. These changed conditions impair wildlife habitat, increase risk of catastrophic fire, and reduce habitat resilience.

Together, the landowners (Peninsula Open Space Trust and Sempervirens Fund) and easement holder (Save the Redwoods League) comprise the Conservation Partners for the San Vicente Redwoods property. The Conservation Partners adopted a Conservation Vision and Conservation Plan for the property, which identifies the 2,733-acre Deadman Gulch Restoration Reserve area as a restoration priority within the property.

The proposed project seeks to restore the forest communities in Deadman Gulch by selectively thinning regrowth in favor of fewer, healthier trees that should be more resilient in the face of climate change, improve habitat for sensitive species (e.g., marbled murrelet), and increase carbon sequestration overall. This project builds on a previous phase (Deadman I) that implemented similar forest restoration work on 110 acres of the Deadman Gulch Restoration Reserve.

The proposed project would apply the following treatments depending on location and forest community type:

- Improve redwood stand health by removing select trees and leaving fewer, larger redwoods in place.

- Improve connectivity among isolated redwood groves by removing over-abundant, intervening hardwoods.

- Favor Douglas-fir regrowth by thinning encroaching hardwoods and plant Douglas-fir seedlings where they have been displaced.

- Enhance hardwood stands by thinning trees around exceptional tanoak trees.

- Promote large hardwood trees in upland areas by removing over-abundant woody vegetation, Douglas-fir, and small hardwood trees.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Forest Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of promoting the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests for all their public benefits through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitat for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
The project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

This project will accomplish Goal B.1 by advancing restoration of degraded woodlands and forests, which should help ameliorate effects of climate change, improve water quality, and increase carbon sequestration, and support native biodiversity that depends on this limited habitat type.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.4 – Invest in projects that provide long-term measurable carbon sequestration benefits.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.1 – Invest in acquisition or restoration projects that have a demonstrated and measurable upper watershed ecosystem services benefit.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The Conservation Partners for San Vicente Redwoods adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of

the Deadman Gulch Restoration Reserve. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, Save the Redwoods League does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the grant agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB funds*
Pre-Treatment	$232,581	$43,000	$189,581
Culverts and Temporary Bridges	$100,000	$100,000	-
Treatment	$787,500	$687,500	$100,000
Post-Treatment	$55,000	$55,000	-
TOTAL	$1,175,081	$885,500	$289,581

*Non-WCB funding sources include contributions from Save the Redwoods League, Peninsula Open Space Trust, and Sempervirens Fund.

Project costs include:

- Pre-Treatment (e.g., site planning, monitoring)
- Culverts and Temporary Bridges
- Treatment (e.g., develop and administer contract for project treatments)
- Post-Treatment (e.g., monitor and evaluate project effects)

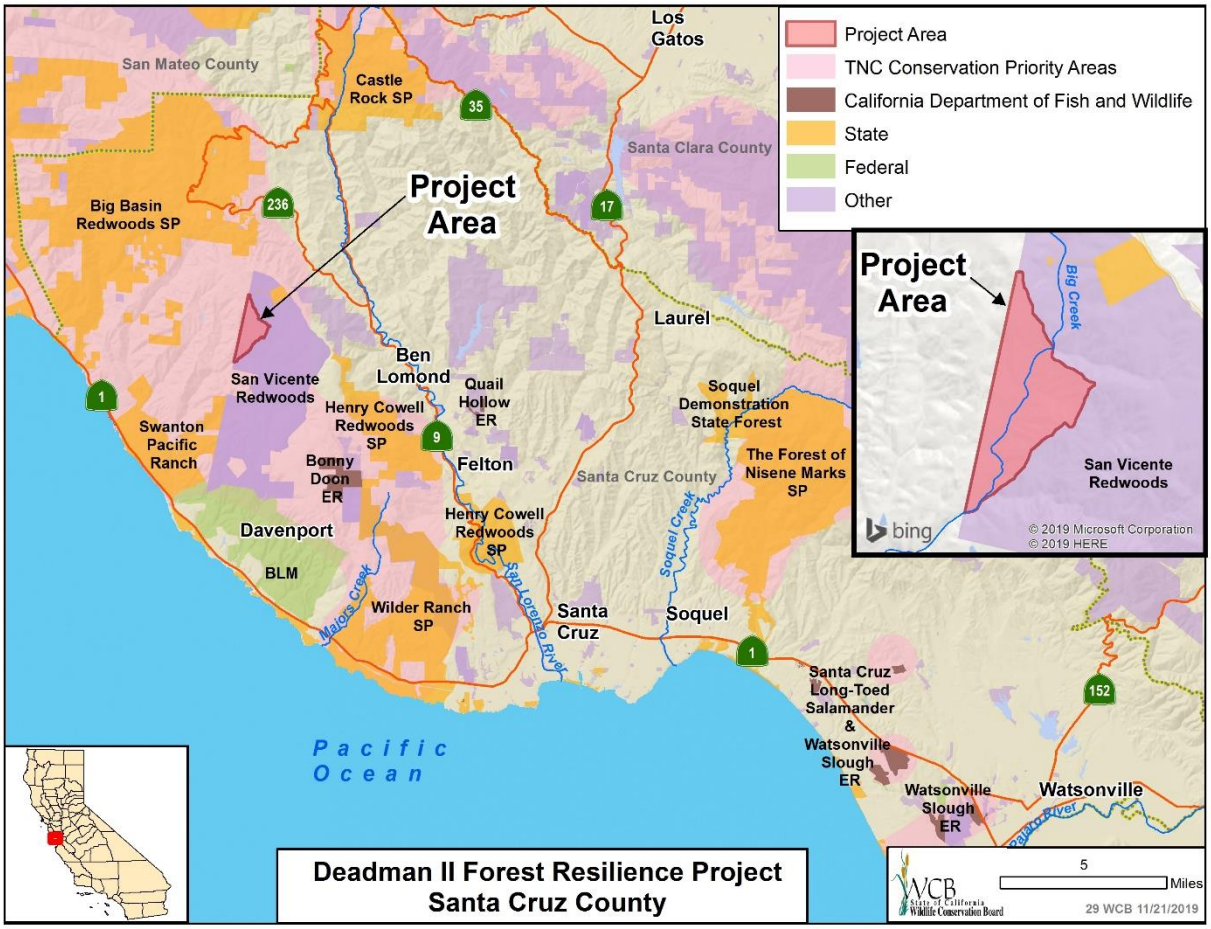
FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a), which provide funding for the development, rehabilitation, restoration, acquisition and protection of habitat that accomplishes one or more of the following objectives: promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, or implements the recommendations of the California Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
CAL FIRE, as lead agency, prepared a Timber Harvest Plan for the project under a certified state regulatory program pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the THP and has prepared

proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed the proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $885,500 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



29. San Joaquin River Parkway, Milburn Pond CEQA and Pond Isolation Design Fresno County
$622,512

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to DWR for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) and CDFW to complete environmental review for gravel pit isolation from the San Joaquin River, river floodplain improvements, and potential future public access, and to complete design for gravel pit isolation on the 303± acre Milburn Pond and 14± acre Hansen Farm properties of the CDFW San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve (SJRER) located within Fresno city limits approximately four miles upstream of State Route 99 in Fresno County.

LOCATION
The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is defined by state law as approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two-mile-long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and SR 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources, and provide educational and recreational opportunities to local communities. The SJRC mission includes providing public access and restoring habitat within the Parkway.

In the 1950s and 1960s the Milburn Pond area was subject to aggregate mining, which resulted in large, water-filled gravel pits separated from the river by berms. In 1988, CDFW acquired the Milburn Pond property, including the pits comprising the pond and the land immediately surrounding the pond, and incorporated the site into the SJRER. CDFW pumped water out of the pits, recontoured the bottom, and constructed wildlife habitat islands. Pumping was subsequently discontinued, allowing the pits to fill with water, encircling the islands and creating shallow water habitat. In 1999, CDFW also acquired a portion of the privately-owned Hansen Farm, northeast and just upstream of the Milburn property and formerly used for agricultural production. Together, the Milburn and Hansen properties comprise the project site.

Between 1995 and 1997, San Joaquin River flood flows breached the berm between the river and Milburn Pond, causing inundation of the islands and shallow water habitat and impacting river hydraulics and sediment transport in the vicinity of the breaches. Additionally, warm water, non-native fish species in the pond gained access to the river. These non-native species are predators of riverine, native cold-water species, such as salmon. Since 2014, spring-run Chinook salmon have been reintroduced to the San Joaquin River through the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP), beginning with fish raised at the Feather River Hatchery and enhanced with spring-run Chinook salmon raised at the interim Salmon Conservation and Research Facility (iSCARF) at the San Joaquin Hatchery on the San Joaquin River. For the first time in 2018, all spring-run Chinook salmon releases have occurred from iSCARF.

When the breaches occurred, members of the public fishing by boat were able to access Milburn Pond from the river. Prior to that time, fishing was not permitted on the pond because CDFW established the SJRER to conserve riparian vegetation and associated native wildlife. The SJRER does allow for non-commercial fishing by boat where designated by CDFW (California Code of Regulations Section 630(e)(25) and (h)(30)). Visitor uses at CDFW Ecological Reserves are dependent upon both applicable laws and a determination by the Fish and Game Commission that opening an area to visitor use is consistent with the designated purposes of the property. Boating access became passively permissible on Milburn Pond after berm breaches connected it to the river, a federally designated navigable waterway (Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations Part 329).

The Milburn property is located at the northern edge of the city of Fresno at the end of a wide public street. The property also is just west of the Bluff Point Golf Center, a leased public use on SJRC property. The Milburn property is disturbed with topography that has been affected by mining and berm breaching. Riparian vegetation grows around the edge of the pond. The CDFW Hansen Farm property also borders the river but is not separated from it by berms. Topography on the Hansen Farm property ranges from sparsely vegetated flat to gently undulating areas that may indicate a history of gravel mining activity.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The proposed Milburn Pond CEQA and Pond Isolation Design Project (Project) includes completion of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review and design to isolate gravel pits comprising Milburn Pond from the San Joaquin River and to conceptually address floodplain improvements along the river adjacent to the Milburn Pond and Hansen properties (collectively, the Property) and potential future public access improvements at Milburn Pond once the pond is isolated from the river. DWR will act as the CEQA lead agency. The project also includes completion of design for gravel pit isolation so that DWR may initiate a project to improve the berm once the project is complete.

SJRRP has the stated goal of maintaining fish populations, including re-introduced salmon, in good condition in the main stem of the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam. The SJRRP identifies DWR as a party to its implementation and includes isolating or filling gravel pits as one of its highest priorities. SJRC, CDFW, and DWR have identified the need to reconstruct a stable berm across the breached areas between Milburn Pond and the river, create floodplains and improve river flows, and restore native riparian vegetation along the reconstructed berm and floodplains to provide habitat for re-introduced native salmonids and other wildlife. DWR has identified the Hansen Farm as a borrow site for a portion of the materials it will use to reconstruct the berm. Subsequently, DWR will restore the borrow site to river floodplain habitat.

Additionally, habitat restoration and public access at the Milburn property are high priorities for both Parkway development and the SJRRP. CDFW supports the evaluation of potential future public access at Milburn Pond, though any

improvements for public use will require evaluation of impacts to the SJRER during CEQA review and a future public process with the California Fish and Game Commission to address required changes to the California Code of Regulations sections that update its purpose and uses.

The proposed project is comprised of several major tasks including:

- *Project Management*. DWR will direct and manage all aspects of the scope of work below as well as, tracking budgets and funding expenditures, scheduling, and reviewing plans, specifications, and related project documents. DWR will fund all project management activities as cost share.

- *Meetings and Reporting*. DWR coordination with CDFW and the SJRC will take the form of an interactive reporting, meeting, and response process throughout the project. Additionally, DWR will prepare a final design report including a summary of engineering and design and a complete set of the project plans.

- *Environmental Review and Permitting*. DWR will serve as the Lead Agency under CEQA and anticipates completing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that evaluates berm and floodplain improvements and assesses the potential for future public access. DWR will fully describe and analyze berm improvement and pond isolation and will conceptually address the floodplain improvement and public access components. As part of the environmental analysis, DWR will complete wetland delineations and resources evaluations, and will identify permits necessary for implementation.

- *Certification of Real Estate Requirements*: In coordination with CDFW, SJRC, and WCB, DWR will address real estate questions previously identified during preliminary design. DWR will provide legal descriptions, analysis and mapping services, and verify real property rights for parcels pertinent to implementation of the project.

- *Final Design*: DWR will complete the design phase for the berm improvement and pond isolation stage including engineering plans and specifications, and design-related surveys and data collection.

WCB PROGRAM
WCB assists with the administration of project funding for the SJRC. WCB, represented by its Executive Director, holds a position on the 15-member SJRC Board along with CDFW, represented by the Central Region's Regional Manager. The SJRC Board reviews and approves projects to ensure they are viable and consistent with the goals of the current SJRC Parkway Master Plan Update (2018), prior to consideration by WCB. The SJRC Board approved this project and its submittal to WCB on September 25, 3019.

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries

restoration, restoration of threatened and endangered species habitats, and in-stream restoration projects.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands.

- Provide planning for restoration of wetlands and riparian habitat, which will improve water quality and support native biodiversity and wildlife corridors, and

- Enhance and expand water resources for fish and wildlife.

Additionally, the project meets numerous objectives of the Parkway Master Plan Update and the SJRRP. Several specific goals of the Master Plan Update supported by the project include the following:

- Fundamental Goal (FG) 1. Preserve and restore a riparian and floodplain corridor of statewide and regional significance along the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to State Route 99.

- FG 2. Conserve wildlife species that depend on the river environmental.

- SJRRP Goal 1. Coordinate and cooperate with the SJRRP to ensure efficiency and develop projects that meet mutual objectives.

- Habitat Conservation and Management Goal 2. Conserve, enhance, restore, and maintain contiguous and continuous native riparian, wetland, and upland habitat on public lands and conservation easements for wildlife movement and refuge.

- Floodplain and Water Resource Management Goal 3. Conserve, improve, and manage lands and natural resources in the Parkway to facilitate more reliable water supplies; restore important species and habitat; and contribute to a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Repairing and improving the berm between Milburn Pond and the San Joaquin River and improving the riverside floodplain are critical components to restoring the river and reintroducing native salmonids to the river reach just downstream of Friant Dam. DWR has the engineering expertise and ability to collect current scientific and real estate data to complete CEQA analysis for habitat improvements and public access and to complete planning documents for berm improvements. Completion of this project will provide the foundation to move forward with a future berm improvement project. The project is consistent with the Parkway Master Plan

Update and will not conflict with city of Fresno or Fresno County zoning or jurisdictions.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	DWR	Total Cost
Project Management	-	$282,000	$282,000
Meetings and Reporting	$10,000	$100,560	$110,560
CEQA	$15,000	$218,751	$233,751
Data Collection and Monitoring	$10,000	$67,000	$77,000
Certification of Real Estate Requirements	$152,920	$20,000	$172,920
Engineering and Design	$378,000	$15,000	$393,000
Contingency	$56,592	$70,331	$126,923
TOTAL	$622,512	$773,642	$1,396,154

Project costs include meetings and reporting, environmental review, and data collection and monitoring, real estate, engineering and design costs, and 10 percent contingency.

Prior to this project, DWR was awarded $458,000 in Proposition 1 funds to complete the Milburn Pond Habitat Restoration and Public Access Improvements Project for preliminary planning and design, completed in September 2019.

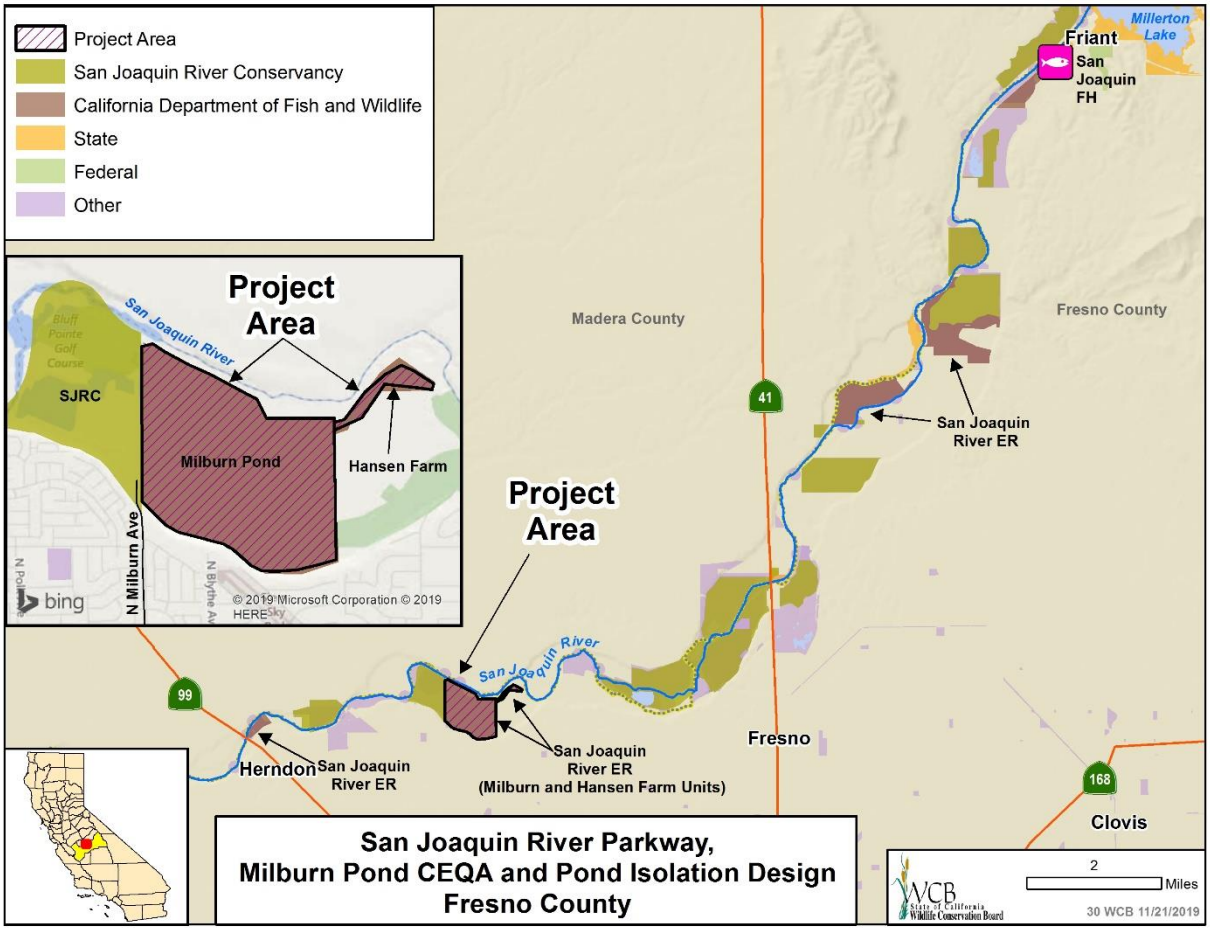
FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund [(Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5)], which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the SJRC.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The proposed project was recommended for funding by the SJRC Proposition 1 evaluation panel. The project was approved for submittal to WCB by the SJRC Board, which includes a representative with CDFW, on September 25, 2019 with the request that Proposition 40 funds be used to fund the project. The SJRC Board's decision to use funds other than Proposition 1 was based on the limited amount of Proposition 1 funds remaining for planning projects.

The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations,

Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262), as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $622,512 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund [(Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5)]; authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



30. Tricolored Blackbird Wetland Habitat Enhancement
Kern County
$719,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited (DU) for a cooperative project with USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USFWS, Audubon California (AC), and Lawrence Duck Club (LDC) to enhance wetlands that provide Tricolored Black Bird (TRBL) nesting habitat and waterfowl breeding habitat, located on privately owned land in Kern County.

LOCATION

The project is located within the LDC, which is composed of two properties in Kern County: Lawrence-East (LE) – 130 acres, approximately 2.25 miles east of Kern National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR), and Lawrence-DeLorenzo (LD) – 43 acres, adjacent to KNWR. Both tracts are managed as seasonal wetlands, hunted, and have semi-permanent emergent wetlands that are utilized by waterfowl and their broods. The properties are generally flat, with the exception of small levees that retain seasonal water in ponds, and swales to move water within ponds. The properties are adjacent to Poso Creek, a seasonal floodway that facilitates floodwaters of Poso Creek and Kern River.

Historically, LD was a pig farm before the current owners purchased the land in 2015, restored the wetlands and began managing it as a duck club. LE has been managed as a duck club since 1998, and the previous owners also used the property as a duck club intermittently for approximately 30 years.

No WCB projects have occurred on either property. The landowners have partnered with AC in the past and currently with the NRCS to manage water in the spring for TRBL. Both properties are protected by a USFWS conservation easement.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

TRBL are nearly endemic to the State of California, with the majority of the breeding population occurring in the Central Valley. Habitat loss, including wetland habitat and grassland habitat important to foraging, has led to long-term population declines across the Central Valley. TRBL numbered in the millions in the 1930s and nested in colonies of up to 250,000 adults. In 2017, the statewide survey documented approximately 178,000 TRBL, down from approximately 395,000 in 2008. With growing uncertainty about availability of water throughout the state, the wetland habitat that TRBL rely on for establishing nesting colonies is becoming scarce. As a result, many TRBL now utilize dairy farm silage fields for nesting, leading to direct conflict between harvesting of the silage and active nesting. In 2018, TRBL was designated as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. This designation emphasizes the importance to restore critical habitat as well as protect and enhance existing TRBL habitat throughout the Central Valley in support of the species' conservation.

Though more than 95 percent of historical wetlands across the Central Valley have been degraded, altered or lost, the Central Valley still supports up to 60 percent of the Pacific Flyway's waterfowl through intensively managed wetlands and associated agricultural habitats. The Central Valley consists of nine major basins, the Tulare Basin being the largest and one of the most critical for wetland reliant species, historically having more than 500,000 acres of wetlands. With the expansion of agriculture across the Central Valley, the Tulare Basin is left with less than one percent of its historic wetlands remaining. This loss of native wetlands has led wetland reliant species, such as ducks, geese and shorebirds, to utilize irrigated crop fields as alternative habitat. Growing human populations and new groundwater management regulations threaten this surrogate habitat, making it more necessary to protect, restore, and enhance any remaining wetlands in the Central Valley. With approximately two-thirds of remaining wetlands in private ownership, it is evident that supporting these landowners in protecting, restoring and enhancing wetland habitat is critical for the conservation of TRBL, waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds, collectively.

This project will increase seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands in the Tulare Basin for the benefit of TRBL and breeding waterfowl, two target groups/species in the Central Valley Joint Venture's (CVJV) Implementation Plan.

The project goal is to restore and enhance wetland habitat to encourage TRBL to nest on the duck clubs instead of on nearby agricultural fields in Kern County. Kern County agricultural lands have consistently supported 30,000 to 50,000 nesting TRBL over the past three years. KNWR and duck clubs manage their seasonal wetlands to attract wintering waterfowl, but drawdown most of their wetland units in spring to encourage growth of annual grasses and sedges. These drawdowns benefit migrating shorebirds and other waterbirds but are not ideal for nesting TRBL or breeding waterfowl. Nesting TRBL and waterfowl utilize semi-permanent wetlands that are flooded into July. This project will provide water from February through July to grow cattails and softstem bulrush, which are known to support TRBL colonies. By targeting duck clubs with existing brood ponds and improving water infrastructure, managers can provide habitat for both breeding waterfowl and TRBL. While the enhancement projects will be designed to target TRBL and breeding waterfowl, a suite of species is expected to benefit, including yellow-headed blackbird, white-faced ibis, least bittern, northern harrier, and western pond turtle.

The proposed project is a collaboration aimed at meeting two objectives: 1) providing spring TRBL nesting habitat, and 2) providing breeding waterfowl habitat on private wetlands in Kern County through water infrastructure improvements and installation of solar arrays. For the wetland enhancement at LD, a solar array will be installed at a pre-selected site. A sump will be constructed to collect all irrigation and drainage water. Water from the sump will be pumped out and re-circulated with a new tailwater pump. Re-circulated water will be pumped back into the existing semi-permanent wetland (brood pond) and into a newly constructed brood pond. The new brood pond will expand the wetland footprint by three acres. A solar

array and re-circulation system will provide irrigation during the summer months providing high quality wetland habitat for waterfowl, TRBL, and other waterbirds.

Vegetation management on the LD property will involve controlling non-native, invasive salt cedar through mechanical and/or chemical methods. Snags will be left to provide structure while the planted native plants grow to maturity. Container stock woody vegetation that can tolerate seasonal inundation such as cottonwoods, black willow, and buttonwillow will be planted.

The LE wetland enhancement will consist of installation of solar arrays and construction of a 58.5-acre, semi-permanent emergent wetland adjacent to Poso Creek. This wetland will be supplied with water by a new 12-inch, PVC pipeline from an existing well complementing the existing seasonal wetlands. Cost of electricity is the number one limiting factor for both tracts. The solar arrays will support the operation of the wells that supply water to maintain the semi-permanent wetlands managed for TRBL, waterfowl, and other waterbirds.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Inland Wetland Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400, et seq.) and meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
The project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

The project will enhance water resources for fish and wildlife.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The landowner, LDC, will maintain an interspersion of open water and emergent vegetation to be used by waterfowl and TRBL. LDC will follow the guidance for

wetland management in the documents: *Tricolored Blackbird Habitat Management Recommendations Matrix* developed by the Tricolored Blackbird Working Group and *Managing for Tricolored Blackbirds: Guidelines for Private Landowners and Agency Land Managers*, currently under development. These guidelines represent the best available science on habitat management for TRBL. TRBL nest in emergent wetland vegetation over four feet tall. In order to achieve this habitat condition, the landowner will mow, disk, and/or burn three to five-year-old vegetation to avoid thatched or decaying vegetation that cannot be used by TRBL. The landowners will mow, disk, and/or burn approximately one-fourth to one-third of the dense vegetation in the brood ponds at a time so that two-thirds to three-quarters is available to nesting TRBL in any given year.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the project improvements are not managed and maintained, the grant agreement requires DU to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

Project Task	WCB	Project Partners	Total Cost
Project Management & Monitoring	$163,776	$58,953	$222,729
Mobilization and Site Prep	$52,416	-	$52,416
Construction	$440,093	$217,296	$657,389
Contingencies	$62,715	-	$62,715
TOTAL	$719,000	$276,249	$995,249

**Project Partners include: LDC, AU, DU, NRCS, USFWS*

Project costs will be for project construction management, TRBL monitoring, site preparation, mobilization, earthmoving, lift pump and pipeline purchase and installation, solar array purchase and installation, water control structure purchase and installation, and revegetation of wetlands.

FUNDING SOURCE

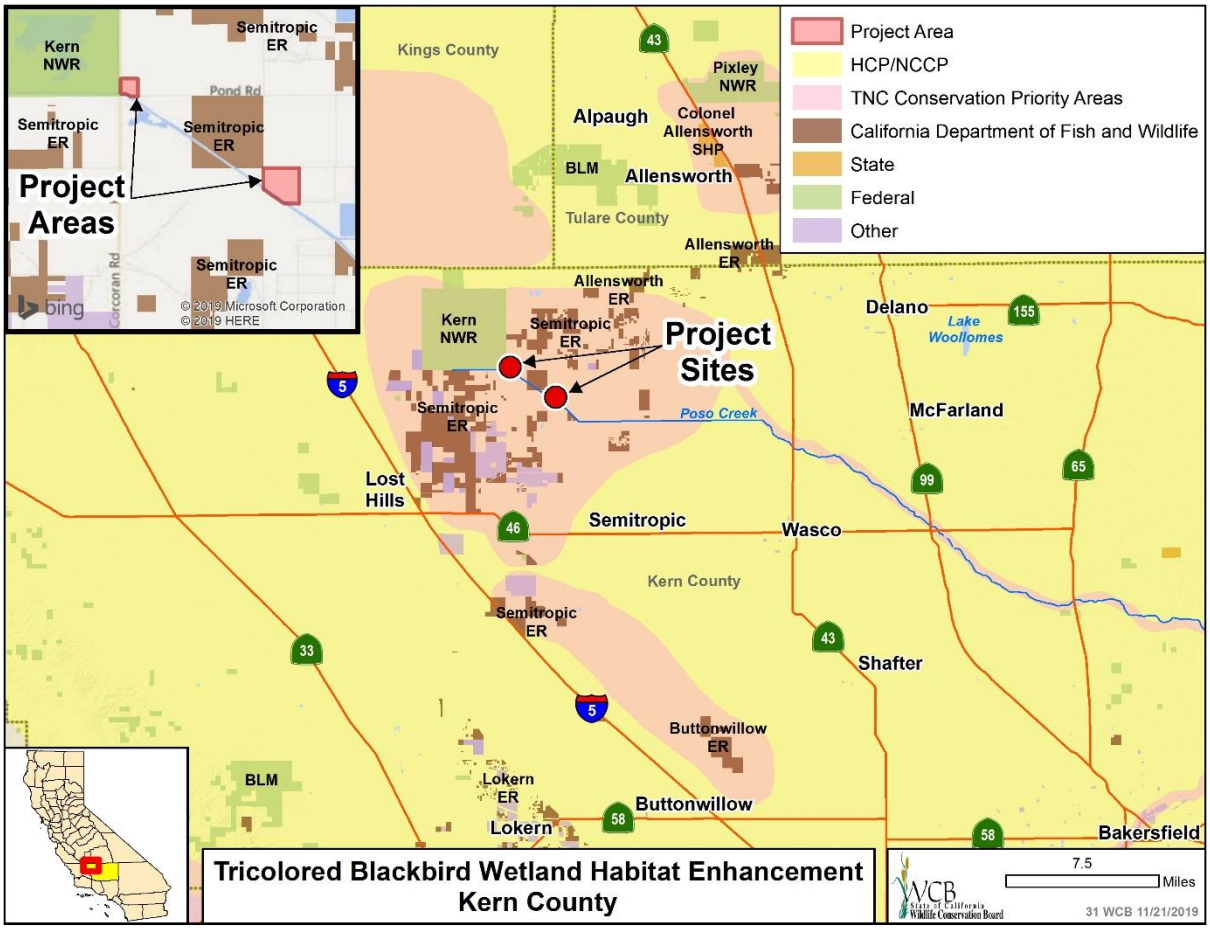
The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) and 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass outside the Central Valley.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land, water and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this

proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $719,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) and 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Inland Wetland Conservation Program; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



31. Campbell Ranch Conservation Easement
Santa Barbara County
$1,951,884

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (LTSBC) to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 118± acres of land to protect and preserve oak woodlands, grasslands, and habitat for the California tiger salamander (CTS).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is situated in northern Santa Barbara County, in the scenic coast range wine country just east of the community of Lompoc. Presently, this region supports large scale ranching, grape growing and winemaking activities. The area is also experiencing expansion of rural residential and rural ranchette development, as well as encroaching vineyards intensifying agricultural uses on lands historically used solely for grazing.

The general terrain of the vicinity and the Property is rolling hills, supporting oak woodlands, grasslands, and oak savanna habitat types. The surrounding area is characterized by a significant amount of widely dispersed developed rural homesteads along with large agricultural landscapes.

The Property is of ecological significance for oak woodlands and associated plant and animal populations found nearby and on the Property. Furthermore, the Property sits within the USFWS's Recovery Plan for CTS. CTS has been documented in the Property's stock ponds, and there are other known occurrences nearby.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is an undeveloped, irregularly shaped tract of land and has been managed as rangeland for many years with a well-developed network of interior access roads, stock ponds and improved springs. The topography of the Property varies from 380 to 940 feet above sea level with rolling to steeply sloping terrain and is predominantly grasslands or lightly forested with oaks and chaparral.

The purpose of the Easement is to allow for continued ranching practices and animal husbandry in a way that is compatible with protection of the Property's resource values. The Easement will prevent future subdivision and limit development of the Property, which would have a detrimental ecological effect. The Easement also protects CTS habitat, oak woodlands, and the associated species. Economic stimulus from ranching activities will still be allowed and have positive results for the region and local economies.

The parties to the Easement intend to extinguish the development rights and restrict the use of the ranch to rangelands. The terms of the Easement will allow for the maintenance of ranch infrastructure including fences, stock ponds and corals but will not allow any new homes. Species observed on the Property that will benefit from its protection include the following: a vast array of migratory birds

including birds of prey like Swainson's hawk, burrowing owl, golden eagle, bald eagle, and prairie falcon. Black bear, deer, bobcat, mountain lion, coyote, and rabbit are known to use the Property as well.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed grant is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to WCB's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outline goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

The project will protect rangelands and stock ponds utilized by CTS at various elevations. These ponds are of various depths and will allow for the migration of CTS between ponds during drought years.

Goal A.3 – Fund projects that support the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans, and recovery of listed species.

As noted, the Property is part of the Recovery Plan for the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of the California Tiger Salamander. The plan calls for the protection of critical CTS habitat and the protection of remaining connective corridors between breeding ponds.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following priorities outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Ensure 40 percent of all acquisition and restoration projects are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
Under the terms of the Easement, the landowners will be allowed to continue ranching in accordance with a Long-Term Management Plan, and all applicable state and federal laws, practices, guidelines, and regulations. LTSBC will hold, manage, and be responsible for the monitoring of the Easement in perpetuity per WCB grant terms. If this project is approved, a baseline report will be completed by the grantee and reviewed by WCB. The conservation easement deed permits access to the Property by both LTSBC and WCB staff for monitoring purposes.

TERMS
The Easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of $1,951,884. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the grant between WCB and LTSBC provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the Easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

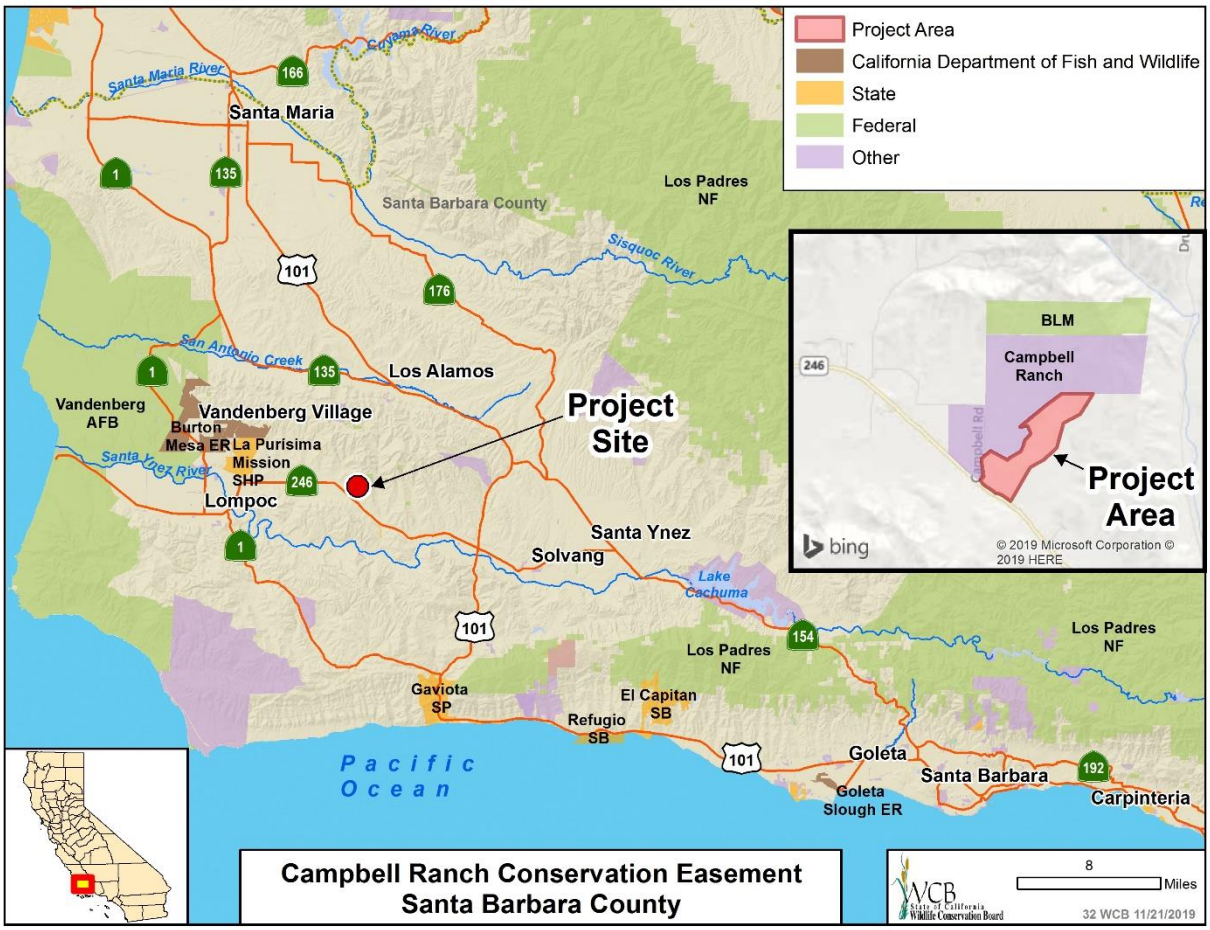
Partners	Amount
WCB	$1,951,884
TOTAL Purchase Price	$1,951,884

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species habitat promoting recovery of those species pursuant to Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c).

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $1,951,884 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c) for a grant to the LTSBC and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



32. Walker-Hearne Ranch
Ventura County
$2,991,605

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ventura Land Trust (VLT) to acquire 2,118± acres of land for the protection of threatened and endangered species and to provide future wildlife-oriented, public-use opportunities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located north of Foothill Road, five miles east of downtown Ventura. The Property is located south of the Los Padres National Forest and is located within the Santa Clara River CAPP. The CAPP supports a wide array of rare and endangered species in a significant biodiversity hotspot. Additionally, the Property is located within the Santa Clara River watershed and is part of the Santa Clara River Upper Watershed Conservation Plan and the Conservation Plan for the Lower Santa Clara River Watershed and Surrounding Area. The Santa Clara River flows roughly 86 miles from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean and is the second largest watershed in the South Coast.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property varies from flat to steep canyons with an elevation range from 400 to 1,736 feet above sea level which allows for species migration in response to climate change between the Santa Clara River watershed and the Ventura River watershed. Public access to the Property is from Foothill Road. This acquisition excepts out a surveyed five-acre mineral reserve area. The seller is retaining the mineral ownership and the right to extract the minerals under the five-acre site and VLT will solely fund the acquisition of the reserve area. An access easement will be provided to the reserve area using an existing road and will be recorded at close of escrow.

Conservation of this Property protects it from the risk of being subdivided and developed for housing or agricultural use. Demand for residential and multifamily residential use is strong and supply is very limited. In addition, demand is strong for agricultural land with a quality water supply and topography that will support avocados, row crops, and citrus.

The Property is home to several diverse habitats featuring majestic old-growth oak groves, intermittent streams, perennial springs, swaths of native California wildflowers and coastal sage scrub habitat. The Property supports a diverse wildlife population including plant and animal species classified as sensitive, threatened, or endangered. The least Bell’s vireo, Swainson’s hawk, and the California gnatcatcher all call this Property home. Mule deer and coyotes are among the most commonly spotted mammals, but mountain lions, black bears, bobcats and gray foxes are also seen throughout the canyon. The perennial springs on the Property provide for the perfect habitat for Baja California tree frogs, garter snakes, and salamanders. The Property’s flora includes the rare native

Catalina mariposa lily, fish's milkwort, and an array of native wildflowers such as the purple sage, paintbrush and golden star.

With over 12 miles of existing rustic ranch roads as well as a planned trail network, the Property will provide Ventura area residents with terrific local options for hiking and trail running. The Property will also provide for an outdoor learning opportunity for local schools via VLT's education program. Students will take guided field trips throughout hills once inhabited by the Chumash. Education activities include watershed awareness, native plant and animal identification, and hands-on fieldwork restoration projects.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed grant is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. This program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to the Director of CDFW and, if approved, transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

The Property has a variety of different terrain, landscapes, resources and elevation, which will further enhance habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity for numerous threatened and endangered species. This preservation of corridors, connectivity, and elevation change will allow species to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Goal A.2 – Fund projects and landscape areas that conserve, protect, or enhance water resources for fish and wildlife.

The Property is part of the Santa Clara River Watershed CAPP which features southern California's last non-channelized and least ecologically disturbed major river system. Supporting a wide array of rare and endangered species, the

watershed encompasses an area of great biological richness and lies within a globally significant biodiversity hotspot.

Goal A.3 – Fund projects that support the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans, and recovery of listed species.

As noted, the Property is part of the Santa Clara River Watershed CAPP and supports a variety of threatened, endangered, and species of special concern of both flora and fauna.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.2 – Invest in acquisition and restoration grants that advance habitat and natural community targets embodied in RCIS, NCCPs, or regional conservation plans.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
VLT will manage and monitor the Property daily to ensure the grant terms are being honored. VLT will implement ecological restoration and enhancement projects to maximize the wildlife habitat value of the property and conduct appropriate weed abatement and fuel reduction work as a balanced approach to protect the Property, nearby schools, churches, and neighborhoods. The preserve will be open every day to the public for hiking, mountain biking, and the enjoyment of nature, providing an outdoor recreation asset not presently available to the community. A preserve manager will ensure the preserve users are adhering to the rules to protect wildlife habitat and public safety.

TERMS
The Property was appraised as having a fair market value of $8,390,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for a bargain sale price of $5,700,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the VLT provide that WCB staff will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. Under the terms of the WCB grant agreement, VLT will be required to hold the Property in a manner consistent with the purposes of the grant agreement. The Property cannot be sold, transferred, exchanged or otherwise conveyed without WCB approval. In event of default, WCB may require VLT to convey a conservation easement over the Property in favor of the state, or

another entity or organization authorized by California law to acquire and hold the conservation easement that is willing and financially capable.

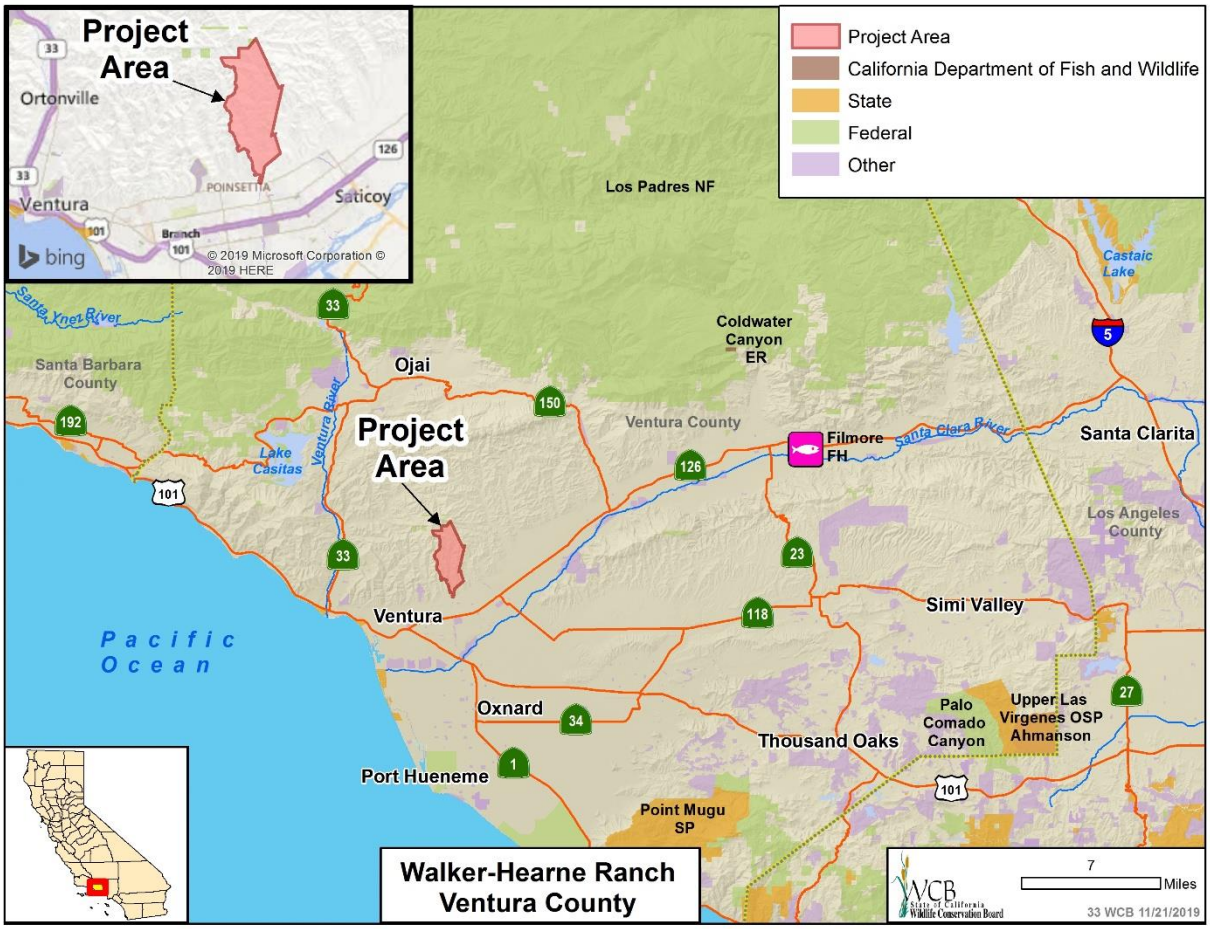
PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board grant	$2,991,605
Ventura Land Trust (for the acquisition of the 5-acre reserve area)	$14,395
CDFW Proposition 1	$1,700,000
Caltrans EEMP	$994,000
TOTAL PURCHASE PRICE	$5,700,000
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	$2,991,605

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and for the implementation of habitat conservation plans. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c).]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to the authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $2,991,605 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


Project Area
Ortonville
Ventura
Saticoy
POINSETTIA
Branch
© 2019 Microsoft Corporation © 2019 HERE
Project Area
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State
Federal
Other
Los Padres NF
Castaic Lake
Santa Ynez River
Santa Barbara County
Ojai
Coldwater Canyon ER
Ventura County
Filmore FH
Santa Clara River
Santa Clarita
Lake Casitas
Ventura River
Project Area
Los Angeles County
Simi Valley
Pacific Ocean
Ventura
Oxnard
Palo Comado Canyon
Upper Las Virgenes OSP Ahmanson
Thousand Oaks
Port Hueneme
Point Mugu SP
Walker-Hearne Ranch
Ventura County
7
Miles
33 WCB 11/21/2019

33. CDFW Land Management Plan, South Coast Region
Los Angeles and San Diego Counties
$1,327,213

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the San Diego Society of Natural History (DBA San Diego Natural History Museum) for a cooperative project with CDFW to complete and deliver five land management plans (LMP) for five South Coast Region CDFW properties located in San Diego and Los Angeles counties.

LOCATION
The CDFW Land Management Plan, South Coast Region includes five LMPs on five CDFW properties: Boden Canyon Ecological Reserve (ER), 1,221 acres; Ballona Wetlands ER, 558 acres; Batiquitos Lagoon ER, 544 acres; Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (WA), 6,771 acres; and Oak Grove Unit of the San Felipe Valley (SFVWA), 3,200 acres.

Property 1, Boden Canyon ER (BCER): located in north central San Diego County between the communities of San Pasqual and Ramona. BCER is a north-south trending canyon in the San Dieguito River watershed. It provides important wildlife corridors in and between regional plan efforts and provides a variety of habitats for local wildlife. Previous WCB projects included the acquisition of the property in 1998 and 1999.

Property 2, Ballona Wetlands ER (BWER): lies within the city and county of Los Angeles, near the communities of Marina del Rey and Culver City. It is a historic wetland formally owned by private parties until WCB began acquisitions in 2003. BWER is surrounded by and subjected to urban influences; however, listed species and wetland habitats have persisted over the centuries.

Property 3, Batiquitos Lagoon ER (BLER): a 553-acre coastal water body that lies in the city of Carlsbad, northern San Diego County, immediately adjacent to and eastward of the Pacific Ocean. It is bounded on the east by El Camino Real and is bisected by the Coast Highway (101), the North County Transit District railroad tracks, and Interstate 5. Previous WCB projects include collaborating with the State Lands Commission (SLC), Coastal Conservancy and non-profit organizations in land transactions, leases, easements and acquisitions adjacent to the ecological reserve on the north, south and eastern edges of the lagoon proper.

Property 4, Hollenbeck Canyon WA (HCWA): lies in southern, inland San Diego County between the unincorporated communities of Jamul and Dulzura. HCWA lies adjacent to the Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve (across Highway 94) and is east of the Otay Mountain Ecological Reserve. The three CDFW properties connect, and their combined acreage total is approximately 13,565 acres. Past WCB projects at HCWA include funding the initial land acquisition in 2001, and additional acquisitions through 2016.

Property 5, Oak Grove Unit of the SFVWA Complex: located in rural northeastern San Diego County just south of the Riverside/San Diego county line, just east and south of the community of Temecula. It comprises the Chihuahua Creek/Valley and adjacent foothills, ranging up to around 4,000-foot elevation, and includes tributaries to Temecula Creek and into the Santa Margarita watershed. It is located near the BLM Beauty Mountain Wilderness Area. Oak Grove is a disjunct unit of the SFVWA Complex and totals about 3,200 acres. It was acquired by WCB in 2006.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The proposed project is to provide funding for the collection of information needed to thoroughly and adequately prepare and complete LMPs or LMP updates on five CDFW properties in the South Coast Region, four in San Diego County and one in Los Angeles County. This will be accomplished by granting funds to the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM); operated by the San Diego Society of Natural History, a private non-profit (501(c)(3)), to conduct a variety of biological and cultural field studies over the next five years for use in the development of the five LMPs/LMP updates. These studies will enable CDFW, through SDNHM, to prepare and complete an LMP for each of the five properties that can then be processed through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and be implemented by CDFW.

An LMP is a dynamic document that not only provides the basic property and resource information for the public and CDFW staff, but also acts as a tool in prioritizing the management and monitoring actions that need to occur on each property. An LMP ensures that the investment of state funds, through WCB's land acquisitions, is adequately managed and maintained. It is the goal of CDFW to ensure the viability of all species and habitats on these acquired lands is sustained over time.

The project objective is to collect resource information that is either outdated or was never collected. CDFW staff will then use this information to prepare LMPs or LMP updates. CDFW is contributing significant staff time in conducting other necessary studies, and in writing these plans.

WCB PROGRAM
The proposed project will be funded under the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), WCB specifically received funding to prepare land management plans for properties acquired in fee by WCB.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:
This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

The LMP will lead to the enhancement of wetland and riparian areas for fish and wildlife.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 2.2 – Invest in acquisition and restoration grants that advance habitat and natural community targets embodied in RCIS, NCCPs, or regional conservation plans.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

The LMP will lead to the protection and enhancement of habitats to provide species strongholds, and to enhance habitats for threatened and endangered species. The LMP will also provide direction to CDFW in providing enhanced public use and will benefit under-served communities.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The LMPs are prepared per CDFW guidelines, A Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans, and other local or federal agency requirements as necessary. The LMPs are written to guide CDFW in managing the properties.

PROJECT FUNDING

Project Task	WCB Grant	CDFW (staff time)	Total Cost
Property 1 Boden Canyon ER	$200,200	$100,000	$300,200
Property 2 Ballona Wetlands ER	$49,500	$100,000	$149,500
Property 3 Batiquitos Lagoon ER	$203,500	$100,000	$303,500
Property 4 Hollenbeck Canyon WA	$591,800	$100,000	$691,800
Property 5 Oak Grove Unit of San Felipe Valley WA	$200,200	$100,000	$300,200
Subtotal Project Costs	$1,245,200	$500,000	$1,745,200
Contingency	$82,013	-	-
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	$1,327,213	$500,000	$1,827,213

Project costs will be for tasks for land management planning, including resource studies, assessments, mapping, and LMP review with CEQA document assistance.

CDFW is contributing in-kind services for this project as a whole; however, those tasks and the amount are only approximated above. CDFW staff are conducting complementary and associated surveys that will also be used in the preparation of the various LMPs. Additionally, staff are writing the LMPs and associated CEQA documents.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)(5), which allows funding for the preparation of land management plans for properties acquired in fee by WCB.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262, Planning and Feasibility Studies. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $1,327,213 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)(5); authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.


WCB State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
CDFW Land Management Plans, South Coast Region
Los Angeles and San Diego Counties
Ballona Wetlands ER
San Felipe Valley WA
Boden Canyon ER
Batiquitos Lagoon ER
Hollenbeck Canyon WA
Project Site
Los Angeles County
San Bernardino County
Riverside County
Orange County
San Diego County
Gulf of Santa Catalina
Content may not reflect National Geographic's current map policy. Sources: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.
34 WCB 11/21/2019

34. Hidden Creeks
Los Angeles County
$4,900,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) to acquire 257± acres of land for the preservation of oak woodland and grassland habitat, wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, and to provide future wildlife-oriented, public-use opportunities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located approximately three miles east of the city of Simi Valley, in the San Fernando Valley near the western boundary of Los Angeles County. It is situated roughly two miles north of the 118 Freeway, three miles northeast of the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, and eight miles east of the city of San Fernando.

The Property is connected to over 11,000 contiguous acres of parkland owned by MRCA. The western boundary of Property is adjacent to the Michael D. Antonovich Regional Park at Joughin Ranch, a 2,326± acre regional park owned by MRCA. Other large conservation holdings near the Property are Rocky Peak Park and Santa Clarita Woodlands Park. WCB funded projects in the area include Joughin Ranch, a 1,733± acre project approved in 2003; Ahmanson Ranch, a 2,959± acre project approved in 2003; Chesebro Meadows, a 71± acre project approved in 2016; Alamos Canyon, a 326± acre project approved in 2015; and Simi Hills – 118 Freeway Wildlife Connector, a 213± acre project approved in 2017.

The Property is an essential component of the Santa Susana Pass inter-mountain range habitat linkage which connects the Simi Hills to the Santa Susana Mountains across the 118 Freeway. The Property is in the National Park Service's proposed Rim of the Valley Corridor, a proposal that would more than double the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The westerly half of the Property is within the Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills Significant Ecological Area, per the Los Angeles County General Plan.

The Property is a Priority 1 parcel in CDFW's Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP. The Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP encompasses 166,411± acres, was developed to link over two million acres of already protected habitat to create an expansive intact habitat containing about 40 different natural communities with over 50 species listed as threatened, endangered, or sensitive, and was designed based on the habitat and movement requirements of 20 focal species, including mule deer and mountain lion.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregularly shaped with topography ranging from gently sloped meadows to hilly. It is located on the southern face of the Santa Susana Mountains at the confluence of Browns Creek and Mormon Creek, which are part of the Los Angeles River Headwaters. The Property is accessed from the south by Browns Canyon Road. The land use designation of the Property is A2-2, Heavy

Agriculture, one- to ten-acre lots. The Property is a major portion of the 286± acre Hidden Creek Estates project with a previously approved Vesting Tentative Tract that would change zoning, creating a 188-lot subdivision.

The Property supports coast live oak woodland, California walnut woodland, southern willow scrub, coastal sage scrub, mixed northern chaparral, and both native and non-native grassland. Its gentle terraced grasslands are unique on the south slope of the range and are beneficial to raptors. As part of the core habitat of the Santa Susana Mountains, the Property supports the full complement of large mammals including mountain lion, mule deer, bobcat, American badger, grey fox, long-tailed weasel, and ring-tailed cat. There are numerous threatened, endangered and special status listed species found near the Property including the southern spotted owl, burrowing owl, San Diego horned lizard, San Diego desert wood rat, slender mariposa lily, and the Santa Susana tarplant.

Browns Creek crosses the Property and a long section of Mormon Creek abuts the western boundary. The spring that feeds Mormon Creek is the most reliable wildlife water source within all the canyons that flow into the northwest sphere of the Los Angeles River watershed and the San Fernando Valley.

Preservation of the Property is a priority in preventing residential development from inhibiting species migration, protecting multiple gene pools for species, and protecting threatened species. The location of the Property provides a migration corridor for species including mountain lion traveling along the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills between large urban populations in the San Fernando and Simi valleys.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to WCB's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, et seq.), authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept or subgrant federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to the Director of CDFW and, if approved, later transmitted to WCB with a recommendation to fund.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

The project will preserve corridors that provide transitional habitat to adapt to climate change by moving between the Property's lower elevation habitat and higher elevation habitat.

Goal A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW.

The Property is identified as a Priority 1 parcel for protection in CDFW's Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP. Both the habitat and wildlife value, along with the preservation of existing linkages and corridors, support the Property's identity as a priority for protection.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outline in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.2 – Invest in projects that contribute to connectivity as highlighted in the California Terrestrial Connectivity Map, or linkages as mapped in regional assessments.

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.5 – Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

Objective SI 3.4 – Invest in projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS
The Property will be owned, managed, and maintained by MRCA and will be incorporated into the assemblage of previously protected lands, including MRCA's Michael D. Antonovich Regional Park at Joughin Ranch, which is adjacent to the Property. MRCA will own and operate the Property as part of its extensive land holdings in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. MRCA is a joint powers authority and owns thousands of acres of open space across the region and has many years of experience in managing similar properties. Although it is currently grazed by cattle, MRCA would work towards eliminating grazing and all ranch fencing and infrastructure in order to best balance weed management and passive habitat restoration. The acquisition of the Property will provide an opportunity for MRCA to protect and preserve the Property's open space and natural resource values, and potentially afford recreational opportunities to the public such as hiking, photography, biking, and wildlife viewing.

Public and administrative access to the Hidden Creeks property would be via a 60-foot-wide easement centered on a high-quality, partially paved road that connects to paved Browns Canyon Road. A public trail that follows Mormon Creek will also provide immediate access to the ranch road system as soon as it becomes public land. Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation owns property to the immediate south that it intends to develop with parking, restrooms, and equestrian facilities.

TERMS
The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $10,450,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for $6,750,000, less than the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to MRCA provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING
The Proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	$4,900,000
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	$100,000
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	$150,000
Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District	$1,600,000
Total Purchase Price	$6,750,000
Total WCB Allocation	*$4,900,000*

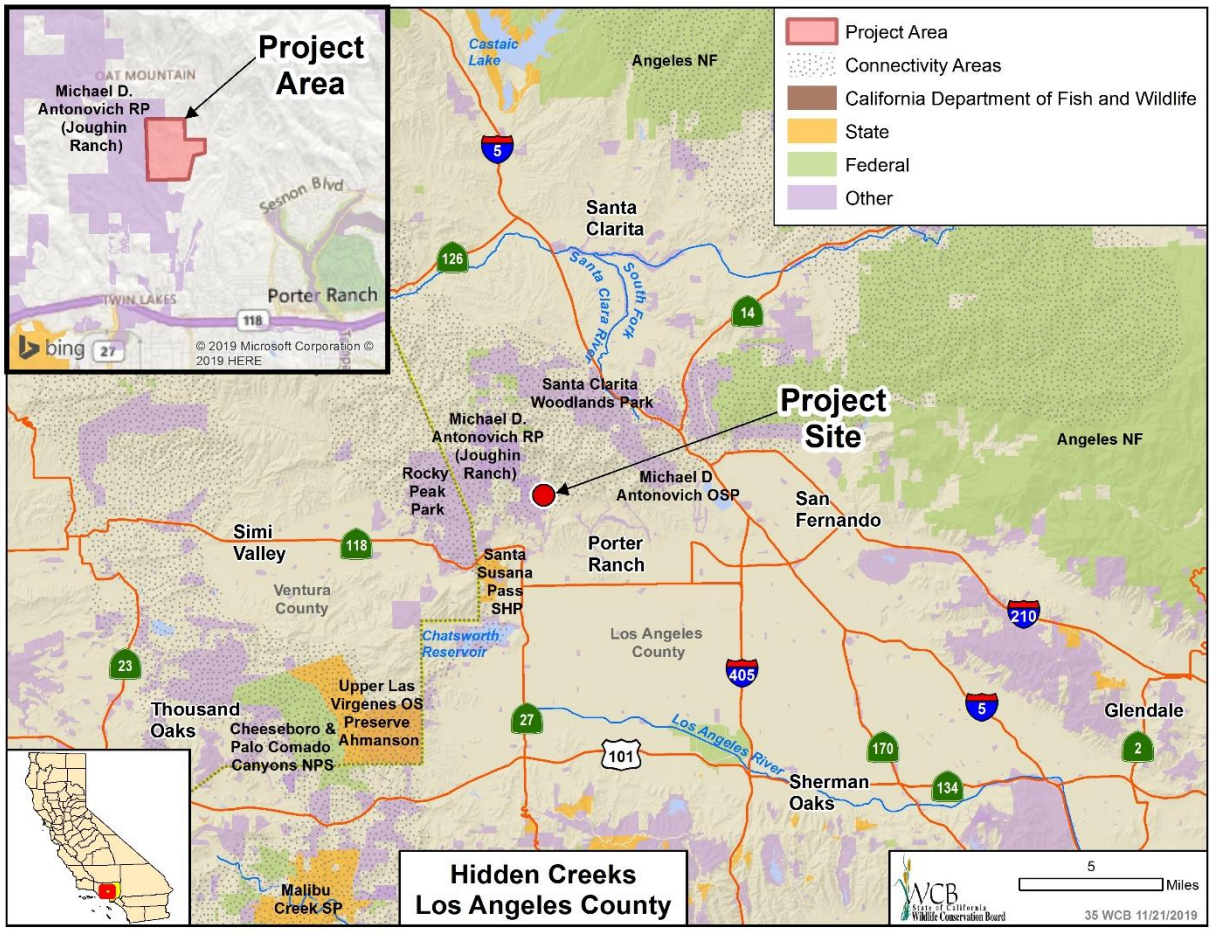
FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d).]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under

CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $4,900,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



35. Los Angeles River Fish Passage and Habitat Structures Design
Los Angeles County
$1,356,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Council for Watershed Health for a cooperative project with the city of Los Angeles, the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP), the Friends of the Los Angeles River, and the Arroyo Seco Foundation for a planning project to provide designs, permits, and environmental review for addressing impaired mobility for southern steelhead trout and other native fish along 4.4 miles of the Los Angeles River in downtown Los Angeles.

LOCATION

This project is located in downtown Los Angeles along 4.4 miles of the Los Angeles River between the Arroyo Seco Confluence and Washington Boulevard. Historically, the river drained the Los Angeles basin and created a broad floodplain with a braided channel that provided high quality aquatic, riparian, and upland habitat. Beginning in the nineteenth century, settlers in the region started modifying the river's hydrology in order to develop a reliable water source and to provide flood control. Today the river in this area is confined to a concrete channel that is approximately 30 feet deep, with a bottom width of 160 feet and a top of bank width of about 280 feet.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will involve preparation of designs to modify the existing Los Angeles River flood control concrete-lined channel to improve fish passage for steelhead migration to soft-bottom reaches of the Los Angeles River and upper tributaries. Like many watersheds throughout the western United States, the Los Angeles River watershed became increasingly urbanized over the last century. In these urban riparian corridors, streams have been completely channelized and lined with concrete to efficiently convey runoff and minimize erosion. These original goals have largely been accomplished but resulted in degraded ecosystem services due to significant impacts to watershed hydrology, sediment yield, and imposed constraints that limit natural channel adjustment and floodplain access. As a result, urban streams have perhaps suffered the greatest decline in biological habitat values and species diversity as rivers that have been channelized and confined.

One species that has been dramatically impacted by the changes to urban streams is the southern steelhead trout. Once abundant in the Los Angeles River, they are now extremely rare throughout their historical range which spans from San Luis Obispo County to the United States/Mexico border. The dramatic drop in population is attributable to the dense urbanization that occurred in the south coast region. The river channelization and installation of transportation and flood control infrastructure associated with this urban growth created fish passage barriers that prevent the steelhead from reaching spawning and rearing areas. Without access to adequate flows of cool, clean water to reproduce in, southern steelhead populations dropped to the point that they were listed as endangered by the National Marine Fisheries Service in 1997.

Right now, the depth and velocity of the Los Angeles River serve as a hydraulic fish passage barrier for southern steelhead trout, regardless of the presence of other physical obstructions. Flow depths are uniform across the channel and velocities are increased with no refugia for aquatic species. Even the low to medium flow periods that occur during more than 95 percent of the year provide no habitat for aquatic species. These flows are either confined to a small notch or spread out at shallow depths across the concrete bed. Owing to the smooth concrete boundary and relatively steep channel slope, flows in the Los Angeles River are generally too fast for fish for to be able to swim upstream. Even low flows have a velocity of 5 to 6 ft/s, which is above the cruising speed of southern steelhead trout.

Revitalization can be accomplished by considering channel functions over a range of low to high flows, thereby converting a single purpose (runoff conveyance) waterway to a multi-purpose (flood control, habitat, aesthetics, and recreation) feature of the urban landscape. This project examines how to redesign the channel bed and banks to provide increased flow complexity and habitat heterogeneity within confined urban streams. As resources devoted to urban restoration, and the Los Angeles River in particular, increase, it is important to have performance data on various ecosystem features.

This project will evaluate methods that can be implemented within confined urban channels to improve ecosystem function without significantly raising flood stage at high flows. Using the Los Angeles River as a pilot site, conceptual designs have been developed for the following features: meandering low-flow channel, variable width low-flow channel, pool-riffle sequence, flow deflectors (boulder clusters, transverse vanes), multi-thread flow paths, and variable roughness elements(cobbles, vegetation). Design concepts are tested and evaluated with a two-dimensional numerical model and a physical model. Habitat suitability and effect on flood stage are assessed for each of the proposed ecological enhancement methods. Aquatic species habitat is improved by creating areas of low velocity refugia and adding diversity and complexity to the flow field.

The project will develop a Los Angeles River Management Framework linked to a steelhead conceptual model, fish passage design for the 4.4-mile project reach, and tools for transforming urban flood control channels to multi-function streams with increased ecological and aesthetic values. The steelhead conceptual model will include: channel morphology and conditions, estuary morphology and conditions, debris and sediment management, unimpaired and managed hydrology, water quality (including water temperature and pollutants), the status of key aquatic, riparian, and estuarine species, aquatic and riparian habitat distribution, threatened and endangered species management, and habitat requirements of steelhead relevant to the Los Angeles River watershed. The project will advance fish passage design and habitat structures for southern steelhead to preliminary design and 60 percent design levels.

A successfully implemented restoration project that relies upon the designs developed through this project will enhance access of migratory anadromous southern steelhead trout to upstream spawning and juvenile rearing habitat in key tributaries, such as Arroyo Seco, will improve metapopulation resilience to climate change by increasing local population size, and increase the spatial distribution of the species within the upper Los Angeles River watershed. Improving passage and connectivity with natural bottom and restoration project reaches of the Los Angeles River and key tributaries will also provide better access to perennial reaches and more diverse habitats that can serve as refugia for steelhead trout and other native fishes during stressful events such as drought or floods which are anticipated to be increasing stressors under climate change.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This project is guided by WCB's Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:

Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:

- Provide resilience in the face of climate change by improving access of migratory anadromous steelhead trout to upstream spawning and juvenile rearing habitat in key tributaries that will improve metapopulation resilience to climate change by increasing local population size and increasing the spatial distribution of the species within the upper Los Angeles River watershed.

- Improving passage and connectivity with natural bottom and restoration project reaches of the Los Angeles River and key tributaries also provides better access to perennial reaches and more diverse habitats that can serve as refugia for steelhead trout and other native fishes during stressful events such as drought or floods which are anticipated to be increasing stressors under climate change.

Goal B.5 – Provide opportunities for greater public involvement in restoration projects:

- The project will provide opportunity for greater public involvement by hosting educational workshops about the urban Los Angeles River watershed that help community members better understand how activities within the watershed impact stream health and the health of native fish communities.

- During workshops, community members will learn about the project, have opportunities to provide design ideas, and will learn about and practice collecting the types of data that biologists use to understand the obstacles to sustaining healthy native fish populations in our local streams.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following objectives outlined in the 2019 WCB Strategic Plan Update:

Objective SI 1.3 – Invest in projects that are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

Objective SI 2.4 – Invest in projects that support one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

Objective SI 4.3 – Invest in projects that provide tangible ecosystem services benefits to local lower watershed (urban or rural) communities, and document that benefit.

PROJECT FUNDING
The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	City of Los Angeles	SCCWRP	Other	Total
Project Management	$231,234	$221,000	-	$15,000	$467,234
Designs	$924,766	-	$75,000	-	$999,766
Environmental Review	$200,000	$55,000	-	-	$255,000
TOTAL	$1,356,000	$276,000	$75,000	$15,000	$1,722,000

**$10,000 from the Friends of the Los Angeles River and $5,000 from the Arroyo Seco Foundation.*

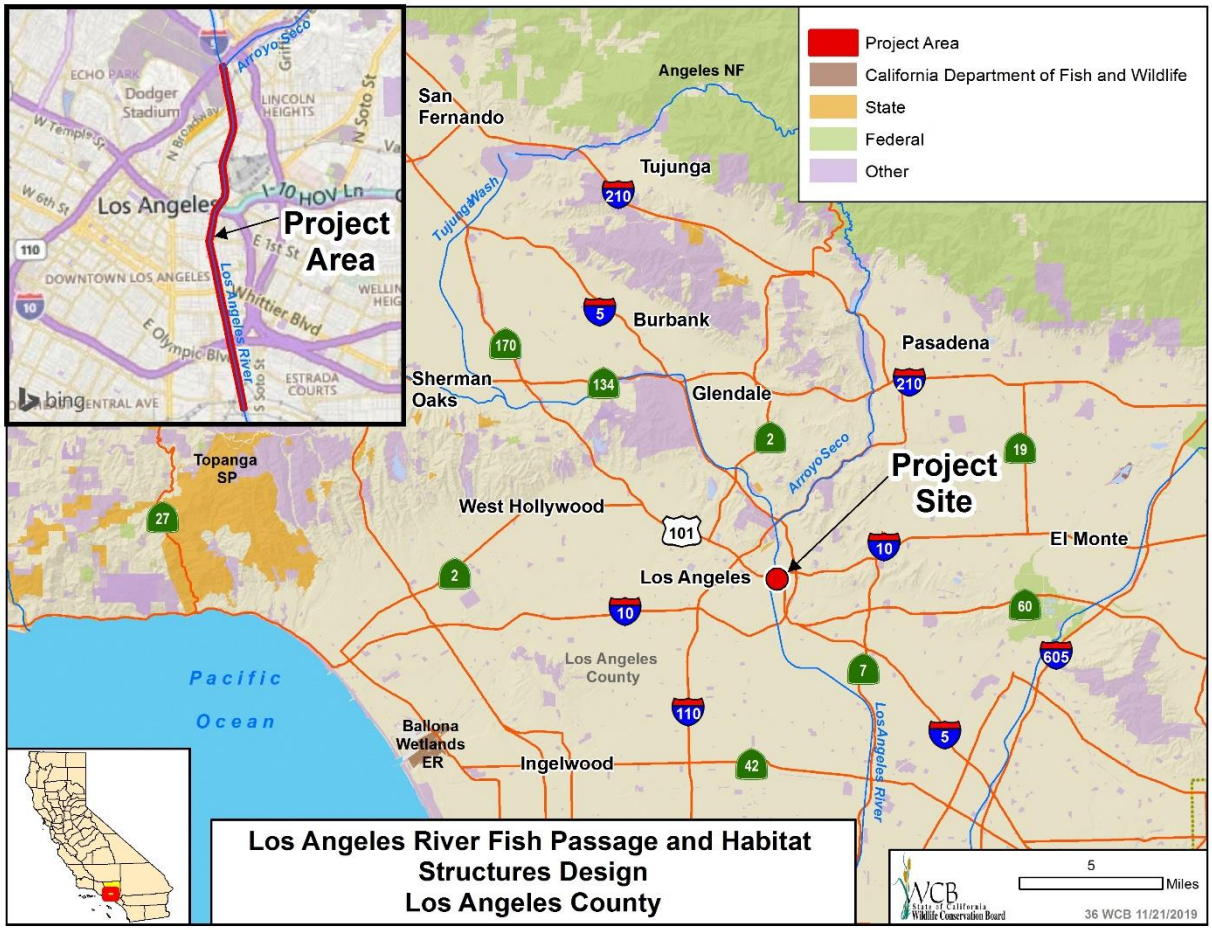
Project costs will be for project management, preliminary and 60 percent level designs, permitting and a CEQA/NEPA document.

FUNDING SOURCE
The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1) which allows for projects to construct, repair, modify, or remove transportation infrastructure or water resources infrastructure to improve passage for wildlife or fish.

CEQA COMPLIANCE
The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as a feasibility or planning study for possible future actions which have not been approved. Subject

to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate $1,356,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132 (e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



36. 2019 Board Meeting Dates

Board will be asked to approve WCB meetings dates for 2020.

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
Wednesday, May 20, 2020
Wednesday, August 26, 2020
Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Stream Flow Enhancement Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 1, 2020

37. Executive Session (Not Open to the Public)

The Board may meet in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 11126(a)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, or dismissal of a public employee. After close session, the Board will reconvene in public session, which may include announcements about actions taken during closed session.

Adjourn