

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103

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

Minutes
November 18, 1999

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**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

November 18, 1999

The Wildlife Conservation Board met at the State Capitol, Room 113, Sacramento, California on November 18, 1999. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Mr. Richard Thieriot, President, Fish and Game Commission. He announced that this would be his last Board meeting and expressed his pleasure in having shared in the Board's accomplishments. Introductions were made at this time, acknowledging that former Board Chairman, Mr. Douglas McGeoghegan, was in the audience. Mr. Schmidt expressed his thanks to Mr. Thieriot for his service on the Board, noting that he and the staff enjoyed working with him.

1. Roll CallWILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Richard T. Thieriot, Chairperson
President, Fish and Game Commission
Fred Klass, Program Budget Manager
Vice, B. Timothy Gage, Member
Director, Department of Finance
Robert C. Hight, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

W. John Schmidt

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

Others Present: Karen Berger, San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy
Donald Norris, Lakeview Farms
Darcy Norris, Lakeview Farms
Dave Patterson, California Waterfowl Association
Harold Beck, Beck Family Farms
Mike Ford, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Don Koch, Department of Fish and Game
Banky Curtis, Department of Fish and Game
Gail Presley, Department of Fish and Game
Jeff Shellito, Senator Sher's Office
Kate Anderton, Save-the-Redwoods League

2. Funding Status as of November 18, 1999

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

Governor's Budget - Land Acquisition	\$200,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>(2,000.00)</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$198,000.00

Governor's Budget - Minor Projects	\$955,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>(250.00)</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$954,750.00

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

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

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

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

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

Governor's Budget	\$18,932,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(1,170,344.05)
Unallocated Balance	\$17,761,655.95

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

Governor's Budget	\$17,960,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(10,495,560.98)
Unallocated Balance	\$7,464,439.02

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

Governor's Budget	\$16,598,000.00
Plus Mid-year Adjustment	250,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(15,878,500.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$969,500.00

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

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

(h) 1997-98 Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Fund, River Parkway Subaccount Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$9,800,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(6,938,150.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$2,861,850.00

(i) 1999-00 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget

.....	\$34,100,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(1,931,250.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$32,168,750.00

(j) 1998-99 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$4,850,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(2,332,320.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$2,517,680.00

(k) 1999-00 Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund

Governor's Budget	\$1,050,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(200,000.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$850,000.00

(l) 1999-00 Forest Resources Improvement Fund

Governor's Budget	\$2,600,000.00
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RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

<u>Wildlife Restoration Fund (a), (b) and (c)</u>	\$1,219,750.91
<u>Habitat Conservation Fund (d), (e) and (f)</u>	\$26,195,594.97
<u>Environmental License Plate Fund (g)</u>	\$0.00
<u>Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Fund, River Parkway Subaccount (h)</u>	\$2,749,350.00
<u>General Fund (i) and (j)</u>	\$34,686,430.00
<u>Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund (k)</u>	\$850,000.00
<u>Forest Resources Improvement Fund (l)</u>	\$2,600,000.00

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

3. PROPOSED CONSENT CALENDAR (Items 4 - 9 and 11 - 15)

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Consent Calendar consisted of Items 4 through 9 and 11 through 15, noting that Item 10 had been withdrawn from the agenda. Staff recommended that the Board approve the Consent Calendar as amended, absent any objection. There were no comments or objections.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, Consent Calendar items 4 through 9 and 11 through 15, as proposed in the individual agenda explanations, including funding as noted therein.

Motion carried.

*4. Approval of Minutes - August 19, 1999 Meeting

Approval of the minutes of the August 19, 1999 meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board was recommended.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, that the minutes of the August 19, 1999 Board meeting be approved as written.

Motion carried.

*5. 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 was recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

\$11,123.74. to the Wildlife Restoration Fund,

\$21,091.02. to the Habitat Conservation Fund

\$0.00 to the General Fund

\$1,263.00 to the River Parkway Sub-Account, Safe,
Clean Reliable Water Supply Fund

\$9,631.92 to the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Concow Reservoir Public Access, Butte County

Amount Allocated	\$28,850.00
Amount Expended	- 28,849.52
Balance for Recovery	\$0.48

Moore Creek Exp. #1 (Bombay Property), Santa Cruz County

Amount Allocated	\$7,770.00
Amount Expended	-2,628.68
Balance for Recovery	\$5,141.32

San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Exp. #9 (Mystic Lake), Riverside County

Amount Allocated	\$270,000.00
Amount Expended	-265,082.43
Balance for Recovery	\$4,917.57

Sky Ranch, Contra Costa County

Amount Allocated	\$1,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-360.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$640.00

Susan River Parkway Fishing Access, Lassen County

Amount Allocated	\$3,690.00
Amount Expended	<u>-3,265.63</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$424.37

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund Recoveries \$11,123.74

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Arroyo Seco Wildlife Area (Howard Ranch), Sacramento County

Amount Allocated	\$1,410,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-1,402,844.98</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,155.02

Lusardi Creek Ecological Reserve, San Diego County

Amount Allocated	\$932,750.00
Amount Expended	<u>-925,540.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,210.00

North Fork Weber Creek, (Spivey Pond), El Dorado County

Amount Allocated	\$106,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-102,940.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,060.00

Petaluma Marsh WLA (Rush Creek Unit), Marin County

Amount Allocated	\$5,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-5,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Exp. #9 (Mystic Lake), Riverside County

Amount Allocated	\$2,740,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-2,740,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Wetland Conservation Easement Program, Sacramento County

Amount Allocated	\$448,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-444,334.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,666.00

Total Habitat Conservation Fund \$21,091.02

GENERAL FUNDMoore Creek Exp. #1 (Bombay Property), Santa Cruz County

Amount Allocated	\$1,000,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-1,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Sky Ranch, Contra Costa County

Amount Allocated	\$100,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-100,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total General Fund \$0.00

RIVER PARKWAY SUB-ACCOUNT, SAFE CLEAN RELIABLE
WATER SUPPLY FUND (PROP. 204)

San Joaquin River (SJRC-Caglia)(aka Friant Cove), Fresno County

Amount Allocated	\$320,000.00
Amount Expended	<u>-318,737.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,263.00

Total River Parkway Sub-Account, Safe Clean Reliable
Water Supply Fund \$1,263.00

INLAND WETLANDS CONSERVATION FUND

Wetland Conservation Easement Program, Sacramento County

Amount Allocated	\$594,358.00
Amount Expended	-584,726.08
Balance for Recovery	\$9,631.92

Total Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund \$9,631.92

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, to recover funds for the projects listed on pages 4 thru 7 of this agenda and close the project accounts. Recovery totals include \$11,123.74 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund, \$21,091.02 to the Habitat Conservation Fund, \$1,263.00 to the River Parkway Sub-Account, Safe, Clean Reliable Water Supply Fund and \$9,631.92 to the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund.

Motion carried.

*6. **Gray Lodge Wildlife Area - Mineral Rights Donation, Butte County** **\$1,000.00**

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a donation of the underlying mineral rights located within the state's Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, which is located in Butte County, about 6± miles east of the City of Gridley. The original acquisitions for this wildlife area were completed in 1949, with the latest expansion (#6) being approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) at its November 5, 1996 meeting.

Many of the properties acquired had mineral rights reserved by the then owners or by previous owners, and were never acquired by the state. The 1,100± acre parcel under consideration at this time, was acquired in 1953 through litigation. The judgment in this matter provided for a reservation of the mineral rights. The owners of these rights have now offered to donate them to the state. To avoid any possible disturbance of this property in the future, it is recommended that this donation be accepted.

The only funds needed to complete this transfer are for WCB administration costs which are estimated to be \$1,000.00 for closing expenses and Department of General Services' costs. This acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition of real property rights for wildlife conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acceptance of the mineral rights donation, as proposed; allocate \$1,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the acceptance of the mineral rights donation, as proposed; allocate \$1,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *7. Allensworth Ecological Reserve, Expansions #7 through #14, \$6,000.00
Tulare County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a grant in the amount of \$310,000.00, from the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) for the ongoing acquisition of Allensworth properties, and the authorization to acquire eight separate ownerships totaling 176± acres of land. These purchases will be added to Allensworth Ecological Reserve, a Significant Natural Area providing habitat for the endangered Tipton kangaroo rat and Blunt-nosed leopard lizard, as well as the San Joaquin kit fox, a state listed threatened and federally listed endangered species. The subject properties are located about five miles west of both Highway 99 and the town of Delano, at the Tulare-Kern County line.

The Allensworth area is listed in the 1988 Annual Report of Significant Natural Areas of California prepared by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Valley Sink Scrub community found at Allensworth is one of the best remaining examples in the southern San Joaquin Valley. Due to the relatively large area it covers, it provides critical habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox, which requires sizable territories (1-2 square miles) for hunting and breeding. In addition, because of its significant habitat for the Blunt-nosed leopard lizard, the Allensworth area has long been recommended for protection in the Recovery Plan for that species.

Much of the land in the general vicinity of the subject properties has been or is currently being converted to extensive agricultural uses including alfalfa, cotton, milo, grapes or orchard use. In the long-term, it is almost a certainty that the subject properties would be developed to agricultural uses, thereby destroying their habitat values. DFG operation and maintenance costs for this area are expected to be minimal. The management focus is habitat preservation with potential species augmentation.

While good progress has been made to protect habitat in the northern portion of the Allensworth Ecological Reserve, progress has been slower in the southern portion with about 1,120± acres acquired to date. The subject acquisitions will bring the total acreage in the southern portion to 1,296± acres. Continuing efforts are being made to join DFG ownerships in the southern area through mitigation measures.

The following is a brief description of the eight individual parcels being recommended for purchase and acceptance under this grant program. It should be noted that separately, the parcels may contain limited wildlife values, however, as combined together and with other Department of Fish and Game lands, they are very important to the overall, long-term program of creating a viable ecological reserve in this area. In essence, the acquisitions are an effort to buy out inholdings within the Allensworth Reserve and simplify DFG management. The subject properties are not farmed, contain no improvements and have no current water availability. Each property, with the exception of Expansion #14, below, is adjacent to either existing state property or to other property proposed for purchase in this agenda item.

Expansion #7

This 20± acre parcel, is located on the Tulare/Kern County line and has legal access. The owners have agreed to sell at the approved fair market value of \$10,000.00.

Expansion #8

This ownership contains 53.5± acres, is located on the Tulare/Kern County line and has legal access. It is located adjacent to existing state property to the north. The owners have agreed to sell to the state at the approved fair market value of \$42,800.00.

Expansion #9

Proposed Expansion #9 is a 12.5± acre ownership, without legal access. It is located approximately one-half mile north of the Tulare/Kern County line. The owner has agreed to sell at the approved fair market value of \$8,500.00.

Expansion #10

This 2.5± acre parcel is located at the southern property line of Expansion #9 and has no legal access. The owners have agreed to sell to the state at the approved fair market value of \$3,500.00.

Expansion #11

Proposed Expansion #11 contains 5± acres, has no legal access and adjoins Expansion #7 at its southeast corner. The owners have agreed to sell their property to the state at the state's approved appraised value of \$5,000.00.

Expansion #12

This 53.5± acre parcel has legal access and is bordered by state ownership on both its west and north boundaries as well as having a common boundary with Expansion #8. The owners have agreed to sell their ownership at the state approved appraised value of \$42,800.00.

Expansion #13

Proposed Expansion #13 contains a 20± acre parcel and is located about one-half mile north of the Tulare/Kern County line. It has legal access and adjoins state-owned property on its west property line. The owners have agreed to sell at the state's approved fair market value of \$10,000.00.

Expansion #14

This 9± acre parcel, with legal access, is located on the east side of state Highway 135 and adjoins current state ownership on its eastern boundary. However, the owner has adjacent lands that he is willing to sell which are currently being appraised. If and when purchased, they will provide a larger continuous state ownership. The owner has agreed to sell this land at the state's approved appraised fair market value of \$9,000.00.

The funding for these purchases, and others currently in negotiations, has been made available through a grant from the BOR in the amount of \$310,000.00. The BOR, together with the Department of Fish and Game, has targeted a number of ownerships in the southern Tulare County area for protection, as discussed earlier. To date, eight of these ownerships are ready for state purchase. The BOR grant provides funding for the total purchase price of properties to be acquired. These funds are to be placed directly into escrow. In addition, BOR provides funds for all related real estate expenses such as title, escrow and appraisal services. These funds are to be provided to WCB on a reimbursement basis.

As noted, all owners have agreed to sell the above discussed lands for the total approved appraised fair market value of \$131,600.00. Acquisitions costs are estimated to be an additional \$6,000.00 for title insurance, escrow fees and the Department of General Services' review charges, all of which will be reimbursed by BOR. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Section 15313 as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and a Notice of Exemption has been filed.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this transaction as proposed; authorize the acceptance of both the grant and the proposed properties; allocate \$6,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c), to cover the related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, this transaction as proposed; authorize the acceptance of both the grant and the proposed properties; allocate \$6,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c), to cover the related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*8. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion #11, Riverside County \$30,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of a 1.0± acre parcel located adjacent to the Department of Fish and Game's San Jacinto Wildlife Area in western Riverside County for the purpose of eliminating a small in holding that will be used by the Department for a parking lot and a gated access way to the wildlife area.

The San Jacinto Wildlife Area is located in the San Jacinto Valley, approximately 18 miles southwest of downtown Riverside, and just north of the community of Lakeview. To the northwest is the City of Moreno Valley, whose current authorized sphere of influence wraps around the northern and northeastern borders of the wildlife area. The western boundary of the 6,546± acre wildlife area is contiguous with the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, placing a total of 14,245± acres under public ownership and protection.

Initial land acquisitions for the wildlife area were completed during the period of 1981-82 as a part of a mitigation package developed to compensate for wildlife habitat losses resulting from the construction of the State Water Project. As opportunity and circumstances allowed, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) acquired additional properties. As recently as October, 1999, the Board exercised the third and last phase of an option to acquire 301± acres of property within an area known as Mystic Lake, located on the easterly side of the wildlife area.

The subject property is located along the Ramona Expressway, at the southern boundary of the Department's wildlife area. Surrounded by state-owned land, this small in holding was believed to be under state ownership. In fact, it has been used by the Department over the past 10± years as a public parking area and gated access way to the wildlife area.

The wildlife area provides for the protection of freshwater wetlands at Mystic Lake and its associated upland habitat for sensitive plants associated with the Lake, and the over 240 bird species that have been recorded using the Mystic Lake area. The wildlife area also supports a full array of programs sponsored by the Department including nature observation, photography, hiking and hunting. With an estimated 20,000 visitors utilizing the wildlife area each year, the Department has placed a high priority on acquiring the subject property for its continued use as a parking facility and access way to the wildlife area.

The subject property has an approved appraised fair market value of \$50,000.00. However, the owner has agreed to sell it to the state for \$28,500.00, resulting in a donation of \$21,500.00. It is anticipated that an additional \$1,500.00 will be needed for administrative costs, which include escrow, title insurance and Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this proposal to \$30,000.00.

This proposal is exempt from CEQA, under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; allocate \$30,000.00 from the Wildlife Conservation Fund to cover the purchase price and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved this acquisition as proposed; allocate \$30,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund to cover the purchase price and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *9. Canebrake Ecological Reserve Public Access (Augmentation), \$20,000.00
(South Fork Kern River), Kern County

This proposal was to consider an allocation to augment a February 24, 1998 allocation to fund trail improvements and a parking lot at the Department of Fish and Game's (Department) Canebrake Ecological Reserve, located on the South Fork of the Kern River just off Highway 178, in northeast Kern County.

The 1,290± acre Reserve was acquired by the Board in 1994 to preserve the area's biological diversity and to provide access to thousands of acres of federal public lands located adjacent to the Department's property. The proposed improvements are needed to provide access from State Highway 178 across the Reserve to the common state-federal property line on the north boundary of the Reserve. Due to the sensitive nature of the Reserve's habitats and species, hunting on the Reserve is not compatible, but the proposed parking lot and trail will provide public access to those adjacent federal lands that have been inaccessible for decades.

In February of 1998, the Board approved \$160,000.00 in funding for the Department to design and contract for construction of the project.

Cost elements for the proposed project were estimated as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Original Estimated Cost</u>
Parking lot	\$ 5,000.00
Trail	75,000.00
Foot bridge	45,000.00
Fencing	<u>35,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$ 160,000.00</u>

Bids for the project have now been received and are higher than the funding originally approved for the construction. Therefore, additional funds will be needed to complete the project. In addition, since the original estimates were prepared, it was determined that the length of the trail had to be extended to avoid sensitive areas, causing an increase in costs needed to construct the trail and the fencing along the trail.

In an attempt to get this project under construction, the contractor has agreed to construct the trail, parking lot and foot bridge over Canebrake Creek for a \$140,000.00 base bid. The California Conservation Corps (CCC) has agreed to enter into an agreement with the Department to provide the labor to install the fencing, and additional funds will be needed for the CCC labor and the fencing material to complete the project. The new funding breakdown is as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Revised Estimated Cost</u>
Parking lot, Trail and Foot bridge	\$ 140,000.00
Fencing (Labor and Materials)	<u>39,750.00</u>
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$ 179,750.00</u>

In addition to the project cost listed above, an additional \$250.00 will be required for General Services' review costs, bringing the total augmentation allocation necessary to complete this project to \$20,000.00.

Staff recommended the Board approve the augmentation as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$20,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the augmentation as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$20,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *10. Knights Landing Fishing Access (Augmentation), Yolo County

THIS ITEM WAS WITHDRAWN FROM CONSIDERATION.

*11. Mountain Meadows Reservoir, Upland Restoration, Lassen County \$10,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the CWA, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) the landowner, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Board to construct cross fencing to reestablish high quality nesting cover at Mountain Meadow Reservoir to attract breeding waterfowl on privately-owned property located next to quality wetland habitat.

On May 14, 1996, the Board allocated \$85,600.00 for a cooperative project with the same partners as noted above, to enhance 1,500± acres of wetland and upland habitat at this reservoir. This project is intended to enhance the earlier project by adding additional cross fencing to provide the opportunity for better rotational grazing, thereby allowing better habitat management opportunities.

PG&E has traditionally allowed public access to the reservoir for hunting and fishing, with livestock grazing being a long-term secondary use of their adjacent uplands. Unfortunately, timing and duration of past livestock grazing practices has severely reduced the quality and quantity of woody and herbaceous vegetation on the project site for nesting ducks.

Past grazing practices have also reduced wildlife habitat values, affecting waterfowl production on the property. Grazing of the uplands has reduced residual vegetation used as nest sites by local breeding ducks, while grazing in shallow areas of the reservoir near the uplands has eliminated emergent wetland vegetation, a critical habitat component for waterfowl broods, overwater nesters and other wildlife. As is typical, preferred plants (primarily grasses) were continuously grazed throughout late spring, summer and into fall by a relatively small number of livestock. Because of this grazing pattern, the number and diversity of desirable native perennial grasses has declined and juncus now dominates most of the uplands, with only remnant native perennial grasses such as tufted hairgrass, meadow barley, sloughgrass and native timothy remaining.

To promote desired nesting heights, as breeding waterfowl prefer, a component of the previous project was to defer grazing on the project site for two years. However, as a result of the deferred grazing, residual juncus growth from previous years has created a thick layer of thatch further reducing the occurrence of native perennial grasses that have the potential to provide taller/dense nesting cover.

Now, to help remedy this problem, and allow for better grazing management in the future, approximately 9,240 feet of four strand barbed wire cross fencing is proposed to be installed to allow closely controlled grazing, as needed to control plant residues and encourage the reestablishment of native grasses. The modification to the fencing plan is estimated to cost \$10,000.00 PG&E and the grazing permittees will pay for the maintenance of the fence.

Once the fencing is installed, it is proposed that the site will be flash grazed to remove/reduce the amount of juncus residue on the site. It is also proposed that grazing will commence on August 1, 2000 and cattle will be removed from the site no later than August 15, 2000. Each year thereafter the need to graze the project site will be evaluated by DFG and CWA. If grazing is recommended, a written recommendation will be prepared for the grazing permittees. CWA will continue to search for, and monitor, waterfowl nests on the project site for a ten-year period.

The primary waterfowl species that will benefit from the proposed project include mallard, redhead, cinnamon teal, gadwall, ring-necked ducks, lesser scaup, northern pintail, and the Great Basin Canada goose. Other waterfowl species and a diversity of water dependent wildlife will also benefit including the greater sandhill crane and the bald eagle.

To protect the state's investment, the landowners and project partners have previously agreed to manage and maintain the property to benefit nesting waterfowl for 10 years. If during the 10-year life span of the project, the determination is made that they are no longer able to manage and maintain the project to benefit nesting waterfowl, project sponsors have agreed to reimburse the state the amortized cost of the fencing effort.

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d); and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d); and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*12. Wetland Habitat Restoration (Brood Water and Wetland Enhancement, Phase II), Glenn County \$26,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the CWA, the landowner, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Board to enhance 104± acres of seasonal wetlands on privately-owned property.

The subject property is located approximately four miles east of the town of Afton within the Butte Sink portion of Glenn County. The project site is a part of an 806± acre ownership which is farmed using wildlife friendly farming practices and crop rotations such as corn, milo and small grains, beneficial to nesting waterfowl and other neotropical shorebirds and songbirds. On March 9, 1993 the Board approved funding for a cooperative project to work with the landowner and the CWA to restore 104± acres of managed wetlands. The work was completed in 1994 and consisted of the creation of five brood ponds and the installation of irrigation wells and a tail water delivery and return system. The initial project provided improved feeding areas and nesting habitat for upland nesting birds and provided critical water during late spring and early summer for waterfowl, pheasants, and a diversity of other wetland dependent species. The entire upland nesting area and ponds have been managed according to a detailed management plan prepared by the landowner, WCB, CWA and DFG staff.

Since the initial project was constructed, a design flaw has become evident which has allowed emergent vegetation such as tules and cattails to grow in scattered clumps over approximately 50 percent of each pond, thus reducing their effectiveness and capability to provide quality brood water for young birds. Throughout the irrigation season, because of an inadequate drainage system, agricultural tail water continuously enters the north and south ponds and Beck Lake. Agricultural tail water also enters the Golden and Middle Ponds.

Now, to allow for drainage and the proper management of the restored wetlands and brood ponds, a drainage ditch to divert the irrigation run off is necessary. Additional water control structures are also needed to direct and control irrigation runoff away from the ponds and the upland areas surrounding the ponds. A swale and "V" ditch will be constructed to improve drainage efficiency in the Upper Lakes, Beck Lake, Golden and Middle Ponds. Completion of the planned project measures will allow management of the habitat ponds as required in the Management Plan.

Cost estimates for this proposal have been developed by CWA and have been reviewed and approved by staff as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
9 Flash Board Risers (FBR)	\$4,359.00
2 Rice Boxes (36x48x24)	350.00
40' Pipes/Reset some existing pipe	1,390.00
Lower existing FBR from Upper Lake to pooling area	200.00
Delivery of materials	150.00
Construct new diversion ditch	14,811.00
Excavate swale and ditches through ponds	6,300.00
CWA Project Design	800.00
CWA Construction Management and Control	1,200.00
Contingency (excluding in-kind)	2,740.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$32,300.00</u>
<u>Proposed Funding Breakdown:</u>	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$26,000.00
Landowners	6,300.00
<u>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</u>	<u>\$32,300.00</u>

Construction of the water control structures and drainage ditches are estimated to cost \$32,300.00, of which \$26,000.00 is proposed to be funded by the Board. The landowners will be contributing the remaining \$6,300.00. To protect the state's investment, the landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the property to benefit nesting waterfowl and their broods for 20 years. If during the 20-year life span of the project, the landowners determine they are no longer able to manage and maintain the project to benefit nesting waterfowl and their broods, the landowners have agreed to reimburse the state the amortized cost of the project.

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$26,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d); as authorized for use by the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$26,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d); as authorized for use by the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *13. Lokern Ecological Reserve, Expansions #4 through #14, \$40,000.00
(Kern County Valley Floor Habitat Conservation Plan), Kern County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of eleven ownerships, containing a total of 82.1± acres of privately-owned land, located approximately 30 miles west of Bakersfield, near the town of Buttonwillow. These proposed purchases are part of a larger program involving a number of public and private entities to protect rare natural communities in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

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

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

The primary purpose of acquisitions in the proposed 40,000-acre LNA is to protect rare natural communities and the threatened and endangered plant and animal species that are found in this area. In 1992 a report was completed by the San Joaquin Valley Biological Technical Committee (composed of various agency representatives) entitled "A Biological Framework for Natural Lands and Endangered Species in the Southern San Joaquin Valley," which described the value of preserving lands in this area. In developing this document, the participants proposed a strategy of core reserves of existing habitat with connecting corridors

throughout the San Joaquin Valley, which would form a regional conservation program to ensure that sensitive natural communities and listed species would survive over time. The Lokern area was identified as one of the primary preserve areas for this purpose. This part of the valley has one of the highest concentrations of listed species in the continental United States. It is estimated that only 5 to 10 percent of the land base on the valley floor remains in the natural vegetative communities endemic to the area. The Lokern area of western Kern County contains some of the highest quality natural habitats left in the entire valley. The primary sensitive species found in this area include the San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, Tipton kangaroo rat, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, Kern Mallow, Hoover's woolly star and alkali larkspur. These species are all known to exist in the proposed LNA.

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

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

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

Following is a brief description of the eleven parcels being recommended at this time for purchase under this program. It should be noted that each parcel, by itself, contains limited wildlife values. However, each one being considered for purchase has been identified by the Department of Fish and Game as being very important to the overall, long-term program of creating a viable reserve in this area.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #4 (Russell) \$4,400.00

This unimproved property contains 9.6± acres and is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road. The northern corner of the subject parcel borders the California Aqueduct. It has no legal access, which is typical of many properties in the area. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$4,000.00. An additional \$400.00 will be necessary to cover costs including escrow and title insurance, appraisal and Department of General Services' costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$4,400.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #5 (Garner) \$2,900.00

This 5± acre parcel is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road, but cannot be accessed from this county road. The southwest corner of the subject property adjoins the California Aqueduct. The property is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell their property for its approved appraised value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 is estimated to be necessary to cover all costs of the proposed purchase bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$2,900.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #6 (Angst) \$4,400.00

This unimproved property contains 10± acres and is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road and has no legal access. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$4,000.00. An additional \$400.00 will be necessary to cover costs including escrow and title insurance, appraisal and Department of General Services' costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$4,400.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #7 (Rancho Attilio) \$2,900.00

This 5± acre parcel is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road, but cannot be accessed from this county road. It is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell for the approved appraised value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 is estimated to be necessary to cover all costs of the proposed purchase bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$2,900.00

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #8 (Bolle) \$4,400.00

This unimproved property contains 10± acres and is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road. However, it has no legal access. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$4,000.00. An additional \$400.00 will be necessary to cover costs including escrow and title insurance, appraisal, and Department of General Services' costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$4,400.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #9 (Brazher) \$2,900.00

This 5± acre parcel is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road, but it cannot be accessed from this county road. The property is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell their property for its approved appraised value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 is estimated to be necessary to cover all costs of the proposed purchase bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$2,900.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #10 (Morehouse) \$2,900.00

This unimproved property contains 5± acres and is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road. However, it has no legal access. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 will be necessary to cover costs including escrow and title insurance, appraisal and Department of General Services' costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$2,900.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #11 (Giovanetti) \$2,900.00

This 5± acre parcel is located approximately one mile north of Lokern Road, but cannot be accessed from this county road. The property is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell their property for its approved appraised value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 is estimated to be necessary to cover all costs of the proposed purchase bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$2,900.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #12 (Randolph) \$2,900.00

This unimproved property contains 5± acres and is located approximately one-half mile north of Lokern Road. It has no legal access. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$2,500.00. An additional \$400.00 will be necessary to cover costs including escrow and title insurance, appraisal and Department of General Services' costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$2,900.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #13 (Jerich) \$1,500.00

This 2.5± acre parcel is located approximately one mile north of Lucern Road, but cannot be accessed from this county road. The property is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell this property for its approved appraised value of \$1,250.00. An additional \$250.00 is estimated to be necessary for costs, bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$1,500.00.

Lokern Ecological Reserve Expansion #14 (Gunn)

\$7,900.00

This 20± acre parcel is located approximately one mile east of Lucern Road, but cannot be accessed from this county road. It is generally level and is located within a designated flood zone. The owners have agreed to sell this property for its approved appraised value of \$7,000.00. An additional \$900.00 is estimated to be necessary for costs, bringing the total allocation necessary to complete this purchase to \$7,900.00.

The total allocation necessary to complete the entire eleven purchases is \$40,000.00 (\$35,250.00 purchase price and \$4,750.00 in costs). The acquisitions are exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as acquisitions of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition of these parcels, as discussed above; allocate \$40,000.00 for the purchases and related costs from the Habitat Conservation Fund, as specifically made available for this program; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish these acquisitions; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the acquisition of these parcels, as discussed above; allocate \$40,000.00 for the purchases and related costs from the Habitat Conservation Fund, as specifically made available for this program; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish these acquisitions; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*14. Fields Landing Public Access, Humboldt County

\$88,510.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a partnership project with the County of Humboldt to upgrade access to the existing restroom to barrier-free standards and replace the boarding float at the Fields Landing Public Access facility. The project is located within Humboldt Bay, on County-owned land, in the community of Fields Landing, approximately five miles south of the City of Eureka.

The Board has been involved with this project, since funding the construction of the boat ramp and parking area in 1958. This public access site quickly proved extremely popular, especially during the ocean salmon fishing season, and in 1974 the Board funded a project to enlarge the parking area, extend the ramp, and construct floats and sanitary facilities. The boarding float was replaced in 1988. The existing site improvements include a two-lane boat ramp, with boarding float on the south side and a concrete walkway on the north, protected by riprap. In July of 1999, the County and the Department of Boating and Waterways

(DBW) entered into an agreement to install ramp lighting and to remove the existing concrete walkway and riprap from the north side of the ramp to replace them with a more boater-friendly boarding float. That project is under construction.

During planning for the previously described DBW project, it became clear that the existing boarding float on the south side was rapidly disintegrating because marine animals were tunneling through the supporting floats. The proposed project will replace that float with one made from heavier gauge plastic better able to withstand the harsh marine environment. At the same time, the restroom will be upgraded to barrier-free standards.

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

<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>
Preliminary engineering	\$ 6,300.00
Site work	14,000.00
Pre-cast concrete piles (3), installed	20,000.00
Floating dock, 6' x 20', installed	40,000.00
ADA restroom upgrades	1,950.00
Signs	1,000.00
Construction and contract administration	5,000.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$88,250.00</u>

In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$260.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the Board's portion of the project to \$88,510.00.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15302, as it is a replacement of an existing structure with a new structure on the same site with the same purpose and capacity. The County has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, through a Lease and Operating Agreement, and will handle contract administration for the proposed construction.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$88,510.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$88,510.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *15. Lusardi Creek Habitat Linkages, Expansion #1, San Diego County \$990,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the County of San Diego to be applied toward its acquisition of 95.4± acres of coastal sage scrub and riparian habitat located in the Santa Fe Valley area of San Diego County. The acquisition of this property would provide a significant wildlife linkage along a tributary to the San Dieguito River and protect important habitat lands essential for the natural exchange of California gnatcatchers along coastal San Diego County. The acquisition would also allow for management of this habitat in a manner consistent with other lands already included in the county's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Reserve and further implement the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) efforts in the county.

The DFG's Conceptual Area Acquisition Plan for the Lusardi Creek Habitat Linkage Area consists of three contiguous properties, totaling approximately 250 acres of natural land along Lusardi Creek, located within the Lake Hodges segment of the County's MSCP Subarea Plan. This rapidly developing area, known as Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch is situated west of Interstate 15 and east of Interstate 5. The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan, as approved by the County, permits development on the mesa top areas of the three parcels along Lusardi Creek, providing the slopes and riparian areas are preserved. Acquisition of all of the parcels will protect the important upland habitats associated with the lands and will preserve habitat that is occupied by the California gnatcatchers.

In September, 1999, with the assistance of an acquisition grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board, the County acquired the first property identified in the acquisition plan, consisting of 97.2± acres. The DFG has now identified the second, adjacent, property as being of the highest priority for acquisition within the acquisition plan. The subject vacant property would access Rio Visa Road by sharing an easement frontage road through the County's adjoining property. Freeways are located within five miles of the subject property.

The State and the County are already working together in the corridor to acquire and manage open space land. The DFG currently participates in land acquisition with the San Dieguito River Valley Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority and the County of San Diego in the San Dieguito River Valley as part of a "mountains to the sea" open space corridor. Together

these three entities have acquired over 3,000 acres of open space within the corridor, and jointly manage properties at San Dieguito Lagoon Ecological Reserve, Volcan Mountain Preserve and San Felipe Wildlife Area, which are located at the western and eastern ends of the corridor.

The DFG has identified the Lusardi Creek Habitat Linkage Area as very important to the long-term survival of rare, threatened and endangered species covered by the MSCP. In addition to the linkage, which is essential for the continued natural exchange of the California gnatcatchers, sensitive plant and animal species found in the area include the coast barrel cactus, southwestern spiny rush and ashy spikemoss, while habitat for the Quino checkerspot butterfly is present in the upland areas of the properties. Sensitive animals, some of which are threatened, endangered or proposed for listing, have been identified on the Lusardi Creek properties, including two rufous-crowned sparrows, coastal California gnatcatchers, orange throated whiptails, San Diego coast horned lizard, northern red-diamond back rattlesnake and coastal rosy boa.

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

The Board's proposed \$988,000.00 grant, if approved, will be used to match the County's contribution toward the approved fair market value purchase price of \$1,976,000.00 for the subject property. It is estimated that an additional \$2,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses, including Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the total allocation for this proposal to \$990,000.00. The proposal is exempt from CEQA, under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions, as an acquisition for land for wildlife conservation purposes.

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve the award of a grant to the County of San Diego to be applied to the acquisition of the 95.4± acres, as proposed; allocate \$990,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/NCCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the award of a grant to the County of San Diego to be applied to the acquisition of the 95.4± acres, as proposed; allocate \$990,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/NCCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

16. Boden Canyon Ecological Reserve, Expansions #1 and #2, \$2,410,000.00
San Diego County

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was for the purchase of approximately 660 acres within Boden Canyon, which lies on the north side of State Highway 78, about 10 miles easterly of Escondido. The acquisition would be further implementation of the habitat protection efforts in this region's Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. At its meeting of February 24, 1998, the Board approved the initial purchase of 561± acres within the canyon. Following Mr. Sarro's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal. He added that the original proposal, as shown in the agenda, was for 670 acres. However, because one of the landowners wanted to retain 10 acres, this proposal was amended to consider a total of 660 acres.

Boden Canyon is ideally located for purposes of creating a viable preserve and is an important element of the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and NCCP, as well as the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority's (JPA) San Dieguito River Regional Park Plan. The site provides a connection between the San Dieguito River Valley and the Rancho Guejito area adjacent to Pamo Valley, forming one of the longest natural corridors in San Diego County, extending north to Riverside County. In addition, the entire eastern boundary abuts the Cleveland National Forest.

The canyon, which is over 4 miles long and about 3/4 of a mile wide, consists of about 2,070 acres with a mixed ownership pattern. In recent years, the City of San Diego and the County of San Diego have acquired almost 840 acres in separate locations as part of the NCCP program and the San Dieguito River Regional Park plan. The Board's 1998 purchase leaves the remainder, about 670 acres, in two private ownerships. Of that, 660 acres are under consideration in this proposal.

There are nine major vegetation communities in the canyon, all of which occur on the subject property and six of which are considered sensitive, namely Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern willow scrub, southern coast live oak riparian forest, coast live oak woodland, Engelmann oak woodland and coastal and valley freshwater marsh.

Among the fourteen observed sensitive animal species using these habitats are the San Diego horned lizard, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, loggerhead shrike, two-striped garter snake, jacumba pocket mouse and Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse. Game species using the canyon include mule deer and turkey.

The Department strongly supports the acquisition and would propose to work with the City and the County toward cooperative management of the property along with the lands acquired in the 1998 purchase. Management would be primarily for habitat protection and enhancement, but, where compatible, could include hunting, hiking, nature observation and similar wildlife oriented public recreation.

The two proposed acquisitions are structured as follows:

Expansion #1 \$2,194,000.00

This 590± acre ownership would connect and solidify the public ownerships within the canyon, providing a contiguous block of almost 2,000 acres in state, county and city ownership. The subject property has a state-approved fair market value of \$2,790,000.00 (an overall value of \$4,730 per acre). However, the owner has offered the property to the state for a total price of \$2,360,000.00 (\$4,000 per acre); a donation of \$430,000.00 in land value. To assist in this purchase, the San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy and the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park have each raised \$90,000.00 in grant funds to be used for this purchase, thereby reducing the necessary allocation by the Board to \$2,180,000.00. Expenses for appraisal, escrow and Department of General Services' review are estimated to be \$12,000.00. An additional \$2,000.00 is recommended for allocation to pay for posting the area and providing initial security fencing and gate improvements. A total allocation of \$2,194,000.00 is therefore necessary to complete the purchase of this property.

Expansion #2 \$216,000.00

This ownership, previously proposed as 80± acres and now revised to 70± acres, consists of the northwesterly-most, and last remaining private holding in the canyon. It has a revised state-approved fair market value of \$315,000.00 (\$4,500 per acre). However, the landowner has offered the property to the state for \$210,000.00 (\$3,000 per acre), representing a donation to the state of \$105,000.00 in land value. Expenses of appraisal, escrow and Department of General Services' review are estimated to be \$6,000.00. Therefore, a total allocation of \$216,000.00 is necessary to complete the purchase of Expansion #2.

Staff recommended that the Board approve these acquisitions as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the two grants totaling \$180,000.00 as discussed, for placement directly into escrow; allocate \$2,410,000.00 to cover the balance of the purchase price and related expenses for the two acquisitions from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (b/c) NCCP; authorize staff to enter into such agreements as may be necessary to carry out these acquisitions; and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Thieriot questioned the impact this project would have on the San Diego area pheasant hunters. Ms. Gail Presley of the Department of Fish and Game responded by reporting that the Department of Fish and Game has current authorization for management of the area and

would be exploring partnerships with other entities in the area, including the City or the Palomar Audubon Society. She added that the Department is looking closely at hunting opportunities on lands that are suitable for such activity and would be going through a management plan development process where public meetings would be held to discuss concerns, in addition to considering nature interpretations, hiking and horseback trails, etc. She explained that in many cases hunting is not always appropriate for all areas. Mr. Schmidt reported that it was his understanding that the Department held a junior hunt several weeks ago on the property previously acquired by the Board.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved these acquisitions, as amended; authorize the acceptance of the two grants totaling \$180,000.00 as discussed, for placement directly into escrow; allocate \$2,410,000.00 to cover the balance of purchase price and related expenses for the two acquisitions from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (b/c) NCCP; authorize staff to enter into such agreements as may be necessary to carry out these acquisitions; and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

At this time, Mr. Schmidt welcomed Maureen Rose, representing Assembly Member Howard Wayne's office.

17. Redwoods to the Sea Corridor, Humboldt County \$500,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to assist them in the purchase of 1,394± acres of privately-owned land for the preservation of old-growth Douglas fir and mixed hardwood-conifer forest types. Following Mr. Frank Giordano's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal.

The subject property is located in Humboldt County, about 50 miles south of Eureka, approximately 11 miles inland from the coast and 5 to 10 miles west of the towns of Weott, Myers Flat and Miranda, which lie along U.S. Highway 101 on the South Fork of the Eel River. It adjoins the BLM's Gilham Butte Late Seral Reserve, a Resource Natural Area, on the south and east. It also adjoins the California Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) Humboldt Redwoods State Park (HRSP) along part of its northern border. Road access is through the HRSP, on Bull Creek Road, an unimproved dirt road. Gilham Butte is the divide between the Eel River and the Mattole River watersheds. It is also a portion of the physical connection between the HRSP and the BLM's King Range National Conservation Area (KRNCA). Elevations range from approximately 1,600 feet along the creeks to 2,600 feet along the ridge tops. Current land use is timber production.

The 1,394± acre Gilham Butte parcel is rugged, low-elevation old-growth Douglas-fir and mixed hardwood-conifer (oak, madrone and second growth Douglas-fir) forest types. These forest types provide habitat for a number of sensitive species, such as the northern spotted owl, goshawk, red tree vole, Pacific fisher and the southern torrent salamander, as well as salmon and steelhead.

The primary purpose of acquisition of the property is to protect the habitats of rare, threatened and endangered fish and wildlife and to provide public access between two existing blocks of public lands. The structural complexity and high volume seed production of the forests found in the proposed acquisition provide significant habitat for species dependent on late-succession forest, including many rare, threatened and endangered species. Because the land proposed for acquisition is zoned Timber Production Zone, the only hope for achieving these objectives is a conversion to public ownership. Retention of the existing continuity of a large, structurally diverse, forested landscape ranging across watersheds, with multiple gradients in elevation, topography and vegetative species composition, will protect wildlife habitat values for both the HRSP and the KRNCA. Providing a significantly larger protected land base improves population viability for species with large home ranges.

Species known to exist on the subject property include Coopers Hawk, Northern Spotted Owl, Ruffed Grouse, Red Tree Vole, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead Trout and the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog.

Management objectives would be 1) to conserve existing high quality coastal low-elevation old growth Douglas-fir, deciduous and live oak, and madrone forest types, 2) to prevent fragmentation and maintain wildlife travel and migration corridors, 3) to restore and enhance habitat for listed and candidate fish and wildlife species and 4) to assist the recovery of viable populations of fish and wildlife species in jeopardy of extirpation or extinction on both the local and regional levels.

Public use would include vehicular access to the currently landlocked Gilham Butte Late Seral Reserve and a hiking trail linking HRSP, in the Eel River watershed, through the proposed acquisition to the Gilham Butte Late Seral Reserve in the Mattole River watershed. Other public uses would include camping, wildlife and bird viewing, hunting and fishing access.

Additionally, the purchase of the property would significantly aid the effort to insure permanent and sustainable protection for a wildlife corridor linking the largest old-growth redwood grove in the world, the 55,000-acre HRSP, with the old-growth Douglas-fir forests of the 60,000-acre KRNCA, extending to the longest unroaded coastline in the contiguous United States, the Lost Coast.

Both the DPR and the BLM strongly support the acquisition and the BLM has indicated it would accept fee title and management responsibility for the property.

The appraised fair market value of the subject property, as approved by both the BLM and Department of General Services is \$2,420,000.00. It is proposed that the Board fund \$500,000.00 toward this purchase with the balance coming from the BLM. Funding was specifically provided to WCB in the 1999/2000 budget for the Redwoods to the Sea Corridor from the Forest Services Improvement Fund.

Staff recommended that the Board approve a grant to BLM, as proposed; allocate \$500,000.00 from the Forest Services Improvement Fund to complete the grant; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; authorize staff to deposit the funds into escrow as a grant toward BLM's purchase; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Fred Klass asked a question regarding the prospects of buying the nearby properties necessary to complete the corridor and if there were willing sellers. Mr. Giordano pointed out that some property was already in public ownership and explained that over a reasonable period of time, either through the Bureau of Land Management or Forest Service, they would be able to link the properties together. He introduced Ms. Kate Anderton of Save-the-Redwoods League, who provided further clarification stating that the League was in current negotiations to obtain additional parcels, which would provide an unusual opportunity for a matrix of private and public ownerships to enhance and promote habitat values in that corridor.

Mr. Hight commented that the Kings Ranch and Black Sands Beach are beautiful sites and encouraged everyone to visit those areas.

It was moved by Mr. Robert Hight, and the Board approved, a grant to BLM, as proposed; allocate \$500,000.00 from the Forest Services Improvement Fund to complete the grant; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; authorize staff to deposit the funds into escrow as a grant toward BLM's purchase; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

18. Mattole River Ecological Reserve, Expansions #4 through #9, \$1,870,000.00
Mendocino County

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of six separate ownerships totaling 668± acres for the preservation of old-growth redwood and mixed coniferous forest and Mattole River watershed land adjoining the Mattole River Ecological Reserve. The properties are located in northern Mendocino County, just south of the town of Whitethorn. Access to the ecological reserve area is from Briceland Road which traverses a portion of the Reserve. Following Mr. Giordano's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal.

At its meetings of November 15, 1988, May 11, 1989 and February 13, 1991, the Board approved the previous purchases totaling 614± acres. The lands generally described for acquisition at this time contain large stands of old-growth redwood and Douglas fir, as well as various hardwoods, providing ideal habitat for numerous old-growth dependent animal and plant species. These forests, located near the headwaters of the Mattole River, contain

the best King salmon spawning gravels in the entire watershed and provide nesting habitat for the unique marbled murrelet, the spotted owl, osprey, goshawk and many other bird species. The numerous cool, clean creeks flowing from the forest support many aquatic species, including the Olympic salamander and tailed frog. In past years, logging practices all around the subject area have made this particular forest the last genetic reservoir of many threatened and endangered species found in the Upper Mattole River watershed. An important use of the area could be for the reintroduction of species needing such an old-growth habitat for their survival.

Habitat for more common mammal species such as deer, fox, raccoon, bear, skunk, porcupine, squirrel and mountain lion is abundant throughout the subject properties and the existing reserve area. The undisturbed ecosystem in the forest is an excellent educational laboratory, not only for trained scientists, but for students as well. It clearly shows the interdependence of rare plant and animal species and old-growth forests.

Following is a brief description of the six unimproved parcels of land being recommended for purchase at this time, together with the costs associated with each purchase.

Expansion #4 - Dream Stream

\$1,030,000.00

This 215± acre property lies south of the Mattole River adjoining state ownership on its north boundary line. The property is typical with others in this proposal with its rolling to steep terrain. The owners have agreed to sell to the state for the approved fair market value of \$1,025,000.00. An additional \$5,000.00 will be necessary to cover administrative costs including appraisal, General Services' review costs, escrow and title insurance fees bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$1,030,000.00.

Expansion #5 - Kisutch

\$179,000.00

This 80± acres parcel lies east of the Mattole River, adjoining "Save the Redwoods League" property on its south and west property lines. It also has rolling to steep terrain. The owners have agreed to sell their property for the state's approved appraised value of \$176,000.00. Additional administrative costs are estimated to be \$3,000.00 bringing the total allocation necessary for this purchase to \$179,000.00.

Expansion #6 - Ramsom

\$203,000.00

This 50± acre parcel lies on the west side of the Mattole River, adjoining Expansion #4 on its south boundary line, Expansion #7 on its east property line and state ownership on a portion of the southern boundary. It is heavily forested with steep terrain. The owners have agreed to sell for the state's approved fair market value of \$200,000.00. An additional \$3,000.00 will be needed for administrative costs bringing the total allocation of funds needed to \$203,000.00 for this purchase and related costs.

Expansion #7 - O'Neil

\$72,000.00

This small, 10± acre parcel of land lies on both sides of the Mattole River, adjoining Expansion #6 on its western boundary and Expansion #4 on its southern property line. The property is fairly open and is suitable for a home site. The owners have agreed to sell the acreage for the state's approved appraised value of \$70,000.00. In addition to the purchase price, an additional \$2,000.00 will be needed for administrative costs bringing the total purchase allocation to \$72,000.00.

Expansion #8 - Lee

\$153,000.00

This 40± acre parcel also lies on both sides of the Mattole River, adjoining state property on both its north and east sides. It is heavily timbered with steep terrain. The owners have agreed to sell for the state's approved appraised value of \$150,000.00. In addition to the purchase price, an additional \$3,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses bringing the total allocation needed for this purchase to is \$153,000.00.

Expansion #9 - Ancestor Yew

\$233,000.00

Expansion #9 contains 273± acres of land located about one-half mile north of the Mattole River, and contains rugged forest terrain. It is irregular in shape, sharing common boundaries with BLM to the west and south, and the state to a portion of the south and along its west property line. The property has an appraised value of \$235,000.00, but the owners have agreed to sell for \$230,000.00, providing a \$5,000.00 donation to the state. An additional \$3,000.00 will be needed for administration costs, bringing the total allocation needed to \$233,000.00.

The total allocation necessary to complete all six purchases is \$1,870,000.00 (\$1,851,000.00 purchase price and \$19,000.00 in costs). When acquired, the subject properties will be managed by the Department of Fish and Game as part of the existing ecological reserve, through an interim agreement with the Sanctuary Forest, Inc. (SFI), a local nonprofit group. Long-term management strategies for these properties are being developed cooperatively among numerous interested public agencies, private landowners and nonprofits who own property within the watershed. Among these are the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Fish and Game, Save the Redwoods League, the State Coastal Conservancy, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and SFI. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions.

Staff recommended that the Board approve these purchases as proposed; allocate \$1,870,000.00 from the General Fund (1998/99) for the purchase price and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, these purchases as proposed; allocate \$1,870,000.00 from the General Fund (1998/99) for the purchase price and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

19. Cache Creek Wildlife Area, Lake and Colusa Counties \$300,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) to assist in the cooperative acquisition of 1,675± acres of land, being part of a larger phased purchase, for the preservation of habitat for tule elk, deer and other species associated with this habitat type. In addition to the RMEF and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is also a partner in this project. Mr. Giordano reported that Mr. Ford, representing the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, was in the audience should there be any questions. Mr. Giordano then explained the project's location and Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal.

The subject area is located within Lake and Colusa Counties, lying south of Highway 20 and one-half mile east of Highway 16. The eastern boundary lies 1± mile westerly of the state's Wilson Valley Wildlife Area. Access is generally achieved from Highway 20 over BLM lands. In this particular phase, the property to be acquired consists of 20± acres within Lake County and 1,655± acres within Colusa County.

In the late 1970s, the Department of Fish and Game recommended that the Board seek to acquire various properties in Wilson Valley, specifically, some of the properties located adjacent to BLM lands. In 1985, the staff was able to make the first acquisition of about 800 acres in all. WCB has now acquired over 2,500 acres in the Wilson Valley/Cache Creek area.

This area provides critical habitat for resident tule elk and wintering and feeding areas for Bald and Golden eagles. The key habitat types found within the Cache Creek/Wilson Valley area include blue oak woodlands, valley oak woodlands, valley foothill riparian, mixed chaparral, chamise-redshank chaparral, annual grasslands, riverine habitat and wet meadows. Because of the area's importance to tule elk and to the Bald eagles, its protection continues to be considered of statewide, and even national significance. Other wildlife species using the subject include deer, tule elk, wild pig, black bear, wild turkey, California quail, dove and some species of waterfowl. The large size of the surrounding publicly-owned area and the lack of federal grazing leases on BLM administered lands also makes this area important to the state's mountain lion habitat protection effort. Species listed by the Department of Fish and Game as "Species of Special Concern" that utilize the wildlife area include prairie falcon, golden eagle, osprey, long-eared owl and American badger.

Rural subdivision development is a serious threat to this area, with two such developments already in existence. Firewood harvest and commercial decorative rock harvesting also pose threats to the wildlife habitat. An adjacent ownership has already experienced a substantial reduction in oak trees due to such activities. The riparian habitats along Cache Creek are the most impacted, mainly by cattle grazing. These areas are also the most critical to wildlife during the dry, hot summers.

RMEF's acquisition will help guarantee protection of the habitat, provide an opportunity for enhancement and provide for expanded public use opportunities where appropriate. Consumptive uses such as hunting and fishing are anticipated while nonconsumptive uses could include hiking, nature studies and photography. The BLM and the RMEF have entered into management agreements for Cache Creek Wildlife Area providing for controlled public access and recreational use, managed with the primary purpose of the endangered species habitat preservation.

The owners have agreed to sell the subject property for the approved appraised value of \$600,000.00. The project is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions. Management would be carried out by the BLM under a cooperative agreement with RMEF.

Mr. Schmidt reported that a letter of support had been received from the Lake County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Ford explained that this acquisition is only a part of the larger overall 13,000-acre property being protected through the collective efforts of the BLM and the RMEF, and with the Board's approval of this project, the entire project would be valued at \$4.5 million.

Mr. Klass asked a question regarding BLM's management interest for the adjoining property. Mr. Don Koch, Department of Fish and Game Regional Manager, responded by stating that the BLM's interest is from a habitat perspective as there is an increasing need for preservation in this area.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant as proposed, allocate \$300,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Robert Hight, and the Board approved, the grant as proposed, allocate \$300,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

20. Wetland Habitat Restoration (Lakeview Farms), Placer County \$190,150.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the CWA, the landowners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Department of Fish and Game and the Board to restore and enhance 460± acres of wetlands, uplands and brood habitat on privately-owned property. The project area is located approximately 4 miles northwest of the town of Lincoln and approximately 18 miles southeast of the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge, lying within the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture American Basin. Following Ms. Cundiff's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal.

As proposed, approximately 175 acres will be converted from historic crop lands to natural wetland habitat. Spring and summer water will be provided to about 25 percent of the wetlands to provide habitat for breeding ducks and other wetland dependent species. In addition, approximately 280 acres will be restored to natural upland habitat, interspersed with vernal pools that will provide nesting habitat for waterfowl, pheasants, and other upland nesting birds.

The property has traditionally been farmed for rice production, and cattle grazing. The historic wetlands along Coon Creek (which runs east-west through the property) were lost through previous management practices. One goal of this project is to return these areas back to wetlands.

This project will take advantage of the existing site features and create a complete breeding duck habitat complex. Brood water created by the project should contribute to the survival of hundreds of ducklings annually. Nesting ducks are expected to include mallards, wood ducks, cinnamon teal and gadwall. Pheasants, American bitterns, northern harriers, and a variety of songbirds are also common nesters in these habitats. Providing late spring and summer water will create habitat for wading birds, shorebirds, great blue herons, snowy egrets, white-faced ibis, American avocets, black-necked stilts, long-billed curlews, a variety of sandpipers, and a variety of neotropical songbirds.

To achieve the diversity associated with the wetland, upland and vernal pool complex, it is proposed that four wetland units will be constructed on approximately 175 acres. Interior and exterior levees will be built surrounding the wetland units, and ditches will be developed to facilitate independent flooding and drainage of each wetland unit. Water control structures will be installed to allow the timely flooding and drainage of the wetland units and further allow for the precise control of wetland water depths. The construction of channels or swales and loafing bars will meander from the inlet to the outlet structures.

A secondary benefit of this project is that it will also serve as an outdoor science classroom for the local Sheridan elementary/middle school. While still in the design stage, it is planned that the children will be directly involved in the restoration effort by planting willows and

cottonwoods, many of which may be propagated in their local school nursery. In addition, under the supervision of the CWA's Wood Duck Program, it is planned that the Sheridan school will participate in the construction and installation of the wood duck nesting boxes to be located along Coon Creek. As part of the school science program, it is proposed that the nesting boxes be maintained and monitored by the school children.

One component of this proposed restoration project will be the acquisition of a conservation easement to protect the land from development. The landowner has agreed to sell a wetland conservation easement to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, which will restrict development and agricultural activities on the land in perpetuity. Cost estimates for the entire project are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Conservation Easement (NRCS)	\$828,000.00
Levee Preparation and Construction (34,835 cu. yds.)	57,146.00
Delivery Ditch (9,992 cu. yds.)	14,988.00
Rehabilitate and Clean Existing Ditch (2,571 ft.)	13,000.00
Water Control Structures (Risers, gates, cross check, etc.)	15,270.00
298 ft./24 in. A.D.S. Polyethylene Pipe	10,337.00
Pump and Well	90,000.00
Wetland Revegetation (Bulrush, etc.)	7,500.00
Riparian/Wetland Revegetation (Willows, Cottonwoods, etc.)	2,050.00
Seed Levees (7 acres)	1,000.00
Upland Revegetation (62 acres)	9,300.00
CWA Project Engineering and Design	4,000.00
CWA Construction Management and Control	15,500.00
Contingency	23,559.00
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>\$1,091,650.00</u>

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$806,065.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	190,150.00
California Waterfowl Association	25,935.00
Landowners	69,500.00
<u>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</u>	<u>\$1,091,650.00</u>

To protect the state's investment, the landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the property according to a detailed management plan for 30 years. If during the 30-year life span of the project, the landowners determine they are no longer able to manage and maintain the project to benefit nesting waterfowl and their broods, the landowners have agreed to reimburse the state the amortized cost of the project.

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$190,150.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d), as authorized for use by the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Klass and Mr. Thieriot requested clarification regarding water rights for this project. Ms. Cundiff stated that the landowner had water rights on Coon Creek and that, if necessary, water would be pumped to maintain the appropriate level in the brood ponds. Mr. Schmidt added that the agreement insures that the landowner must maintain the property in wetland habitat and to provide the water.

It was moved by Mr. Robert Hight, and the Board approved, this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$190,150.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund - Section 2786 (d), as authorized for use by the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

21. Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion #3, Tehama County \$530,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of 116± acres of land, including one-half mile of stream frontage on Battle Creek, for the preservation and enhancement of significant riparian and wetland habitats. Following Mr. Donnelly's explanation of the project's location, Mr. Schmidt summarized the proposal.

The subject property is located on the east bank of Battle Creek, about six miles east of the town of Cottonwood, adjacent to the Department of Fish and Game's 466± acre Battle Creek Wildlife Area. It can be accessed from Jellys Ferry Road which runs along the entire northern boundary of the property. The property is included within the Department's Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for the Battle Creek and Cottonwood Creek areas which are two major tributaries of the Sacramento River. The proposed acquisition would increase the size of the Battle Creek Wildlife Area to 582± acres.

The property is improved with a single family residence and miscellaneous outbuildings. The residence is approximately 1,000 square feet, and like the outbuildings, is old and in substandard condition. Because the improvements have no contributory value to the property, and would pose a management and cost burden to the Department, WCB staff has arranged to have the structures removed at no cost prior to the state acquiring the property.

Not only is there an extensive riparian zone on the subject property, but there are also several bodies of water and stream courses within its boundaries that harbor wetland habitat. In addition, the property is endowed with pre-1914 water rights as well as riparian rights from Battle Creek, providing the opportunity for some water management should it be desirable

in the future. Historically, the property has been irrigated from the Long-Buckley-Blodgett Ditch. The main ditch take-out traverses the center of the property on its way to Battle Creek, with some water naturally pooling at several locations forming marsh and riparian areas throughout the property.

This acquisition would provide added protection for the breeding territory of the Bald eagle, which has a documented nest site within one mile. Sandhill cranes are known to migrate through the area and, with the protection and enhancement of the subject property, should become more frequent users of this site.

The entire corridor along Battle Creek is used by migratory waterfowl and raptors while also allowing for movement of local species such as deer, ringtail cat, river otter, racoon, red-shouldered hawk, great-horned owl, screech owl and many others. As Battle Creek is a perennial stream with nearly constant flow, it is a primary spawning habitat for salmon and steelhead trout. In fact, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operates the Coleman National Fish Hatchery on Battle Creek approximately 3 miles upstream from the subject, and the Department operates the Darrah Springs Fish Hatchery farther upstream. Protection of the riparian habitat found on this property is very important to this fishery. The Department of Fish and Game considers the purchase of this property to be a high priority. If not acquired, it could easily become more highly developed, destroying some of the high quality habitat found there now.

The owners have agreed to sell their property for its approved fair market value of \$520,000.00. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for project expenses including appraisal, escrow, title insurance and Department of General Services' review costs. The project is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes.

Mr. Schmidt reported that a letter of concern had been received from Tehama County. He added that Mr. Don Koch, Department of Fish and Game Regional Manager, was in the audience and available to answer questions. Mr. Klass requested clarification regarding a statement contained in the County's letter asserting that several agencies were acquiring land along the Sacramento River without an overall plan or coordination of efforts. Mr. Koch responded that the Department of Fish and Game has been working with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), The Nature Conservancy and the Battle Creek working group, which is a watershed conservancy comprised of private citizens in the County. He added that the BLM and the Department worked together on the BLM's plan in the early 1990's, which identified the entire area in terms of protection of riparian habitat and acquisition of some of the property. He explained that the BLM's land management plan for that area addresses the County's issues. Mr. Schmidt added that there is also the SB 1086 plan which addresses management issues for the Sacramento River and its tributaries. Additionally, the Board staff meets quarterly with The Nature Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land, and also meets on a regular basis with the Bureau of Land Management to coordinate efforts in this area. Mr. Hight added that there is actually a great deal of coordination among various

agencies on the Sacramento River projects. Mr. Schmidt advised that the Board would work with Mr. Koch to respond to all concerns addressed in the County's letter. Mr. Klass addressed another concern in the County's letter, specifically that if the water rights were excessive to what was needed to maintain habitat, would the rights be transferred downstream. Mr. Koch stated they could not envision this happening as they just spent 10 years negotiating with Pacific Gas and Electric to get more water into Battle Creek.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition as proposed; allocate a total of \$530,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Section 2786 (e/f)) to cover the acquisition costs and project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the acquisition as proposed; allocate a total of \$530,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Section 2786 (e/f)) to cover the acquisition costs and project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

22. Wildlife Conservation Board Logo

\$5,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider funding design costs for, and adoption of, a Wildlife Conservation Board logo. In 1947, when unprecedented population growth and development were expected to begin in the state, the California Legislature created the Wildlife Conservation Board to not only conserve California's precious wildlife resources, but also to provide for suitable public access to those resources for recreation. That 1947 law created a separate and independent Board, within the Department of Fish and Game, with powers and funding to carry out a new capital outlay acquisition and development program for wildlife conservation. Mr. Schmidt explained the need for a logo and briefly described the two samples.

During the last 52 years, more than 830 projects to protect, enhance or restore fish and wildlife habitat have been approved by the Board. Of these approved projects, the Board has successfully acquired more than 320,000 acres of critical habitat for a host of fish, wildlife and plant species. Included in these acquisitions are more than 135,000 acres of wetlands and marshes, 95,000 acres of critical deer habitat and migration corridors, 13,000 acres of riparian habitat and 65,000 acres of habitat for threatened and endangered plant and wildlife species.

In addition to the protection, enhancement and development projects, the Board has approved more than 290 cooperative projects with other governmental agencies to develop and restore public access to the state's fish and wildlife resource areas. These have included the development and restoration of fishing piers, boat launch ramps and trails for fishing and hunting access, or for just observing wildlife. These efforts have resulted in providing more than 20 million visitor days of enjoyment to California's citizens and for visitors to our state.

In an attempt to provide the Board with identity, visibility and recognition for its many years of work and accomplishments, staff proposes that the Board adopt a Wildlife Conservation Board logo. It is felt that a logo could be used in a variety of ways, from projects signs to business cards, to promote the mission and goals of the Board. A logo would help the public identify the Board from the other various state conservancies, many of whom have individual logos. This visibility could also be helpful in gaining support from the public for future bond funding efforts.

Staff has been working with the graphic artist from the State Lands Commission to develop some logo concepts and are now presenting two samples for your consideration and approval. Both sample logos have been developed to feature the preservation, enhancement and public access activities of the Board.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the adoption of a Wildlife Conservation Board logo from the two samples presented; approve the funding for the design work from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to complete the logo; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass, and the Board approved, the adoption of a Wildlife Conservation Board logo from the two samples presented; approve the funding for the design work from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to complete the logo; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried. (See adopted logo attached)

23. Staff Report - Easement Transfers

Informational

At the February 24, 1998 Wildlife Conservation Board meeting, the Board authorized the Executive Director to transfer less-than-fee interests (easements, rights of ways, etc.) in Department of Fish and Game or Wildlife Conservation Board controlled lands, where the value of the interests is less than \$50,000.00. This was done to improve service to the public and to reduce the cost of processing these transfers.

In addition, the Board placed two conditions on this delegation of authority, the first of which is that in all cases the grant of a less-than-fee interest would be made at the request or with the recommendation of the Department of Fish and Game to assure adequate consideration of impacts on habitat and programs. Secondly, any grant made under this authority would be reported as an informational item at the next available meeting of the Board.

Pursuant to the above described process, the following easement transfers have been completed by staff:

PROJECT TITLE	TRANSFER TYPE	GRANTEE	SIZE	CONSIDERATION
Allensworth Ecological Reserve, Tulare County	A permanent easement to allow farming and wells and related water delivery equipment to be placed and used by them.	Alvin Peter	5.3± acres	The construction of a wire and post fence approximately one mile long dividing DFG property from Peter's ownership. Fence cost estimate - \$11,650.00
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County	An easement for electrical use to the owner of a Duck Club located adjacent to the state's wildlife area.	Volanti Investment Associates	.15± acre	\$1,000.00
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County	An easement for a new access to adjacent owner's residence needed due to the planned development of the DFG's Beldon's Landing Fishing Access.	Jones	.20± acre	\$1,500.00
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County	Exchange of reciprocal easements between adjacent owners due to county road abandonment	various	3± acres	\$1,600.00
Dairy Mart Ponds, San Diego Co.	Utility easement	City of San Diego	1± acre	\$500.00
Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve, Santa Barbara Co.	Exchange of easements/ quitclaim deeds between multiple parties to facilitate a new access that would not encumber Cal-Storke Lands.	Various	2.5± acres	-0- (equal benefit to all parties)

24. Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting Schedule for 2000

Informational

The Wildlife Conservation Board's regular meeting schedule for 2000 is as follows:

Thursday, February 17, 2000

Thursday, May 18, 2000

Thursday, August 17, 2000

Thursday, November 16, 2000

It was proposed that all of the above noted meetings will be held in the State Capitol and will begin at 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Schmidt expressed his appreciation to Mr. Thieriot for his sincere support of the Board and its efforts over the past two years.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,



W. John Schmidt
Executive Director

Attachment

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on November 18, 1999, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$667,508,944.42*. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

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

A.	Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B.	Fish Habitat Preservation, Development and Improvement	22,441,662.93
	Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 4,534,613.05
	Stream Clearance and Improvement	14,788,961.69
	Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	547,719.86
	Marine Habitat	646,619.07
	Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	1,923,749.26
C.	Fishing Access Projects	37,783,376.60
	Coastal and Bay	\$ 2,992,860.08
	River and Aqueduct Access	9,320,738.28
	Lake and Reservoir Access	7,194,317.98
	Piers	18,275,460.26
D.	Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
E.	Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	576,489,033.02
	Wildlife Areas (General)	\$190,722,279.57
	Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	4,633,633.74
	Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	212,626,977.51
	Land Conservation Area	21,057.18
	Inland Wetlands Conservation Grants and Easements	6,176,207.99
	Riparian Habitat Conservation Grants and Easements	5,068,763.47
	Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	157,240,113.56
F.	Hunting Access Projects	484,898.57
G.	Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	10,653,879.29
H.	Special Project Allocations	1,116,464.79
I.	Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	1,806,095.63
	State Owned	\$917,735.63
	Grants	888,360.00
J.	Sales and/or exchanges	<u>550,420.04</u>
	Total Allocated to Projects	\$667,478,944.42*

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

