

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1416 9TH STREET, ROOM 1266
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
(916) 445-8448
FAX (916) 323-0280
www.wcb.ca.gov

State of California
Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Minutes

November 19, 2015

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 19, 2015

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, November 19, 2015, at the California State Capitol, Room 3191 Sacramento, California. Mr. Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.. Mr. John Donnelly, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, performed the roll call.

ITEM NO.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director
Vice, Charlton H. Bonham, Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager
Vice, Michael Cohen, Member
Director, Department of Finance

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Rachelle Caouette
Vice, Senator Jean Fuller

Katherine Moore
Vice, Senator Fran Pavley

Tara Brown
Vice, Assembly Member Das Williams

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

Candice Marg, Senior Land Agent
Celestial Reysner, Staff Services Analyst
Chad Fien, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Colin Mills, Staff Counsel
Elizabeth Hubert, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Heidi West, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Jasen Yee, Senior Land Agent
John Walsh, Supervising Land Agent
Kurt Weber, Senior Land Agent
Laura Featherstone, Budget Officer

Scott McFarlin, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Teri Muzik, Senior Land Agent
Liz Yokoyama, Senior Land Agent
Lloyd Warble, Staff Services Analyst
Ron Wooden, Receptionist
Peter Perrine, Assistant Executive Director
Nancy Templeton, Staff Counsel
Mary Delaney, Administrative Assistant
Brian Cary, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Brian Gibson, Senior Land Agent (Specialist)

Others Present:

Alan Ehgott, American River Conservancy
Jim Gwerder, Souza Realty and Development
Chad Santerre, CA Waterfowl Association
Bruce Wilcox, CA Natural Resources Agency
David Elms, CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Michael Flores, CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Michael Crew, Office of the Attorney General
Joanne Chiu, East Contra Costa County
Habitat Conservancy
Abigail Fateman, East Contra Costa County
Habitat Conservancy

David Wasemiller, Valley Pacific Investment
Patricia Wasemiller, Valley Pacific Investment
Katerina Robinson, Audubon California
Wendy Branine, CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Craig Garner, Ducks Unlimited
Melinda Marks, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Nathan Reade, Inyo/Mono Agricultural Commissioner
E.J. Remson, The Nature Conservancy

2. Funding Status Informational

The following funding status depicts Capital Outlay appropriations by year of appropriation and by fund source and fund number.

(a) 2015-16 Wildlife Restoration Fund, (0447)

Budget Act	\$1,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$1,000,000.00

November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-5,000.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$995,000.00

(b) 2015-16 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)

Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,440,515.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$19,222,485.00

November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,329,163.00
Total Project Development	<u>-6,963,410.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$10,929,912.00

(c) 2014-15 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)

Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,755,545.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$7,907,455.00

November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-327,037.00
Total Project Development	<u>-4,240,157.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$3,340,261.00

(d) 2013-14 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)

Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,779,076.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$883,924.00

November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-35,530.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$858,394.00

(e)	2012-13 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,460,870.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$16,202,130.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$16,202,130.00
(f)	2011-12 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-14,285,980.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$6,377,020.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-1,009,411.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$5,367,609.00
(g)	2010-11 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,030,674.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,637,326.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-690,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$947,326.00
(h)	2009-10 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,581,119.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$86,881.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-30,589.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$56,292.00
(i)	2008-09 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2012-13 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,659,368.00</u>

	Unallocated Balance	\$8,632.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$8,632.00
(j)	2007-08 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2011-12 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,674,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,350,571.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$323,429.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$323,429.00
(k)	2006-07 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,833,298.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$865,702.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$865,702.00
(l)	2006-07 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, (0005) (2015-16 Reappropriation)	
	Capital Outlay Budget [Sections a3, a5 & a6]	\$15,224,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,690,324.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,533,676.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,533,676.00
(m)	1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, (0005)	
	Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]	\$36,100,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-31,262,120.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,837,880.00

	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-87,880.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$4,750,000.00
(n)	2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (6029)	
	2014-15 Reappropriation	\$11,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-10,807,019.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$192,981.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$192,981.00
(o)	2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (6029)	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650)	\$273,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-250,260,196.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$22,739,804.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-9,724,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$13,015,804.00
(p)	2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, (6031) Colorado River Reappropriated 06/07, 10/11, &14/15 (Section 79568)	
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-21,904,443.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,595,557.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-6,574,574.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$4,020,983.00
(q)	2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, (6031)	
	Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572), including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005	\$814,350,000.00
	2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
	2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
	2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-4,000,000.00
	2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-3,100,000.00

	2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-17,688,000.00
	2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-5,150,000.00
	2008-09 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-1,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-683,114,154.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$58,297,846.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-3,824,426.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-39,705,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$14,768,420.00
(r)	2010-11 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2014-15 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$3,380,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-72,280.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,307,720.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$3,307,720.00
(s)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Partial Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$4,800,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-3,639,660.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,160,340.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,160,340.00
(t)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2015-16 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$5,200,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>25,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$5,175,000.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$5,175,000.00

(u)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2015-16 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-25,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$9,975,000.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-1,601,082.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$8,373,918.00
(v)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2014-15 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,889,082.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$7,110,918.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,042,000.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,068,918.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(w)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2014-15 Reappropriation)	
	Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	\$24,000,000.00
	Less 2013-14 Partial Reappropriation	<u>-15,500,000.00</u>
	Balance	\$8,500,000.00
	Less Previous Board	<u>-5,074,012.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,425,988.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,425,988.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(x)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Partial Reappropriation)	
	Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	\$15,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-9,333,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$6,167,000.00

	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,742,400.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,424,600.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(y)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051), (2014-15 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,997,979.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$12,002,021.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-84,750.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-11,884,650.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	32,621.00
(z)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 , (6051) (2014-15 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-23,399,564.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,600,436.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,600,436.00
(aa)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Appropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1))	\$1,279,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,098,806.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$180,194.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$180,194.00
(ab)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Appropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2))	\$1,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,177,682.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$322,318.00

	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$322,318.00
(ac)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Appropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(4))	\$2,368,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,282,281.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$85,719.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$85,719.00
(ad)	2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	\$164,700,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-133,045,508.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$31,654,492.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-28,930,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$2,724,492.00
(ae)	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	\$123,525,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-90,367,414.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$33,157,586.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-5,140,396.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-15,110,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$12,907,190.00
(af)	2015-16 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014, (6083)	
	Budget Act (Section 79735(b)(2))	\$38,400,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$38,400,000.00
	November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$38,400,000.00

(ag) 2015-16 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014, (6083)

Budget Act (Section 79731(g))	\$2,800,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-0.00
Unallocated Balance	\$2,800,000.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$2,800,000.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$1,000,000.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-5,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$995,000.00

Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k)	\$53,514,984.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,656,200.00
Total Project Development	-12,969,097.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$38,889,687.00

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (l) and (m)	\$6,371,556.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$6,371,556.00

California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (n) and (o)	\$22,932,785.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-9,724,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$13,208,785.00

Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (p) and (q)	\$62,318,829.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-10,399,000.00
Total Project Development	-39,705,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$12,214,829.00

Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (r), (s), (t), (u), (v), (w), (x), (y), (z), (aa), (ab), (ac), (ad), (ae)	\$100,174,732.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-12,009,546.00
Total Project Development	-72,620,238.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$15,544,948.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (af) and (ag)	\$41,200,000.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$41,200,000.00
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$287,512,886.00
November 2015 Board Meeting Allocation	-24,064,746.00
Total Project Development	-135,111,215.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$128,336,925.00

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004 Tax credits awarded through June 30, 2008	\$48,598,734.00
Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective January 1, 2010) Tax credits awarded	\$2,755,000.00

SUMMARY OF BOND CASH

The following summary provides the status of the up-front general obligation bond sale proceeds that the Wildlife Conservation Board has received since the spring of 2009.

Bond Fund	Authorized GO Bond Proceeds	Expenditures through 10/13/15	Encumbrances through 09/30/15	Cash Balances Includes Encumbrances
Proposition 12	\$ 12,621,973.31	\$ 9,287,343.81	\$ 450,424.09	\$ 2,884,205.41
Proposition 40	\$ 89,820,580.40	\$ 89,207,006.22	\$ 15,151,059.49	\$ (14,537,485.31)
Proposition 50	\$ 164,694,364.56	\$ 89,394,766.21	\$ 22,619,514.93	\$ 52,680,083.42
Proposition 84	\$ 267,394,047.99	\$ 260,044,686.39	\$ 27,645,218.40	\$ (20,295,856.80)
Proposition 1E	\$ 65,725,202.07	\$ 51,765,056.16	\$ 17,810,238.10	\$ (3,850,092.19)
Proposition 1	\$ 40,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00
Grand Totals	\$ 600,296,168.33	\$ 499,698,858.79	\$ 83,676,455.01	\$ 16,920,854.53

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 –12)

Mr. Donnelly informed the Board that he received letters of support for items; 8, 9, 10 and 11, from Dan Silver, Executive Officer, Endangered Habitats League, and for items 9 and 10 from Senator Jeff Stone.

*4. Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2015, and September 29,

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve Consent Calendar Items 4 –12 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

*5. Recovery of Funds

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

\$123,723.45 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
\$138,437.16 to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
\$303,213.20 to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe
 Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection
 Fund**
\$659,213.31 to the **Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply,
 Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection
 Fund of 2006**
\$0.00 to the **Other**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Otay River Delta Riparian Habitat Restoration, San Diego County

Allocated	\$600,000.00
Expended	<u>-600,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Sacramento River Riparian Restoration Planning, Rancho Breisgau and Jelly's Ferry, Tehama and Shasta Counties

Allocated	\$151,000.00
Expended	<u>-117,227.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$33,772.50

Shasta River Fish Passage, Siskiyou County

Allocated	\$1,500,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,413,876.05</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$86,123.95

Western Riverside MSHCP (2013) - Evandel - Bergstein, Riverside County

Allocated	\$218,565.00
Expended	<u>-218,565.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Western Riverside MSHCP (2013) - Evandel - Wilson, Riverside County

Allocated	\$146,200.00
Expended	<u>-146,200.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Western Riverside MSHCP (2013) - Patterson, Riverside County

Allocated	\$160,500.00
Expended	<u>-156,673.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,827.00

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$123,723.45**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Clarksburg Public Access Improvements Phase II, Yolo County

Allocated	\$232,000.00
Expended	<u>-196,007.30</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$35,992.70

Crescent City Harbor Restroom and Fish Cleaning Station, Del Norte County

Allocated	\$527,000.00
Expended	<u>-489,638.61</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$37,361.39

Shaver Lake Boat Launch Parking Lot, Fresno County

Allocated	\$268,000.00
Expended	<u>-202,916.93</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$65,083.07

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$138,437.16**

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

Habitat Restoration, Mill Creek Watershed, Phase II, Del Norte County

Allocated	\$2,869,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,565,786.80</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$303,213.20

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe
Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund** **\$303,213.20**

SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006

Blue Oak Ranch Reserve CEQA and Planning, Santa Clara County

Allocated	\$1,073,000.00
Expended	<u>-635,000.44</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$437,999.56

Butte Creek Meadows Working Forest, Siskiyou County

Allocated	\$1,679,500.00
Expended	<u>-1,667,940.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$11,560.00

DFG Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program, Statewide

Allocated	\$3,862,007.00
Expended	<u>-3,656,650.98</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$205,356.02

DFG Wildlife Corridor Mapping, Statewide

Allocated	\$315,000.00
Expended	<u>-314,923.98</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$76.02

Insectaries for Pollinators and Farm Biodiversity, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$73,000.00
Expended	<u>-72,918.29</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$81.71

Placer County Oest Ranch Oak Woodlands Conservation Easement, Placer County

Allocated	\$189,000.00
Expended	<u>-184,860.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,140.00

Trabuco Creek Fish Passage Physical Modeling, Orange County

Allocated	\$338,000.00
Expended	<u>-338,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 **\$659,213.31**

OTHER

Allensworth Ecological Reserve, Expansion 57, Tulare County

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

At the February 25, 2015 meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Board approved the acquisition of two separate parcels of land totaling approximately four acres by the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the protection of habitat supporting the San Joaquin kit fox and other rare species found within the Allensworth Ecological Reserve and to enhance habitat linkages and connectivity. Work is now completed on this expansion. This entry was to officially close the project.

Total Other **\$0.00**

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Recovery of Funds. Recovery totals include \$123,723.45 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; \$138,437.16 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund; \$303,213.20 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund; \$659,213.31 to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, and \$0.00 to the Other.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

- *6. Cameron Meadows, Phase II, \$10,000.00
El Dorado County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the County of El Dorado (County) to acquire in fee 22± acres of land for the protection of gabbroic mixed-chaparral habitat that supports six special status plant species.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located in the community of Cameron Park in El Dorado County, just south of Green Valley Road, and approximately 12 miles east of the city of Folsom. State Route 50 is four miles south of the Property and provides convenient regional access to Sacramento, Placerville, and South Lake Tahoe.

The Property is adjacent to the Pine Hill Ecological Preserve (Preserve). The entire Preserve is under Federal, State, and County ownership and encompasses 4,746± acres in western El Dorado County. The Preserve is comprised of five distinct units which include Pine Hill, Salmon Falls, Martel Creek, Penny Lane, and Cameron Park. The Preserve is interspersed amongst rural estates, subdivisions, and industrial development that cover the surrounding area. Gabbroic mix chaparral dominates the terrain of the Preserve, along with patches of open grassland and oak woodlands. The Preserve's unique gabbro soils derived from the underlying surface of gabbro rock are generally red, mildly acidic, and rich in magnesium and iron, which helps to promote the growth of gabbroic mixed chaparral habitat that supports an assemblage of eight state and federal status plant species. Identified gabbroic habitat targeted as an addition for the Preserve is being threatened by the ongoing pattern of development within the area.

A primary goal identified in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's 2002 Recovery Plan for Gabbro Soil Plants is the acquisition and conservation in perpetuity of habitat to protect gabbro special status plant species. The acquisition and management of lands occupied by these special status plants is the most effective means of securing long term protection. To support this effort, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) provided grant funding in 2001 for the acquisition of 90± acres of land within the Cameron Park Unit of the Preserve.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of an undeveloped, irregular shaped parcel, with gently rolling to moderately steep terrain comprised primarily of gabbroic mixed chaparral habitat, grassland, and scattered oak woodland. The parcel is zoned for high density residential use, which allows for the development of single family homes. This acquisition will eliminate the threat of development and protect the gabbroic mixed chaparral habitat that hosts six State and federal special status

plant species. These plant species include the Pine Hill ceanothus, Stebbins' morning glory, El Dorado bedstraw, Layne's butterweed, and the Red Hills soaproot (Plant Listing in Table Below). In addition to benefitting the special status plant species, the Property will provide important breeding, foraging, and migration corridors for terrestrial wildlife species, song birds, and raptors.

<u>Plant Species</u>	<u>Listing Type</u>
Pine Hill ceanothus	State listed as rare; Federally listed as endangered
Stebbins' morning glory	State and Federally listed as endangered
El Dorado bedstraw	State listed as rare; Federally listed as endangered
Layne's butterweed	State listed as rare; Federally listed as threatened
El Dorado mule ears	Federal species of concern
Red Hills soaproot	Federal candidate for listing

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

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

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

The WCB is administering a USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition Grant to support this acquisition, which is specific to the recovery and protection of the six special status plant species on the Property.

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

CDFW assisted with the development of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's 2002 Recovery Plan for Gabbro Soil Plants of the Central Sierra Nevada Foothills and has supported WCB's approval of projects protecting approximately 1,600± acres of land within Preserve.

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

The bond funds are maximized in this project by a combination of contributory funding sources towards the acquisition of the Property. The majority of funds to acquire the Property will be provided by a USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition Grant. The required matching share requirement of \$166,525.00 will be provided by the County. The only WCB funds expended towards the acquisition are the internal project related costs associated with the Department of General Services' (DGS) appraisal review.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed as part of the Cameron Park Unit of the Preserve by staff of the Bureau of Land Management. Management will be directed by the 2001 Pine Hill Preserve Management Agreement, which is designed for the protection of gabbro soil plant species. Upon the discretion of management staff, the Property may provide future passive recreation.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$499,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the DGS and USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the approved fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the County. The terms and conditions of the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the County provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the subgrantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	\$332,475.00
County of El Dorado	<u>\$166,525.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$499,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	\$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$10,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Recovery Land Acquisition grant from the USFWS in the amount of \$332,475.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Recovery Land Acquisition grant from the USFWS in the amount of \$332,475.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

- *7. Cullinan Ranch Tidal Restoration Enhancement, \$399,000.00
Solano/Napa County

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. and acceptance of a federal reimbursable grant from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program for up to \$399,000.00, for a cooperative project with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to enhance and benefit 1,575± acres of tidal marsh and uplands, located just north of Highway 37, on the Cullinan Ranch Unit of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), two miles west of the City of Vallejo, in Solano and Napa Counties.

LOCATION

The San Francisco Bay Estuary (SBFE) is the largest estuary system on the Pacific coasts of North and South America, and is globally recognized for its historic and continued importance to a myriad of fish, waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland-dependent species. San Pablo Bay is one of three large bays that comprise SFBE and is located in the northernmost reach, about 20 miles northeast of the city of San Francisco. Low-lying areas adjacent to seven major tributaries along the north shore of the bay form the San Pablo Baylands (baylands). More than 80% of the baylands have been lost to reclamation for agriculture and development. The remaining baylands and their tributaries provide critical wetland and floodplain habitat and dispersal corridors for wetland-dependent plant and wildlife species, and for resident and diadromous fishes. The Napa River is the largest tributary, but due to habitat loss and degradation, it supports much lower numbers and fewer species than were historically found there.

Cullinan Ranch and adjacent properties, located near the mouth of the Napa River, were diked and reclaimed for agriculture in the late 1800s. In the 1950s, approximately 9,000 acres were converted to salt ponds, including the lands immediately to the north and west of Cullinan Ranch. Collectively, the salt ponds are the subject of the second largest tidal restoration project in the country totaling 7,171 acres of ponds and 2,679 acres of associated sloughs, wetlands, and levees, known as the Napa Sonoma Restoration Project (NSRP). The WCB and partners have funded the restoration of over 5,000 of these acres to tidal marsh. In 2009, WCB and other funding partners approved funding for the Cullinan Ranch Restoration Project restoring 1,575 acres to tidal habitat and transitional upland habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project activities will include, planting upland transition habitat with native plant species and controlling non-native invasive plant species. These activities will complement the previous restoration activities and result in measurable habitat improvements to marsh hydrology, marsh ecology, and endemic species.

As a direct result of this project, 10 acres of upland transition and 1,314 acres of tidal marsh habitat will be enhanced. In addition, the revegetation and enhancement of upland transition habitat will benefit the 1,575 acres of tidal wetlands and associated uplands previously restored by controlling the spread of non-native invasive plant species throughout Cullinan Ranch, and by providing upland refuge for marsh dependent species, including California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse.

Specific project elements and procedures:

Native plant restoration - Revegetation is essential because native species provide unique habitat attributes required by endemic fauna, and to exclude or limit non-native invasive species. Native plant restoration efforts will focus on key areas within Cullinan Ranch. These areas include the viewing pad area located in the southwest corner of Cullinan Ranch and about 4.5 miles of levees on the south and western boundaries. Native plants will be used and may consist of plugs, shrubs, potted plants, and seed mixtures.

Control non-native invasive species – Colonization of non-native invasive plant species, as part of restoration efforts, within disturbed construction areas can be rampant. In fact, field inspections show that New Zealand spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonioides*), perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*), Australian saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*), stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*), and common reed (*Phragmites australis*) have already started colonizing areas previously restored on Cullinan Ranch. Incorporating the guidelines of an early detection and rapid response protocol (ED&RR) to control and prevent the further spread of non-native species will be much more cost effective than if invasive species establish themselves widely in the project area and the result demands long-term invasive species management.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program such as coastal, tidal, or fresh water habitats, coastal scrub, grasslands, threatened and endangered species habitats, in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

The project is consistent with the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

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

The proposed project will revegetate native plant species and control non-native invasive plant species which will enhance the upland transition habitat resulting in improved habitat and refuge during high tide cycles.

In addition, the proposed project addresses the following priorities outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan: Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species: This project is uniquely situated to benefit multiple federally listed coastal wetland-dependent wildlife species, particularly salt marsh harvest mouse, California clapper rail, and soft bird's beak.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project is located on property owned and managed by the USFWS and will be managed long-term for transition-zone habitat values. Long-term management and maintenance on Cullinan Ranch will be minimal since most of the area will be restored to tidal marsh. Potential long-term management needs include some mowing and periodic weed control along levees. USFWS staff that manages the property will continue to be responsible for performing or coordinating monitoring and maintenance activities for twenty-five years. Monitoring will be conducted by USFWS biologists in accordance with all regulatory permit conditions.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Item	TOTALS
Revegetation	\$350,000
Project Management	\$29,246
Project Administration	<u>\$19,754</u>
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$399,000

Project costs will be for controlling non-native invasive species, native plant revegetation, and includes costs for project management supervision and administration. Project costs will be paid by the WCB, and reimbursed by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reimbursable grant from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c), which provides funding for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands within the San Francisco Bay Area and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have reviewed this proposal and recommend it for funding by the WCB. CDFW, as lead agency, prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this grant as proposed; allocate \$399,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize the acceptance of the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program reimbursement of \$399,000.00; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$399,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize the acceptance of the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program reimbursement of \$399,000.00; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

- *8. Thousand Palms Conservation Area, \$43,500.00
Expansion 1,
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition (Section 6) grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC). This proposal is also to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB or Board) grant to the CVCC. The proposed grant and subgrant would fund CVCC's purchase of 20± acres of land in Riverside County for the protection of habitat to support the recovery of federal and state endangered species within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP/NCCP) area.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in the community of Thousand Palms, along the south side of Vista Chino Road, just north of Interstate 10 and approximately nine miles northeast of the City of Palm Springs.

The Property is located in a region known as the Coachella Valley (Valley), which extends approximately 45 miles southeast from the San Bernardino Mountains to the northern shore of the Salton Sea. The Valley is bounded by the outlying mountain ranges of the San Jacinto Mountains on the west, the Santa Rosa Mountains on the south, and the Little San Bernardino Mountains on the north and east. The greater Los Angeles area is approximately 100 miles to the west of the Property, with Highway 10 providing convenient Valley access for residents and commuters. The Valley's urban and residential development has been growing rapidly and the region now has a population of nearly 600,000 people. The Valley is considered part of the 13th largest metropolitan area in the United States, the Inland Empire.

The Property is identified for protection within the Thousand Palms Conservation Area, a designated conservation area within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County. The purpose of the CVMSHCP/NCCP is to provide a regional vision for balanced growth to meet the requirements of federal and state endangered species laws, while promoting enhanced opportunities for recreation, tourism, and job growth. The CVMSHCP/NCCP aims to conserve an additional 240,000 acres of open space to support the 500,000 acres of pre-existing conservation land for the protection of 27 plant and animal species. With the support of other resources partners, the State and the federal government have currently helped conserve approximately 85,000 acres within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of an undeveloped rectangular parcel characterized by natural desert terrain with a gently sloping topography. The parcel is zoned for rural residential and light industrial uses. This proposed acquisition will provide core habitat, linkages, fluvial and Aeolian sand transport corridors for both state and federally listed species, including the desert tortoise, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, triple-ribbed milk vetch and the Coachella Valley milk-vetch. Other sensitive, sand dependent species that would benefit from this acquisition are the flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley round tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Coachella Valley sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and burrowing owl.

This Property's vital habitat continues to be threatened by ongoing urban development, off-road vehicle use, invasive species, and the loss of sand source. A majority of the Valley's natural blowsand habitat has been eliminated or degraded by the direct and indirect effects of development. Structures and non-native plant species restrict what were once free-moving sand deposits and prevent replenishment of the blowsand habitat, which the above-named species rely upon. Acquisition of this Property would place over 20± acres of blowsand and braided wash habitat under permanent protection. Placement of this area into public ownership would help add a protective buffer from the developing residential and agriculture lands that surround it.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

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

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

The Project preserves existing habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. Habitat connectivity is essential in maintaining the genetic viability of the region's listed/sensitive species conserved under the CVMSHCP/NCCP. The Project will expand the protection of wildlife linkages and provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

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

The Property is identified in the CVMSHCP/NCCP as a priority acquisition that supports the recovery of listed species.

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

CDFW was instrumental in the creation and support of the CVMSHCP/NCCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, CDFW works with numerous private and public partners to develop a regional protection plan for plants, animals and their habitats.

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

The Property is proposed to be acquired with WCB funds leveraged by the matching funds from the USFWS Section 6 subgrant.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the close of escrow, the Property will be owned, managed and monitored by the CVCC. The Property will be maintained in conjunction with other properties contained within the CVMSHCP/NCCP. The Property may be considered for future appropriate passive recreational uses.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$110,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS

funds require a non-federal match of \$38,500.00 that is proposed to be provided by a WCB grant. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the CVCC and the proposed subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the CVCC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant or subgrant terms the WCB can require CVCC to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$38,500.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	<u>\$71,500.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$110,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	\$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$43,500.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans and is consistent with the purposes of the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$43,500.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$71,500.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$43,500.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$71,500.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

- *9. Western Riverside MSHCP (2012) - Caramello, \$50,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant, and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority). This proposal will also consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the Authority, to acquire in fee 10± acres of land located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP) area.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as the Caramello property, is located in the community of Teneja, in an unincorporated area in southwest Riverside County. More specifically, the property is located on the west of Calle de Corizon and Calle de Mucho roads.

The Property is located in the Wildomar area which is bounded by Interstate 15 and the City of Murrieta to the east; the San Diego County line to the south; the Cleveland National Forest to the west; and the southerly city limits of Wildomar to the north. The area is comprised primarily of ranchette style homes combined with traditional and mobile homes built on 5 to 20+ acre lots with the additional space used for equestrian, agricultural, or conservation uses.

The Wildomar area of Riverside County falls within the WRC MSHCP area, which encompasses approximately 1.2 million acres of land providing habitat for over 146 wildlife species, several of which are both state and federally listed as threatened or endangered. The WRC MSHCP was established under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program under the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991 (Fish and Game Code Section 2800, et seq.).

The NCCP program is a cooperative effort that includes both private and public partners and takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An NCCP identifies and provides for regional or area wide protection of plants, animals and their habitats, while still allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. Under the WRC MSHCP, the goal of the Authority is to assemble a reserve of 500,000 acres of conserved properties identified to sustain and protect important wildlife ecosystem processes and corridors throughout western Riverside County. To date, 49,201 acres have been added to the reserve.

The WRC MSHCP designates the following six distinct habitat areas for conservation: Western Core/Linkage, Alkali Playa/Vernal Pool Area, Temecula Creek Watershed, Santa Rosa Plateau, San Timoteo Canyon, and B Canyon Area. The Property is located in the Santa Rosa Plateau (SRP) habitat area,

which encompasses an area from the Santa Rosa Plateau located west of the City of Temecula and extends south from the City of Murrieta west to the Riverside-San Diego County line and includes the area known as the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve (SRER) which is owned and managed by CDFW. This area also includes the Tenaja corridor which serves as an important wildlife linkage connecting SRER to the Cleveland National Forest in the western portion of the WRC MSHP. Properties targeted for acquisition in the SRP area are important because these properties will protect multiple listed species and their habitats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is vacant and unimproved and is an irregularly shaped parcel of land located approximately six miles east of the City of Wildomar. It is situated in a Rural Residential zoning designation, with a minimum lot size of one-half acre.

The site has a rolling to rough mountainous topography covered with various types of vegetation including chaparral and coastal sage scrub, a soft-leaved drought-deciduous subshrub, which serves an important and necessary component to the survival of several resident species (i.e.: coastal California gnatcatcher, orange throated-whiptail and red-diamond rattlesnake). Coastal sage scrub has been extensively cleared for agriculture and urbanization in recent years. This has resulted in the fragmentation of the coastal sage scrub community and the degradation of ecological processes and ecosystems of native wildlife species that rely on it. The decline and magnitude of the loss of coastal sage scrub correlates with the decline of individual species in the area.

The proposed acquisition will protect coastal sage scrub habitat and several federally listed species including the federally endangered arroyo toad, California orcutt grass and spreading navarretia. Other species occurring in this area include the coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, many-stemmed dudleya, Davidson's saltscale, Parish's brittle scale, and San Miguels savory.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, the "Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.), which authorizes WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW; grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property; and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisition of properties. Under the Program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities.

The Property has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its NCCP program; the biological values of the Property are substantiated and recommended for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

The project meets WCB's Strategic Plan goals:

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

One of the goals of the WRC MSCHP is to preserve existing habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. Connectivity in the Western Core Linkage habitat area is essential to maintaining the genetic viability of listed/sensitive species being conserved under the plan. Wildlife linkages also provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allows species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

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

The project meets WCB's Strategic Plan by supporting the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans and the recovery of listed species. The WRC MSHCP complements WCB's Strategic Plan through its goal to acquire properties for the purpose of wildlife habitat and landscape preservation. The Authority has successfully worked on the expansion of protected wildlife habitat linkages and corridors to ensure the success and recovery of threatened and endangered wildlife species, and for the protection of natural landscapes within the WRC MSHCP area.

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

CDFW, together with other public and private parties, was instrumental in the creation of the WRC MSHCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, all parties recognized the importance of western Riverside County's conservation values. The conservation values recognized by all include the mixture of habitats located across diverse landscapes with numerous ecosystems and wildlife species found nowhere else in the world. This fact, coupled with the extensive growth and urbanization of the area has resulted in the decline of these habitat communities. Since 2006, WCB and the USFWS Section 6 grant program have supported and participated in funding several acquisitions in the WRC MSHCP area.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Authority will manage the Property as part of the WRC MSHCP reserve system, which serves to provide permanent habitat protection for populations of federal and state-listed endangered and threatened species that occupy the reserve and to increase regional wildlife habitat cores and linkages that will connect existing habitat reserve areas throughout western Riverside County. As part of its obligation under the WRC MSHCP, the Authority retains a Reserve Manager to ensure that management actions are consistent with the plan. Management costs for parcels acquired under the WRC MSHCP will be provided by the Authority's operating funds.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$150,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS grant requires a non-federal match in the amount of \$45,000.00 that is proposed to be provided by a grant from the WCB. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to the Authority provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 45,000.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	<u>\$105,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$150,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 50,000.00

It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review. The Authority, as project proponent, will fund all other project-related administrative costs for the acquisition, including but not limited to the environmental site assessment, appraisal, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$105,000.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority; allocate \$50,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$105,000.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority; allocate \$50,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting - Yes

- *10. Western Riverside MSHCP (2014/2015) - Bautista, \$846,200.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority). This proposal will also consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the Authority to acquire in fee 2,838± acres.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as the Bautista property, is located approximately four miles east of the city limits of Hemet in an unincorporated area in Riverside County. More specifically, the Property is located south of Bautista Road and east of Fairview Avenue. Bautista Road is a two-lane paved highway, which turns into a dirt road running 15± miles in a southeast direction ending in the unincorporated area of Anza. Stetson Road, a major east-west commercial artery in Hemet, lies approximately one mile north of the Property and intersects with Fairview Avenue. Physical and legal access to the Property is from Bautista Road on the north. The Property is surrounded, to within approximately two miles, by Diamond Valley Lake to the west, Diamond Valley Golf Club to the southwest, and the San Bernardino National Forest on the east. The Lake Skinner Recreation Area is located 10± miles southwest of the Property.

The immediate neighborhood is generally residential in nature with a nominal amount of single family dwellings and vacant land. A small housing development known as Wilson Mesa is located nearby at the intersection of Bautista Road and Fairview Avenue. The development consists of single family residences on ¼ acre lots. As with many areas in Riverside County, development pressures are high and the city of Hemet is currently evaluating additional development within the city.

The Hemet area falls within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP) Area, which encompasses approximately 1.2 million acres of land providing habitat for over 146 wildlife species, several of which are both state and federally listed as threatened or endangered. The WRC MSHCP was established under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program under the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991 (Fish and Game Code Section 2800, *et seq.*).

The NCCP program is a cooperative effort that includes both private and public partners and takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An NCCP identifies and provides for the regional or area wide protection of plants, animals and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. Under the WRC MSHCP, the goal of the Authority is to assemble a reserve of 500,000 acres of conserved properties identified to sustain and protect important wildlife

ecosystem processes and corridors throughout western Riverside County. To date, 49,201 acres have been added to the reserve.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of 11 contiguous unimproved parcels that form an irregular shape. The Property is comprised of three separate zoning designations: RM - Rural Mountainous (1,744 ±acres), AG - Agriculture (90 ±acres), and OS-RUR - Open Space-Rural (1,004 ±acres). Both the RM and AG designations permit a single family homesite on a minimum 10-acre lot size. The OS-RUR designation allows single family homesites on a minimum 20-acre lot.

The Property was once a working cattle ranch in the 1960s. At that time, two residential dwellings were on site together with ancillary storage/shed buildings. The on-site structures have since been abandoned and are in disrepair. If the proposed project is approved, the Authority will demolish the buildings and return the site to its natural condition. The Property was selected for acquisition because of its naturally occurring biotic and abiotic components and ecological processes that are necessary to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem. The Property will provide core living and breeding habitat for several covered species that include the coastal California gnatcatcher, quino checkerspot butterfly, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and the Stephens' kangaroo rat. The Property's extensive acreage combined with its conservation values makes it a priority project for the Authority. Furthermore, the Authority realizes the Property has a high risk for conversion to residential development.

The Property is also situated within a high priority conservation area in the WRC MSHCP. This high priority area focuses its conservation efforts on the western slope of the San Jacinto Mountains, and is confined to acquisitions within the Eastern Foothills Area (EFA). The EFA extends from Cactus Valley and continues north across Bautista Canyon and the San Jacinto River. This area supports a suite of covered species that contain key populations of eight federally listed species, five of which are also State listed, and at least eleven sensitive, unlisted species. The EFA also complements and supplements past awards granted to the Authority. Previous awards were focused on six distinct habitat areas (Western Core/Linkage, Alkali Playa/Vernal Pool Area, Temecula Creek Watershed, Santa Rosa Plateau, San Timoteo Canyon, and B Canyon Area) identified under the WRC MSHCP. The EFA objective is to: (1) acquire vegetation habitat comprised of coastal sage scrub, alluvial fan scrub, riparian woodland, chaparral, oak woodland, and grassland that supports rare plants and animals; and (2) secure a key regional transition zone including wildlife linkages and core habitat areas essential to long-term conservation and recovery efforts.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, the "Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game

Section 1300, *et seq.*), which authorizes WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW; grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property; and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisition of properties. Under the Program, WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities.

The Property has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its NCCP program, the biological values of the Property are substantiated and recommended for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

The project meets WCB's Strategic Plan goals:

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

One of the goals of the WRC MSHCP is to preserve existing habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. Connectivity in the Western Core Linkage habitat area is essential to maintaining the genetic viability of listed/sensitive species being conserved under the plan. Wildlife linkages also provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

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

The project meets WCB's Strategic Plan by supporting the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans and the recovery of listed species. The WRC MSHCP complements WCB's Strategic Plan through its goal to acquire properties for the purpose of wildlife habitat and landscape preservation. The Authority has successfully worked on the expansion of protected wildlife habitat linkages and corridors to ensure the success and recovery of threatened and endangered wildlife species, and for the protection of natural landscapes within the Plan Area.

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

CDFW, together with other public and private parties, was instrumental in the creation of the WRC MSHCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, all parties recognized the importance of western Riverside County's conservation values. The conservation values include the mixture of habitats located across diverse landscapes with numerous ecosystems and wildlife species

found nowhere else in the world. This fact, coupled with the extensive growth and urbanization of the area has resulted in the decline of these habitat communities. Since 2006, WCB and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Section 6 grant program have supported and participated in funding several acquisitions in the WRC MSHCP area.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Authority will manage the Property as part of the WRC MSHCP reserve system, which serves to provide permanent habitat protection for populations of federal and state-listed endangered and threatened species that occupy the reserve and to increase regional wildlife habitat cores and linkages that will connect existing habitat reserve areas throughout western Riverside County. As part of its obligation under the WRC MSHCP, the Authority retains a Reserve Manager to ensure that management actions are consistent with the plan. Management costs for parcels acquired under the WRC MSHCP will be provided by the Authority's operating funds.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$3,832,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS grant requires a non-federal match that will be provided by both WCB and Authority. WCB's share of the non-federal match will be a contribution of \$841,200.00 towards the proposed acquisition, which is proposed to be provided by a grant from the WCB. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to the Authority provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 841,200.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	\$ 2,490,800.00
Western Riverside Conservation Authority	\$ <u>500,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$ 3,832,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	\$ 5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 846,200.00

It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review. The Authority, as project proponent, will fund all other project-related administrative costs for the acquisition, including but not limited to the environmental site assessment, appraisal, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$2,490,800.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority; allocate \$846,200.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$2,490,800.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority; allocate \$846,200.00 from the Habitat

Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously

Finn – Yes

Hunting - Yes

- *11. Willow Hole Conservation Area, Expansion 2, \$31,250.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition (Section 6) grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC). This proposal is also to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the CVCC. The grant and subgrant would fund CVCC's purchase of 29± acres of land in Riverside County for the protection of habitat to support the recovery of threatened and endangered species within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP/NCCP) area.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located within the sphere of influence of the City of Desert Hot Springs, north of Interstate Highway 10, east of State Highway 62 and approximately seven miles north of the City of Palm Springs.

The surrounding topography is mostly desert dunes, with blow-sand habitat areas found specifically within the Coachella Valley (Valley). Historically these habitat areas have been eliminated or degraded by the direct and indirect effects of urban and residential growth that has occurred throughout the Valley, including ongoing building and related infrastructure development, off-road vehicle use and invasive species. The introduction of structures and non-native plant species within the Valley restrict what were once free-moving sand deposits, thus preventing replenishment of the blow-sand habitats.

The Property is identified for protection within the Willow Hole Conservation Area, a designated conservation area within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County. Protection and placement of the Property into public resource stewardship will provide an additional habitat buffer area from the surrounding residential, industrial and agricultural lands. With the support of other resources partners, the State and the federal government have helped conserve approximately 85,000 acres within the CVMSHCP/NCCP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of an undeveloped rectangular parcel characterized by natural desert terrain with undulating topography. The parcel is zoned as rural desert which allows for limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreation, and renewable energy uses. This acquisition would permanently protect the Property from development and provide core habitat, linkages, and fluvial and Aeolian sand transport corridors important for the federally threatened and state endangered Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. The land also provides habitat for other sensitive sand dependent species including the flat-tailed horned lizard,

Coachella Valley round tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Coachella Valley sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and burrowing owl.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

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

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

The Project preserves existing habitat connections by expanding the network of protected linkages. Connectivity in habitat areas is essential to maintaining the genetic viability of listed/sensitive species being conserved under the CVMSHCP/NCCP. Wildlife linkages also provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

A.3 – Fund projects that support the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans and recovery of listed species. The Property is identified in the CVMSHCP/NCCP as a priority acquisition that supports the recovery of listed species.

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

CDFW was instrumental in the creation and support of the CVMSHCP/NCCP

through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, CDFW works with several private and public partners to develop a regional protection plan for plants, animals and their habitats.

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

The Property will be purchased with WCB grant funds leveraged by the funds from the USFWS Section 6 subgrant.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the close of escrow, the Property will be owned, managed and monitored by the CVCC. The Property will be maintained in conjunction with other properties contained within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area. The Property may be considered for future appropriate passive recreational uses.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$75,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match of \$26,250.00 that is proposed to be provided by a WCB grant. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to the CVCC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant or subgrant terms WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$26,250.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	<u>\$48,750.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$75,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	\$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$31,250.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans and is consistent with the purposes of the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$31,250.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the USFWS in the amount of \$48,750.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$31,250.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the USFWS in the amount of \$48,750.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

- *12. San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (Skyline 244) \$10,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC). This is a cooperative project with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the USFWS and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to acquire a total of 244± acres of land for the protection of core habitat and linkage areas for rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Soon after the State of California enacted the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act in 1991, the County of San Diego, along with 12 other local jurisdictions, began planning for habitat conservation that would address the growing conflict between conservation and development within a 900 square mile area within southwestern San Diego County.

The plan, referred to as the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a joint Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). The MSCP covers 85 species, including 26 listed species and 59 unlisted species.

This proposed acquisition focuses on land that will greatly enhance the existing San Diego MSCP by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core resource areas of habitat. Core resource areas are defined as areas of high concentration of sensitive biological resources which, if lost, could not be replaced or mitigated elsewhere.

The property (Property) is generally located in a key linkage area between the State-owned Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve (SPER) and Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (HCWA). This acquisition will help protect the wildlife corridor between the SPER and HCWA. The WCB recently approved projects protecting 468± acres in this same area. There are several more pending projects that will further contribute to protected lands in this corridor.

Many of the surrounding land uses include residential subdivision, with larger estate developments and intermittent commercial development along the major thoroughfares. Not protecting this strategically located property and allowing further development and encroachment would result in a fragmented landscape precluding connectivity between already protected areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County of San Diego adopted the MSCP, which is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan addressing the needs of multiple species and the

preservation of natural vegetation communities in San Diego County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, species endangerment, and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of covered species and their habitat due to the direct impacts of future development of both public and private lands within the MSCP area.

Like the nearby SPER and HCWA, this property contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including coastal sage scrub habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher as well as habitat for other sensitive and protected species. The acquisition will also benefit several unlisted species, covered by the San Diego County MSCP with major benefits to multiple endemic plants as well as several species of raptors including Swainson's hawk, ferruginous hawk, bald eagle, and northern harrier.

Naturally occurring ecological processes necessary to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem are still intact on the subject property. Conservation of this property will improve the linkages among public lands that are managed by local partners, including County of San Diego, CDFW, USFWS, and EHC.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed subgrant for this project is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) and enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions on behalf of the CDFW and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

STRATEGIC PLAN

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

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

The Property contains habitat and wildlife corridors for threatened and endangered species. In addition to the gnatcatcher, the property supports habitat for the following 6 federally listed species, thread-leaved brodiaea, southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, San Diego thorn-mint, San Diego ambrosia, and Encinitas baccharis. By protecting wildlife corridors and reducing development in the area, these species will have the potential to adapt to any climate change impacts.

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

The San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (San Diego MSCP) is a joint Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (Plan). The San Diego MSCP covers 85 species, including 26 federally and/State listed species and 59 unlisted species. The Plan commits to an approximately 172,000 acre preserve area. The Property is within the Plan area and will help meet the goals of the Plan. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding.

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

The Property is within the boundaries of the San Diego MSCP. The USFWS grant proposed for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS:

EHC manages 19 properties in San Diego County, totaling approximately 4,650 acres, including CDFW's Crestridge Ecological Reserve. These properties are managed to MSCP standards for covered species and reserve function, including wildlife corridor function.

EHC's management team will conduct annual surveys and monitoring of MSCP plant and animal target species, invasive species, and rare plants. Monitoring data will be integrated into the regional NCCP management and monitoring program. EHC estimates that its annual cost to monitor and manage the property will be around \$11,500.00. SANDAG, through its TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program will make a grant to EHC to assist with the acquisition and future management and maintenance of the Property.

TERMS

The Property was appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,345,000.00. WCB reviewed the appraisal and submitted it to the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS for review. DGS and USFWS both approved the appraisal. The landowner has agreed to sell the property for the approved fair market value of \$1,345,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB Subgrant of USFWS funds to EHC provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions

and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the Subgrant terms, WCB can require the Subgrantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another approved holder and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	\$874,250.00
SANDAG (non-federal match)	<u>\$470,750.00</u>
TOTAL purchase price	\$1,345,000.00
Administrative costs	\$10,000.00
Total WCB allocation	\$10,000.00

It is estimated that project-related administrative costs include DGS appraisal review. The grantee will fund all appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of these projects are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species to implement or assist in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover the project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$874,250.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the EHC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover the project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$874,250.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the EHC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting - Yes

13. East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Nunn), \$2,742,400.00
Contra Costa County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (ECCCHC) as well as the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to sub-grant these federal funds to the ECCCHC, for a cooperative project with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to acquire 646± acres of land for the protection and preservation of existing regional wildlife linkages, including cropland, pasture, wetland, and slough habitat areas, within the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (ECCC HCP/NCCP) plan area.

Mr. Brian Gibson presented the project.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as the Nunn property, is located in an unincorporated area of Contra Costa County near the community of Knightsen, approximately two miles northeast of the City of Brentwood and a quarter mile south of the City of Oakley. The Property is comprised of two parcels with the northern 80-acre parcel separated from the southern parcel by Delta Road. The Property is bordered by privately-owned rural and agricultural land. This acquisition is an important acquisition within the ECCC HCP/NCCP and will be the first property acquired in the northeastern region of the ECCC HCP/NCCP Plan Area.

Over the past several years the WCB, USFWS, ECCCHC and EBRPD have partnered to acquire just over 13,000 acres of habitat within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area, helping protect essential habitat and connectivity for multiple wildlife species. The Nunn acquisition is also consistent with action proposed under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Wildlife Action Plan (CWAP). The project is located within the Central Valley and Bay Delta region within the CWAP. One of the recommended conservation actions called out for this region is reducing the risk of habitat isolation in the eastern San Francisco Bay area

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is 646± acres in size and is currently used as rural agricultural. It consists of two parcels, 565.95± acres and 80± acres. The larger parcel is irregularly shaped, comprised of a number of rectangular sections separated by agricultural drainage sloughs used in connection with farming activities. The smaller parcel is located north of the larger parcel, north of Delta Road, and is rectangular in shape. The terrain of the Property is relatively flat with a slight fall from west to east. Elevations range from about 18 feet in the southwest corner to just above sea level in the northeast corner. Habitat types found on the Property include wetland, slough, cropland, and pasture. The Property is adjacent to and north of No Name Slough.

Acquisition of the Property will protect suitable habitat for the conservation of a variety of special status wildlife species including Swainson's hawk and western burrowing owl. This Property is also unique in that it offers the potential for future restoration activities which could provide suitable habitat for other wildlife species including silvery legless lizard and giant garter snake. The Property also offers benefits to wildlife in terms of future climate change resiliency by providing and connecting with varied terrains and elevations for species movement.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD (WCB) PROGRAM

The proposed grant and subgrant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) and enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

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

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

The Project enhances habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. The Project will expand the protection of wildlife linkages and provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

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

The Property is identified in the ECCHC HCP/NCCP and supports the recovery of listed species.

A.4 – Invest in priority conservation projects recommended under CDFW's land acquisition evaluation process or within other conservation plans supported by CDFW. CDFW was instrumental in the creation and support of the ECCHC HCP/NCCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, CDFW works with numerous private and public partners to develop a regional protection plan for plants, animals and their habitats.

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

The Property is proposed to be acquired with WCB funds leveraged by the matching funds from the USFWS Section 6 subgrant and EBRPD funds.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

EBRPD has agreed to manage the Property once it is acquired. Funding of future management activities for this Property will be provided by ECCCHC and EBRPD, in part through wind turbine and communication tower lease revenue from prior acquisitions within the ECCC HCP/NCCP area. ECCCHC and EBRPD anticipate that the Property will offer future opportunities for passive recreational use, an allowed use under the ECCC HCP/NCCP. The habitat will be maintained in conjunction with other properties acquired by EBRPD.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$6,072,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by EBRPD bond funds and the proposed WCB grant to ECCCHC. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant to ECCCHC provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

WCB Grant	\$ 2,732,400.00
USFWS subgrant funds	\$ 2,732,400.00
East Bay Regional Park District	\$ 607,200.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$ 6,072,000.00
Other Project Related Costs:	\$ 10,000.00
Total WCB Allocation	\$ 2,742,400.00

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review costs. Under the terms of the USFWS grant WCB may seek partial reimbursement of these costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal

Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) (SSJD-NCCP) that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for areas in and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that assist in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

CEQA

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from USFWS in the amount of \$2,732,400.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$2,742,400.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) (SSJD-NCCP) for the grant to East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and to cover the project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson reported that Abigail Fatemen and Joanne Chiu both of the ECCCHC, were in attendance.

Mr. Donnelly informed the Board that he received a support letter from Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League. He asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Kevin Hunting commented that this particular Natural Community Conservation Plan is just one of 19 such plans that CDFW has been partnering with local Governments on for the last 10 or 15 years. He said this is a kind of premier NCCP as it demonstrates that collaboration between local government, private land owners, park districts and CDFW can work well, and that its satisfying to see the growth of habitat reserve in the area.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak, there were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed approve the acceptance of Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from USFWS in the amount of \$2,732,400.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$2,742,400.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) (SSJD-NCCP) for the grant to East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and to cover the project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Finn- Yes

Hunting- Yes.

14. San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch (Quarry Site), \$4,042,000.00
Fresno County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition in fee of 122± acres of land in Fresno County (Property) on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Transfer of Jurisdiction of the Property by CDFW to the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC), for the protection of riparian and oak woodlands habitat and for potential future wildlife oriented public use opportunities within the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway). The SJRC Board approved acquisition of the Property on August 21, 2013, for expansion of open space within the Parkway.

Ms. Teri Muzik described the project.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Property is located at 13109 and 13475 North Friant Road, in the community of Friant, along the north side of Friant Road south of the San Joaquin River. The Property lies along Little Dry Creek, a tributary to the San Joaquin River, and is surrounded by the SJRC's Ball Ranch property and the Willow Unit of CDFW's San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve. The State acquired both the Ball Ranch Property and the Willow Unit in 2000 to provide for preservation and restoration of riparian habitat, and for inclusion in the Parkway. The Parkway is a 22-mile regional greenspace and wildlife corridor along both sides of the San Joaquin River extending from Friant Dam to State Route 99, with an interconnected trail system and recreational and educational features.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is developed and currently operated as a sand and gravel plant (Plant). RMC Pacific Materials, LLC (Lessee) holds a lease on the Property (Lease) allowing it to mine for and sell aggregates and precious metals, create and use silt ponds, and carry out related operations. The Lease term will expire on July 28, 2023. Lessee holds a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the Property from the County of Fresno which will also expire in 2023. Virtually all of the aggregates and precious metals have been removed from the Property. The Lessee currently trucks materials onto the Property from other off-site quarries for processing. Prior to termination of the Lease, Lessee must complete any required toxic remediation, rehabilitate the Property as required by the CUP, and reclaim the Property according to state and federal law. Within six months after termination of the Lease, Lessee must remove all of its buildings and improvements from the Property.

The Property is within the Parkway area designated by statute and is located adjacent to other State-owned properties. Most of the Property lies above the 100-year base flood elevation of the San Joaquin River. The resulting development potential means there is a higher demand for the Property compared to most other Parkway lands, which are within the 100-year floodplain.

The appraiser determined the highest and best use of the Property to be for rural homesites. The SJRC has prioritized the Property for acquisition because it is essentially an inholding and because of its development potential.

The Property also contains mature riparian habitat, oak woodlands and existing wildlife corridors. The proximity of the other State-owned lands will contribute to the ability of the wildlife to move between protected habitats. This acquisition will also protect waterway channels that feed into the San Joaquin River.

SJRC will assume the Lease directly from the landowner at closing of the Property purchase. Title to the Property will vest in the State, acting by and through CDFW, which will then complete a Transfer of Jurisdiction to SJRC. WCB staff anticipates that the Transfer of Jurisdiction will take place at the same time as the closing of the Property purchase.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board or WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, the "Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) which authorizes WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities.

WCB assists with the administration of project funding for SJRC. WCB, represented by its Executive Director, holds a position on the SJRC Board along with CDFW, which is represented by the Regional Manager of the Central Region. The SJRC Board reviews and approves projects to ensure they are viable and consistent with the goals of the current SJRC Parkway Master Plan, prior to consideration by WCB. As indicated above the SJRC Board approved this acquisition August 21, 2013. Under this transaction WCB would acquire the Property on behalf of CDFW and then transfer jurisdiction to SJRC.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Acquisition of the Property would be consistent with the following SJRC Master Plan (2000) Natural Resources, Recreation, and Land Acquisition objectives:

NRO3. In areas that are not publicly owned or managed, establish, through purchase, easements, or other mutually satisfactory arrangements, a continuous wildlife corridor along the river of sufficient width to facilitate the movement of large mammals between habitat areas, to provide a variety of nesting and

foraging areas, and to enhance and protect the aquatic habitats of the river and nearby wetlands.

RO4. Unify Parkway elements into a recognizable unit and a visually integrated park system.

LO2. Make the most effective use of limited public funds.

Additionally, the acquisition of the Property would be consistent with WCB Strategic Plan Goals A (Environmental Protection and Conservation) and C (Public Use and Recreation), and further the following Strategic Plan Objectives:

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

The Property contains a habitat and wildlife corridor along Little Dry Creek. By protecting the corridor and reducing development in the area, the species found on the Property will have the potential to adapt to any climate change impacts.

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

This privately-owned Property is surrounded by property that is owned by the State, under the jurisdiction of CDFW and the Conservancy. Eliminating the possibility of development on this Property will maintain the existing wildlife corridors and will reduce further impacts to the river.

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

All the land surrounding the Property is part of the San Joaquin River Parkway. The Property is being leased and is currently used for a sand and gravel operation. The revenue from the Lease will be used to support the ongoing operation of the Parkway.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Revenues from the Lease would be payable to SJRC and used to support operation and maintenance of the Parkway. The minimum rent rate is \$75,000/year with royalties and inflation adjustments. The average historical rent from 2005 through 2013 was \$186,990/year. These revenues will also be available to SJRC to help it develop plans for the potential use of the Property once the Lease is terminated.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$4,000,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by

the Department of General Services (DGS). The owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB acquisition provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In addition, SJRC must approve the assignment and assumption of Lease. Once approved by WCB, the transaction must also be reviewed and approved by the DGS.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)	\$3,992,000.00
High Speed Rail contribution	<u>\$8,000.00</u>
Total	\$4,000,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs:	\$50,000.00
WCB Total Allocation	\$4,042,000.00

It is estimated that \$50,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal, environmental services and transaction reviews and closing costs.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (HSR) acquired jurisdiction over a portion of CDFW's San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve (Camp Pashayan property), located within the proposed California High-Speed Rail Authority right-of-way. In exchange for the Camp Pashayan property, HSR has deposited funds (Exchange Funds) into escrow for the acquisition of suitable replacement property. The Exchange Funds will be applied to the purchase price of the Property.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), which allows for the acquisition of river parkway projects identified by the San Joaquin River Conservancy.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,042,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(f) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly informed the Board that he had received a letter of support from Attorney Robert Hillson, on behalf of the Ball Family Trust, and asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Finn asked for assurance that the transfer of the property from HSR to CDFW did not constitute a sale. Ms. Muzik explained that the WCB negotiated not sale, but an exchange of properties, between HSR and CDFW. A simultaneous exchange was not possible. Therefore, HSR went through the appropriate process to obtain approval to deposit funds into escrow rather than to pay them directly to CDFW.

Ms. Muzik offered further assurance that the process was completed under the guidance of DGS and in full compliance with State Administration Manual requirements. Ms. Finn was comfortable with the explanation but asked for a break-down on why the proposal for acquisition is written on behalf of CDFW and then transfers jurisdiction. Mr. Donnelly explained the two step process is necessary because while the WCB doesn't have authority to acquire or authorize acquisition of property on behalf of the SJRC, the WCB does have the Conservancy's budgetary authorization for funding in its budget. Historically, the practice has been for the WCB to approve a CDFW acquisition using Conservancy funding and, subsequent to that, completing a transfer of control and possession as soon as immediately possible after the transaction is approved by DGS and closes escrow.

Mr Donnelly then asked if first there were any more questions or comments. Ms. Katherine Moore asked for assurance that the assumption of the lease would not in any way relieve RMC Pacific Materials of the burden of remediating the acquired property. Ms. Musik stated that the Conservancy will assume the lease as is, but RMC Pacific Materials will complete remediation and remove all buildings prior to the termination of the lease in 2023.

Mr. David Wasemiller spoke on behalf of the Ball family trust voicing appreciation for Teri's work and stating that the tenant has posted a \$150,000 bond that will not be released until remediation has been completed and signed off.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there any more questions, there were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,042,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(f) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting - Yes

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 15. Big Creek Reserve Facility Improvements,
Phase II,
Monterey County | \$0.00 |
|--|--------|

This item was withdrawn from consideration.

16. Big Sky Natural Area - Alamos Canyon, Ventura County \$1,852,126.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) for a cooperative project with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the California Natural Resources Agency to acquire in fee 326± acres of wildlife habitat, including large areas of riparian and aquatic habitat, grasslands, and oak woodlands.

Mr. Kurt Weber presented this project to the Board

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Alamos Canyon is located at the western edge of the City of Simi Valley in the Santa Susanna hills. The property (Property) forms a greenbelt between the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark. To the south of the Property is the RSRPD Tierra Rejada Park, the Ronald Regan library and industrial development. West of the Property is Moorpark College and east is residential sub-divisions and large scale urban development. Undeveloped property and open space are north and northeast of the project site.

Surrounding land uses are primarily urban and industrial development and open space. The current property owner, Waste Management, operates a landfill and recycling center adjacent to the Property.

The Property falls within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Big Sky Natural Area Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). Alamos Canyon plays an important role in maintaining regional landscape connectivity. The main objectives of this CAPP are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect threatened vegetative communities along with other rare and important plants and animals, and maintain habitat linkages that help protect elevation gradients that allow species to adapt to climate change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The long term sustainability of the natural systems in the Santa Monica Mountains depends upon this connection being maintained. Alamos Canyon occupies a key location along the western linkage.

The Property contains about 58 acres of wetlands. The wetlands are formed by ephemeral streams, including Alamos Creek and are located just north of SR 118 where the water pools because of the reduced slope and a barrier caused by the fill needed to elevate the highway. The water retained in the wetlands percolates into the soil and eventually moves down to where it recharges subsurface aquifers that supplement the local ground water supply and provides ground water recharge.

Listed species to benefit from the proposed acquisition include the following: the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher and Conejo dudleya, and the endangered least Bell's Vireo, Riverside fairy shrimp, Lyon's pentachaeta and California orcutt grass.

This project is part of a larger comprehensive regional initiative that will protect a 25 mile long wildlife linkage that will connect two mountain ranges, the Santa Susanna and Santa Monica Mountain Ranges. Several federal, state and local government agencies and conservation groups are working in partnership to protect this linkage. These partners have established a group known as the Linkage Implementation Alliance with the specific focus on preserving this wildlife corridor.

In addition to the above, The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and CDFW commissioned the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project which identified this wildlife corridor as a priority. Furthermore California State Parks has been a partner in this project as its lands are connected to the Big Sky Natural Area.

One of the most important features of the Property is that it contains an undercrossing at State Route 118. The Property being acquired includes land on both sides of the highway that were originally intended to be developed as freeway on and off ramps to serve a large residential and commercial development. The acquisition of the property will prevent development of this area and will leave the area for the use of wildlife passing underneath the freeway. The National Park Service (NPS) has documented the wildlife linkage importance of the Property, and it is a key parcel in the greater Sierra Madre - Santa Monica Mountains wildlife corridor linkage.

WCB PROGRAM

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

This Project is guided by the WCB Strategic Plan and supports the following Strategic Plan Goals:

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

The project conserves wetlands and riparian habitat that support healthy fish, wildlife, and plant populations and ecosystem functions in a changing climate. Furthermore, the project protects connectivity areas between critical habitats to allow the movement of species in response to climate change.

A-3 Fund Projects that promote the recovery of listed species.

Acquisition of the Property will reduce major habitat fragmentation and help implement the recovery of the listed species found on or near the Property.

A-4 Invest in priority conservation projects recommended by CDFW.

The acquisition of this Property is at the request of CDFW and the surrounding area contains resources for sensitive habitat.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be owned, managed and monitored by the RSRPD. The RSRPD manages numerous parks and open spaces in the area for habitat preservation and provides public use opportunities, relying on a combination of employees, volunteers, partners and members to support this effort. The acquisition of the Property will provide an opportunity for RSRPD to protect and preserve the Property's open space and natural resource values, and potentially afford recreational opportunities to the public such as hiking, photography, and biking.

TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$5,150,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for less than the appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. Under the terms of the WCB Grant Agreement, RSRPD will be required to hold the Property in a manner consistent with the purposes of the Agreement. The Property cannot be sold, transferred, exchanged or otherwise conveyed without WCB approval. In the event of default, WCB may require the RSRPD to convey a conservation easement over the Property in favor of the State, or another entity or organization authorized by California law to acquire and hold the conservation easement that is willing and financially capable.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 1,842,126.00
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	\$ 500,000.00
California Natural Resources Agency (EEMP)	<u>\$ 550,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$ 2,892,126.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 1,852,126.00

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development, rehabilitation, restoration, acquisition and protection of habitat that accomplishes one or more of the following objectives: promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, such as oak woodlands, riparian and wetland areas. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)].

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,852,126.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b) for the grant funding and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly received support letters from; Senator Fran Pavley; Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director, Department of Transportation; Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy; Robert O. Huber, Mayor, City of Simi Valley.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any further questions or comments, there were none.

It was moved by Board Member Kevin Hunting that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,852,126.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b) for the grant funding and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned

Passed Unanimously.

Hunting – Yes

Finn - Yes

17. Middle Owens Valley Perennial Pepperweed Removal, \$730,000.00
Mono/Inyo County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Inyo and Mono Counties Agricultural Commissioner's Office (CAC), for a cooperative project with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to control invasive perennial pepperweed on a total of 14± acres, thereby protecting native habitat on 10,000± acres on publicly owned land managed by LADWP and CDFW, located approximately 2 miles northeast to 4.5 miles southwest of Bishop, in Inyo and Mono Counties.

Ms. Elizabeth Hubert presented this project.

LOCATION

The Owens Valley is located in Eastern California in Mono and Inyo Counties, and occupies the western terminus of the Great Basin Geologic Province. The valley is characterized as high desert, thus vegetation is controlled largely by the arid and semiarid conditions of the region, salinity of soil in many locations, and the presence of a shallow water table. Common vegetation communities of the valley include alkaline meadow, alkaline scrub, and where water is available, desert riparian and wetland communities.

This area was used historically for Native American encampments and food foraging, and later for providing livestock forage for ranching operations. Currently, this area is used as a working landscape, providing areas of both managed range for ranching operations and recreational lands. Recreationalists use the area for birdwatching, photography, fishing, hunting, kayaking, hiking, and many other outdoor activities.

The Owens River is a perennial watercourse that traverses through the Owens Valley with many smaller tributary streams that discharge into it, all within the project area. The project area includes mostly undisturbed riverine and riparian environments including alkali wetlands and meadows, willow riparian forest, and saltbush scrub, which host important wildlife habitat.

The majority of the project is on land owned by LADWP along the Owens River. Several smaller infestations are also located on the 188 acre CDFW Fish Slough Ecological Reserve. The project area was defined specifically because it contains the most upstream populations of pepperweed found along the Owens River. The project area provides significant ecological and socioeconomic benefits, which include: wildlife habitat, native plant species habitat, grazing production, and outdoor recreation and tourism.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Perennial pepperweed is an aggressive invader of brackish to alkaline wetlands and riparian areas throughout much of California, including the middle Owens Valley near Bishop. Both the California Department of Food and Agriculture and California Invasive Plant Council list pepperweed as a noxious weed of great ecological concern. Within the last fifteen years, perennial pepperweed populations in California have expanded significantly. It rapidly forms dense homogenous stands which displace native vegetation. Pepperweed reproduces from seed, and each plant has the capacity to disperse thousands of seeds in one growing season. The plant also spreads easily from intact root systems or from pieces of rootstock. These invasive plant populations pose significant threats, and have potential to expand regionally. The infestations in the project area are still of a size that can be reasonably and scientifically expected to be controlled and eradicated within five years.

Eradication and control of the identified 14± acres of pepperweed, through the use of herbicides, will benefit the entire 10,280 acres of land identified as the project area and will prevent the spread of pepperweed to over 100 miles of downstream habitat. The Lower Owens River Project (LORP), which re-watered a large section of riverine habitat that had been dried up by water diversions in the early 1900s, lies within this 100 miles of downstream habitat. The LORP area is largely weed-free native habitat that is in recovery, but susceptible to invasion from non-native plants. Eradication and control of current populations in the project area will allow native vegetation to expand and result in: improved wildlife habitat, increased biodiversity, decreased threat to listed species, decreased streambank erosion, improved water quality, increased flood control capacity, groundwater savings, and the normalization of the local fire regime.

Specific project goals include returning the landscape to pre-pepperweed invasion conditions, resulting in the protection of over 100 miles of downstream habitat along the Owens River, and 7 miles of downstream habitat along Fish Slough. The project area includes specific locations which contain large populations of pepperweed, and will result in reduction of these populations with leading edge containment. This will both isolate infestations for later eradication as well as prevent new satellite infestations from appearing. In total, the project area includes removal of invasive plants along 33 miles of the Owens River and 4 miles of stream tributaries.

WCB PROGRAM

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

The project is consistent with the following priorities outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

- Goal B.1 – Invest in projects and landscape areas that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands:
The project will restore over 14 acres of riparian habitat, and contribute to protection of more than 10,000 acres of habitat.

The project is consistent with ecological goals for protecting biodiversity and habitat for listed species, control of noxious weeds, and enhancement of wildlife habitat in local plans, including the 2013 draft update for the Management Plan for the Fish Slough Area of Critical Environmental Concern (Bureau of Land Management), the Owens Valley Land Management Plan (LADWP), and the State Wildlife Action Plan. Land and grazing management plans also comply with the Conservation Strategy for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The CAC has decades of experience in successful invasive plant management. The CAC operates a noxious weed program and administers the Eastern Sierra Weed Management Area (ESWMA). In 2011, this noxious weed program was responsible for controlling 155± net acres of weeds that covered over 70,990 acres of range and cropland. The weed program is also involved with controlling and preventing weed spread in the newly re-watered Lower Owens River Project area.

CAC will be required to manage invasive plants in the project area once the project is complete for twenty-five years as described in the grant agreement. The CAC, as the administrative entity of the ESWMA, will provide LADWP with expertise in order to meet management goals. Both agencies will monitor, assess, and maintain treatment areas so they do not become re-infested. The management activities will consist of periodic monitoring of the project site, and spot treatment of weeds as necessary. Both agencies have conducted monitoring in the area and will continue monitoring the project site and providing periodic status reports.

After removing weeds from a location, sites will be revisited for at least five years to ensure re-growth does not occur. After five years, the infestation can be declared eradicated. Depending on the long-term viability of the seeds belonging to the target species, site revisits may continue longer than five years. Surveys of nearby areas with potential for colonization will also be examined, including fields irrigated from ditches linked to the infested site or roadsides connected to infested areas.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$730,000.00
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	\$1,500,000.00
Inyo and Mono Counties Agricultural Commissioner	<u>\$147,975.00</u>
TOTAL	\$2,377,975.00

WCB funds will cover project management, materials and equipment, herbicide application, equipment rental and monitoring.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 4, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land and vegetation that does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$730,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly has received support letters from; Devon Mathis, Member of the Assembly; Leslie MacNair, Regional Manager, Inland Deserts Region, CDFW; Alisa Ellsworth, Senior Environmental Scientist, Lands North Supervisor, Inland Deserts Region, CDFW; James G Yannotta, Manager of Aquaduct, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power; and Karen Ferrell-Ingram, Executive Director, Eastern Sierra Land Trust.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Karen Finn asked about pepperwood that in photos appears to be growing near the project, and whether it might encroach on the project area. Ms. Hubert explained that the patch visible in photographs is in the agricultural commissioner's area of responsibility, has already been treated, and should not be a problem. She added that eradicating these upstream populations will protect the rest of the river. Mr. Kevin Hunting asked whether the project would impact LADWP's mitigation obligation in the area. Ms. Hubert said it will not.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any further questions or comments, there were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$730,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting - Yes

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| 18. Salton Sea Species Conservation
Habitat Project, Phase II,
Imperial County | \$10,000,000.00 |
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This item was withdrawn from consideration

19. Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Phase II, \$750,000.00
Imperial County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to restore and enhance 150± acres of wetlands, located on CDFW's Imperial Wildlife Area (IWA) four miles northwest of Niland, in Imperial County.

Mr. Brian Cary presented this project.

LOCATION

Millions of years ago the area surrounding the Salton Sea was part of the Gulf of California. Over time sediment deposited by the Colorado River cut off the area from the Gulf, and a large freshwater lake was formed. Over hundreds of thousands of years, changing climate and realignment of rivers would result in the lake alternately forming, then drying out and reverting to desert. The last time the lake formed was in 1905, when the Colorado River was accidentally diverted into the basin during construction of the All-American Canal, and the Salton Sea as we know it was formed.

The IWA is located on the southeastern shoreline of the Salton Sea north of the city of Niland. The IWA was established in 1954 to provide over 6,000 acres of safe haven for migrating birds that visit the Salton Sea region every winter. Over the years many seasonal and permanent wetland units were developed to provide habitat for wildlife, as well as to provide recreational activities for the public. Over the last six years alone, seven State-funded projects totaling more than \$1.76 million restored 1,700± acres of wetlands on IWA. Five of the projects were funded by CDFW's Duck Stamp Program, and two projects were funded through WCB. Two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grants through the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) totaled nearly \$1.3 million and helped restore an additional 1,800± acres of wetlands. This restoration project will be taking place near the northern boundary of the IWA. The area to be restored is currently sitting idle, but was at one time managed as a fish hatchery. The facility stopped production of fish in the early 1980s due to budget constraints. The site contains heavy clay soils that hold water well, probably one of the reasons for its use for fish production in the past.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Because of the great regional importance of Imperial Valley's wetlands to wildlife and migrating birds of all species, the Sonoran Joint Venture identified the IWA, and surrounding Salton Sea, as a designated focus area in need of habitat protection, enhancement, and expansion. In addition, the WCB, the NAWCA council, and CDFW dedicated a significant amount of funds over the last six plus years for the restoration and enhancement of the area's wetlands, including those at the IWA's Wister Unit. The potential to increase the acreage of high quality

wetland habitat for wildlife while also increasing the availability of usable acreage for the general public will successfully provide benefits to the goals and objectives of all the partners involved.

This project will remove the remaining fish farm infrastructure, develop and construct new levees, establish a swale system within each unit, and install new water control structures to deliver and drain water efficiently for each restored wetland unit. These improvements will maximize management capabilities and increase habitat quality.

This portion of the IWA receives water from the Imperial Irrigation District. The Wister Unit is the terminus for much of the delivered Imperial Valley agricultural water diverted from the Colorado River. The development of the wetland units will allow for efficient usage of water supplies during fall flooding and spring irrigations.

In total, the project will restore an estimated 150 acres of seasonal wetland habitat. This project will help to expand and increase the quality of the existing habitat within the IWA, expand hunting opportunities for the public, and provide a more enjoyable experience for all visitors who come to IWA to appreciate the thousands of birds and other wildlife that call this place home.

WCB PROGRAM

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

The project is consistent with the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

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

Water supply infrastructure and improved ability to move water efficiently will enhance water resources for wildlife, in all years, wet or dry, and earthwork and levee construction will enhance management capabilities and habitat by providing the wetland managers an efficient way to manage water.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project will be on a portion of IWA, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of IWA, pursuant to the Land Management Plan for the wildlife area. The improved water management capabilities associated with this wetland enhancement will allow the CDFW managers to provide improved wetland habitat through more efficient water delivery and drainage, with less staff time.

PROJECT FUNDING

Earth Work (Reservoir Demolition)	\$140,000.00
Debris clean up and disposal	\$38,000.00
Levee/Island/Swale Construction	\$350,000.00
Water control structures/pipe/installation	\$46,000.00
Additional Road Base	\$32,000.00
Signage	\$4,000.00
CWA Project Management	\$110,000.00
Contingency	\$30,000.00
Total Construction Project Cost:	\$750,000.00

Project costs will be for construction, debris clean up and disposal, and project management (survey, engineering, design and construction management). Construction costs are associated with acquisition and installation of water control structures (e.g. valves and screwgates) and earthwork.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands outside the Central Valley and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15304 Class 4, 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 California Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$750,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley; authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly suggested that a brief explanation of where the water comes from might be helpful. At Mr. Cary's request, California Waterfowl Association Biologist Chad Santerre, explained that the majority of the water haul comes from the Imperial Irrigation District. The wildlife area has an annual supply that is allocated to the lands but has not been accessed previously due to the absence of infrastructure that would make the water usable. The water is available. This funding will result in the infrastructure and habitat improvements that will allow for the flooding and subsequent water management that will allow these 150 acres of habitat to exist.

The question arose of whether this project presented any conflict with the Quantification Settlement Agreement of 2003 and it was established that there is no conflict.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any further questions or comments, there were none.

It was moved by Board Member Kevin Hunting that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$132,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f), authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Hunting – Yes

Finn - Yes

20. Procedures for Grant Augmentations

Informational

To report on procedures for evaluating requests for augmentations to existing grants.

Peter Perrine presented on this topic.

Augmentations are defined as an increase in funding for an existing habitat restoration or public access implementation project and without a significant change in scope. Requests for cost increase are handled by WCB staff similarly to requests for completely new projects. The process usually begins with a phone call or email requesting the augmentation. After an initial determination that the request has merit and was beyond the control of the grantee, WCB staff request a written description with a justification, new budget and workplan as necessary. The request is evaluated by WCB and CDFW staff, and other evaluators are contacted as necessary. Alternatives are considered, and a recommendation is presented to WCB management.

Since 2005, WCB has received an unknown number of requests for augmentation and the Board has approved 25 of those. Five were for the development of CDFW Land Management Plans, twelve at the request of the San Joaquin River Conservancy, and eight from a variety of grantees. Approximately half of these occurred during or shortly after the Bond freeze of 2008, which resulted in costly delays for many projects.

Mr. Donnelly reminded the Board that this item was being presented in response to a request from the Board members who, while approving an augmentation request presented at a previous meeting, asked that staff return at a future date and talk about augmentation process. Mr. Donnelly explained that while the augmentation process is, and historically has been, utilized frequently, augmentations get as much if not more scrutiny as the original grant. Additionally, augmentations are almost always a result of something that is beyond the grantee's control.

Mr. Kevin Hunting asked if, when considering a request for an augmentation, there is care taken ensure the original purpose of the grant is still viable and competitive, and Mr. Perrine offered assurance that an evaluation of cost effectiveness and best interest of the State is performed when considering an augmentation request.

Mr. Hunting also asked whether some grantees have a pattern of requesting augmentations. Mr. Perrine said he had looked at that but did not find a pattern with any particular grantee. He found most augmentations were to address issues that were unknown to the grantees and contractors until after the project was underway. Mr. Perrine's review also confirmed that, historically, cost for any given augmentation has not been very large and that in each case, it made more sense to move forward and complete a project than to leave it incomplete and not providing the intended benefit.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any other questions or comments, there were none.

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| 21. Appraisal Review and Disclosure Policy Report
(Postponed) | Informational |
| 22. 2016 Wildlife Conservation Board
Meeting Schedule | Informational |

The Board considered the following 2016 meeting schedule.

February 24, 2016
May 26, 2016
August 30, 2016
November 16, 2016

Mr. John Donnelly explained that meeting dates were vetted with the Board Members and these dates were selected, recognizing that they may change as we move through the year.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve these dates.

Passed Unanimously.

**Finn – Yes
Hunting - Yes**

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any further questions or comments, there were none.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Kevin Hunting adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



John Donnelly
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on November 19, 2015, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$2,652,273,581.63. 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, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, 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. The tax credits are not reflected in the total amount allocated to projects.

A.	Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$18,414,719.06	
B.	Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement		51,594,658.92
	Reservoir Construction or Improvement	5,737,699.00	
	Stream Clearance and Improvement	34,307,885.78	
	Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	542,719.86	
	Marine Habitat	4,570,581.57	
	Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	6,435,772.71	
C.	Fishing Access Projects	65,815,239.67	
	Coastal and Bay	6,236,773.14	
	River and Aqueduct Access	27,827,073.13	
	Lake and Reservoir Access	10,748,540.36	
	Piers	21,002,853.04	
D.	Game Farm Projects	146,894.49	
E.	Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement		2,426,094,278.05
	Wildlife Areas (General)	463,760,116.23	
	Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	41,425,338.81	

Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened,
Endangered or Unique Habitat) 802,402,230.89
Land Conservation Area 15,130,464.18

Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements 31,349,560.50
Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements 98,000,458.66
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants 974,026,108.78
F. Hunting Access Projects 1,365,195.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases) 45,770,136.91
H. Special Project Allocations 1,892,420.35
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects 40,643,618.54
State Owned 2,247,004.81
Grants 38,396,613.73
J. Sales and/or exchanges 536,420.07
K. Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded)
(57,261,234.00)
Statutory plans (0.00)
Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and
riparian habitat (6,289,658.00)
Agricultural lands (13,775,640.07)
Water and water rights (0.00)
State and local parks, open space and
archaeological resources (37,195,935.93)

Total Allocated to Projects \$2,652,273,581.63