

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
 (916) 445-8448
 FAX (916) 323-0280
www.wcb.ca.gov

State of California
 The Resources Agency
 Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
 Minutes
 May 13, 2004

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

May 13, 2004

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, May 13, 2004, in Room 113 of the State Capitol in Sacramento, California. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Mr. L. Ryan Brodrick, Director of the Department of Fish and Game. At this time he introduced the Board and Joint Legislative Interim Advisory Committee members present. He then turned over the meeting to Mr. Al Wright, Executive Director. Mr. Wright explained that Mr. Jim Kellogg, Chairman, was absent and that Mr. Brodrick would chair the meeting.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

L. Ryan Brodrick, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game
Dave Harper, Deputy Director, Legislation
Vice, Donna Arduin, Member
Director, Department of Finance

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Michael J. Machado
Mary Morgan,
Vice, Assembly Member Patty Berg
Jeff Arthur,
Vice, Assembly Member Hannah-Beth Jackson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Al Wright

Staff Present: Al Wright, Executive Director
John Donnelly, Assistant Executive Director
Bonnie Turner, Public Land Management Specialist
Peter Perrine, Wetlands Program Manager
Scott Clemons, Riparian Program Manager
Tony Chappelle, Public Land Management Specialist
William Gallup, Senior Land Agent
Randy Nelson, Senior Land Agent
Steven Christensen, Senior Land Agent
Terri Muzik, Associate Land Agent
Roxanne Woodward, Budget Officer
Ajit Bindra, Associate Budget Analyst
Gary Cantrell, Research Analyst
Ken Morefield, Research Analyst
Jennifer Smith, Staff Services Analyst
Maureen Rivera, Executive Assistant
Elena Salas, Secretary
Mary Grande, Secretary
Jan Beeding, Office Technician

Others Present: Lee Leslie, Leslie Salt Company
Terry Palmisano, Department of Fish and Game
Phil Hogan, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Dave Koehler, San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust
Sonia Jacques, The Trust for Public Land
Andrea MacKenzie, Sonoma County
Mike Darnell, Middle Mountain Foundation
Vance Russell, Audubon California
Alex Palmerlee, Center for Land-Based Learning
Tim Wirth, The Trust for Public Land
Adam Steinbuck, Mendocino Redwood Company
Dick Bobertz, San Dieguito River Park
Bill Hamilton, U.C. Davis
Bill Havert, Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
Trevor Burwell, Sacramento County Parks
Paul Rowan, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and
Open Space District
Jennifer Johnson, The Nature Conservancy
Jim Swanson, Department of Fish and Game
Karen Frankel, The Trust for Public Land
Tim Caro, U.C. Davis
Erik Vink, The Trust for Public Land
Joe Rodrigues
Chris Beale, Resources Law Group

2. Funding Status as of May 13, 2004 (Informational)

(a) 2003-04 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Minor Projects..... \$500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (449,405.00)
Unallocated Balance \$50,595.00

(b) 2003-04 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget..... \$20,620,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (1,337,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$19,283,000.00

(c) 2002-03 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget..... \$20,664,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (6,506,491.00)
Unallocated Balance \$14,157,509.00

(d) 2001-02 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget..... \$19,963,500.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (16,785,463.02)
Unallocated Balance \$3,178,036.98

(e) 2000-01 Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection and Flood Protection Bond Fund (River Protection Subaccount) Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (2003-04 Reappropriation)
(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects-Reimbursements)..... \$10,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (5,983,480.00)
Unallocated Balance \$4,016,520.00

(f) 2000-01 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (2003-04 Reappropriation)
(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$14,562,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (9,577,127.23)
Unallocated Balance \$4,984,872.77

(g) 1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]... \$38,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (23,102,356.33)
Unallocated Balance \$14,897,643.67

(h) 2003-04 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$8,500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
Unallocated Balance \$8,500,000.00

(i) 2002-03 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$2,500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
Unallocated Balance \$2,500,000.00

Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002 \$4,800,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
Unallocated Balance \$4,800,000.00

Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002 \$19,200,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (2,465,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$16,735,000.00

(j) 2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650) \$273,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (94,842,061.00)
Unallocated Balance \$178,157,939.00

(k) 2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)

Governor's Budget..... \$32,500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (31,425,035.00)
Unallocated Balance \$1,074,865.00

(l) 2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572)	\$814,350,000.00
Less 2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565 ...	(21,000,000.00)
Less Previous Board Allocations	(436,619,249.73)
Unallocated Balance	\$356,730,750.27

(m) 2003-04 Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor’s Budget (Pursuant to Chapter 588, Statutes of 2001)	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(0.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$5,000,000.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a).....	\$50,595.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c) and (d)	\$36,618,545.98
Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection and Flood Protection Bond Fund (e)	\$4,016,520.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (f) and (g).....	\$19,882,516.44
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (h), (i) and (j).....	\$210,692,939.00
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (k) and (l).....	\$357,805,615.27
Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (m)	\$5,000,000.00

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000

Total Tax Credit Available, Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000	\$100,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Approved Tax Credit for Donated Property .	(33,241,234.00)
Tax Credit Available	\$66,758,766.00

3. Special Project Planning Account Informational

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

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

The Board, at the May 6, 1986 meeting, authorized the Executive Director to use up to 1 percent of a budgeted appropriation to set up and maintain an appropriate planning account with the provision it would be reported to the Board as an informational item at the next meeting.

Accordingly, a planning account has been set up as follows:

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund.....	\$25,000.00
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal And Beach Protection Fund of 2002.....	\$25,000.00

Mr. Wright asked if there were any questions regarding the above informational items. There were none.

4. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 5 through 16)

Mr. Wright explained, regarding Consent Item 5, Approval of Minutes, that the September 30, 2003 minutes were not being presented for consideration today by the current Board due to the change in Board members. He reported that former Board members, Mr. Robert Hight, Director of Fish and Game, Mr. Fred Klass, representing the Department of Finance, and Mr. Michael Flores, Chairman of the Board and President of the Fish and Game Commission, have given approval of the September 30 minutes. He reported that in regard to the November 18, 2003 minutes, Mr. Michael Flores and Mr. Fred Klass have also given approval of those minutes. Mr. Wright clarified that in the November 18, 2003 minutes, Item #25, Commander South Tract, Glenn, Lake and Tehama Counties, as discussed at that meeting, was a project where a fire had gone through the land prior to the Board meeting, the property had been reappraised as a result of that fire and the fair market value was reduced. Those figures were adjusted and discussed at the meeting but were not reflected in the meeting minutes. Therefore, those minutes are adjusted to reflect a reduction in value from \$7,270,000.00 to \$7,052,554.00. Both Mr. Michael Flores and Mr. Fred Klass have approved those changes to the minutes. Mr. Wright asked if there were any questions regarding the consent items. There were none.

It was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve Consent Calendar items 5 through 16 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations, including funding as noted therein. Motion carried.

- *5. Approval of Minutes – September 30, 2003 and November 18, 2003 Meetings and February 19, 2004 Meeting

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve Consent Calendar items 5 through 16 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations, including funding as noted therein. Motion carried. (See discussion in Item 4.)

- *6. Recovery of Funds, May 13, 2004

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.

\$4,281.73 to the **General Fund**
\$89,943.75 to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
\$190,765.38 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
\$0.00 to the **Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund**
\$17,187.46 to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
\$0.00 to the **River Parkway Sub Account**
\$1,291,222.75 to the **River Protection Sub Account**
\$9,708.93 to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
\$173,264.00 to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**
\$160.00 to the **Special Deposit Fund**

GENERAL FUND

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Lower Colorado River (Imperial Division), Imperial County

Allocated	\$1,400,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,400,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Sheepy Creek (Cross Ranch), Siskiyou County

Allocated	\$110,000.00
Expended	<u>-105,718.27</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,281.73

Total General Fund \$4,281.73

**SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND
COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND**

China Hill and Expansions 1 and 2, Siskiyou County

Allocated	\$130,000.00
Expended	<u>-66,615.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$63,385.00

Cosumnes River Preserve Public Access, Sacramento County

Allocated	\$315,270.00
Expended	<u>-315,270.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Cosumnes River Preserve Public Access Augmentation, Sacramento County

Allocated	\$125,835.00
Expended	<u>-125,835.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

East Sacramento County Blue Oak Legacy Area, Expansion 1,
Sacramento County

Allocated	\$2,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

Iron Mountain Wildlife Area, Expansion 2 (Boulder Oaks), San Diego County

Allocated	\$1,233,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,233,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Sacramento Valley Refuge, Glenn County

Allocated	\$2,500.00
Expended	<u>-736.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,764.00

San Joaquin River Riparian Habitat (SJRC 6-11), Madera County

Allocated	\$6,754,880.00
Expended	<u>-6,752,551.08</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,328.92

Wetland Conservation Easement and Restoration Program (CREP),
(Traynham Ranch), Colusa County

Allocated	\$561,500.00
Expended	<u>-549,034.17</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$12,465.83

Wildwood Native Park Public Access, Madera County

Allocated	\$75,000.00
Expended	<u>-75,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, \$89,943.75
Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve, Expansions 26-29, Riverside County

Allocated	\$450,000.00
Expended	<u>-427,400.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$22,600.00

Hallelujah Junction Wildlife Area, Expansion 5, Sierra County

Allocated	\$2,750,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,750,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Spenceville Wildlife Area, Expansion 4, Nevada County

Allocated	\$685,000.00
Expended	<u>-534,965.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$150,035.00

Wetland Habitat Restoration (San Joaquin Wetland Farms), Stanislaus County

Allocated	\$196,000.00
Expended	<u>-178,370.62</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$17,629.38

Wetland Habitat Restoration (Wallace Ranch), Yolo County

Allocated	\$50,000.00
Expended	<u>-49,499.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$501.00

Total Habitat Conservation Fund \$190,765.38

INLAND WETLANDS CONSERVATION FUND

Wetland Habitat Restoration (Little Dry Creek Farms), Butte County

Allocated	\$83,000.00
Expended	<u>-83,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund **\$0.00**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Anderson River Park Fishing Access Improvements, Shasta County

Allocated	\$56,270.00
Expended	<u>-39,837.95</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$16,432.05

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Mouth of Cottonwood Creek, Funding Augmentation, Shasta County

Allocated	\$19,000.00
Expended	<u>-18,244.59</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$755.41

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$17,187.46**

RIVER PARKWAY SUB ACCOUNT

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Mouth of Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area, Shasta County

Allocated	\$130,000.00
Expended	<u>-130,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total River Parkway Sub Account **\$0.00**

RIVER PROTECTION SUB ACCOUNT

Cosumnes River Wildlife Area, Expansion 10, Sacramento County

Allocated	\$1,060,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,054,654.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,346.00

Project Planning

Allocated	\$10,000.00
Expended	<u>-3,704.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$6,296.00

San Joaquin River Riparian Habitat (SJRC 6-11), Fresno County

Allocated	\$5,723,480.00
Expended	<u>-4,693,899.25</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,029,580.75

San Joaquin River Riparian Habitat (SJRC 11) Augmentation, Fresno County

Allocated	\$250,000.00
Expended	<u>-0.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$250,000.00

Total River Protection Sub Account **\$1,291,222.75**

**CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS,
AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND**

Diablo Range Conservation Area, Bear Valley Unit, Expansion 1,
Monterey County

Allocated	\$2,678,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,677,576.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$424.00

Iron Mountain Wildlife Area, Expansion 2 (Boulder Oaks), San Diego County

Allocated	\$2,080,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,074,500.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,500.00

Oak Valley, Riverside County

Allocated	\$5,005,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,001,215.07</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,784.93

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe
Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund** **\$9,708.93**

WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002

Ahmanson Ranch, Ventura County

Allocated	\$135,000,000.00
Expended	<u>-135,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Fall River Valley (Noel Ranch), Shasta County

Allocated	\$174,000.00
Expended	<u>-736.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$173,264.00

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 **\$173,264.00**

SPECIAL DEPOSIT FUND

Lokern Ecological Reserve, Expansion 22, Kern County

Allocated	\$26,000.00
Expended	<u>-25,840.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$160.00

Total Special Deposit Fund **\$160.00**

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve the recovery of funds for the projects listed on pages 7 through 12 of these minutes and close the projects accounts. Recovery totals include \$4,281.73 to the General Fund, \$89,943.75 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, \$190,765.38 to the Habitat Conservation Fund, \$0.00 to the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund, \$17,187.46 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund, \$0.00 to the River Parkway Sub Account, \$1,291,222.75 to the River Protection Sub Account, \$9,708.93 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, \$173,264.00 to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, and \$160.00 to the Special Deposit Fund.

Motion carried.

- *7 Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, Shellmaker Island Wetland Restoration, Orange County \$69,000.00

This was a proposal to consider the allocation of a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore a former salt marsh habitat area about ¼ acre in size, located on Shellmaker Island, at the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, just west of Back Bay Drive, north of the Pacific Coast Highway in Newport Beach. The reserve was designated by the DFG in 1975 and contains 752 acres of upland and salt marsh habitat as well as public access for thousands of visitors annually. The site is one of the few remaining southern coastal estuaries that functions as home to hundreds of species, both marine and land-based.

The wetland restoration project is an integral part of the ongoing planning for the Back Bay Science Center, to be built immediately north of the salt marsh restoration site. The project will be an important educational focal point by introducing visitors and students to wetland biology and ecological principles through outdoor classes, and by also providing an opportunity for students and researchers to conduct short-term and long-term research on restoration techniques and methods used. Other goals are to increase the public's awareness of the value of southern California wetlands, and to provide critical saltmarsh habitat for endangered species. Two prime examples are the Salt marsh birds beak (a plant) and Belding's savannah sparrow.

The demonstration marsh site will be graded and contoured to provide a variety of salt marsh habitats. These habitats include (1) low marsh, middle marsh and high marsh habitat, (2) connecting marsh creek channels to the existing salt marsh areas and the Dunes Marina Access Channel, (3) transitional habitat, and (4) a backshore dune habitat. Revegetation species will include cordgrass, pickleweed, salt wort, Frankenia, sea lavender and sea blight.

The demonstration marsh will be designed so that one-half of the area is dedicated to natural revegetation and the other half is dedicated to education and research, using various transplant methods (seedlings, seeds and fresh water enhancement) to establish the marsh vegetation. The success of natural revegetation and selected transplant methods will be compared over time, using techniques such as belt transects, point intercept analysis and digital video documentation. Natural revegetation has worked well in previous Lower Shellmaker restoration projects, with vegetation returning within one to two years. Research involving plant reproduction, wildlife use and other types of research will be conducted within the restored marsh. Physical and chemical parameters of soil such as sedimentation rates and nutrient values, for example, could also be measured. Selected areas of the existing natural marsh on Lower Shellmaker could serve as long-term reference (control areas) to compare natural physical, chemical and biological characteristics with the newly restored marsh. In addition, a wetland monitoring plan is being developed in accordance with Coastal Commission recommendations.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Project management	\$6,300.00
Grading and elevational contouring	20,000.00
Fine grading and soil preparation	2,900.00
Removal of nonnative trees	11,550.00
Removal of nonnative herbaceous spp.	1,650.00
Wetland & dune plantings (1 gal)	4,900.00
Wetland & dune plantings (4")	14,200.00
Temporary irrigation structures	7,500.00
Simulated wood walkway along marsh	26,400.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$95,400.00
Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$69,000.00
Department of Fish and Game	26,400.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$95,400.00

The project was approved by the Coastal Commission at its March 17, 2004 meeting, and all CEQA requirements have been met. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$69,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$69,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (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.

- *8 Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, Public Access Bridge, \$141,900.00
Orange County

This was a proposal to consider the allocation of a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to install a public access footbridge near Warner Avenue across the outer channel of the existing Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve which lies on Pacific Coast Highway 1, southeast of the City of Seal Beach. The footbridge would span the Outer Bolsa Bay and connect the existing DFG parking lot at the Pacific Coast Highway and Warner Avenue with an existing designated trail on the reserve. This will provide safe access over the Bay outlet for many reserve visitors who now must walk on the high-traffic shoulder of Warner Avenue to reach the other side of the outlet. This project will also complement the adjacent 880± acre Bolsa Chica Lowlands Restoration Access Plan coordinated by the State Lands Commission.

The Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve has a system of trails that brings visitors close to wildlife and allows them to experience California's coastal wetlands. Visitors who come to enjoy the reserve and the interpretive center, operated by the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, must currently access the trail system by crossing over the outlet channel on a heavily traveled road along 120 feet of a narrow asphalt bike lane that offers no protection to pedestrians. The crossing is used by both individuals and large groups that visit the reserve. The DFG would like to provide safe and comfortable access to the trail systems for visitors of the Ecological Reserve. The idea is to continue the walkway that leads from the parking area onto the proposed footbridge, and deliver guests to the trail on the other side. This will provide a safer entry to the reserve, and will also promote others to enjoy the reserve by improving accessibility. The bridge will be maintained and operated by the DFG and local volunteers.

The single span bridge would be constructed of steel or aluminum and coated to resist corrosion. Foundations will be installed away from the bank and will be used to minimize impacts to bank stability. The bridge and access trail which leads to the bridge will be constructed in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act specifications.

Cost estimates for the project, which have been reviewed by staff, are as follows:

Description	Estimated Cost
Project management	\$12,900.00
Prefabricated bridge	90,000.00
Bridge foundation	30,000.00
Engineering/design	52,390.00
Installation costs	10,000.00
Construction contingency	19,500.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$214,790.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$141,900.00
Department of Fish and Game	72,890.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$214,790.00

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The DFG will be responsible for completing the appropriate notice to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act requirements and will obtain all necessary permits.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$50,595.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and \$91,305.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$50,595.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and \$91,305.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (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.

- *9. Morro Bay Dunes, Expansion 1, San Luis Obispo County \$175,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for a cooperative project with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to assist in the acquisition of a 10± acre real property located in the town of Los Osos, adjacent to the Morro Bay State Park for protection of coastal wetland habitat for threatened and endangered species. This proposal is to also consider the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the TPL to be applied toward the acquisition. The TPL will subsequently transfer this property to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

The project area is situated within the Los Osos Creek watershed framed by rolling hills covered with chaparral and stands of small oaks and eucalyptus trees. Los Osos Creek is one of the main tributaries flowing into the Morro Bay Estuary. The coastline and estuary includes substantial publicly-owned open

space land, including Montana de Oro State Park and Morro Bay State Park. The subject property is located along the eastern fringe of the developed community of Los Osos, just south of the community of Baywood Park, on the southeast corner of South Bay Boulevard and Pismo Avenue. Located in the upland areas east of the Morro Bay Estuary, the property benefits from views of Hollister Peak and the Seven Sisters Mountain Range, plus a limited view of Morro Rock, and is one mile from Morro Bay.

Acquisition of the property is an essential part of a multi-agency effort to preserve and establish a greenbelt corridor around the community of Los Osos. The planned greenbelt runs south from the Morro Bay State Park, along Los Osos Creek through the subject property, to the Los Osos Oaks State Preserve and then heads west to the Montana de Oro State Park, located on the coast. There have been a number of recent acquisitions within the corridor, including the 30± acre Elfin Forest Preserve, acquired by the DPR as an expansion to the Morro Bay State Park; the 15± acre Powell I property, acquired by the DPR as an expansion to the Morro Bay State Park; the 40± acre Morro Bay Dunes (aka Powell II) property, acquired by the DPR and funded in part by a grant approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) on August 22, 2002; the 26± acre Morro Dunes Ecological Reserve, an expansion to the Montana de Oro State Park; the 18± acre Los Osos Dunes and Wetland property, acquired by the Bay Foundation and funded in part by a grant approved by the WCB on February 27, 2002; the 205± acre Bayview Ecological Reserve, a cooperative project acquired by the DFG and approved by the WCB on August 10, 2000; the 32± acre Morro Dunes Ecological Reserve, South Unit, acquired by the DFG, approved by the WCB on August 13, 2003; and the 42± acre Los Osos Dunes and Wetlands, Montana de Oro Unit, approved by the WCB on November 18, 2003.

Within the greenbelt a variety of different habitat types can be found, including fresh and saltwater wetlands, riparian, coastal dune scrub and maritime chaparral. Within the Los Osos Creek watershed upland areas, where the subject property is located, the primary habitat types are coastal dune scrub and riparian. These habitats support a wide variety of rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species. These include the Morro shoulderband snail, Morro Bay blue butterfly, Morro Bay kangaroo rat, California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, steelhead trout, California black rail, Blochman leafy daisy and dune almond. Migratory waterfowl also frequent the property.

The present zoning of the subject parcel is residential suburban and allows for development of a 20 lot subdivision or, because the property comprises three distinct legal parcels with Certificates of Compliance, three separate single-family residences. Similar to other coastal areas in southern California, the Los Osos area is experiencing increased demand for residential development. Combining this factor with the property's exceptional views, the cost to acquire the property and the pressure to develop it are sure to rise over the foreseeable future.

Protection of the subject property will also enhance previously protected land by preventing disturbance caused by encroaching residential development.

The TPL, a partner in this transaction, has an option to acquire the property. The conveyance of the property will occur with TPL first exercising their purchase option, acquiring the property at its appraised value, and then conveying the property to the DPR, as a no-cost acquisition. The project is part of a larger Morro Bay Dunes Greenbelt Conservation effort – a proposed 600± acre greenbelt that will surround and protect the Bay and border Los Osos Creek. Currently the DPR has over \$600,000.00 in an endowment for management of dune habitats in the Los Osos area, and a cooperative agreement is being developed to manage all the Morro Bay Dunes Greenbelt lands for habitat protection and passive recreational use in perpetuity. Located adjacent to the Morro Bay State Park, the DPR proposes to manage the property in conjunction with the park. Potential public uses include hiking, bird watching and educational research and study. Strong local community support and involvement, including the local schools, has already led to the development of volunteer programs to help study and assist with the management of the properties recently acquired and protected within the greenbelt.

The fair market value of the subject property, as determined by the appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$765,000.00. To fund this cooperative project the USFWS has awarded a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant for the acquisition of the property, in the amount of \$600,000.00. Staff proposes that the WCB approve the acceptance of this grant and approve an Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the TPL to be applied toward their purchase. Staff also proposes that the WCB approve a grant to the TPL to provide the remaining balance, in the amount of \$165,000.00, which will also meet the required match for the federal funds. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project costs including appraisal costs and DGS' review charges, bringing the total amount requested for this project to \$175,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the 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 the disbursement of grant funds.

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant as proposed; allocate \$175,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565, for the grant and associated costs; authorize acceptance of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Recovery Land Acquisition Grant in the amount of \$600,000.00, and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant those funds, as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant as proposed; allocate \$175,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565, for the grant and associated costs; authorize acceptance of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Recovery Land Acquisition Grant in the amount of \$600,000.00, and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant those funds, as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *10. San Joaquin River Parkway, Lewis S. Eaton Trail, \$59,000.00
River Center Extension, Fresno County

This project was to consider an allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to construct a 1,600± linear foot extension to the Lewis S. Eaton Trail south of the San Joaquin River, from its northern terminus at Old Friant Road to the Coke Hollowell Center for River Studies.

The San Joaquin River Parkway is defined in State Legislation as approximately 5,900 acres within a 22-mile long stretch between Friant Dam and State Route 99 along the San Joaquin River. Part of the overall plan for the Parkway is to have a multi-use public access trail stretching its entire length. To date, approximately 6 miles of this trail, called the Lewis S. Eaton Trail, have been constructed between the Coke Hollowell Center for River Studies to the northeast and Highway 41 to the southwest. About half of the trail is located in the City's Woodward Park and the other half stretches between Woodward Park and Old Friant Road. Another two-mile trail segment is currently under construction at River Bottom Park and Riverside Golf Course. The proposed trail extension will connect the trail with the Coke Hollowell Center for River Studies which is a major public access feature of the San Joaquin River Parkway. The trail design will be consistent with that of the existing trail including a 24-foot wide trail corridor, a 12-foot wide asphalt trail and 10 feet of compacted soil shoulders for joggers and equestrians. The existing terminus of the trail will be moved

approximately 50 feet at the request of the County of Fresno (County) to provide maximum site distance between two opposing curves on Old Friant Road. The road crossing will be striped and signed per County standards.

The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) 2000-01 budget contains Proposition 12 monies with control language directing that these funds be used for SJRC programs. On November 20, 2003, the SJRC Board approved a request asking the WCB to allocate funds from this source to the Trust for the proposed trail project.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Preconstruction design drawings	\$15,000.00
Construction costs including site preparation, mobilization, trail laying	46,000.00
Construction management	7,650.00
Contingencies	5,350.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS:	\$74,000.00
Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$59,000.00
Trust	15,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$74,000.00

The County processed a mitigated negative declaration for the project in June of 2000. The Trust will obtain all permits that may be necessary to complete the proposed work.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust as proposed; allocate \$59,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop.12), Section 5096.355; 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, as proposed; allocate \$59,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop.12), Section 5096.355; 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.

- *11. San Joaquin River Parkway, Willow Lodge Improvements, \$265,000.00
Fresno County

This project was to consider the allocation of a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to improve and convert a former single family home to a multi-use facility, for meetings, public outreach, interpretive programs and educational purposes at the DFG's Willow Unit of the San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve, northeast of Fresno.

The Willow Lodge was purchased for the DFG by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 2002, as part of a 20± acre addition to the San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve. The plan is to convert the two-story 3,586 square foot building into a meeting and public education center to be utilized by the community, the DFG and the Trust. While acceptable for family living, the building is not Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant or suited to accommodate the number of people expected to use Willow Lodge once operational. This proposal includes expanding the septic system, driveway and parking areas and replacement of the existing carpet with a "high traffic" variety. In order to comply with the ADA, the proposal calls for remodeling of a first floor bathroom and modification of outside walkways and trails to accommodate wheelchairs and scooters. Fire safety improvements are proposed including replacement of the shake wood roof with a fire resistant composite roof, installation of fire extinguishers, exit signs, smoke and carbon dioxide alarms, a pump with a generator and fire hose and application of flame retardant sealant to the wood paneling on the outside of the house. Energy efficient double-paned windows will replace single-paned windows and glass doors. Other improvements include, retiling of some floors, replacement of some light fixtures and installation of a security alarm system and gate.

The addition of a small outdoor amphitheater, educational kiosk, trail improvements and pier on one of the ponds will enhance the educational potential of the facility. Also the ponds will be sealed and a solar powered pump installed to maintain water levels. New landscaping will focus on native plants and will include a new, more water efficient irrigation system. The Trust and the DFG plan to enter into an Operation and Use Agreement giving the Trust responsibility for the bulk of the day-to-day operations of the facility with the DFG's approval.

The San Joaquin River Parkway is defined in State Legislation as approximately 5,900 acres within a 22-mile long stretch between Friant Dam and State Route 99 along the San Joaquin River. The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The WCB's 2000-01 budget contains

Proposition 12 monies with control language directing that these funds be used for SJRC programs. On March 18, 2004, the SJRC Board approved a request asking the WCB to allocate funds from Proposition 12 to the Trust for the proposed project.

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

Description	Estimated Total
Structure remodeling	\$90,300.00
Interpretive kiosk and signs	11,500.00
Landscaping improvements	17,500.00
Pond and trail improvements	50,000.00
Parking improvements	55,000.00
Project management	20,350.00
Supplies, computer, furnishings, lawn mower, terrarium, picnic tables, owl/kestrel boxes etc.	30,000.00
Contingencies	20,350.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS:	\$295,000.00
Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$265,000.00
In-kind contributions	30,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$295,000.00

The DFG has completed the environmental review of the project and filed a Mitigated Negative Declaration in compliance with CEQA. The Trust will obtain all permits that may be necessary to complete the proposed work.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust as proposed; allocate \$265,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355; 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust as proposed; allocate \$265,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *12. Volta Wildlife Area, Expansion 2, Merced County \$220,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of 120± acres of land for the purposes of protecting Central Valley wetlands and grasslands. The property is situated approximately 12 miles northwest of the City of Los Banos and lies immediately north of the Volta Wildlife Area.

The property lies in western Merced County and is part of the Grasslands Ecological Area (GEA). The GEA consists of six State wildlife areas, a State park, a large national wildlife refuge complex, and over 160 private duck clubs. For the past 30 years, the wetlands that once surrounded the Volta Wildlife Area have been converted to agriculture. As a result, the Volta Wildlife Area is no longer a part of the large wetland mosaic of the North Grasslands and functions rather as a small island of habitat surrounded by agriculture. The property will be added to the Volta Wildlife Area and will help to reconnect the wildlife area to the large block of wetlands in the North Grasslands portion of the Grassland Ecological Area. By reconnecting the Volta Wildlife Area to this large block of habitat, it is expected that avian, mammal and reptile use of the area will increase. Listed species and species of special concern expected to benefit include: giant garter snake, western pond turtle, tri-colored blackbird, American white pelican, white-faced ibis, long-billed curlew, northern harrier, greater sandhill crane, black tern and double-crested cormorant. This reestablishment of habitat connectivity will also enhance the long-term viability of the wetland habitat on the Volta Wildlife Area.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will manage this property as an addition to the Volta Wildlife Area. The combined acreage will be managed with an emphasis on seasonal wetlands and wildlife related public use.

The owners of the property have agreed to sell this property for \$227,000.00, the appraised value approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). It is estimated that an additional \$9,000.00 will be needed for appraisal costs, DGS' review fees, escrow fees and other related costs.

The DFG is the beneficiary under a trust from the estate of an anonymous donor. The trust directs the proceeds are to be used to acquire habitat for waterfowl in Merced County. At the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) meeting on February 11, 2003, the WCB authorized the acceptance of a disbursement from the estate to acquire the first expansion of the Volta Wildlife Area. The remaining funds in the amount of \$15,335.18 will be used to fund a portion of the proposed acquisition.

This acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313 as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325 as a transfer of ownership of interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed upon approval by the Board.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition as proposed; allocate \$220,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (d), IWCP, for the acquisition and to pay for project expenses; direct the remaining funds from the Trust of an anonymous donor be used to fund a portion of this acquisition; 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the acquisition as proposed; allocate \$220,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (d), IWCP, for the acquisition and to pay for project expenses; direct the remaining funds from the Trust of an anonymous donor be used to fund a portion of this acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *13. Wetland Habitat Restoration, Frog Pond, Merced County \$85,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the landowner and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance 190± acres of seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands and adjacent uplands. The site is located approximately 10 air miles southeast of the City of Los Banos on privately-owned property and is protected with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservation easement. The project is situated on the southern edge of the South Grasslands wetlands complex, approximately 10 air miles south of the Gadwall Unit of the DFG's North Grasslands Wildlife Area and 20 air miles north of the DFG's Mendota Wildlife Area.

The Grasslands is arguably the most important wetland area in California, containing nearly a third of all managed wetlands in the State. Most of the 180,000 acres of wildlife habitat is privately owned, and there are nearly 50,000 acres of wetlands and uplands on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges and nearly 19,000 acres of wildlife habitat on the DFG's three properties in the Grasslands, Volta Wildlife Area, Los Banos and the North Grasslands. The Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) considers this area to be of critical importance to breeding and wintering waterfowl and other wetland dependent species. The CVJV Implementation Plan calls for the protection and enhancement of 20,000 acres of restorable lands within the San Joaquin Basin, which includes the East Grasslands. The Plan also specifies that waterfowl dispersal is of extreme importance in the San Joaquin Basin. Lying where it does, at the extreme south end of the Grasslands and only 20 miles north of the Mendota Wildlife Area, this site will provide habitat to those birds moving between these two large blocks of wetland habitat.

This property has been operated as a duck hunting club since the 1940s. The original levees are still operating, but their small size and decades of rodent activity make them somewhat porous. The current water control structures are too small, leak and are in the wrong locations for proper management of the water delivery and drainage system.

The proposal calls for the renovation of the entire property. Approximately 50,000 cubic yards of earth will be moved to strengthen existing levees, remove obsolete dikes, build loafing and nesting islands, and construct swales and potholes. Fifteen water control structures will be installed, willows will be planted to provide habitat diversity, and upland areas and levees will be seeded with upland grass mix to provide nesting sites for mallards and other birds. Once the habitat work is complete, managed wetlands such as this provide tremendous wildlife habitat values for such bird species as pintails, greater yellowlegs and white faced ibis. Mammals, amphibians and reptiles will also benefit, including such species as river otters, beavers, and, potentially, the giant garter snake, a State and federally listed threatened species, which has been found nearby in similar habitat.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Site preparation and earthmoving	\$75,000.00
Water control structures	17,745.00
Removal of old structures	2,750.00
Riparian restoration	4,000.00
Upland seeding	1,820.00
Rip-rap	1,000.00
Grantee project design & management	12,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$114,315.00
Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$85,000.00
Landowner	29,315.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$114,315.00

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowner is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, he will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$85,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786(d) IWCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$85,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786(d) IWCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *14. San Bruno Mountain – Shellmound, San Mateo County \$5,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a Section 6 Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the amount of \$860,000.00, and authority to re-grant those funds to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for the acquisition of 26± acres on San Bruno Mountain in San Mateo County. Other partners contributing toward this acquisition include the California Department of Transportation, San Francisco Foundation and the Ohlone Indian Tribe.

The property is situated in the San Bruno Mountains and overlooks Oyster Point in South San Francisco. It falls within the San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) which was the nation's first HCP. The parcel itself is on the west side of Bayshore Boulevard, north of Sister Cities Boulevard.

The San Bruno Mountain is a 3,600 acre wildlife sanctuary in a sea of urbanization, surrounded on all sides by the metropolitan areas of Daly City, Colma, South San Francisco and Brisbane. The mountain contains a diversity of microenvironments ranging from coastal scrub, chaparral and grasslands to coastal wetland communities. The property shelters habitat for the endangered Callippee silverspot butterfly, and has potential for Mission blue, San Bruno elfin, and Bay checkerspot butterfly habitat. This area is the largest remaining tract of natural habitat for these butterflies on the San Francisco peninsula. Other areas on the parcel include sensitive freshwater seeps, riparian habitat and a perennial spring. The parcel also contains one of the largest and oldest Native American shell mounds in the Bay Area created by the Costanoan/Ohlone Indians beginning in approximately 3,200 B.C.

The TPL has entered into an agreement with the property owner to acquire the subject property at the approved, appraised fair market value of \$1,285,000.00. Pursuant to the Section 6 Cooperative Agreement, the USFWS will contribute \$860,000.00 toward the proposed grant. The balance of funding will be as

follows: \$325,000.00 - California Department of Transportation (Environmental Mitigation Program); \$50,000.00 – San Francisco Foundation; and \$50,000.00 Ohlone Indian Tribe, for a total of \$1,285,000.00. In addition to the proposed grant, it is anticipated that the Board will provide the estimated costs needed for project expenses, including Department of General Services' appraisal review costs, bringing the total allocation for this acquisition to \$5,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the proposed Cooperative Agreement provide that staff will review the proposed title documents, appraisal, preliminary title report, agreement for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instrument of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into an escrow.

Once the acquisition is complete, TPL will convey the 26± acre parcel to the County of San Mateo as an addition to the San Bruno Mountain State and County Parks. The County will own and manage the property for habitat protection and passive recreational use, in perpetuity.

Staff recommended that the Board accept the \$860,000.00 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and approval to sub-grant those funds, as proposed; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c) for related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff of 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. Dave Harper that the Board accept the \$860,000.00 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and approval to sub-grant those funds, as proposed; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c) for related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff of the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *15. Wetland Habitat Restoration, Holmestead Farms, Yuba County \$34,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation of a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the landowner and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to restore and enhance approximately 65± acres of wetlands and 54± acres of vernal pool/upland grassland habitats. This privately-owned property is located 8 miles north of the City of Marysville near Honcut Creek, an area of mixed agriculture, wetlands and riparian habitat. Six separate State-owned conservation easements totaling nearly 1,700 acres are located within 5 miles of this site. In addition, six conservation easements have been acquired by the NRCS in this same radius, providing perpetual protection to nearly 1,500 acres of wetlands in the area.

This is the fourth WCB action on land owned by this landowner; the three previous were all acquisitions of conservation easements to protect existing wetlands, riparian habitat and oak woodlands. This portion of the property has been protected with a wetland conservation easement through the NRCS's Wetland Reserve Program. This federal voluntary program offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. The NRCS provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. Typically, these lands are marginal farmlands that regularly flood. The Board and NRCS have a long and cooperative history together, protecting and restoring wetland habitat throughout the Central Valley and California. Holmestead Farms is a prime example of this cooperation, with the NRCS providing funds for its protection and assisting the Board and the landowner in the restoration efforts.

The property has been a pasture for many years, but an existing swale that runs through the property regularly floods, reducing the value for cattle grazing. This same flood regime, however, provides a unique opportunity to provide valuable wetland and upland nesting habitat. This project, once restored, will add to the considerable wildlife diversity of the Honcut Creek area, providing additional wetland acreage that will be flooded throughout the summer to provide brood water for mallards, Canada geese and many other species.

The WCB's Inland Wetlands Program was established to help achieve the goals of the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV), which calls for the protection and restoration of 10,000 acres within the American Basin, located in the area bounded by the Sierra foothills, the lower reach of the Feather River and the Lower American River. This Basin has tremendous potential for improvements to waterfowl habitats. Even now, large numbers of wintering waterfowl frequent the Basin, almost all of it on flooded harvested rice fields. However, given the volatile nature of rice prices, rice acreage can vary significantly from year to year. Restored and protected seasonal wetlands, on the other hand, would consistently provide the necessary waterfowl food sources every year. In addition, breeding habitat is in relatively short supply in the Basin, so permanent brood water is extremely important. For these reasons, this Basin continues to be one of the top priorities to the CVJV for wetland restoration and protection.

The project calls for the restoration of wetlands through the construction of a new levee and three new water control structures to allow the landowner to precisely manage water levels on the property to maximize wetland habitat values. Swales will be cut through the property to provide improved water delivery and drainage. Tules will be planted and more than 5,000 cottonwood and willow cuttings will be planted adjacent to the new swales. Approximately 25 acres of uplands will be planted with a native upland seed mix. The habitat area will be managed to provide permanent water for brood ponds, seasonal wetlands for food for wintering waterfowl and upland grasslands to provide dense upland nesting habitat. Vernal pools are also located on site and will be protected and maintained.

These habitat improvements should provide for a broad range of wildlife species. The habitat has been designed to provide an ideal mix of seasonal wetlands, brood ponds, riparian habitat and uplands, that will support many species of waterfowl, including cinnamon teal, wood ducks and American widgeon. Shorebirds, such as greater yellowlegs and long-billed dowitchers, will benefit from the shallow water and mudflats created by the project. Riparian dependent species that will also benefit from the project include yellow warblers and song sparrow. Finally, the uplands will provide nesting habitat for such species as mallards, savannah sparrows and northern harriers.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Site preparation and earthmoving	\$31,000.00
Water control structures	4,500.00
Tule planting	2,000.00
Tree planting	5,000.00
Native seeding/planting	12,500.00
Grantee project design and management	13,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$68,000.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$34,000.00
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service	34,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$68,000.00

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowner is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, he will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$34,000.00 from the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund; 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$34,000.00 from the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund; 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. Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansions 32 & 33, Del Norte County \$20,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a grant from the State Coastal Conservancy for the acquisition of two privately-owned parcels comprising 13± acres as an expansion of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Lake Earl Wildlife Area (LEWA). The acquisition will allow for the further protection of Lake Earl and its associated coastal dune, wetland, upland and forest habitats, the continued development of the wildlife area, the protection and enhancement of threatened and endangered species habitat, and the improvement of public access to the LEWA. The subject parcels are located north of Crescent City near the north shore of Lake Earl on Lower Lake Road.

The Lake Earl Wildlife Area was acquired as a result of the Keene-Nedgedly Act of 1975, which directed the DFG and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to jointly evaluate and acquire certain specified coastal lands for the purpose of protecting, enhancing and managing wetlands. Together the two agencies have acquired over 11,000 acres in the Crescent City area, extending from near Point Saint George north to the Smith River. Of the total, approximately 5,749 acres have been purchased by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and are managed by the DFG. This includes all of Lakes Earl and Talawa (under lease from the California State Lands Commission). These lakes are actually coastal lagoons that periodically breach the barrier island, thereby allowing the interchange of fresh and saltwater. This natural breaching has been replaced in recent times by artificial breaching as a means of lowering water elevations and increasing lands available for livestock grazing and urban development.

Lake Earl is a shallow estuarine lagoon that supports a variety of wetland plant communities, including submerged aquatics in deeper, relatively freshwater areas of the estuary. Freshwater aquatic plants are used extensively by migrating waterfowl. These wetland communities provide habitat for a large number of water-associated species. Sitka spruces grow to the edge of the lake shore and are used by both peregrine falcon and bald eagle. The nonnative perennial grasses are managed on the LEWA as foraging habitat for the Aluetian Canada goose. Over 95 percent of the Aluetian Canada goose population stages in the agricultural fields on or adjacent to the LEWA. Over 240 species of birds have been recorded in the area since 1982. Historically, the Lake Earl complex

has been an important northern California wintering, stopover and nesting area for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. Three federally or state listed endangered birds have been sighted in the LEWA: the bald eagle, the Peregrine falcon and the California brown pelican.

The acquisition of the subject properties would assist in securing these unique resources, which lie adjacent to or between existing State lands and urban residential development. Placement of this property in public ownership would facilitate lake level management, and habitat protection and restoration, and would add significant buffer for the LEWA. The DFG has identified the subject properties as being within a Significant Natural Area (Lake Earl) and has recommended the purchase of these parcels, which would be incorporated into and managed as part of the existing LEWA.

The two proposed acquisitions are more specifically described as follows:

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion 32

The Grantors have agreed to sell at the DGS-approved fair market value of \$107,000.00, while retaining a life estate on the property. The 5± acre parcel is improved with a 1,373 square foot single family residence, a two-car garage, workshop, hothouses and barn. The owner-occupants will reserve a life estate on the property.

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion 33

The Grantors have agreed to sell at the DGS-approved fair market value of \$240,000.00. The 7.84± acre parcel is improved with a 1,930 square foot single family residence, a 2-car garage, workshop and barn. The owner-occupants are eligible for relocation benefits in the form of moving expenses and a replacement housing payment.

It is intended that the two parcels with a total appraised value of \$347,000.00, be acquired using the grant in that amount from the State Coastal Conservancy and that the \$33,970.00 in relocation benefits be paid using a grant in that amount from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition to the \$380,970.00 in grant funds, \$20,000.00 is needed for appraisal, escrow, and title fees, relocation entitlement study, environmental investigation and DGS' review costs.

There are no claims of sovereign State land ownership within the subject property. The proposed acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of lands for wildlife purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of ownership interest in land to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resources.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the project as proposed; approve acceptance of the \$347,000.00 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, directly into escrow for acquisition costs; authorize expenditure of \$33,970.00 in grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover relocation benefits; allocate \$20,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop.50), Section 79565, to pay 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; approve acceptance of the \$347,000.00 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, directly into escrow for acquisition costs; authorize expenditure of \$33,970.00 in grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover relocation benefits; allocate \$20,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop.50), Section 79565, to pay 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.

17. San Dieguito River Valley Corridor, Phase II, San Diego County \$1,295,000.00

This proposal was to consider a grant to the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) for a cooperative project with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) to assist with the JPA's acquisition of 73± acres located near the mouth of the San Dieguito Lagoon, in the City of San Diego. Mr. John Donnelly briefly explained the project and its location.

The project area is located 20 miles north of downtown San Diego and just over one mile inland from the Pacific Ocean in the San Dieguito River Valley. Just east of I-5, on the west side of El Camino Real Road, the subject property is situated opposite the San Dieguito Road intersection. The topography of this undeveloped acreage is level to very gently rolling in character and entirely within the 100-year floodplain of the San Dieguito River. The property has a history of agricultural use, and until recently, was planted with pole tomatoes.

Lands due west of the subject property are also within the 100-year floodplain of the San Dieguito River and have been set aside for open space preservation by the JPA and the City of San Diego. Northwest of the subject is the San Dieguito Wetland Restoration Project in which Southern California Edison is required to substantially restore 150 acres of tidal wetland as mitigation for impacts to the marine environment caused by the construction and operation of San Onofre

Nuclear Generating Station. Acquisition of the subject property will provide a significant linkage within the San Dieguito River Park system and connect the San Dieguito Lagoon wetlands to publicly-owned land upstream.

The San Dieguito Lagoon is a nursery for many oceanic fish, and provides habitat for many sensitive plant and wildlife species. It is a critical site on the Pacific Flyway. The lagoon, which is located within the largest watershed of the six San Diego coastal lagoons, was once the largest lagoon in the County, spanning the area that now occupies the land both east and west of I-5. Presently, the lagoon is confined to the area west of I-5, while degraded wetlands continue to exist to the east. The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan supports the restoration of the San Dieguito Lagoon and its associated wetland ecosystem. Full restoration of the wetland ecosystem involves the enlargement of the existing tidal basin, creation of a variety of coastal wetland habitats, and the restoration of associated upland habitat in order to create a functioning ecological unit that will provide for tidal flushing, open water, wetlands, grassland and other upland habitat. The property is the JPA's highest priority for acquisition in the coastal lagoon section of the River Park Corridor. It has also been identified by the SCC as their highest current priority for acquisition under the Wetland Restoration Program.

The types of coastal wetlands that may be potentially created or restored in the future within the project area include subtidal habitat, intertidal habitat and low, mid and high salt marsh. Together these habitats form an ecosystem that supports invertebrate species, fish, birds and other wildlife. Some species such as California killfish, topsmelt, gobies and the staghorn sculpin appear to be year-round residents in wetlands and adapted to the saline conditions. Species such as the Pacific sardine, sanddab, northern anchovy, California halibut, diamond turbot and croaker are found in coastal wetlands in large numbers as juveniles, rather than as adults, which means that they probably use the wetlands as spawning or nursery grounds. Finger channels in the salt marshes are important to juveniles as refuges from predation by larger fish.

Many bird species depend upon coastal wetlands to some extent, ranging from nesting, foraging or resting. Of these, the endangered species which could utilize San Dieguito Lagoon wetlands include the light-footed clapper rail, California coastal gnatcatcher, Belding's savannah sparrow, California brown pelican, California least tern and western snowy plover. In addition, waterfowl migrating along the Pacific Flyway stop to rest and feed in lagoon marshes and surrounding grasslands.

The property will be owned and managed primarily by the JPA. In addition to the future wetland restoration potential of the project, the public access/interpretation element provides an alignment for the Coast to Crest Trail and several interpretive trails, each of which has been designed to be compatible with the adjacent sensitive habitats. This element also includes the design and location of park facilities to enable public access.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), at its meeting on February 27, 2002, and February 11, 2003, approved two grants to the JPA in the amount of \$4,300,000.00 and \$5,573,709.00, respectively, to assist the JPA in facilitating the acquisition of properties within the San Dieguito River Valley Corridor. Using a portion of the funds allocated under these agreements, the JPA has worked cooperatively with federal, state and local entities to expand the valley corridor by an additional 849± acres. The JPA proposes to use funds from the second grant to provide partial funding, in the amount of \$1,464,000.00, for their purchase of the subject property.

The TPL, a partner on this transaction, has an option to acquire the property. The conveyance of the property will occur with TPL first exercising their purchase option, acquiring the property at its appraised value, and then conveying the property to the JPA at the appraised value. The property has been appraised for \$4,253,000.00, a value approved by the Department of General Services (DGS).

To fund this cooperative project, the SCC proposes to award a Wetlands Recovery Grant to the JPA in the amount of \$1,500,000.00 to assist in the acquisition. In addition to the previously approved WCB grant funds in the amount of \$1,464,000.00, staff proposes that the WCB approve a grant to the JPA to provide the remaining balance, in the amount of \$1,289,000.00. It is estimated that an additional \$6,000.00 will be needed for project costs, including appraisal costs and DGS' review charges, bringing the total amount requested for this project to \$1,295,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the 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 the disbursement of funds.

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB. All future restoration and development activities will require additional CEQA determinations separate from the initial acquisition.

Mr. Donnelly Introduced Mr. Dick Bobertz, Executive Director of the San Dieguito Park Joint Powers Authority. Mr. Bobertz provided Board members with a copy of the Conceptual Habitat Restoration Plan for the property, described an overview of the River Park and explained future plans for the area. He expressed appreciation to the Board for considering this proposal.

Mr. Brodrick requested clarification regarding the JPA's plan for long-term operation and maintenance of the area. Mr. Bobertz stated that Southern California Edison will be responsible to maintain the portion of the project that they are implementing starting next year for 40 years, which is the life of the San Onofre operating plant, past and future. He added that at some time during those 40 years they will be turning it over to the San Dieguito River Park, when they are confident about how much it will cost. He commented that by adding these 75 acres, they will enjoy the benefit of the efficiency of maintaining a larger project.

Mr. Brodrick asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant as proposed; allocate \$1,295,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a), for the acquisition and associated costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant as proposed; allocate \$1,295,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a), for the acquisition and associated costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned. Motion carried.

Mr. Wright complimented Mr. Bobertz and the JPA for their accomplishments.

18. Sky Valley Ecological Reserve, Riverside County \$5,125,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to assist in the acquisition of approximately 8,881± acres of vacant land as a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC), Friends of the Desert Mountains, Resources Legacy Foundation Fund, Coachella Valley Associated Governments and the City of Palm Desert for the protection of desert habitat, located north of Palm Desert and easterly of Desert Hot Springs. Mr. William Gallup briefly explained this project and its location.

The project area is located near the intersection of 1000 Palms Road and Dillon Road in the "low desert" about 10 miles east of Desert Hot Springs. Indio is located about 10 miles east of the subject and Interstate 10 is located approximately 5 miles southwesterly of the subject. The Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve (CVER) is adjacent on the south side of subject property and Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) is adjacent on the north.

The proposed 8,881± acre Sky Valley Ecological Reserve is the strategic link between the CVER established for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and the JTNP. The area is an essential sand transport area for the CVER via Thousand Palms Canyon and provides habitat for the State and federally listed threatened desert tortoise and is a contact zone for the Palm Springs pocket mouse found in other locations throughout the Coachella Valley. The property provides an approximately 5-mile wide linkage between the CVER and JTNP for such species as the desert bighorn sheep, bobcat, kit fox and coyote. The property is part of the hydrological regime area that provides groundwater for the lush palm oases and surface water found on the CVER. These ponds provide support for a population of the State and federally listed endangered desert pupfish. The gradient between the preserve, which includes near sea level elevation, to the higher elevations of the JTNP at approximately 5,000' elevation, constitutes one of the few remaining areas in the Coachella Valley where an unimpeded elevation transect exists. As climate changes over time, the availability of this area may be vital for species to adjust to climate-induced shifts in habitat. For all of these reasons, this area is proposed for conservation in the Coachella Valley Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Development has been sporadic but steady along the Dillon Road corridor that stretches from Desert Hot Springs to the City of Indio a distance of nearly 20 miles. This particular property lies equidistant on Dillon Road between the two cities.

A number of funding contributors are participating in this project and include the CVMC, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Resources Legacy Foundation Fund, Coachella Valley Associated Governments, City of Palm Desert, The Nature Conservancy and private donations, which allow this transaction to move forward. Once TNC closes escrow, the property will be transferred to various entities including the Department of Fish and Game (1,700 ± acres); Department of Parks and Recreation (3,245± acres) and Friends of the Desert Mountains (3,695± acres).

The owners have agreed to sell their property to TNC at the agreed price of \$26,000,000.00. The appraised value, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$28,400,000.00. It is anticipated that additional costs of \$25,000.00 will be needed for project expenses, including escrow, title insurance, appraisal, appraisal review and transaction review.

The proposed acquisition is exempt for the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of lands for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership or an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the Board.

In addition to the information contained herein, a Project Summary Paper, and a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for this project were available for public review at the following locations:

1. Wildlife Conservation Board, 1807 13th Street, Suite 103, Sacramento, CA 95814, telephone (916) 445-8448
2. Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 205, Palm Desert, CA 92260, telephone (760) 776-5026

Documents and summaries were also available on the internet at www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb.

Mr. Wright reported that the Board received letters of support from Howard Gross, California Desert Field Representative for the National Parks Conservation Association; Joan Taylor, Vice Chairman of the California/Nevada Desert Committee; Barbara Hall, President of the Sky Valley Chamber and Community Center; Mark Stephenson, Vice Chair of the Sky Valley Community Council and 47 letters from private citizens with one of those letters containing 11 signatures.

Mr. Gallup reported that Mr. Bill Havert, Executive Director of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, and Ms. Jennifer Johnson of The Nature Conservancy, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Harper requested clarification regarding the CVMC's role in the process. Mr. Gallup explained that the CVMC is the guiding force in this proposal and is providing approximately \$10 million into the transaction. Mr. Havert addressed the Board and further explained that the CVMC is one of the major funding contributors to this transaction, contributing between \$9.5 and \$10 million of Prop. 40 funds. He added that the CVMC has worked with TNC from the beginning of this process to find all of the necessary funding partners, working closely with the City of Palm Desert, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments and the Friends of the Desert Mountains, as well as the WCB. Mr. Havert commented that this was a splendid example of what a partnership of public and private entities can do that no one agency would have been able to accomplish on its own. Mr. Havert stated that the CVMC has already approved funding for this proposal.

Mr. Broddrick asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate a total of \$2,862,561.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c) and \$2,262,439.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650, to cover the grant amount and to pay for project expenses; authorize acceptance of up to 1,700± acres; authorize staff to enter into agreements as necessary to carry out this transaction as proposed; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate a total of \$2,862,561.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (b/c) and \$2,262,439.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650, to cover the grant amount and to pay for project expenses; authorize acceptance of up to 1,700± acres; authorize staff to enter into agreements as necessary to carry out this transaction as proposed; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

At this time Mr. Wright welcomed Senator Machado to the meeting.

19. San Joaquin River Parkway, Friant Cove Public Access, \$351,000.00
Fresno County

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) for a cooperative project with Caltrans and the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) to construct a car-top boat launch, restroom, parking area, barrier-free pedestrian path and service road on property owned by the SJRC adjacent to the San Joaquin River at the corner of North Fork Road and Millerton Road, near the community of Friant. Mr. Tony Chappelle briefly described the project and its location.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved the acquisition of this 6± acre property on the left bank of the San Joaquin River in 1998. The purpose of the acquisition was to provide public access and eventually construct a public access project like the one presently proposed. This project proposal includes a stabilized, compacted gravel ramp for hand-launching small boats, an approximately 60 space parking area for both parkway users and park and ride commuters, a vault restroom, a barrier-free pedestrian path to the riverbank to accommodate mobility impaired individuals, and a service road for maintenance and emergency vehicles. Other improvements included are landscaping, an educational kiosk, picnic area, drinking fountain, entry sign, lighting and security gates. The SJRC will be responsible for maintenance and operation of the facility for the next 25 years. This facility is envisioned to become a visitor “hub” at the terminus of the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) and located near Millerton Park. A portion of the parking area will also function as a park and ride facility, with designated spaces provided during the week for this purpose. The site is already used informally for fishing access and launching of small boats.

Preliminary project design was funded through Caltrans by a federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant as well as a 1999 WCB allocation. Construction of the proposed project will be funded by a Congestion Management Air Quality grant, a DBW grant, a Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) grant and a WCB grant.

The San Joaquin River Parkway is defined in State Legislation as approximately 5,900 acres within a 22-mile long stretch between Friant Dam and State Route 99 along the San Joaquin River. The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The WCB's 2000-01 budget contains Proposition 12 monies with control language directing that these funds be used for SJRC programs. On August 21, 2003, the SJRC Board approved a request asking WCB to allocate funds from Proposition 12 to the SJRC for the proposed project.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Engineering and Design	\$26,100.00
Site clearing/cleanup	3,700.00
Earthwork/fill	53,900.00
Boat launch (gravel and placement)	5,200.00
Restroom	34,000.00
Parking area	148,300.00
ADA path, concrete, handrails	20,500.00
Rip rap	10,600.00
Utilities (electrical and water)	11,400.00
Landscaping and irrigation	38,500.00
Entry sign and interpretive kiosk	13,800.00
Picnic tables and slabs	16,500.00
Lighting	25,500.00
Service road, gates, fencing, approaches	85,600.00
Construction management	215,200.00
Contingencies	28,400.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS:	\$737,200.00
Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$351,000.00
SJRC (other grants)	386,200.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$737,200.00

The SJRC has completed the environmental review of the project and filed a Mitigated Negative Declaration in compliance with CEQA. The SJRC will obtain all permits that may be necessary to complete the proposed work.

Mr. Broddrick asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy as proposed; allocate \$351,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy as proposed; allocate \$351,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

20. San Joaquin River Riparian Habitat, Expansion 12, \$6,635,000.00
Madera County

This cooperative acquisition proposal, presented on behalf of the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC), was to consider the acquisition of 347± acres of land containing riparian and upland habitat, located on the north side of the San Joaquin River, westerly of State Highway 41 in Madera County. The purchase of this property is consistent with the SJRC priority, as established at their March 18, 2004 Board meeting and they also recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board allocate funds to complete the purchase and pay appropriate administrative costs and other costs. Also to be considered was the acceptance of the transfer of any of the rights the owner of the property may claim to 14± acres of land lying within an area claimed by the State Lands Commission (SLC). Mr. Bill Gallup briefly described the proposal and its location.

The proposed acquisition will further the goals of protecting riparian habitat along the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to Highway 99, and to provide public access opportunities as appropriate. The acquisition may also provide the opportunity in the future for habitat restoration and enhancement work on the areas proposed for purchase.

In 1988 the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) began an acquisition program along the San Joaquin River in cooperation with the SJRC to protect the numerous properties and to date has acquired approximately 2,484 acres. With the proposed acquisition being considered in this agenda will bring a total protected area to over 2,800 acres.

The SJRC is responsible for coordinating a program to preserve and restore natural habitat along the San Joaquin River, from Friant Dam to State Highway 99 in Fresno and to provide compatible public access with appropriate facilities for public use. Habitat values found along this portion of the river corridor are extensive, although some areas have degradation, requiring on-site restoration to bring habitat values back to their full potential. Some restoration has already taken place on this property due to the withdrawal of a gravel mining company and their efforts to satisfy the requirements of the closure of their activities and the conditional use permit issued by the County of Madera.

Habitat types found along the river provide home to a wide variety of wildlife species. Among these are water oriented birds common to the area, which include herons, egrets, grebes and a variety of duck species. Many songbirds also inhabit the area, the use of which is fully expected to diversify and expand with the proper management of this riverine habitat. Also found along this stretch of the river are numerous raptors, including the Cooper's hawk, northern harrier, sharp-shinned hawk, prairie falcon and an occasional bald or golden eagle. Mammals found include raccoon, opossum, coyote and deer. Topography of the parcel varies from generally flat at or near the river with slight to moderate slopes upward to the toe of the bluff portion of the property that is not included in this acquisition proposal.

Staff proposes that once this property is acquired, it will be transferred to the SJRC through a "Transfer of Jurisdiction". Management will be the responsibility of the SJRC, but will ultimately be accomplished under a cooperative management agreement with such potential partners as the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust and other public and private entities along the parkway.

The owners have agreed to sell their property for \$6,584,640.00, the appraised value as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). It is anticipated that additional costs of \$25,360.00 will be needed for project expenses, including escrow, title insurance, appraisal and transaction review. In addition to project costs, it is estimated that up to \$25,000.00 may be needed for a relocation study and associated costs with the ongoing fishing operation and "bee keeping" activities conducted by private individuals under various leases with the owners.

The property is currently improved with three bridges that in the past have provided access across the San Joaquin River. The bridges were installed by gravel mining companies with approval of the owners over the past 20 years to reduce haul distances and to improve access to the gravel mining and processing plant from the Fresno side of the river. All of the bridges were built without securing the appropriate permits or agreements with the SLC, DFG or the County of Madera. Two of the bridges are currently not operational and are in need of repair or removal. One bridge currently provides access across the river. The owners have agreed in consultation with the DFG and SLC to study,

evaluate and propose a course of action to address the “bridge issue” and have agreed to execute a “hold back” agreement to hold funds in the escrow or other security interest to cover all necessary expenditures to alleviate and correct the bridge issue.

The proposed acquisition is exempt for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of lands for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership or an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB. It should be noted that the exemption as noted above is for the acquisition of the property only. Any action relating to the bridges (repair and/or removal) is considered separate from this transaction and any and all CEQA documentation that may be required is the responsibility of the owners, lessees or contractors of owners of the property.

The SJRC Board has passed a motion recommending that the WCB approve an allocation in an appropriate amount, from Propositions 12 and 13 (SJRC), to cover the purchase price and related costs, and has agreed to accept the jurisdiction of the property after completion of the purchase.

Mr. Gallup reported that Mr. Dave Koehler of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, and Messrs. Dave Sutton and Erik Vink of The Trust for Public Land were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Broddrick asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

The WCB staff therefore recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$6,635,000.00 [\$1,332,604.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355, and \$5,302,396.00 from the River Protection Sub-Account (Prop. 13) SJRC] for the purchase price, related relocation expenses, and project costs; authorize acceptance of any interest the owners may claim lying within an area claimed the State Lands Commission; approve the transfer of jurisdiction to the San Joaquin River Conservancy upon completion of the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$6,635,000.00 [\$1,332,604.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355, and \$5,302,396.00 from the River Protection Sub-Account (Prop. 13) SJRC] for the purchase price, related relocation expenses, and project costs; authorize acceptance of any interest the owners may claim lying within an area claimed by the State Lands Commission; approve the transfer of jurisdiction to the San Joaquin River Conservancy upon completion of the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

Referring to the displayed map, Mr. Wright noted all of the parcels in public ownership so far and that this expansion will assist in the long-term goals of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust and the San Joaquin River Conservancy. He expressed his appreciation to Mr. Koehler and also Ms. Melinda Marks of the San Joaquin River Conservancy for their efforts.

21. Riparian Habitat Restoration, American River Parkway, Phase II, \$382,000.00
Sacramento County

This was a proposal to consider an allocation of a grant to the County of Sacramento, Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space for a cooperative project with the County and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), to remove selected species of nonnative invasive plants from within the 4,700± acre American River Parkway, restore 30± acres of native riparian forest in treated areas and restore 40± acres of native oak woodland in areas invaded by the yellow star thistle. The project will extend from below the Nimbus Dam downstream to the confluence with the Sacramento River at Discovery Park. The project will be conducted on land that is owned and managed by the County of Sacramento and is a continuation of the 2001 Phase One implementation of the County's Invasive Plant Management Plan that was partially funded by the Board, and successfully removed large, mature stands of targeted nonnative invasive plants in defined work areas throughout the American River Parkway, covering 653± acres. Mr. Scott Clemons briefly described the proposal and its location.

Comprised of riparian habitat on both sides of the American River from the Nimbus Fish Hatchery to the confluence with the Sacramento River, the 29-mile American River Parkway is widely recognized as the Sacramento region's most precious protected habitat and is considered the focal point of community pride and activities. In addition to providing access along the river for the public, the Parkway provides habitat for a wide variety of resident and migratory birds, fish and other wildlife. Increasingly, however, the widespread invasion of nonnative plants within the Parkway has diminished wetland and oak woodland habitat, greatly impacting the landscape and the balance of life.

A cooperative effort to develop a strategy to effectively manage the invasive non-native plants was initiated in 1997, with technical leadership from the California Native Plant Society, with support from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA). By the year 2000 this effort yielded the American River Parkway Invasive Plant Management Plan (Plan), which identified and mapped the locations of over 140 species of nonnative plants within the 4,700 acres of the Parkway. Recognizing that many of the plants identified do not pose an immediate threat to habitat, the cooperators identified the 20 highest priority plants and conducted several pilot projects that tested a variety of eradication and control methods. A phased approach for management was recommended in the Plan, and the proposed project is the second phase to be implemented. This phase focuses on completing the eradication of the invasive weeds that were identified and partially controlled in the first phase, and expands the efforts to include removal of the following targeted weeds: Pampas grass, Pyracantha, French broom, Scotch broom and Oleander. Simultaneous removal of both phase one and phase two weeds is efficient and possible because they both co-occur as widely spaced individuals and small clumps in similar floodplain riparian habitats within the Parkway.

Restoration planting will utilize local seeds or transplants grown from native Parkway stock, if available. Planting densities and species will be selected to mimic the surrounding naturally established plant community at maturity. A certified arborist will review all planting plans prior to implementation.

Over the long term (25 years), crews composed of volunteers and staff from the cooperating agencies will conduct periodic monitoring and removal of incipient nonnative plant populations. The project will be managed by the County of Sacramento, with assistance from a management committee which includes County Parks, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Department of Water Resources and American River Flood Control. The implementation phase of this project (approximately the next three years) will be carried out under the leadership of May & Associates, the Project Manager for Phase One, with the assistance of a large number of subcontractors and volunteers, and will utilize the California Conservation Corps.

The proposed project is expected to provide year-round benefits to a wide variety of wildlife, including fall-run Chinook salmon, Sacramento splittail, Northwest pond turtle, river otter and a host of both migratory and resident birds, including assorted egrets and herons, bald eagle, Swainson's hawk, burrowing owl and tri-colored blackbird. People who visit or live near the river will benefit from enhanced wildlife viewing opportunities, improved access to the river for fishing or use of water craft, and a reduction in flood damages to levees and other structures that are caused when the nonnative plants impede the movement of flood flows.

Estimated costs for the project, which have been reviewed by staff and the DFG, are as follows:

Description	Estimated Cost
Project Management and Permitting	\$222,830.00
Expanded treatment of Phase One Plants	200,000.00
Restoration of Phase One and Two Sites	426,435.00
Yellow Star Thistle Control and Restoration	90,000.00
Stewardship Program	211,677.00
Performance Monitoring & Reports	50,380.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$1,201,322.00
Proposed Funding Partners:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$382,000.00
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program	250,000.00
Sacramento County Parks	89,420.00
Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency	425,945.00
American River Foundation	17,007.00
Others	36,950.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$1,201,322.00

This project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15307, Class 7, and Sacramento County has filed the appropriate notice.

Mr. Clemons reported that Mr. Trevor Burwell of Sacramento County Parks and Mr. Banky Curtis, Regional Manager of the Department of Fish and Game, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Harper requested clarification regarding the length of the long-term plan and anticipated completion date. Mr. Clemons stated that the initial work to remove the weeds and follow-up treatment on the sites will take about three years and that the County has a 25-year long-term management agreement with the State which will consist of follow-up treatments and monitoring. Mr. Harper asked what the total cost of the entire restoration project would be, including subsequent phases. Mr. Burwell explained at length the County's plans for additional phases and that the Board's approval of funding Phase II would not commit the State to funding Phases III, IV and V, although it would not preclude it either. Mr. Brodrick asked how many volunteers are involved in the removal of the weeds. Mr. Burwell reported that there are thousands of people involved and that in Phase I they have completed over 10,000 hours of volunteer service.

Mr. Wright reported that the Board received a letter of support from Mr. Ron Suter, President of the Sacramento County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$382,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (e/f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$382,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (e/f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned. Motion carried.

22. Riparian Habitat Restoration, Bobcat to Blue Oak Ranches, \$542,500.00
Yolo County

This proposal was to consider an allocation of a grant to the National Audubon Society, Inc., for a cooperative project with the landowners and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore 120± acres of riparian, wetland and upland habitat associated with three creeks on two neighboring private ranches, located northwest of the City of Winters. Other partners on this project include the Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Center for Land-based Learning, the DFG and both landowners. Mr. Scott Clemons briefly described the project and its location.

Within the last four years, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has approved funding for two other projects in Yolo County, both on the Stone Ranch located north of the proposed project. The two projects included a grant approved by the Board in February of 2000 to the National Audubon Society, Inc., for a riparian restoration project, and the acquisition of a conservation easement, approved by the Board in February of 2004 to protect the varied habitats found on the same Stone Ranch.

Much of the land found along the western slope of the Coast Range between Putah Creek and Cache Creek, approximately 500,000 acres, has historically been managed as rangeland. This activity continues today, and many of the landowners in this area are opposed to commercial or residential development on their property. Many of the ranchers are interested in improving their land both for livestock and wildlife purposes.

The proposed project will occur on two contiguous ranches which comprise 7,102 acres of inner Coast Range in Yolo County. To the west, this land ascends to a major ridgeline known as the Blue Ridge of the Vaca Mountains; to the east, it reaches the farmlands of the Sacramento Valley. The two ranches are drained by three tributaries of Putah Creek: Dry Creek, Enos Creek and Moody Slough. Once rich in native riparian, oak woodland and grassland communities, much of the watershed's ecosystem has been altered by cultivation, intensive grazing practices and invasion of nonnative vegetation.

The Putah Creek watershed is impaired by nonpoint source water pollution, mercury pollution, channelization and disconnection between the upper and lower watersheds. Loss of native plant cover and intense grazing pressure in riparian areas has contributed to large scale erosion, degradation of water quality and loss of habitat for wildlife species.

Because both of these ranches are private property, unrestricted public access is currently not possible. Both landowners have expressed interest in allowing guided visits for schools or interested groups.

In general, this project will provide fencing to protect developing riparian habitat, repair eroded areas, develop several ponds and associated wetland habitats, and use prescribed burning and improved management to encourage the return of native grassland communities. Specifically, the project will restore approximately 120 acres of riparian habitat along Dry Creek and Enos Creek in the Maxwell Flat area of Bobcat Ranch and along an unnamed tributary, locally known as "Middle Creek" on Blue Oak Ranch, and will provide fencing to protect the riparian corridors from browsing by deer and to allow improved livestock grazing management. In addition, the project will develop a major wetland complex (approximately 9 acres) that will include two ponds on Bobcat Ranch that will be connected by a vegetated swale to a larger pond specifically designed to attract and support tri-colored blackbirds on Blue Oak Ranch. Two other ponds will be developed on Blue Oak Ranch, and these will also be connected by a vegetated swale. Lastly, the project includes prescribed burning of approximately 60 acres of annual grasslands on both ranches. The burned areas will be managed to encourage the return of native perennial grassland habitat.

This project will enhance and restore habitats that will benefit a wide range of wildlife species, including blacktailed deer, bobcat, mountain lion, neotropical migratory songbirds, many species of raptors and owls, and small mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

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

Description	Estimated Cost
Project management	\$180,370.00
Riparian restoration on Bobcat Ranch	221,571.00
Wetland complex	203,211.00
Riparian restoration on Blue Oak Ranch	76,490.00
Blue Oak wildlife ponds	126,557.00
Native grassland restoration	85,204.00
Administration	48,364.00
Contingencies	10,500.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$952,267.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$542,500.00
National Resources Conservation Service	250,015.00
Center for Land-based Learning	57,500.00
Landowners and miscellaneous others (in-kind)	102,252.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$952,267.00

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15304, Class 4, because it is a minor alteration of land. Staff will file the notice following WCB approval of the grant. The landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

This project has excellent support at the local, State and federal level, as indicated by letters of support that have been received at WCB.

Mr. Wright reported that the Board received letters of support from Assembly member Lois Wolk; Lynnel Pollock, Chair of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors; Paul Robins, Executive Director of the Yolo County Resource Conservation District; Phil Hogan, District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service; Rich Burns from the Ukiah Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management; Morgan Doran, of the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Cooperative Extension in Yolo County; Rich Marovich, Streamkeeper for the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee; Lewis Grant and Mark Higgins, Directors of The Regent Trust Company Limited; and Dennis Orthmeyer, Director of the Waterfowl and Wetlands Program, California Waterfowl Association.

Mr. Clemons reported that Mr. Vance Russell, representing Audubon California; Mr. Bill Hamilton, property owner of Blue Oak Ranch; Mr. Phil Hogan, representing the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Mr. Banky Curtis, Regional Manager for the Department of Fish and Game, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Hamilton commented that this proposal represents the culmination of several years of planning to restore the area and his commitment to provide habitat for the tri-colored blackbird.

Mr. Wright stated that Mr. Hamilton recently gave him a tour of the property and, in addition to what has been discussed, he has already completed a significant amount of riparian restoration on the property. He complimented Mr. Hamilton on his accomplishments.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$542,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (e/f), authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Dave Harper that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$542,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786 (e/f), authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

23. Willow Creek, Sonoma County \$4,250,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for a cooperative project with DPR, State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Open Space District) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for the acquisition of fee title by DPR of 3,373± acres of land and a conservation easement in favor of the Open Space District over 515± acres of land. Ms. Terri Muzik briefly described the project and its location.

The property is located just south of the town of Duncan Mills in southwestern Sonoma County. The property is bounded by the Sonoma Coast State Beach to the west and by the Russian River to the north.

The subject property contains the remaining privately-owned portion of the Willow Creek watershed, and nearly the entire Freezeout Creek watershed. The State purchased the lower Willow Creek watershed in 1978 for inclusion in the Sonoma Coast State Beach. Willow Creek and Freezeout Creek are both tributaries of the lower Russian River and flow into the Sonoma Coast's largest freshwater marsh.

Acquisition of the subject property will protect close to 30 threatened, endangered or species of special concern that could potentially occur in the Willow Creek and Freezeout Creek watersheds. These species have been identified by a variety of people including a Department of Fish and Game (DFG) biologist, Audubon members, biologist and foresters hired by the landowners and others. Both Freezeout and Willow creeks support critical habitat for the endangered and threatened coho salmon and steelhead trout. The Willow Creek watershed has been considered excellent spawning and nursery area for salmon and trout. Willow Creek comprises approximately three miles of fish-bearing stream on the conservation property, a majority of which lies within the fee portion.

The property also contains moderate to steeply sloping redwood, riparian, estuarine, and coastal grassland habitat. As a result of this habitat, the property is known to support a high density of northern spotted owls. Six historical, active territories for the northern spotted owl are known to occur on the property. Ninety percent of the conservation property is considered foraging habitat and nearly half is currently considered nesting habitat for the northern spotted owl. California Species of Special Concern known to occur on the property include the osprey, the sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, pallid bat, red tree vole, northwestern pond turtle, Myrtles silverspot, and California freshwater shrimp.

Although not documented by field sightings, the following species are known to occur in the area and could potentially reside on the conservation property: maple-leaved checkerbloom, Point Reyes checkerbloom, swamp harebell, western leatherwood, Baker's larkspur and north coast semaphore grass.

The Trust for Public Land has been negotiating the transaction with the landowner. The funding for the transaction will be provided through grants from, among others, the Open Space District, SCC, DPR and WCB. The landowners have agreed to sell the property for the appraised fair market value of \$20,560,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services. Staff proposes that the WCB approve a grant to the DPR for up to \$4,230,000.00. It is estimated that an additional \$20,000.00 will be needed to cover project expenses including appraisal costs and DGS' review charges, bringing the total amount requested for this project to \$4,250,000.00.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of lands for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership or an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Mr. Wright reported that there are letters of support from Senator Wesley Chesbro; Assembly member Patty Berg; Karen Douglas, Planning and Conservation League; Kim Delfino, Defenders of Wildlife; former Assembly member Virginia Strom-Martin; Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey; Sonoma County Supervisor Mike Reilly; in addition to a long list of more support letters.

Ms. Muzik reported that Ms. Sonia Jacques from The Trust for Public Land, Ms. Andrea MacKenzie and Mr. Paul Rowan from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and Mr. Adam Steinbuck from the Mendocino Redwood Company, were in the audience should there be any questions.

Ms. MacKenzie addressed the Board and explained their involvement in this project for more than two years, partnering with the Department of Fish and Game, Department of Parks and Recreation and The Trust for Public Land.

She stated that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, which acts as their Board of Directors, approved their \$10,225,000.00 grant towards this project. She commented that this funding comes from the district tax revenue, indicating the importance of this project to Sonoma County. Ms. MacKenzie stated that they also asked their Board to commit \$300,000.00 to jumpstart this project.

Ms. Mary Morgan stated that Assembly member Berg thinks this is a wonderful project and expressed her support for the proposal.

Staff recommended the Board approve the grant as proposed, contingent upon Department of General Services' approval of the property's fair market value; allocate \$4,250,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565, for the grant and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as 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. Dave Harper that the Board approve the grant as proposed, contingent upon Department of General Services' approval of the property's fair market value; allocate \$4,250,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565, for the grant and related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

Mr. Brodrick introduced Mr. Jim Swanson of the Department of Fish and Game. He congratulated Mr. Swanson on his upcoming retirement from the Department after 35 years of service and thanked him for his many contributions to the conservation of the State's resources, his assistance in many land acquisitions including the Blueridge Berryessa Natural Area, Knoxville Wildlife Area, Napa Sonoma Marshes, the Chimineas Ranch and many others.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Wright
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on May 13, 2004, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$1,641,030,727.01. 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 Fund, 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, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond, Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Protection Fund, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 and the Wildlife Restoration Fund. In addition to projects completed with the above funding sources, this statement includes tax credits awarded under the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000. The tax credits are not reflected in the total amount allocated to projects.

A. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement	24,602,180.88
Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 5,518,592.00
Stream Clearance and Improvement.....	14,788,961.69
Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	542,719.86
Marine Habitat	646,619.07
Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	3,105,288.26
C. Fishing Access Projects.....	46,823,419.65
Coastal and Bay	\$ 4,038,176.11
River and Aqueduct Access	13,149,013.84
Lake and Reservoir Access.....	9,250,782.52
Piers	20,385,447.18
D. Game Farm Projects.....	146,894.49
E. Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	1,509,491,492.91
Wildlife Areas (General)	\$286,893,559.87
Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development.....	14,176,933.74
Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	592,775,518.82
Land Conservation Area.....	8,053,464.18
Inland Wetlands Cons. Grants & Easements	18,202,701.19

Riparian Habitat Cons. Grants & Easements	22,954,526.45
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants.....	566,434,788.66
F. Hunting Access Projects	484,898.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	11,938,002.29
H. Special Project Allocations.....	1,389,820.29
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	29,610,379.80
State Owned.....	\$1,595,851.07
Grants	28,014,528.73
J. Sales and/or exchanges	537,419.07
K. Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded)...	(33,241,234.00)
Statutory plans.....	(2222.50)
Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and riparian habitat	(6,232,435.50)
Agricultural lands	(712,726.00)
Water and water rights.....	(0.00)
State and local parks, open space and archaeological resources.....	(26,293,850.00)
Total Allocated to Projects	\$1,641,030,727.01