

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

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**NOTICE OF MEETING  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

June 30, 2015

1:00 to 3:00 PM

1/ Natural Resources Agency Auditorium

1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street

Sacramento, California 95814

**FINAL AGENDA ITEMS**

**ITEM NO.**

1. Roll Call

2. California Streamflow Enhancement Program

Informational/Action

Staff will present the final program guidelines and an overview of the Proposal Solicitation Notice for the California Streamflow Enhancement Program, a program approved by California voters on November 4, 2014 and created within the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) under Proposition 1 (Water Bond). The Water Bond authorizes \$200,000,000.00 to be administered by the WCB (Water Code Section 79733, subject to appropriation by the Legislature) for projects that result in enhanced stream flows. It is proposed that \$38.9 million be made available for expenditure in the first year.

Grants by WCB will be made through a competitive process in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and other partners with the goal of providing and protecting enhanced flows in stream systems statewide to achieve a number of the conservation objectives outlined in the California Water Action Plan. These objectives may include, but are not limited to: restoring central valley tributary salmonid habitat, restoring coastal watersheds, contributing to restoration efforts in the Klamath Basin, restoring key mountain meadow habitat and enhancing and restoring wetlands and riparian areas.

Strategies for enhancing stream flows will vary depending on local conditions and needs, and could include water efficiency projects, conjunctive use, off stream storage, groundwater storage banks, habitat restoration, and water transactions (such as purchase of water rights, lease or seasonal exchange). For example, investments in the Scott and Shasta sub-basins could build on water transaction work under way in the Klamath Basin as a whole. In coastal California, changing seasonal water diversions by temporarily storing water in off-channel ponds or tanks could improve much needed summer and fall flows for salmonids. In the Sierra Nevada, restoration projects could improve seasonal base flows. In desert streams of southern California, improved groundwater management could be critical to improving habitat for birds and fish.

In all instances, however, the importance of the subject stream reaches for fish and wildlife and the amount, timing, duration, and quality of water necessary to drive effective ecological outcomes must be clearly identified. Appropriate monitoring plans and measurement will also be critical to establishing appropriate flow targets and protecting restored water for the intended conservation outcomes and successes over time.

WCB prepared competitive grant program guidelines (Guidelines) and posted the draft on the WCB website, [www.wcb.ca.gov](http://www.wcb.ca.gov) ([Draft Prop. 1 Guidelines](#)). Public input was received from visitors to this site and at the three public meetings held jointly by WCB and CDFW in early April in northern, central and southern California consistent with Water Bond requirements. Thirty-nine people or groups sent comments to our web site regarding the draft guidelines. Comments were mainly supportive and positive, and most appeared to assure that the direction we had laid out would generate quality projects that result in enhanced stream flow. Many of the comments were similar in nature and overlapped in key areas. This allowed grouping of the comments as listed below:

**Emphasize some project types that were already included in the**

**Guidelines:** We received comments suggesting that certain project types should be emphasized (for example, several commenters expressed support for planning and studies), and perhaps given priority in the ranking criteria.

**Response:** Comments were evaluated and incorporated into the Guidelines to assure that ranking criteria addressed the most critical aspects of the Program.

**Allow Project Types Not Included in Guidelines:** Several commenters suggested project types that were not included in the draft Guidelines.

**Response:** The list of eligible projects in the Guidelines is not comprehensive – any project that can reasonably be shown to enhance stream flow is potentially fundable. However, in order to broaden the pool of potential projects, and to give more specific suggestions to potential applicants, several of the suggested additions were specifically incorporated into the Eligible Project Types section of the Guidelines.

**Procedures:** We received many comments with suggestions on how to improve the procedures for identifying, ranking and approving projects.

**Response:** WCB changed the Guidelines to provide more detail on how projects would be evaluated, then developed and inserted ranking criteria. Several of the suggestions, however, were contrary to the Proposition language or to State funding requirements (e.g., partner with private landowners – WCB can only do that through a non-profit or public agency) and could not be incorporated into the Guidelines.

**Suggested Funding Criteria Priorities:** Many commenters expressed a desire for WCB to provide specific ranking criteria and had specific comments as to how they should be scored. There were many suggestions and they included improving specific habitat types, developing projects that are supported by regional planning efforts, or emphasizing projects that provide benefits to disadvantaged communities.

**Response:** WCB staff developed ranking criteria in collaboration with CDFW and all of the suggestions were, to some degree, incorporated into the Guidelines scoring criteria.

**Planning Efforts:** One commenter suggested that WCB directly support regional planning efforts.

**Response:** The Guidelines includes opportunities for planning, provided they lead to implementation projects at a future date.

**Monitoring:** Commenters had suggestions for improving monitoring of projects and requested that the Program be able to pay for long-term monitoring.

**Response:** Monitoring of project success will be a part of each implementation project. Prop 1 funds may be used for long-term monitoring, but may not exceed the liquidation period established for the funding during the state budget process. Monitoring instructions within the Guidelines were updated to clarify how and when monitoring is required. Monitoring studies are not precluded, and solicitations for monitoring studies of program success are expected in future.

**Clarification Questions:** Several commenters suggested specific clarification of concepts and requirements.

**Response:** The Guidelines were updated to clarify these concepts.

**Develop and Implement Long-term Changes to Existing Water Law and Procedures:** Several commenters suggested that WCB be lead to implement changes to existing laws to streamline or fine tune the water rights laws and procedures in California.

**Response:** Many of these concepts are supported by WCB staff, but may fall outside of the Prop 1 fundable requirements. However, it is expected that

WCB, CDFW, the State Water Resources Control Board and others will work to develop and implement future improvements to water rights processes.

A list of all the comments to the Guidelines can be found at the following link: [Prop 1 Comments to WCB Guidelines.](#)

In addition to the Guidelines, WCB has prepared a draft [Proposal Solicitation Notice](#) (solicitation) which was distributed for public comment on June 8, 2015. The solicitation includes specific guidance to applicants, including how the selection criteria will be scored and a complete application form. Comments have been received and will be discussed, and any appropriate changes will be made as the Board deems necessary.

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the Guidelines and authorize staff to finalize and release the solicitation to the public as soon as the 2015/16 State budget is passed.

### 3. Adjournment

#### 1/PERSONS WITH DISABILITES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department's Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator Melissa Carlin at (916) 651-1214 or [Melissa.Carlin@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Melissa.Carlin@wildlife.ca.gov). Reasonable Accommodation requests for facility and/or meeting accessibility should be received by June 22, 2015. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator immediately.