



November 16, 2016
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Wildlife Conservation Board

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes

November 16, 2016

10:00 a.m.

California State Capitol, Room 112
Sacramento, California 95814

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Wednesday, November 26, 2016, in Room 112 of the California State Capitol Building in Sacramento, California. John Donnelly, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), performed the roll call. Present were; Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) representing Board Chair Chuck Bonham; Board Member Eric Sklar; Karen Finn, representing Director of the Department of Finance, Michael Cohen; Rachelle Caouette, representing Senator Jean Fuller; and Harry Ermoian, representing Assemblymember Richard Gordon. Director Donnelly observed that a quorum was established Mr. Hunting called the meeting to order at 10:05am. Senator Fran Pavley joined the meeting while in progress.

1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members

Kevin Hunting for Charlton H. Bonham, Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Karen Finn for Michael Cohen, Member
Director, Department of Finance

Eric Sklar, Member
President Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Fran Pavley

Rachelle Caouette Senator Jean Fuller

Harry Ermoian for Assemblymember Richard Gordon

Executive Director

John P. Donnelly

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Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

Peter Perrine	Shawn Fresz,
Elizabeth Hubert	Maggie Massie,
John Walsh	Scott McFarlin
Nancy Templeton	Candice Marg
Colin Mills	Liz Yokoyama
Brian Cary	Celestial Reysner
Don Crocker	Ron Wooden
Laura Featherstone	Jasen Yee
Heidi West	Cynthia Alameda
Mary Delaney	Joshua Morgan
Brian Gibson	Lloyd Warble
Cynthia Alameda	Jessica Schroeder
Jenette Richey	

Others Present:

Bruce Wilcos, Natural Resources Agency
Brian Shelton, CDFW
Stephen Slade, Land Trust of Santa Cruz
Terry Palmisano, CDFW
Wendy Worthey, Dudek Consulting
Joshua Bush, CDFW
Shawn Kelly, Southern CA Wetlands Recovery Project
Ann Van Leer, Escondido Creek Conservancy
Paul Edelman, MRCA
Chris Hayes, CDFW
Sarah Lozano, Dudek Consulting
Virginia Getz, Ducks Unlimited
Greg Gauthier, Coastal Conservancy
Tim Beals, Sierra County
Mary Beth Wolfe, USFWS
Allan Davis, DWR
Jessica Little, Environmental and Energy Consulting
Dan York, The Wildlands Conservancy
Eric Haney, CDFW
Bob Hill, City of San Luis Obispo
Brendan Moriarty, The Trust for Public Land

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Paul Wisheropp, Dudek Consulting

Reed Addis, Environmental and Energy Consulting

Timm Herdt, Senator Pavley's Office

Jeffrey Shu, CDFW

Christian D. Olsen, Christian D. Olsen, Broker

Dave Sutton, Trust for Public Land

2. Funding Status
Informational

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

(a)	2016-17 WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND, (0447)	
	Budget Act	\$1,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,000,000.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,000,000.00
(b)	2016-17 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>59,717.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$20,603,283.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	125,611.00
	Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$20,477,672.00
(c)	2015-16 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>7,313,549.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$13,349,451.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-705,389.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,572,611.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$9,071,451.00
(d)	2014-15 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>16,380,079.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,282,921.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-626,810.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,656,111.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(e)	2013-14 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,841,982.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$821,018.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-40,190.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-780,828.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00

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(f)	2012-13 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-5,131,696.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$15,531,304.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$15,531,304.00
(g)	2011-12 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-15,733,270.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,929,730.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-2,107,504.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$2,822,226.00
(h)	2010-11 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,427,822.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,240,178.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-1,240,178.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(i)	2009-10 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2013-14 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,500,023.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$167,977.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-7,000.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-30,729.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$130,248.00
(j)	2008-09 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2012-13 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,653,891.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$14,109.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-8,632.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$5,477.00

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(k)	2007-08 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2011-12 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act	\$20,674,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,314,337.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$359,663.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$359,663.00
(l)	2006-07 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2013-14 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-19,839,667.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$859,333.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total June Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$859,333.00
(m)	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>-13,740,324.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,483,676.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,439,801.00
	Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$43,875.00
(n)	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>-31,262,119.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,837,881.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,750,000.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$87,881.00

(o)	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 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$192,981.00
(p)	2003-04 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND, (6029) BUDGET ACT 2016 (NEW APPROPRAITION OF REVERTED FUND EY 2006)	
	(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$1,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-25,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,475,000.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-1,475,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(q)	2001-02 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND, (6029) CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED (SECTION 5096.650)	
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-256,773,818.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$16,226,182.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-465,100.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,681,600.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$12,079,482.00
(r)	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>-23,754,443.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$8,745,557.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-8,745,557.00
	Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00

(s)	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>-689,214,975.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$52,197,025.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-6,778,443.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-39,055,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$6,363,582.00
(t)	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>-1,162,280.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,217,720.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-2,217,720.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(u)	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 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,160,340.00

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(v)	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 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$5,175,000.00
(w)	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 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$9,975,000.00
(x)	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>-6,931,082.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,068,918.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-3,068,918.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(y)	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
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-5,099,012.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,400,988.00
	November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	<u>-437,000.00</u>
	Projected Unallocated Balance	\$2,963,988.00

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(z) 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>-12,697,456.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$2,802,544.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$2,802,544.00
(aa) 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>-13,308,128.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$11,691,872.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-425,614.00
Total Project Development	<u>-11,266,258.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(ab) 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>-23,468,024.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$1,531,976.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,531,976.00
Total Project Development	<u>0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(ac) 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>-143,075,880.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$21,624,120.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-21,325,000.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$299,120.00

(ad) 2006-07 SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006, (6051)	
Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	\$123,525,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-98,997,512.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$24,527,488.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,735,199.00
Total Project Development	<u>-11,695,000.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$10,097,289.00
(ae) 2016-17 WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND OF 2014, (6083)	
Budget Act (Section 79735(b)(2))	\$38,400,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-15,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$38,385,000.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$38,385,000.00
(af) 2016-17 WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND OF 2014, (6083)	
Budget Act (Section 79731(g))	\$3,500,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-10,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$3,490,000.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$3,490,000.00
(ag) 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>-20,171,278.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$18,228,722.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$18,228,722.00

(ah) 2015-16 WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND OF 2014, (6083)	
Budget Act (Section 79731(g))	\$2,800,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,435,979.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$1,364,021.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	<u>-0.00</u>
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,364,021.00

Recap Of Fund Balances

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$1,000,000.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$1,000,000.00

Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k) and (l)	\$62,158,967.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,505,000.00
Total Project Development	-11,396,593.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$49,257,374.00

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (m) and (n)	\$6,321,556.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-6,189,801.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$131,755.00

California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (o), (p) and (q)	\$17,894,163.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-465,100.00
Total Project Development	-5,156,600.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$12,272,463.00

Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (r) and (s)	\$60,942,582.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-15,524.00
Total Project Development	-39,055,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$6,363,582.00

Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (t), (u), (v), (w) (x), (y), (z), (aa), (ab), (ac), and (ad)	\$87,175,966.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,692,789.00
Total Project Development	-50,009,896.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$32,473,281.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (ae), (af) (ag) and (ah)	\$61,467,743.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$61,467,743.00
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$296,960,977.00
November 2016 Board Meeting Allocation	-28,376,690.00
Total Project Development	-105,618,089.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$162,966,198.00

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	\$8,662,500.00

Mr. Donnelly explained that Item 2 is an informational item and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 – 14)

Mr. Donnelly moved directly to the consent calendar, Items 4-14. Mr. Hunting asked if there were questions or comments from the Board or the audience. Mr. Donnelly indicated he had a speaker card from Mr. Bob Hill, City of San Luis Obispo. Mr. Hill voiced his support for the Irish Hills project and thanked Mr. Donnelly and members of his staff, John Walsh and Jasen Yee.

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

It was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve Consent Calendar Items *4 -*14 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn - Yes

Sklar – Yes

Hunting - Yes

***4. Approval of Minutes**

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

RECOVERIES BY FUND			Amount
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund			\$0
Habitat Conservation Fund			583,984.07
Wildlife Restoration Fund			0
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			4,073,600.53
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$7,660.00
RECOVERIES BY PROJECT			
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Gray Lodge Wetland Enhancement and Pump Installation, Butte County	\$494,884	-494,884	0
Total Recoveries to Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund			\$0.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Epperson Place Ranch Conservation Easement, Colusa County	\$407,000.00	-403,240.00	3,760.00
Gray Lodge Wetland Enhancement and Pump Installation, Butte County	543,116.00	-543,116.00	0
Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area, Expansion 5, San Diego County	390,551.00	-377,804.00	12,747.00
Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area, Expansion 6, San Diego County	282,720.00	-269,908.53	12,811.47
Keegan Ranch Conservation Easement, Colusa County	332,500.00	-328,740.00	3,760.00
Live Oak Canyon and Expansion I, San Bernardino County	1,067,500.00	-1,056,831.88	10,668.12
Los Banos Wildlife Area, Island Wetland Enhancement, Merced County	859,000.00	-846,043.07	12,956.93
Puma Canyon, Expansion 7 (Westfall), San Bernardino County	105,000.00	-102,160.00	2,840.00

Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, La BARRANCA Unit Riparian Restoration, Tehama County	579,000.00	-456,677.92	122,322.08
Southern Sierra Nevada Mountains, Cummings, Kern County	210,000.00	-3,640.00	206,360.00
Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve, Expansion 6, San Diego County	25,530.00	-20,787.53	4,742.47
Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area, Expansion 7, Butte County	2,640,000.00	2,448,984.00	191,016.00
Willow Creek Ranch Water Distribution Improvements, Glenn/Colusa County	657,000.00	-657,000.00	0
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			\$583,984.07
Wildlife Restoration Fund	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Lake Tahoe Fishing Access Boat Ramp, Placer County	\$681,000.00	-681,000.00	0
Total Recoveries to Wildlife Restoration Fund			\$0.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality And Supply, Flood Control, River And Coastal Protection Fund Of 2006	Allocated	Expended	Balance
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Hanson Hills), Contra Costa County	\$10,000.00	-4,225.00	5,775.00
Mill Creek Forest Restoration, Del Norte County	550,000.00	-531,146.16	18,853.84
Mt. Shasta Headwaters Forest, Hancock Phase I (Town Block), Siskiyou/Shasta County	9,090,000.00	9,083,895.00	6,105.00
Placer County Oest Ranch Oak Woodlands Conservation Easement, Expansion 1, Placer County	495,000.00	-488,380.00	6,620.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch (Quarry Site), Fresno County	4,042,000.00	-11,525.00	4,030,475.00
Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory Facility Improvements, Mono County	1,412,000.00	1,411,8 08.31	191.69
Silver Spur Ranch, Lake County	440,000.00	-434,420.00	5,580.00
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality And Supply, Flood Control, River And Coastal Protection Fund Of 2006			\$4,073,600.53

Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	Allocated	Expended	Balance
San Joaquin River - Grayson Property Acquisition Project, Stanislaus County	\$2,760,000.00	2,752,340.00	7,660.00
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$7,660.00

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Recovery of Funds. Recovery totals include; \$583,984.07 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; \$0 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund; \$0 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, \$4,073,600.53 to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, and \$7,660.00 to the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014.

**Passed Unanimously.
 Finn - Yes
 Sklar – Yes
 Hunting - Yes**

***6. State Route 36, Buck Mountain Mitigation
Humboldt County
\$0**

This proposal is to consider authorizing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to accept 155± acres of land to satisfy a requirement of a federal permit issued to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for construction of its State Route 36 Road Improvement project undertaken in 2013.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The Burke/Robey Peatland (Property) is in the Van Duzen watershed in the Larabee Valley in Humboldt County. The Property consists of a 155± acre parcel located 12.5 miles east of the town of Bridgeville. The Property is approximately 6.8 miles west of the Trinity County border. The Property is accessed off of State Route 36 and McClellan Mountain Road, a county maintained road. McClellan Mountain Road passes through the center of the southern 40-acres of the Property.

Traditionally, land use on and around McClellan Mountain was primarily forestry and ranching with a rural residential component. Substantial parcelization has occurred over the years; exurban development fueled by marijuana cultivation has transformed and fragmented the landscape and changed the uses of the land. Parcel sizes on McClellan Mountain tend to be 160 acres or larger, with 40-acre minimums. Conversely, nearby parcels along State Route 36, such as those in Larabee Valley, tend to have smaller parcels sizes, greater density, and substantial conversion/development.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2015, the Robey family contacted CDFW's Coastal Conservation Planning Group in the Eureka Field Office and expressed interest in selling the Property on McClellan Mountain, which contained a fen, known to CDFW as the Burke/Robey Peatland. The Property had been owned dually by the Burke and Robey families since the 1930's. The Robey's desire was to see the property and its intrinsic values protected in perpetuity.

CDFW in turn presented the Burke/Robey Peatland conservation initiative to other State agencies known to have mitigation needs within the watershed. A partnership for acquisition resulted from the aligning of CDFW needs with FHWA's upcoming project. The Central Federal Lands Highway Division (CFLHD) of the FHWA agreed to fund the acquisition of the Property for preservation as compensatory mitigation for the impacts to California and federal waters associated with the proposed State Route 36 project.

The sole reason for the acquisition of the Property is to conserve the central 5.12-acre fen and its associated wetlands and streams. Based on a Hierarchical list of Natural Communities with Holland Types (2010), CDFW considers the Burke/Robey fen a G2 S1.2 Sensitive Natural Community. The purpose of vegetation classification is to assist in determining the level of rarity or imperilment of vegetation types. A G2 (G=Global) classification is defined as 6-20 viable occurrences worldwide; S1 (S=State) is fewer than 6 viable occurrences Statewide, and/or up to 518 hectares. The additional threat rank of 0.2 means the occurrences are Threatened. For alliances with State ranks of S1-S3, all associations are also considered to be highly imperiled. The 5.2-acre fen functions as a cold water reservoir and is a tributary to the Van Duzen River, which is impaired for temperature and sediment.

Rare species documented on the Property include: northern red-legged frog (*Rana aurora*), foothill yellow-legged frog (*R. boylei*), southern torrent salamander (*Rhyacotriton variegatus*), and northern western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*). The northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) and pacific fisher (*Pekania pennant*) may occur on the Property based on available habitat.

Simply protecting this property from marijuana cultivation-related fragmenting and water diversion will keep it in a natural state where species will be able to find refuge without additional anthropogenic stressors. Species like the southern torrent salamander are declining across their range from widespread water drafting and dewatering of headwater streams. The Property has abundant surface waters that will be protected and preserved by CDFW.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acceptance of the Property is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*). Under Fish and Game Code section 1348, the WCB may authorize acquisition of real property by CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

This project requires no allocation of funding and is leveraging the management and maintenance of the Property with mitigation funds provided by the CFLHD.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

After CFLHD completes restoration activities and monitoring associated with their compensatory mitigation obligations, CDFW will assume management of the property. CFLHD is providing an endowment to CDFW for management.

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 WCB approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***7. Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area Land Exchange
Sierra County
\$7,000**

This proposal was to consider the exchange of 4.5± acres owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for 9± acres owned by Sierra County (County) to serve as an expansion to CDFW's Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area (SCWA).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject exchange properties (Properties) are located along the southern edge of the Sierra Valley adjacent to the Sierra Brooks Subdivision in Sierra County. The CDFW owned properties (Exchange Properties) are located in the SCWA. The County owned property (Acquisition Property) is located adjacent to the SCWA.

The main purpose for establishment of the 1,400-acre SCWA was to protect critical winter range habitat and essential migratory corridors of the Loyalton-Truckee Deer Herd. The area within SCWA consists of a variety of habitats typical of the east side of the Sierra. The sagebrush-bitterbrush habitat is critical for the migratory deer. Limited stands of yellow pine, mountain mahogany and juniper provide additional habitat for the resident deer. Wet and dry meadows are found along Bear Valley Creek. Riparian habitat consisting of alders, willows and aspen provide cover for wildlife along Bear Valley, Smithneck, and Badenaugh Creeks.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Exchange Properties are non-contiguous and include a 1.00± acre parcel, a 0.50± acre parcel, and a 3± acre road easement. The Acquisition Property consists of 9± acres along Antelope Valley Road adjacent to the SCWA on the west, south, and east sides.

The proposed land exchange was requested by the County to increase its access to municipal water for the buildout of the Sierra Brooks Subdivision (SBS), a planned development permitted for a maximum of 377 homes. SBS currently has 200 homes constructed and is planning to expand by five homes per year until the maximum number of homes is reached. The County requested an exchange of properties with State to accommodate the municipal water needs of SBS.

The Exchange Properties will benefit and expand the County's existing water system in order to correct deficiencies in supply, storage, pumping, and distribution and will allow the continued infill of the remaining undeveloped subdivision parcels. If the County takes ownership of the Exchange Properties, it will be able to construct a well/pump infrastructure to pump groundwater to a municipal water tank located on adjacent property and utilize a utility easement area for access, pipeline extensions, and maintenance.

CDFW is agreeable to the land swap for several reasons. The Acquisition Property will consist of a riparian parcel that is larger and more biologically valuable in terms of habitat type and diversity of wildlife species than the Exchange Properties. In addition, the Acquisition Property will increase the contiguous border with the Badenaugh Canyon Unit of the SCWA, which will make management of the area more uniform.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed exchange 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 Code 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 the acquisition of properties. Under Fish and Game Code section 1348(c)(2), the WCB may authorize the exchange of real property or rights in real property held under the jurisdiction of CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to 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:

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 Acquisition Property provides a high level of riparian habitat value that is larger and more biologically valuable.
- It is proposed to be acquired pursuant to a Land Conversion Evaluation submitted by CDFW.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will manage the Acquisition Property in conjunction with the existing SCWA. Public access will be available consistent with the existing public access at SCWA.

TERMS

The Acquisition Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$52,000. The Exchange Properties have been appraised as having a fair market value of \$40,800. The appraisal covering the Properties has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, exchange documents, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to the exchange.

PROJECT FUNDING

The Proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$0
Total Purchase Price	0
Other Project Related Admin Costs	7,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$7,000</i>

It is estimated that an allocation of \$7,000 will be needed to cover upfront project related administrative costs by WCB, including the DGS appraisal review. These expenses will be reimbursed by the County and the amount will be deposited back into the fund from which it was paid.

The County will also bear the cost of all environmental assessments, appraisal report, survey, escrow and title insurance costs related to the exchange.

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, including native oak woodlands, to protect deer and mountain lions. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (a)]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

As Lead Agency, Sierra County filed a Notice of Determination on June 18, 2013, and prepared a Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the Negative Declaration and prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$7,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to accept reimbursement of internal project-related expenses by the County; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$7,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to accept reimbursement of internal project-related expenses by the County; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***8 Sutter Bypass Access Easements**

Sutter County

\$0

This proposal was to consider authorizing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to acquire and grant easements to formalize access to and over property owned by CDFW, as well as quitclaim any interest CDFW may have in a bridge spanning a portion of the Sacramento Slough that runs through the property.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The CDFW property (State Property) is located east of the terminus of Karnak Road where it meets the levee at the Sacramento Slough, four miles southeast of the town of Knights Landing. The State Property is an approximately 1,300 acre strip of land stretching over a distance of approximately 25 miles. It includes portions of the south levee and varying widths of land commencing at the Tisdale Weir east to its junction with the Sutter Bypass, then south along the west levee to the point where the Bypass rejoins the Sacramento River. CDFW's +/-1,483 acre Fremont Weir Wildlife Area is located south of the State Property. To the north is CDFW's Sutter Bypass Wildlife Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CDFW acquired the State Property by gift from the Sutter Basin Corporation in 1976. No assessor's parcel numbers are currently associated with the State Property.

Generations Farmland, LLC (Generations) owns the properties on the east and west sides of the State Property. The Generations parcel to the west lies between the State Property and Karnak Road. Generations uses an unpaved road on the State Property and an existing pillar bridge over the Sacramento Slough (Bridge) to access their property to the east, which is otherwise landlocked. The Generations parcel to the east is 423± acres of agricultural land that is farmed to rice.

This proposal would authorize CDFW to grant a 25-foot wide access easement to Generations for a 0.49± acre portion of unpaved road on the west side of the Sacramento Slough as well as a 0.06± acre portion of unpaved road on the east side of the Sacramento Slough, totaling .55± acres (Roadway). It would also authorize CDFW to accept a 25-foot wide access easement from Generations for a 0.013± acre portion of gravel road between the State Property and Karnak Road, along with an access easement over the Bridge.

This proposal would further authorize CDFW to quitclaim any and all rights it may have in the Bridge to Generations. Generations would accept the Bridge in its existing condition, along with full responsibility for all aspects of the Bridge, and grant an access easement over the Bridge to CDFW.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant and acceptance of access easements and quitclaim is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*). Under Fish and Game Code section 1348, WCB may authorize CDFW to acquire and transfer property and rights in real property, including easements.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

There should not be any new or additional cost to CDFW as a result of this transaction. Generations will be responsible to maintain the Bridge in good repair and at their sole cost and expense in compliance with applicable laws, as well as for all costs and expenses related to the repair, maintenance, or improvement of the Roadway that Generations may undertake.

TERMS

The easements have been appraised as having a fair market value of \$175 for the access easement to be granted by Generations and \$295 for the access easements to be granted by the State. As part of the easement transaction, Generations will assume full responsibility for the Bridge and accept a quitclaim of any rights CDFW may have in or to it. While CDFW has never operated or used the Bridge nor claimed any interest in it, this transaction will relieve CDFW of any potential obligations associated with the Bridge.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$0
Total Purchase Price	0
Other Project Related Admin Costs	0
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$0</i>

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 15301, Class 1, as the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing use; 15305, Class 5, minor alterations in land use limitations that do not result in any changes in land use or density; 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, including preserving access to public lands and waters; and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***9 American Canyon
Napa County
\$0**

This proposal was to consider authorizing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to accept 307± acres of land from the Napa Valley Unified School District (NVUSD) to satisfy a requirement of a federal permit issued to the NVUSD for the construction of the American Canyon High School and Middle School.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in the City of American Canyon (City) approximately 35 miles northeast of San Francisco in Napa County. The Property is bounded geographically by the Napa River to the west, the foothills of the Sulfur Springs Mountains to the east, Vallejo and Solano County to the south and vineyards to the north. American Canyon Creek, a tributary of the Napa River, runs through the City. The southern boundary of the Property borders American Canyon Drive and is also within close proximity of three major thoroughfares; I-80 to the west, CA-29 to the east and CA-12 to the north.

This regional area consists of a topography ideal for development. Over the last ten years, the Property's surrounding area has been rapidly transitioning from agricultural to residential use. The western boundary of the Property abuts the American Canyon High School that was established in 2010 due to this increasing residential growth. Adjoining the northern boundary of the Property is the 640-acre Newell Open Space Preserve (Preserve) owned by the City. The 1,039-acre Lynch Canyon, owned by the Solano Land Trust, is adjacent to the Preserve. To the west of the Property is a proposed 67-acre open space called the Canyon Estates Open Space Preserve. Nearby Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)-funded projects include the Sky Valley-Cordelia Hills Open Space acquisition, located approximately three miles to the southeast, and the Napa-Sonoma Marsh Wildlife Area acquisition, located approximately 2.3 miles to the west.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property was acquired by the NVUSD in January 2007 to fulfill mitigation requirements for impacts to the California red-legged frog (CRLF), a federally listed threatened species, and impacts to jurisdictional waters of the United States and State resulting from the construction of the American Canyon High School and Middle School. The CDFW proposes to accept this Property from NVUSD in fee title and establish it as the American Canyon Ecological Reserve.

The Property is an undeveloped irregular shaped parcel with topography of level to gently rolling hills that supports a habitat of annual grassland and serpentine rock outcrops. The property contains a large network of springs, seeps and drainages for this mostly dry regional landscape. Perennial seeps originate in the northeastern portion, draining into a series of intermittent drainages, and eventually into American Canyon Creek, which is located just southwest of the Property. Isolated wetlands and sag ponds are scattered throughout the Property. American Canyon Creek eventually empties into the Napa River approximately three miles to the west of the Property. A wetland mitigation pond on the southern end of the Property has been constructed to mitigate for the impacts of the school projects to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdictional waters.

Research surveys have determined that the CRLF are mostly restricted to the eastern portion of the Property, in a tributary to American Canyon Creek and in perennial seeps and spring boxes located on the northeast portion of the Property. The abundant grassland habitat also provides food and cover for a variety of other wildlife species. The grasses, thistles, and some forbs provide seeds for passerine birds such as the savannah sparrow, golden-crowned sparrow, mourning dove and American goldfinch and rodents such as deer mouse, Botta's pocket gopher, and California ground squirrel. Western burrowing owls have been observed using California ground squirrel burrows in the northeastern quarter of the Property. There is also potential habitat for the Callippe silverspot butterfly (CSB), a federally designated endangered species.

The acceptance of the Property by CDFW will create 1,988± acres of contiguous protected habitat, and provide protection of wildlife migration corridors for movement across southern Napa and northern Solano counties. The elevation of the site is dramatic and will also allow for anticipated habitat migration in face of climate change.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acceptance of Property is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*). Under Fish and Game Code section 1348, the WCB may authorize acquisition of real property or rights in real property by the CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP).

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will manage the Property and intends to ask the Fish and Game Commission to formally designate it as a CDFW ecological reserve. The NVUSD has established a management endowment in the amount of \$1,430,460 to support the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the Property by CDFW. Future CDFW management tasks include CRLF and CSB surveys, bullfrog control and installation of fences and gates. Docent-led field trips and scientific studies may be allowed, but only as approved by CDFW in advance of any access onto the Property. The Property will remain closed to non-docent led public use.

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 WCB approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***10 Corte Madera Tidal Marsh Restoration**
Marin County
\$260,000

This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

***11. Irish Hills, Waddell Ranch
San Luis Obispo County
\$505,000**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of San Luis Obispo (City) for a cooperative project with the California Natural Resources Agency to acquire in fee 154± acres of land for the protection of habitat consisting of oak woodlands, grasslands, plants and chaparral that supports a variety of wildlife including mountain lion and deer and to increase protection of regional wildlife habitat corridors and linkages.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as Waddell Ranch, is located in San Luis Obispo County (County) which is centered within the California region known as the Central Coast, midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The County encompasses 3,616 square miles with a geography that varies from sea level along the coastline to approximately 5,109 feet above sea level inland. The growth of the County is steady and primarily based upon the relocation of people from the Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, and Southern California.

The Property is situated on the southwestern fringe of the San Luis Obispo city limits, approximately 1.5 miles west of U.S. Highway 101 and 4 miles north of the coastline community of Avila Beach in an area known as the Irish Hills. The Irish Hills are a major coastal open space which occupy over 120 square miles and extend from the City and State Route 101 to the Pacific Ocean. Primary access to the Property is provided by a graded dirt road off of Perfumo Canyon Road which enters the northern portion of the Property. The headwaters of Froom Creek, a tributary of San Luis Obispo Creek, bisect the northern section of the Property flowing east to west. The 720± acre, City-owned, Irish Hills Natural Reserve (IHNR) abuts the whole eastern boundary of the Property while a portion of the Property's southern boundary adjoins 78± acres of public land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The IHNR provides the public with over 8 miles of managed trails for hiking and biking recreation. The remaining surrounding acreages are privately owned agricultural and ranchland properties.

The Property is identified as a priority for protection in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Irish Hills Serpentine Woodlands Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP has identified 2,000± acres immediately west of the City that contains a diverse wildlife population and unique habitat that has adapted to the rich serpentine based soils. In 2001, the WCB funded the purchase of two properties, identified as the Foster and Johnson Ranches which are owned and managed by the City as part of the IHNR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is triangular in shape and is comprised of three legal parcels with a Rural Lands (RL) zoning designation. Within the Irish Hills area, the RL zoning allows for two single family dwellings with accessory structures per legal parcel. This Property contains onsite older structures that are no longer useful and contribute no value due to their poor condition. These include a utility room, mobile home, bunk building, homestead house and homestead barn. There are no utilities delivered to the site and water is provided by an onsite well, several naturally occurring springs and a year round reservoir.

The topography of the Property ranges from nearly level in the center portion to steeply sloping in the outlying areas. Elevation ranges from 750± feet above sea level along Froom Creek to 1,235± feet at the top of Mine hill located on the Property. The Property is underlain with serpentine rock that sustains a unique habitat vegetation complex of serpentine-adapted grassland, chaparral, and oak woodlands. This habitat supports numerous wildlife species such as mountain lion, deer, fox, and bobcats, as well as plant species endemic to the area such as the San Luis Obispo mariposa lily, San Luis Obispo bog thistle, San Luis Obispo sedge, and San Luis Obispo manzanita. Also, it is expected that the portion of Froom Creek located on the northern end of the Property supports a small local population of the federally endangered fish species, southern steelhead.

The City plans to incorporate the Property as part of the IHNR. The proposed acquisition will increase the protection of the areas wildlife habitat corridors with the adjoining IHNR and BLM lands, connecting nearly 1,000± acres of habitat for wildlife and open space benefits.

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 Code Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program 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 the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

This project supports the following WCB 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 proposed acquisition will increase the protection of the areas wildlife habitat corridors with the adjoining IHNR and BLM lands, connecting nearly 1,000± acres of habitat for wildlife and open space benefits. The Property offers various elevation gradients and will allow for anticipated habitat and wildlife migration in face of climate change.

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

Acquisition of the Property will ensure the protection of a portion of Froom Creek which is expected to support a small local population of the federally endangered, southern steelhead.

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

The Property is identified as a priority for protection in the CDFW Irish Hills Serpentine Woodlands Conceptual Area Protection Plan. The CAPP has identified this Property for its serpentine-adapted grassland, chaparral, and oak woodlands that supports numerous wildlife and plant species.

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

The Property is expected to become part of the IHNR which would allow for potential future hiking and biking recreation.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property is expected to become part of the 720± acre City-owned IHNR, supporting the potential expansion of an existing 8 miles of public recreational trails for hiking and biking recreation. Management operations and maintenance costs will be provided by the operating budgets of the City’s Natural Resources Program and Ranger Service. The anticipated City support for the Property includes staff time for a natural resources manager, City biologist, and eight rangers for patrol services.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,100,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the City 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 proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$500,000
City of San Luis Obispo	100,000
California Natural Resources Agency (EEMP)	500,000
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	5,000
Total Purchase Price	1,100,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$505,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$505,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a) for the grant and to cover project related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$505,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a) for the grant and to cover project related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***12. Pleitito Creek Riparian Restoration**

Kern County

\$142,000

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC) for a cooperative project with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to eradicate invasive perennial pepperweed from Pleitito Creek on Wind Wolves Preserve (Preserve). The Preserve is located 25 miles southwest of the city of Bakersfield in Kern County.

LOCATION

The proposed project is located in Pleitito Creek on the east side of the San Emigdio Canyon within TWC's Preserve property. The Preserve is primarily surrounded by Los Padres National Forest to the south, Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge to the west, Tejon Ranch to the east and agricultural land to the north. Nearby communities include Bakersfield, Mettler, and Taft.

The Preserve is in an ecologically unique region where the Transverse Ranges, Coast Ranges, Sierra Nevada, western Mojave Desert and San Joaquin Valley converge. Due to elevation ranges from 640 to 6,005 feet, the Preserve has an impressive array of landforms and habitats that serve as a critical landscape linkage and wildlife corridor between the Coast Ranges and Sierra Nevada. At 90,000 acres, the Preserve is one of the largest nonprofit preserves in the western United States.

On the San Joaquin Valley floor, the Preserve is a 30-square-mile area of grasslands with remnant stands of saltbush. These grasslands are home to the endangered San Joaquin kit fox and blunt-nosed leopard lizard, as well as one of the largest stands of endangered Bakersfield cactus. The Preserve's main wetland is home to the Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew. Rolling grasslands rise from the valley floor transitioning into California blue oak and valley oak savanna with extensive riparian wetlands. The oak savanna ascends into juniper and pinyon forests transitioning to stands of ponderosa pine and big cone spruce at the highest elevations.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Along 0.67 miles of the Pleitito creek streambed located adjacently east of San Emigdio Canyon on the preserve, a dense 4.9 acre stand of perennial pepperweed has degraded the limited existing habitat in this area. Pepperweed is a highly invasive species that was introduced from southeastern Europe and Asia and is a common problem in floodplains, irrigation structures, pastures, wetlands, riparian areas, roadsides, and residential sites. Both the California Department of Food and Agriculture and California Invasive Plant Council list it as a noxious weed of great ecological concern due to its ability to rapidly form large, dense stands that displace desirable vegetation and wildlife and reduce biodiversity where it is found.

The intrusion of pepperweed into the Pleitito Creek drainage has degraded the existing habitat, outcompeting and displacing native stinging nettle, and isolating nesting tricolored blackbirds (TRBL) to the remaining fragments of suitable habitat.

The TRBL is federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and is currently a candidate species for listing under the California Endangered Species act. Most native wetland habitats that once supported nesting and foraging TRBLs in the Central Valley have been replaced by urbanization and agricultural croplands unsuited to their needs. The Preserve currently has five active TRBL nesting sites throughout the property, often hosting

more than 10,000 nesting pairs, with native stinging nettle used as the primary nesting substrate at all locations. An isolated portion of the Pleitito Creek wetland was occupied by an estimated 1,200 TRBL after fledglings emerged in the spring of 2016 on native stinging nettle, where varying adjacent densities of pepperweed also occur.

To restore Pleitito creek to its native state, this project will involve the removal of the 4.9 acre infestation of perennial pepperweed, followed by replacement plantings of native stinging nettle and additional native plant species found in the area. Pepperweed will be removed by mowing and chemical removal. The replacement native vegetation will be collected from seeds on the Preserve property and broadcasted/hydroseeded on site or propagated in the preserve nursery by staff and volunteers, to be later transplanted to the project site. An existing waterline is directly adjacent to the project location, and can be used as a primary source for filling containers for hand-watering and portable timed irrigation systems to provide light surface watering to ensure optimal establishment of new seedlings and germination of seed. When conditions permit and plants exhibit success, no supplemental water will be used. This will encourage natural plant growth and water conservation.

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 threatened and endangered species habitats.

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 project will provide additional nesting habitat for Tricolored Blackbird, which occupy other portions of the Preserve.
- Over time, the diversity of species selected for restoration will allow for the full range of native plants to successfully adapt during gradually changing climate conditions. Ideally, if dominant habitat components are impacted from climate change, the additional species provided via this project will ensure that the natural shift is towards other native riparian species.
- The habitat provided here will be integrated into the operations of the Preserve, which includes cattle grazing.

Additionally the project will provide species strongholds or refugia by eradicating invasive pepperweed and planting native plants that will encourage TRBL nesting sites.

The project will also improve habitat for threatened or endangered species by creating habitat for the TRBL.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

As with any weed eradication project, follow-up weed removal is required for several years. Hand removal, mowing and spraying of pepperweed re-sprouts will be done on an annual basis for several years as needed by TWC ranger staff and volunteers. Once the native vegetation is established, TWC will continue maintenance of the area, which could include weeding or additional plantings, as necessary or desired.

A biologist will be on site during the initial removal and planting project. Later, biologists will conduct annual monitoring focused on perennial pepperweed re-sprouts, native vegetation success, photo documentation, and bird monitoring.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, TWC does not assure the project improvements are maintained, the Grant Agreement requires the Grantee to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Item	WCB	TWC	NRCS	USFWS	Totals
Permits/Fees	\$2,000	-	-	-	\$2,000
Invasive Species Removal	30,000	17,524	-	10,000	57,524
Revegetation	45,000	26,286	27,798	-	99,084
Monitoring/ Maintenance Costs	40,000	23,365	-	10,000	73,365
Project Management	25,000	-	-	5,000	30,000
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$142,000</i>	<i>\$67,175</i>	<i>\$27,798</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>	<i>\$261,973</i>

Project costs will be for salaries and wages, supplies/equipment, restoration contracts, monitoring, and project management.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), which provides funding for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of habitat to promote the recovery of rare and endangered species, and to provide wildlife corridors, significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, and habitat areas, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the WCB. The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3), Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land and vegetation that does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$142,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40); Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), 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 Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$142,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40); Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), 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.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***13. County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan 2015
(Cheyenne)
San Diego County
\$567,825**

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), as well as to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to EHC, to acquire fee title to 118± acres of land. This is a cooperative project with USFWS and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the protection of core areas of habitat to support threatened and endangered species and to secure key regional wildlife linkages all consistent with the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), a joint Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located approximately 18 miles northeast of downtown San Diego near the City of Santee. The Property is west of State Highway 67. Most of the land surrounding the Property includes 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

The Property is generally located within the San Diego River watershed. The Property is within a rugged and hilly area located at the north side of the Santee city limits. Land to the north and northwest is mostly mountainous and undeveloped.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The San Diego MSCP, a comprehensive long-term habitat conservation plan, 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. The proposed acquisition focuses on land that will greatly enhance the MSCP.

The Property contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including coastal sage scrub habitat for the federally threatened Coastal California gnatcatcher, and habitat for other sensitive and protected species. MSCP target species found or expected on site include the Least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, San Diego thornmint, and the Quino checkerspot butterfly.

The Property is unique, in that the naturally occurring ecological processes necessary to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem are still intact. In addition, conservation of this parcel will improve the linkages among protected public lands.

WCB PROGRAM

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

subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, 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 Property 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.

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 and the Quino checkerspot butterfly, the Property supports habitat for the following six federally listed threatened and/or endangered species: southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, and San Diego thornmint. Linkages and corridors between major core habitat areas will be protected and maintained to allow for range shifts and migration of species to utilize suitable habitat as necessitated by climate change or temporary loss of habitat due to catastrophic fires or drought.

Goal A.3 -Fund projects that support the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans and recovery of listed species. The Property is within the MSCP area and will help meet the goals of the MSCP. Also, 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 USFWS grant has been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

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. Possible future public use opportunities that may be considered for the Property include hiking, photography, and bird watching.

TERMS

The Property was appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,575,000.00. The 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 \$1,575,000.00.

The proposed USFWS subgrant requires a non-federal match. WCB will provide the non-federal match. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to EHC 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, WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB or another approved holder and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board- subgrant of USFWS funds	\$1,022,175
Wildlife Conservation Board non-federal match	552,825
Total Purchase Price	1,575,000
Other Project Related Admin Costs	15,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$567,825</i>

It is estimated that project-related administrative costs will include DGS appraisal review. The grantee will fund all appraisal, escrow and title insurance 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) which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve the project as proposed; allocate \$567,825.00 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) for the grant to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy and to cover project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$1,022,175.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$567,825.00 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) for the grant to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy and to cover project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$1,022,175.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***14. County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan 2015
(Capralis)
San Diego County
\$108,015**

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), as well as to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to EHC, to acquire fee title to 20± acres of land. This is a cooperative project with USFWS and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the protection of core areas of habitat to support threatened and endangered species and to secure key regional wildlife linkages all consistent with the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), a joint Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is generally located within the San Diego River watershed near the City of Santee, approximately 18 miles northeast of downtown San Diego. The Property is within a rugged and hilly area located at the north side of the Santee city limits. Land to the north and northwest is mostly mountainous and undeveloped. The east boundary adjoins a sparsely developed area of Lakeside, an unincorporated San Diego County community.

Most 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 proposed acquisition focuses on land that will greatly enhance the San Diego MSCP, 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, and 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.

The Property contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including coastal sage scrub habitat for the federally threatened Coastal California gnatcatcher, and habitat for other sensitive and protected species. MSCP target species found or expected on site include the Least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, San Diego thornmint, and the Quino checkerspot butterfly.

The Property is unique, in that the naturally occurring ecological processes necessary to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem are still intact. In addition, conservation of this parcel will improve the linkages among protected public lands.

WCB PROGRAM

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

Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, 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 Property 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.

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 and the Quino checkerspot butterfly, the Property supports habitat for the following six federally listed threatened and/or endangered species: southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, San Diego thornmint, San Diego ambrosia, and Encinitas baccharis. Linkages and corridors between major core habitat areas will be protected and maintained to allow for range shifts and migration of species to utilize suitable habitat as necessitated by climate change or temporary loss of habitat due to catastrophic fires or drought.

Goal A.3 -Fund projects that support the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans and recovery of listed species. The Property is within the MSCP area and will help meet the goals of the MSCP. 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 USFWS grant has been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

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. Possible future public use opportunities that may be considered for the Property include hiking, photography, and bird watching.

TERMS

The Property was appraised as having a fair market value of \$265,000.00. The WCB reviewed the appraisal and submitted it to the Department of General (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 \$265,000.00.

The proposed USFWS subgrant requires a non-federal match. WCB will provide the non-federal match. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to EHC 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 WCB or another approved holder and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board- subgrant of USFWS funds	\$171,985
Wildlife Conservation Board non-federal match	93,0150
Total Purchase Price	265,0000
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	15,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$108,015</i>

It is estimated that project-related administrative costs will include DGS appraisal review. The grantee will fund all appraisal, escrow and title insurance 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) which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve the project as proposed; allocate \$108,015.00 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) for the grant to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy and to cover project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$171,985.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$108,015.00 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) for the grant to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy and to cover project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$171,985.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar- Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**15. Heenan Lake Water and Storage Rights, Expansion 4
Alpine County
\$2,209,000**

Mr. Donnelly explained that the microphones at the back table were not working and asked that anyone wishing to speak walk to the front most table so that all comments could be heard. He then introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider authorizing the purchase of 624± acre feet of water and storage rights by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in Heenan Lake to provide for additional protection of the Lahontan cutthroat trout fishery and egg taking operation at this lake.

This project was presented by Brian Gibson.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

Heenan Lake is located in the northeast portion of Alpine County, about seven miles east of Markleeville. State Route (SR) 89 provides the main access to the subject area. SR 89 continues east over Monitor Pass from Heenan Lake and joins SR 395 in Antelope Valley (Mono County), just south of Topaz Lake.

The project area is a combination of steep mountainous terrain with some forest cover, sloping lands with sage brush, juniper cover and fairly level mountain meadow land. Elevations in the vicinity of the lake range from about 7,000 feet to almost 9,000 feet. Heenan Lake occupies about 130 surface acres and is located within the northwest portion of the 1,652± acre Heenan Lake Wildlife Area. The lake has a storage capacity of approximately 2,948 acre feet and was created by an earthfill dam constructed on the lower end of Heenan Creek in 1923. The dam is just south of existing SR 89. During most years, the reservoir can be filled from runoff originating from the Heenan Creek drainage.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The first acquisition of the Heenan Lake property was approved in 1982 when the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) authorized the purchase of 1,652± acres of land, which included the lake bottom, but no water rights. In 1985, the WCB approved funding for fishery facilities (egg-taking operation) to be built on the property. In September 1985, the WCB approved the purchase of the outstanding timber rights on the land. Subsequently, in 1998, the WCB approved the original water and storage rights purchase of 440± acre feet. Since that time, the WCB has approved three additional purchases, bringing the total to 2,324 acre feet of water and storage rights under the CDFW's control. If this current proposal is approved, the State will own 100 percent of the water and storage rights in Heenan Lake.

The CDFW currently uses Heenan Lake for egg-taking purposes in connection with its Lahontan cutthroat trout fishery program. The lake is a high priority for the CDFW as it is the only egg source for this species in the State of California. In past years, CDFW has supplied eggs from this lake to the Lahontan National Fish Hatchery in Nevada and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of the water rights is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the

Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property, rights in real property, water, or water rights on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB acquires water, lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support fish, wildlife, and when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities.

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

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

The Project enhances water resources for the protection of the federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout and simplifies ownership and management of the lake, ensuring minimum streamflow releases to Monitor Creek downstream and enhancing riparian habitat.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Department utilizes the currently owned 2,324 acre- feet water and storage rights in Heenan Lake by maintaining reservoir levels for the protection of Lahontan cutthroat trout brood stock and the fall catch and release fishery.

Acquisition of the 624 acre- feet of the water and storage rights would simplify ownership and management, provide minimum streamflow releases to Monitor Creek downstream, enhance riparian habitat and help assure the future of operations at the egg taking station.

The need for acquisition of this remaining water storage right is identified in the 2007 Land Management Plan for the Heenan Lake Wildlife Area and the Heenan Lake Fishery Management Plan (2008).

TERMS

The water rights have been appraised as having a fair market value of \$2,184,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff, reviewed and approved by an independent appraiser hired by WCB staff, and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the fair market value of \$2,184,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition provide that staff of the WCB review and approve all title documents, 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. Once approved by the Board the transaction will also be reviewed and approved by DGS.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,184,000
Total Purchase Price	2,184,000
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	25,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$2,209,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$25,000 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including appraisal, independent appraisal review, DGS appraisal and transaction review, escrow and title insurance costs.

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 land and water resources to protect regional water quality, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and assist local public agencies in improving regional water supply reliability. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Section 79565]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,209,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Section 79565 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 the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson noted that in the audience were Josh Bush, CDFW, and Jacques Etchegoyhen, Legacy Land and Water.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board or the public. There were none. He then remarked that this is a great project.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,209,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Section 79565 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 the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**16. Montesol Ranch
Lake and Napa Counties
\$3,760,000**

Prior to introducing the project, Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support for the project have been received from; Senator Lois Wolk, Assemblymember Bill Dodd; Bill Schneider of Tuleyome, Deep Home Place; John Woodbury, Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District; Dan Winterson, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation; Doug Parker, Land Trust of Napa County; Catherine Kohler, Lake County Land Trust; and Mary Adelzadeh, Blue Ridge- Berryessa Partnership.

Mr. Donnelly introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to the Land Trust of Napa County (LTNC) for a co-operative project with, State Coastal Conservancy, California Natural Resources Agency, and others to acquire a conservation easement over 7,286± acres of land for the preservation and protection of managed forest lands, including Douglas fir and oak woodlands, and riparian corridors and watersheds that support rare and special status wildlife species and vegetation.

The project was presented by Liz Yokoyama

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property known as Montesol Ranch (Property) is located on the border of Napa and Lake Counties, east of Mt. St. Helena and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park (RLSSP). The majority of the Property is situated in Napa County with a portion of the ownership extending north into southern Lake County. Calistoga is located approximately 3.0 miles southwest of the Property and the community of Middletown is located approximately 4.5 miles to the northeast.

The Property is within the Napa Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA), which extends along most of Napa County, from its northern border with Lake County to the city limits of American Canyon, and from its western border with Sonoma County to Lake Berryessa. Several vineyards of varying acreages are found throughout this area. The AVA is recognized world-wide for its premium grape varieties. According to an independent analysis, approximately 1,600 acres of the Property is “well-suited” to vineyard development.

The Property connects to a complex of surrounding protected lands which includes, properties owned by the Bureau of Land Management, State Lands Commission, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation’s RLSSP, and Land Trust of Napa County preserves. The Property is also situated within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The property contains high concentrations of several threatened and endangered species occurrences (4 priority herpetological species, 24 special status botanical species, including the Rincon Ridge ceanothus and Vine Hill ceanothus, considered seriously threatened in California by the California Native Plant Society). Furthermore, the Property lies within The Nature Conservancy’s - Mt. St. Helena Conservation Area, and in an area designated by the Bay Area Conservation Lands Network as essential to its conservation goals.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed conservation easement (Conservation Easement) covers a majority of the Property and encompasses 38 Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) in Napa County and 7 APNs in Lake County. The APNs in Napa County are situated in an Agricultural Watershed (AW) zoning designation and the parcels in Lake County are either zoned APZ Agriculture Preservation Zone (APZ) or Open Space (O). These designations are predominately dedicated to agriculture. This region is considered essential to the public's general health, safety and welfare because of its agricultural importance, and water resources derived from watersheds and flood plain tributaries (the Property includes the headwaters of Putah Creek and Lake Berryessa, which supplies water to Solano County cities and 70,000 acres of farmland; and approximately 2,500 acres of extensive conifer forests).

The AW designation also permits the construction of a single-family dwelling plus a second unit with conditions for every legal lot. The overall property has the potential to be divided into a maximum of 76 legal parcels.

The irregularly shaped Conservation Easement area is accessible from its frontage on State Route 29. Interior access is through a paved County road (Livermore Road) to a homestead area that extends beyond to Oat Hill Road and to Butts Canyon Road in Lake County through private ranch roads. The Property is improved with a variety of residential and agricultural improvements, most of which are positioned within a 333-acre, circular shaped tract located on the Property's north-central boundary. This developed area is referred to as the "Heartland Area" and also includes several older walnut orchards. The Conservation Easement designates eight building envelopes around existing developed areas, including the Heartland Area, totaling 480 acres that will allow limited future rural residential and vineyard development.

The balance of the Conservation Easement area will be dedicated to the conservation and preservation of its natural resources. The Conservation Easement includes a "Forest Zone," which will be used primarily as a sustainable working forest, utilizing the forest management goals of a Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan (NITMP). The NITMP can be updated periodically to adjust to changing conditions, and must remain in conformance with the purposes of the Conservation Easement. The Forest Zone includes stands of Douglas Fir, ponderosa pine, montane hardwood, blue oak-gray pine, both black and live oaks, valley foothill riparian vegetation, and annual/perennial grasslands. Approximately 1,554± acres of the Conservation Easement will be kept in its relatively natural state in an area referred to as the "Natural Zone." The Natural Zone will conserve and protect the watershed areas and riparian habitat. Both zones safeguard existing wildlife habitat resources and a known wildlife corridor that runs through the Property. This wildlife corridor links the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area and Coast Range mountains to one another. The Conservation Easement will protect this wildlife habitat thereby protecting sensitive wildlife species. Furthermore, the provisions contained in the Conservation Easement will minimize the adverse impacts to water quality and riparian habitat brought on by increased sedimentation, diversion for residential development use, and vineyard irrigation.

The Conservation Easement encompasses the upper watersheds of Putah Creek and Pope Creek, the major tributaries to Lake Berryessa. There are more than 60 known springs, fed by an average annual rainfall of approximately 60 inches, within the Conservation Easement. The streams in the Natural Zone are situated in a largely undisturbed semi-wilderness area. The project will enhance stream flows by permanently extinguishing the threat of land use conversion to subdivision, development, or vineyard conversion, which would otherwise require diverting the natural water resources for domestic or irrigational use.

The proposed Conservation Easement will extinguish all future subdivision, development and vineyard conversion rights across the Property, with the exception of the reservation of vineyard rights confined to approximately 100 acres located in the Heartland Area. The balance of Conservation Easement area will be dedicated to the conservation and preservation of existing natural resources by means of managed working forest practices within the Conservation Easement guidelines and an approved forest management plan; the protection and enhancement of water flow of natural water and riparian habitat resources; and maintenance of the Property's scenic and open space qualities, which will in all, protect existing wildlife corridors and habitat for threatened and sensitive wildlife species that include the northern spotted owl, Coast Range newt, Foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle, steelhead, American badger, mountain lion, and loggerhead shrike.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB'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, 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 the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

Consistent with WCB Strategic Plan Goal A-1, the project conserves natural forest 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. The project is situated in CDFW's Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area CAPP, and as such is consistent with WCB Strategic Plan Goal A-4. Plan Goal A-4 is representative of CDFW's investment in priority conservation projects like Montesol Ranch, which was evaluated and recommended under its land acquisition evaluation process. CDFW supports the acquisition of conservation easements that protect important species and habitats.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The proposed Conservation Easement will be held and managed by LTNC, consistent with the terms of the Conservation Easement and WCB Grant Agreement. LTNC will monitor the Property annually, and enforce the terms of the Conservation Easement with the use of a Baseline Conditions Report and Monitoring Protocol approved by WCB.

The landowner will make a donation to LTNC to create a stewardship endowment for LTNC to ensure that it will have the financial capability of monitoring the Conservation Easement and enforcing the terms of the Conservation Easement in perpetuity.

TERMS

The Conservation Easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$11,665,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by both WCB staff and the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that 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 transaction. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance or require the grantee to transfer the conservation easement to WCB or another qualifying entity approved by WCB.

PROJECT FUNDING

The Proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$3,750,000
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	5,000,000
State Coastal Conservancy	1,700,000
California Natural Resources Agency (EEM)	500,000
The Trust for Public Land	250,000
The Land Trust of Napa County	300,000
Total Purchase Price	11,500,000
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$3,760,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 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 sources: (1) 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 such as riparian and wetland areas and; (2) Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Sections 5096.350(a)(3) and 5096.350(a)(5), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for threatened and endangered species and for the protection of habitat or habitat corridors that promote recovery of threatened, endangered species or fully protected species.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,320,199.00 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); and \$1,439,801.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Sections 5096.350(a)(3) and 5096.350(a)(5) 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 the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

At the conclusion of the presentation Ms. Yokoyama reported that Doug Parker, Executive Director of the Land Trust of Napa County, and Brendan Moriarty, The Trust for Public Land, were in the audience.

Mr. Hunting welcomed Senator Fran Pavley who had joined the meeting while Ms. Yokohama was describing the project. Mr. Sklar also greeted her.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the public or the Board.

Mr. Sklar noted that the project was located in the same general area as his home. He voiced concern that he could know someone socially that, unbeknownst to him, is connected to this project and stated that, in abundance of caution, he would recuse himself from the vote.

Ms. Finn asked if the Coastal Conservancy has already approved the project and was informed that the Coastal Conservancy has approved.

Mr. Hunting reported one speaker card, Brendan Moriarty, The Trust for Public Land, thanked the Board for its consideration and work on this project and reported that there is an opportunity to purchase a property near this project site that would be great for public access. He then especially thanked the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation stating that the Foundation's assistance was very significant in getting this project done.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were further questions or comments. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,320,199.00 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); and \$1,439,801.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Sections 5096.350(a)(3) and 5096.350(a)(5) 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 the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

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Passed 2-0.

Sklar - Recused

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**17. Marywood- Hwy 17 Wildlife Crossing
Santa Cruz County
\$415,000**

Prior to introducing the project, Mr. Donnelly pointed out that the Agenda contained typo on page 47 and stated that the correct total purchase price for this property is \$1,200,000 (this document contains the corrected amount).

Director Donnelly introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the California Natural Resources Agency to acquire a conservation easement over 133± acres of land for the protection of important watersheds, including stream and source waters, as well as maintain native terrestrial communities and landscape connectivity.

The project was presented by Candice Marg.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located on the east side of Glenwood Drive, 4 miles northeast of the town of Scotts Valley, and directly west of State Route 17 (Highway). LTSCC has a conservation easement in place on the east side of Highway 17, and is in the process of acquiring a 37-acre property directly to the north. Escrow for the 37-acre property should close concurrent to close of escrow for this project. East of the Property is the Soquel Demonstration Forest owned by Cal Fire and to the southwest of the Property is Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, owned by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Property lies within the Santa Cruz Mountains Redwood Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) which establishes criteria to prioritize privately-owned parcels for potential acquisition and conservation to protect the redwood forests and other wildlife habitat of the Santa Cruz Mountains, safeguard watersheds and restore streams, connect existing protected lands to maintain wildlife corridors, and expand opportunities for wildlife-dependent uses.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregular in shape and consists of a 133± acre parcel with a separate private inholding consisting of 7± acres. The western portion of the Property is relatively flat with a few improvements. On the east side of the Property is a forested steep hillside. The elevation variance on the Property is 800± feet to 1,300± feet above sea level allowing for species migration.

The Property is located in the upper Bean Creek subwatershed of the San Lorenzo River watershed, a 139-square-mile coastal basin on the western slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Bean Creek flows for more than a quarter mile through the western portion of the Property. Federally-endangered coho salmon were observed in Bean Creek in 2005 and conservation of this Property will help the recovery of coho in the San Lorenzo watershed by decreasing the impacts from roads, minimizing sediment, improving water quality, and ensuring adequate flows year round. Bean Creek also provides rearing habitat for federally threatened Central Cost steelhead trout. The Property also supports appropriate habitat for the federally threatened California red-legged frog which was observed in Bean Creek less than 700 feet downstream of the Property.

The Property also contains a mosaic of terrestrial ecosystems representative of the Santa Cruz Mountains including Coastal redwood, oak woodland, chaparral, riparian woodland, and grasslands.

The Property plays a critical role in maintaining habitat connectivity within central Santa Cruz County. An analysis shows the Property lies in a natural corridor path for mountain lion, bobcat, acorn woodpecker, and dusky-footed woodrat. Protection of this Property will allow for a future proposed collaboration project between LTSCC and Caltrans to construct a wildlife crossing to connect protected land on either side of the Highway in an area known as the Laurel Curve which would provide safe passage to the animals from roughly 55,000 vehicles that travel the Highway daily. The analysis shows that the Laurel Curve contains a high density of wildlife crossing and connectivity is essential to maintain viable populations of species with large home ranges, such as the mountain lion, in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB'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. 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 the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through the 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 recommendation to fund.

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.

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 a high priority within the approved Santa Cruz Mountains Redwood CAPP which establishes criteria to prioritize privately-owned parcels to protect the redwood forests and other wildlife habitat of the Santa Cruz mountains, safeguard watersheds and restore streams, connect existing protected lands to maintain wildlife corridors, and expand opportunities for wildlife-dependent uses. In addition, the Property is directly west of the Highway and is adjacent to land already conserved by the LTSCC and a 37-acre property that LTSCC is acquiring concurrently with this project which will further enhance habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The LTSCC operates under the best standards and practices required pursuant to their accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). The standards set forth by the LTA require specific capitalization requirements for management of protected lands. Annually, the LTSCC allocates funding for management of their portfolio of properties. Those funds are derived from a variety of sources including endowment funds, private foundation funding, and individual donations.

The Dominican Sisters of San Jose, current owners of the Marywood Property, will work with LTSCC to develop a long-term management plan for the Property, as well as bring LTSCC in as a partner for habitat improvement projects and implementation of those management actions.

LTSCC will monitor the Property at least once a year to ensure the Conservation Easement terms are being honored. A written report documenting the visit will be prepared and will note any significant changes to the resources or any compliance issues. If necessary, corrective action will be recommended and noted in the report. A copy of the report will be provided to WCB in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement.

TERMS

The Conservation Easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,250,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to LTSCC provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require specific performance by LTSCC of the grant agreement or require LTSCC convey its interest in the Conservation Easement to WCB or, at the election of WCB, another entity or organization authorized by California law to acquire and hold conservation easements and that is willing and financially able to assume all of the obligations and responsibilities of LTSCC.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$400,000
California Natural Resources Agency	600,000
California State Coastal Conservancy	200,000
Total Purchase Price	1,200,000
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	15,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$415,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including 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 and protection of habitat that promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems such as coast redwood, oak woodland, chaparral, riparian woodland and grasslands. [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 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 13525, 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 WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$415,000.00 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) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Marg stated that in the audience were; Stephen Slade, Land Trust of Santa Cruz; Jessica Little, Environmental and Energy Consulting, and Brian Shelton, CDFW.

Mr. Hunting then stated that CDFW has been working with Caltrans for some time on identifying and cataloging wildlife crossings and that this site is certainly a candidate for an under or over crossing to support wildlife connectivity. He stated that conservation efforts here could at some point support that kind of action with Caltrans and CDFW support

Mr. Sklar added that connectivity is a top priority for the Fish and Game Commission and that he too is pleased with that potential of this project.

Stephen Slade, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, thanked the Board and reported that the California Transportation Commission has allocated \$3.2 million for the design and engineering of a tunnel and that the project is moving along quickly.

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

It was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$415,000.00 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) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**18. Central Region State Wildlife Area Habitat Enhancement Project
Merced County
\$993,000**

John Donnelly introduced this project.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited (DU) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to improve water conveyance and enhance habitat on approximately 956 acres of wetlands and associated managed uplands, including 44 acres of riparian habitat, at Los Banos Wildlife Area and North Grasslands Wildlife Area in Merced County.

Shawn Fresz presented this project.

LOCATION

The project will occur on the North Grasslands Wildlife Area (Salt Slough and Gadwall Units) and Los Banos Wildlife Area. The area composing these two Wildlife Areas was historically a matrix of grasslands and seasonal wetlands influenced by drainages from the Coast Range (Mud Slough and Los Banos Creek) and tributaries of the San Joaquin River (Salt Slough).

Largely inhabited by Yokut Indians through the mid- 1800s, in 1841 a Mexican land grant incorporated part of, what is today, the Los Banos Wildlife Area. In 1863 8,000 acres of that land grant were purchased by the Henry Miller and Charles Lux firm. By 1870, the firm gained control of the rest of the land grant as well, and the land became the North Grasslands Wildlife Area. In 1929, the California Fish and Game Commission purchased 3,000 acres to create the Los Banos Wildlife Area (LBWA). LBWA was the first of a series of waterfowl refuges established throughout the state to manage habitat for wintering waterfowl. Up to this purchase the Los Banos Wildlife Area was used for cattle grazing and recreational hunting. LBWA was designated as a wildlife area in 1954 and has since been expanded to 6,200 acres. The North Grasslands Wildlife Area (NGWA) lands were historically grazed for cattle and hunted prior to purchase by the State of California in the early 1990s. Both wildlife areas consist of seasonal wetlands, semi-permanent emergent wetlands, and uplands with a focus on waterfowl habitat management. They are open to the public with a focus on waterfowl hunting.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project components are on existing protected areas. These project components will restore and enhance existing wildlife habitat for both resident and migratory wildlife. The Widell-Ramacciotti marsh on the Gadwall Unit of the NGWA provides corridor habitat connecting the south and north grasslands, and Salt Slough Unit of NGWA connects San Luis NWR to north grasslands and to Los Banos WA. The project will provide improved nesting/brood-rearing, winter, and migration habitat for waterfowl, waterbirds, shorebirds, and neotropical migratory birds. Special-status species that will benefit include bald eagle, peregrine falcon, Swainson's hawk, greater sandhill crane, white-faced ibis, long-billed curlew, yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, tricolored blackbird, and giant garter snake.

The proposed project will improve water conveyance and supply, habitat, and management capabilities at three sites: LBWA and the Gadwall and Salt Slough Units of NGWA. This work will ultimately improve 956 acres of habitat, including enhancing 445 acres of wetlands, 44 acres of riparian habitats, and 467 acres of wetland-associated and managed

uplands. Major project activities will include adding new and replacing existing deteriorated water control structures (e.g., flashboard risers, culverts), cleaning water conveyance ditches, installing new irrigation pumps and motors, installing electrical service to a well site, and re-grading uplands to improve food plots and nesting habitats. Specifically, work will be as follows:

North Grasslands Wildlife Area: Salt Slough

Work will consist of re-grading 168 acres of managed uplands in fields to improve irrigation efficiency. Typical vegetation planted in these fields includes safflower, sorghum, and milo to provide foraging habitat for mourning doves, California quail, and ring-necked pheasants. Herbicide spraying will control noxious perennial pepperweed, yellow star thistle, and poison hemlock which will be followed by planting native creeping wildrye. The project will also replace a dilapidated water conveyance culvert under Wolfsen Road and add an 18" PVC pipeline to improve water irrigations and decrease water losses. Finally, Field 34 will have a cross levee constructed to increase capability of holding deeper water on the low end without reducing the upland footprint.

North Grasslands Wildlife Area: Widell/Ramacciotti Marsh (Gadwall Unit)

An existing domestic well will be rehabilitated and improved to provide >60 gallons per minute water supply to irrigate riparian and upland vegetation along the western border of the site.

Los Banos Wildlife Area

Habitat enhancement work at the LBWA involves removing dilapidated corrugated metal culvert pipe in the "Boundary Drain" and replacing it with reinforced concrete pipe that will provide more efficient water conveyance, durability, and manageability.

The project will benefit local and migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as other wetland dependent species. The Grasslands and Mendota regions, including the LBWA and NGWA have peak waterfowl use of 1,000,000 as well and thousands of shorebirds and other wetland associated wildlife. Shorebird numbers peak in spring at over 100,000. Shorebirds are also common residents and are very numerous in fall. Many of the riparian areas have nesting Swainsons Hawks.

All of the State Wildlife Areas in this proposal contain natural nesting cover for many species of wildlife, and some planted fields for nesting or foraging. In particular, habitat work in this proposal will have significant impacts on managed upland fields on the Salt Slough Unit and riparian and upland habitat on the Widell- Ramacciotti marsh in the Gadwall unit of the NGWA.

WCB PROGRAM

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

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

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

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

- Provide species strongholds or refugia.

The proposed project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint Venture's (CVJV) mission to protect, restore, and enhance 40,000 acres of wetlands and associated habitats, as identified in the CVJV Implementation Plan, within the Tulare Basin of California's Central Valley.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project will be located on portions of the Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of each WA. The improved water management capabilities associated with this project will allow the DFG managers to provide improved habitat through more efficient water delivery and drainage, and less staff time.

PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	CDFW	Ducks Unlimited	Total Cost
Project Management	\$139,429	-	-	\$139,429
Construction	374,654	1,000	-	375,654
Planting	243,352	-	-	243,352
Herbicide	93,334	-	-	93,334
Sign Repair	1,000	-	-	1,000
Contingency (10%)	85,079	-	-	85,079
Grant Administration	56,125	-	-	56,152
Indirect Overhead	-	-	69,666	69,666
<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>\$993,000</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	<i>\$69,666</i>	<i>\$1,063,666</i>

FUNDING SOURCE

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

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt Class 4 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. 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 recommended it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$993,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d); 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. Fresz reported that in the audience were: Virginia Getz and Matt Kaminsky, Ducks Unlimited, and Terry Palmisano, CDFW/

Mr. Hunting asked if there were questions or comments. Ms. Finn asked if the \$1,000 funding from CDFW indicated in the document was a typo. WCB staff responded that the amount is correct.

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

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$993,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d); 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.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**19. Chesebro Meadow
Los Angeles County
\$3,355,000**

Mr. Donnelly introduced the project.

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for a cooperative project with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the County of Los Angeles to acquire 71± acres of land for the protection of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, native grasslands and oak woodland-savannah habitat and to enhance wildlife linkages, watershed protection, and provide potential future wildlife-oriented public use opportunities.

John Walsh presented the project.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as Chesebro Meadows, is located in Los Angeles County within a tributary of the regionally significant Malibu Creek Watershed. On the north and east, the Property abuts open space owned by the MRCA. The southern boundary of the Property is the Caltrans 101 freeway right-of-way. The east boundary is comprised of a dozen long-established horse keeping lots.

Located just north of the 101 freeway at the southern end of the Simi Hills, Chesebro Meadows is one of the last significant unprotected properties in the Liberty Canyon inter-mountain range wildlife corridor leading into the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). The Liberty Canyon connection between the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains is a major component of the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Linkage documented by South Coast Wildlands. The South Coast Wildlands Missing Linkages project has classified this linkage as one of 15 landscape linkages within the ecoregion as irreplaceable and imminently threatened.

The Property is identified as a priority for protection in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Linkage Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP itself encompasses 166,411 acres and was designed based on the habitat and movement requirements of 20 focal species.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property is part of the 60-square-mile Simi Hills core habitat area. The primary vegetation communities are valley and coast live oak savannah, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, annual grassland, and southern willow scrub.

Preservation of Chesebro Meadows is critical for the functionality of the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor. The long term survival of species depends on their ability to move between the Santa Monica Mountains and Los Padres and Angeles National Forests to maintain genetic diversity.

The Property contains a section of Chesebro Creek, featuring a rich mosaic of red and arroyo willow canopy and mugwort understory. In addition, a portion of the Property contains a 22-acre, virtually flat meadow adjacent to rolling hillside land. During exceptionally wet years, the low end of the meadow inundates and forms a large vernal

pool – a rare feature in the Santa Monica Mountains. The south end of the Property contains an isolated small seep supporting cattail marsh.

The Property comprises the southern terminus of a large valley oak savannah complex that extends northward into the Chesebro Canyon Unit of the SMMNRA. In southern California, valley oak savannah is a scarce but visually and ecologically significant plant community. Just over two percent of the Santa Monica Mountains and less of the Simi Hills consists of valley oak savannah. It supports abundant populations of raptors, woodpeckers, western gray squirrels, quail and other savannah species.

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 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. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

This project supports the following WCB strategic plan goals:

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

Acquisition of the Property will increase the wildlife movement by providing additional area to the Liberty Canyon corridor. The Property offers various elevation gradients and will allow for anticipated habitat and wildlife migration in face of climate change.

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

Malibu Creek is listed as in need of preservation in the Southern California Coast Steelhead Recovery Plan. Preservation of this upstream property will provide multi-benefits to the downstream integrity of the Malibu Creek watershed and improve the total watershed storage capacity.

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

The Property is identified for protection in the newly created CDFW Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Linkage CAPP.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

MRCA will be the sole entity responsible for management once the Property is acquired. Funding of future management activities for this Property will be provided by the MRCA. The MRCA manages and provides ranger services for almost 72,000± acres of parks and open space both within and outside the SMMNRA. MRCA does not anticipate the addition of this Property to significantly impact its existing operations. MRCA may explore the potential for future public use activities on the Property in conjunction with its management

of adjacent properties.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$7,000,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to MRCA 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 proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$3,350,000
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	2,550,000
Los Angeles County	1,100,000
Total Purchase Price	7,000,000
Other Project Related Admin Costs	5,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	\$3,355,000

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands and watersheds located in Southern California. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a)]

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND State Recommendation

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,355,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a) for the grant; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Senator Pavley thanked the WCB. She stated that this property is a key piece of the Malibu watershed. She said the area was once a vibrant oak savannah and that a developer cut down the oaks. She explained that this property is bordered on multiple sides by protected areas and is a critical lynch pin for a wildlife corridor. She reported that a Wildlife Corridor Committee exists and holds quarterly meetings. The committee is attempting to raise funds for a crossing for large mammals and possibly others, to be built over Ventura Freeway. She reported that city officials from Thousand Oaks and Agoura Hills are involved, as is Assemblymember Richard Bloom. Congressman Ted Lieu sends a representative to committee meetings and Caltrans is engaged. She concluded by saying she is really excited about this critically needed project.

Mr. Hunting remarked that he has seen artist renderings of what an overcrossing would look like and they were impressive.

Senator Pavley stated that the concept is science based. She noted that an overcrossing would also improve motorist safety.

Mr. Sklar thanked Senator Pavley for her leadership. He stated that connectivity and linkage is a chief priority of the commission and additionally, the commission is working on a new predator policy and this concept is consistent with the policy.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments.

Paul Edelman, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, stated his support for the project and thanked the Board for its consideration.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were other questions or comments. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,355,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a) for the grant; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**20. DFG Land Management Plans, Inland Deserts Region, Phase II, Augmentation II
Riverside County
\$323,100**

Mr. Donnelly introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for an amendment to an existing grant to the California Wildlife Foundation (CWF) to conduct environmental review and public participation pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Land Management Plan for the San Jacinto Wildlife Area which is owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and located north and east of Lakeview in Riverside County.

Peter Perrine presented the project.

LOCATION

San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA) totals about 19,030 acres in central Riverside County, near the city of Lakeview, California and is made up of two units: the Davis Unit and the Portrero Unit. The 9,900-acre Davis Unit lies generally north of Lake Perris Drive/Ramona Expressway, southeast of Gilman Springs Road, and west of the Lake Perris Recreation Area. The 9,130-acre Portrero Unit is located west of the Davis Unit immediately west of Highway 79 in the southern portion of the City of Beaumont.

The two units are characterized by distinct habitats. The Davis Unit contains Mystic Lake, a large, natural, ephemeral lake, and surrounding uplands. The Portrero Unit consists of rolling foothills. Both areas are interspersed with a wide variety of habitats including riparian, alkaline desert and coastal scrub, fresh emergent marsh, chaparral, annual grasslands, vernal pools and open water. These habitats are utilized by a wide variety of game and non-game species.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), among other things, acquires properties on behalf of CDFW. Many CDFW lands are managed pursuant to existing Land Management Plans (LMP), but some areas either have never had LMPs developed or are managed under plans that are out of date. As such, in 2002, the WCB was granted the authority to provide funding to prepare LMPs for those areas acquired in fee for CDFW. Given the fact that the Davis Unit had been operating under a LMP developed in the 1980s, and the more recently acquired Portrero Unit was not addressed at all, the WCB granted \$221,000 to CWF in 2007 to prepare a LMP for the San Jacinto Wildlife Area.

Once work began under this original grant, it soon became clear that the initial cost estimate was too low due to the biological complexity of the area, the multiple management needs, and the intense public interest in the SJWA. In August 2010 the WCB board approved an augmentation for an additional \$260,000 for completion of the LMP and the completion and circulation of the appropriate CEQA document for the plan.

Since 2010, work has been completed on the LMP, and a draft is currently available for review. However, it also has become clear that additional information is needed to complete the CEQA analysis, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Additional unexpected analysis of the biological resources of the SJWA is needed; updated records

searches for hazardous materials and cultural resources need to be completed; and changes to CEQA guidelines will require additional analysis of utilities and services, greenhouse gases, geology and paleontology. Finally, additional coordination is needed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service USFWS, the Western Riverside Regional Conservation Authority and CDFW in order to assure compliance with the USFWS's Western Riverside County Multi-Species Plan. The draft EIR for the SJWA LMP will be circulated, and comments will provide guidance to CDFW to finalize the EIR and complete the LMP for the SJWA.

WCB PROGRAM

Under California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), the WCB specifically received funding to prepare management plans for properties acquired in fee by the WCB.

The project is consistent with and expected to further the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

Goal B.1 – The LMP will lead to the enhancement of wetland and riparian areas for fish and wildlife.

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

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

SJWA is large and has a diverse assemblage of habitat types and wildlife species. The complexity and length of the LMP is determined by the SJWA's management requirements.

The LMP is prepared per CDFW guidelines, *A Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans* (Guide), and other local or Federal agency requirements as necessary. The LMP is written to guide CDFW in managing the SJWA.

PROJECT FUNDING

To date, the WCB has encumbered \$481,000 (\$221,000 in 2007 and \$260,000 in 2010) for this project. The proposed funding breakdown for this augmentation is as follows:

Task	Cost
Project Management	\$78,472
Preparation of Drafts and Public Review Draft EIR	102,995
Preparation of the Final EIR and MMRP	44,640
Certification and Final Determination Notices	14,245
Direct Costs	28,900
Contingency	53,848
<i>Total Cost Estimate</i>	<i>\$323,100</i>

The Augmentation costs will be for the finalization of the LMP and CEQA document for the SJWA.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), which allows for the preparation of land management plans for properties acquired in fee by the Wildlife Conservation Board.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW has reviewed this project and recommended it for funding by the WCB. The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262), as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not yet been approved or adopted. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate 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 \$323,100.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); 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.

Peter Perrine reported that in the audience were; Wendy Worthy, Paul Wisheropp and Sarah Lozano, all of Dudek Consulting, and Chris Hayes, CDFW.

Mr. Donnelly explained that this project was on the WCB August meeting agenda but that he withdrew the project because he felt it needed a little more work before it was brought to the Board. As part of the August agenda, two letters of opposition were received. One from the Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley, specifically Sue Nash, President, and one from the local chapter of the Sierra Club. Signed by George Hague, the letter requested that the management plan be revised and an initial study be conducted. Staff concluded neither is indicated at this point.

Mr. Hunting said he is very familiar with this project and that finishing it in a manner that results in a management plan that is balanced is a high priority to CDFW and Director Bonham.

He asked if there were any other comments or questions. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$323,100.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); 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.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**21. Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration, Phase II
Various Counties
\$450,000**

Prior to introducing the project, Mr. Donnelly reported receiving letters of support from Jean Watt and Michael Wellborn, both of Friends of Harbors, Beaches, and Parks.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) to assist with implementation of the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project's (SCWRP) Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program (CWRGP), which provides funding for community-based restoration projects in coastal wetlands and watersheds in the Southern California region.

Don Crocker presented the project.

LOCATION

The CWRGP encompasses the Southern California coastal region from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County to the United States border with Mexico. This region includes Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties. Coastal watersheds that drain to the Pacific Ocean are included in the geographic scope of the program. The proposed project locations may include coastal wetlands, tidal marshes, rivers, streams, vernal pools as well as buffer zones including dunes, river banks and coastal sage scrub habitats. Many of the project locations were once flood plains and extensive wetland ecosystems that are now degraded and fragmented. Other locations are discrete pocket wetlands that, while small and sometimes isolated from other habitat, cumulatively comprise a critical natural resource for native flora and fauna in a highly urbanized environment.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The SCWRP is a broad-based partnership of 18 state and federal agencies working in concert with scientists, local governments, environmental organizations, business leaders, and educators. The WCB previously funded the CWRGP with a grant beginning in 2012 (Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration, Phase I). The WCB participated in project review and evaluated three years of project solicitations, resulting in fifteen funded projects in the five-county project area.

SCC manages the SCWRP and assists local partners in developing and implementing projects. The SCWRP ultimately seeks to reestablish a mosaic of functioning wetland and riparian systems that support a diversity of species, while also providing public access.

The purpose of the CWRGP is to further the goals of the SCWRP Regional Strategy: build local capacity to plan and implement wetland restoration projects, promote community involvement in wetland restoration activities, and foster education about wetlands ecosystems. Projects funded through the program must include educational and community involvement elements as components of the project.

Developing understanding of and appreciation for wetland habitats among communities throughout Southern California is critical to preserving remaining wetlands and generating support for restoring degraded wetlands. Southern California has lost a significant amount of its historic wetlands due to urban development, infill, flood control practices, and habitat

conversion. Federal and state regulations stemmed losses, but have been ineffective at achieving a “no net loss” objective. As the significant value of ecosystem services performed by wetlands becomes more clear, the motivation to protect existing wetlands and recover lost wetlands increases.

The SCWRP does not limit its preservation and restoration activities to “wetlands” as defined by regulatory agencies. Instead, it includes historic wetlands, areas fringing wetlands, and uplands integrally related to a healthy wetland ecosystem. Typical projects funded through the CWRGP often include the removal of invasive species, planting of native plant species, trash abatement, trail decommissioning, trail and interpretive element construction, and other efforts to restore or enhance wetland habitats.

The CWRGP funds approximately on the average of 10 projects per year with an annual budget of approximately \$300,000. Each January, the SCWRP solicits proposals for the program. Nonprofit organizations, university departments, and local government entities are eligible to apply. Proposals are reviewed by a technical advisory committee comprised of CWRGP staff, members of the Earth Island Institute, SCC, and WCB. Projects funded through this program are designed to be completed in one or two years.

Below is a partial list of projects by county that were reviewed and approved under Phase I of the Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration, partially funded by the WCB.

Santa Barbara County

- Devereux Slough Margin Enhancement
- Refugio Creek Mouth Restoration Project
- Mission Canyon Cape Ivy Eradication Project
- Andree Clark Bird Refuge Wetland Margin Enhancement Project

Ventura County

- Ventura River Upper Estuary Volunteer Restoration and Wetland Education Program
- Santa Clara River Student Restoration Project

Los Angeles County

- Lower Topanga Creek Restoration Project
- Topanga Lagoon Filter Strip Restoration Project

Orange County

- Invasive Removal in Bell Creek at Audubon Starr Ranch
- Santiago Park Nature Reserve Restoration
- Big Oak Canyon Habitat Restoration
- Upper Newport Bay Eelgrass Restoration Project

San Diego County

- Citizens Restoring Coastal Habitat
- Early Detection Rapid Eradication of Specific Invasive Non-Native Plants in Wetlands of San Diego County
- Earth Discovery Institute Explorers: A Force for Blue

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant 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. The project will:

- Provide resilience in the face of climate change by providing refugia, corridors, and habitat connectivity.
- Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems
- Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds
- Recover native habitat and species diversity
- Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California

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

- Stewardship among communities
- Public participation in restoration activities
- Integration of wetlands recovery with other public objectives
- Promotion of education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watersheds

The CWRGP furthers the goals of the SCWRP Regional Strategy: build local capacity to plan and implement wetland restoration projects, promote community involvement in wetland restoration activities, and foster education about wetlands ecosystems. The project is consistent with the California Water Action Plan and the California State Wildlife Action Plan.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

SCC is the grantee under this project, and therefore has general oversight of the projects funded under the CWRGP. CWRGP projects are typically small scale projects taken on by an agency or organization with a direct connection and commitment to the project location. Long-term care and oversight of project maintenance are the responsibility of the project leads, and will be addressed in Memorandums of Understanding developed between WCB and SCC. The time period for long term management of individual projects will be twenty five years.

PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	State Coastal Conservancy	Earth Island Institute	Totals
Program Management	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$220,000	\$345,000
Sub-Project Implementation	400,000	250,000	-	650,000
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$450,000</i>	<i>\$325,000</i>	<i>\$220,000</i>	<i>\$995,000</i>

Project costs will be for project management and funding of CWRGP projects that typically include the removal of invasive species, planting of native plant species, trash abatement, trails and interpretive element construction, and other efforts to restore or enhance wetland habitats.

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(a) which allows for the acquisition, protection, and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands, and coastal watershed lands.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed this project and recommended it for funding by WCB. The project is proposed as categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4), as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate 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 \$450,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Crocker reported that in the audience were; Greg Gauthier, Coastal Conservancy, and Shawn Kelly, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.

Mr. Hunting asked there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Donnelly informed the Board that the grantees had brought pamphlets that were being distributed.

Mr. Hunting stated that he is familiar with the CWRGP and it is a great program.

Senator Pavley asked if the Conservation Corps workers would be involved. They will be engaged.

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

Mr. Donnelly clarified that it was a motion to approve the CEQA Findings as well as the Recommendation.

Mr. Hunting confirmed the motion would be for both.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$450,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

22. Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project, Phase II
Imperial County
\$14,000,000

Mr. Donnelly introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for a cooperative project to construct 640± acres of wetland habitat, including deepwater channels, shallow ponds, island refugia, and nesting structures to enhance habitat for fish-eating birds, on the edge of the Salton Sea at the terminus of the New River located seven miles northwest of the City of Westmorland in Imperial County.

Don Crocker presented the project.

LOCATION

The project is located on the recently exposed lake bottom at the southern end of the Salton Sea (Sea), at the terminus of the New River, at what was an embayment of the lake. The bay was connected to the Sea until recently when the elevation of the Sea dropped sufficiently to cut off the bay. Historic uses of the immediate area included recreational fishing and boating, bird watching, and waterfowl hunting. Fallow fields, active agriculture, and a duck club are nearby. The area was also a depository for agricultural drain water from the Imperial and Coachella Valleys. The site is flat with a very gradual slope towards the current shore of the lake. There is no geographical structure except for remnants of barnacle bars created by waves in the lake, and two small channels excised by the flow of drain water across the exposed playa to the current lake shoreline. Some vegetation has colonized the playa since it became exposed over the last few years. This vegetation is primarily non-native tamarisk scrub.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Sea, as we know it today, was created in 1905 when the Colorado River, which normally flows to the Gulf of California, breached a levee and flowed into the Salton Sink for about 18 months. Since that time, the Sea has been maintained by agricultural runoff and local rivers, and currently has a surface area of about 365 square miles. The Sea is the State's largest inland body of water and provides a critical link in the Pacific flyway, supporting more than 400 species of migratory birds.

The Sea is a terminal lake; that is, it has no natural outlet for water to leave the basin and eventually reach the ocean. A balance between inflowing water and evaporation sustains the Sea. Through the process of continued evaporation, the salt concentration of the Sea water is now 50% greater than the ocean. As the lake water elevation declines, increasing areas around the Sea will be exposed significantly affecting fish and wildlife resources and impacting air quality from wind erosion of newly dried shoreline areas. While inflows to the lake will decrease and continued water surface elevation declines are projected, modeling for the water transfer project suggests that lake inflows will stabilize at approximately 700,000 to 750,000 acre feet per year with sources primarily from the New and Alamo Rivers, creating a permanent hyper-saline pool in the center of the basin.

Increased demand for water in southern California, Nevada and Arizona, led to a negotiated settlement between the federal and state governments, and local water

agencies, known as the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA). The QSA imposes local water conservation measures to restrict transfer of water elsewhere until 2017. After 2017, inflow to the Sea will be significantly reduced. The reduction in water entering the Sea is expected to reduce the size of the Sea and cause salinity to rise faster than it would have without a reduction in inflow.

Various salinity control measures were studied as early as the mid-1950s. Since then, many alternatives have been proposed and analyzed. The United States Congress approved the Salton Sea Reclamation Act to avoid long term impacts. This was followed by California's Salton Sea Restoration Act and establishment of the Salton Sea Restoration Fund. The joint State and federal Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) was then developed to evaluate various restoration alternatives for the Sea as a whole.

The ERP identified a preferred alternative to provide long-term stable aquatic and shoreline habitat for a diversity of fish and wildlife species dependent on the lake, reduction of air quality impacts, and protection of water quality. A portion of this alternative was more specifically described and evaluated in the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project (SCH) EIR/EIS, which called for the creation of up to 1,600 acres of shallow saline ponds (one to six feet in depth) to provide habitat for fish and the bird life that depend on them.

The current effort by the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) is the latest attempt to develop a permanent solution to continued degradation of the environmental values of the Sea. The proposed Species Conservation Habitat project was created following the State of California's 2007 draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) that addressed restoration of the entire Salton Sea. This will be a Period One activity from the draft PEIR, providing the first step towards restoring the functional values of the Salton Sea. The project is also part of the Imperial County/IID Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative. A joint effort between IID and Imperial County, the initiative is a multiphased approach to Salton Sea restoration – the first phase being the development of a plan for an incremental restoration approach that will bridge the gap between current conditions and longer-range Salton Sea restoration planning measures.

The proposed project will initiate the SCH by constructing up to 640 acres of ponds on the east side of the New River in a shallow bay. The ponds will be formed with constructed berms to retain water pumped in from the Sea and the New River. Water depth in the ponds will vary from very shallow feathered edges to a maximum depth of 6 feet in habitat channels, with an average water depth of 2.7 feet. Water supply for the habitat ponds will be provided by low-lift pump stations that deliver brackish New River water and saline Salton Sea water, with a target salinity in the ponds between 20-40 parts per thousand. Multiple islands will be created for bird use. Exterior earthen berms will create a depth of 4 feet at the berm toe, with additional deep areas created by borrow pits for the islands and interior berm. Although habitat will be shallow, it will remain open water since the salinity will preclude emergent vegetation.

The salinity will also preclude invasion of the habitat by carp and other freshwater fishes. The fish community will mimic that which has become established in similar nearby habitats, containing tilapia sailfin mollies, mosquitofish and the State and federally listed as endangered desert pupfish. The ponds are expected to support a self-sustaining population of desert pupfish that will likely number in the millions.

The important biological values of the project site have been lost, and this loss will soon be reflected by the rest of the lake as fish and invertebrates are extirpated by increasingly saline water. The creation of fish habitat in the ponds will support the primary goal of the project: to provide foraging opportunities for fish-eating birds. Fish-eating birds will be the most severely impacted feeding guild of birds in the near future. Invertebrate-dependent shorebirds will continue to forage upon the invertebrate community in the Salton Sea, as this community changes in response to the change in salinity.

The project contains islands for roosting, loafing, and nesting that are designed to provide habitat for bird species that will be most vulnerable to changes in the Salton Sea. The SCH islands will be designed to provide birds with a clear view of approaching predators; habitat heterogeneity with a combination of slopes and flat areas; and a large substrate for nesting surfaces. The taller, larger islands will be 1 to 2 acres in size, and are designed to provide optimum value habitat for double-crested cormorants. The smaller nesting and loafing islands are one acre or less in size, and will be optimized for several target bird species, primarily Caspian terns, black skimmers and gull-billed terns. There are also a number of existing tree snags still standing within the eastern pond unit that will be left undisturbed to provide roosting and nesting sites for birds.

There is also a crucial proof-of-concept element to the project. Effective construction techniques and management strategies for the restoration of the Salton Sea will require a unique approach to be successful, given the constraints of available water quality and quantity, and extreme geotechnical site conditions. An adaptive management approach must be implemented to handle the inherent uncertainties. This approach will be informed by the California Natural Resource Agency's "Species Conservation Habitat Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan" and the United States Geological Survey's "Salton Sea Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Plan".

The adaptive management framework provides a flexible decision-making process for ongoing acquisition, monitoring, and evaluation, leading to continuous improvement in management planning and project implementation to achieve the specified objectives. The information obtained will be used to measure project effectiveness, to refine operations and management of the ponds, to reduce uncertainties about key issues, and to inform subsequent stages of habitat restoration at the Salton Sea.

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 furthers the following goals shown 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 provide resilience in the face of climate change by providing fish and wildlife habitat year round in the forms of microhabitats, nesting and loafing islands, improved habitat for threatened and endangered species, and deep water fish channels for refugia.

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

The project will provide species strongholds or refugia and improve habitat for threatened or endangered species.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Stressors include declining water elevations, increased salinity and other water quality issues. With the reduction of inflows to the Salton Sea, these problems will increase in the main body of the sea. The Project will minimize some of these impacts through the creation of impoundment, which can be better managed to maintain reasonably constant water elevations and manage salinity concentrations to levels more suitable for habitat.

The State of California has developed a management plan for the long term operation and maintenance and monitoring of the project. The plan is based in part on the *Salton Sea Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Plan* prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey. The project will include biological and water quality monitoring to assess various management techniques for future projects.

Following project construction, project responsibility will transfer to the CNRA. The CNRA is working with IID to develop a legal long-term legal document that will allow the state to access, construct, operate and maintain the project for the long-term project life.

The project is designed as a “proof-of-concept” project in which several project features, characteristics, and operations could be tested under an adaptive management framework. The proof-of-concept period would last for approximately 10 years after completion of construction (until 2029). By that time, managers will be able to best identify those management practices that best meet the project goals. After the proof-of-concept period, the project would be operated for the 25-year project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

Item	WCB	CDFW	Totals
Construction Management	\$4,000,000	\$2,600,000	\$6,600,000
Facilities	3,078,465	6,200,000	9,278,465
Preliminary Site Preparation	60,000	3,284,000	3,344,000
Earthwork and Pond Construction	6,861,535	11,516,000	18,377,535
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$14,000,000</i>	<i>\$23,600,000</i>	<i>\$37,600,000</i>

Project costs will be for construction management, mobilization, site preparation, environmental compliance, berm construction, islands, water channels, water control features, stabilization, and erosion control measures.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources:

Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79568 (a), which allows for the acquisition, protection and restoration of land and water resources necessary to meet state obligations for regulatory requirements related to California's allocation of water supplies from the Colorado River.

Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2005 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79565 and Fish and Game Code Section 2932.2, which allows for acquisitions, grants or other activities that directly restore the Salton Sea and its transboundary watersheds, and

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000, Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(7), which allows for specified environmental restoration projects approved pursuant to the Salton Sea Restoration Project authorized by Public Law 105 - 372, the Salton Sea Reclamation Act of 1998, and identified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement of the Salton Sea Restoration Project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

As Lead Agency, the CNRA has prepared the Salton Sea, Species Conservation Habitat Project Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the Final EIS/EIR and prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to the Board's approval of the project, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board direct staff to condition its approval and any release of grant funds upon WCB staff review and approval of an easement, lease or other agreement between the State of California and IID, authorizing the construction, management and operation of the project on the IID-owned site for a term of at least 25 years, and full execution of the approved agreement by DWR and IID.

Staff also recommended that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$14,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79568(a), Water Code Section 79565 and Fish and Game Code Section 2932.2, and Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000, Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(7); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Following his presentation, Mr. Crocker introduced Bruce Wilcox, California Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea policy. Mr. Wilcox thanked the WCB for their work, as well as the CDFW teams out of Bermuda dunes, Ontario and Blythe. Mr. Wilcox provided an extensive explanation of the history of the sea and the current concerns rising from a decreasing inflow of water, ever-increasing salinity in the water present, dust affecting air quality, and diminishing habitat. Among other remarks, he explained that the Salton Sea Management Program does not return the Sea to what it was in years past but strives to manage the these issues. Part of the management strategy is to put some kind of

concentric ring around the sea to stabilize the shoreline. He explained the benefit of projects with combined benefit to air quality and habitat pointing out, for example, that areas that are flooded cannot emit dust. He continued say that this project would be part of Phase I of the Management Program. This project is also intended to serve as a proof of concept.

He finished by saying this is a very important project and that the help is appreciated.

Mr. Hunting asked what the schedule for work is.

Mr. Wilcox said that work start in 2017, and the SSMP will start in 2018.

Senator Pavley said it is a great project and asked if there is a master plan.

Mr. Wilcox said there is a master plan and specifically mentioned that geothermal activity would be developed in the south end. He added care was being taken to not create an un-permittable situation for the energy folks.

Mr. Hunting said he would like to thank Bruce Wilcox for his leadership on the Salton Sea. That Mr. Wilcox is doing a wonderful job on a must-do project.

Mr. Donnelly reported he received a letter of concern from an adjacent property owner who operates a farm. The land owner asked that the Board take into consideration the negative impact the project could have, not only on the land and the farmers, but within the Imperial Valley community. Mr. Donnelly continued, pointing out that the impacts they identify in their letter are issues of bird-use of farm ground such as potential manure run-off and birds eating off the land. He further explained that the goal of this particular project targets fish-eating birds so significant use by terrestrial birds not associated with the wetlands is not anticipated. Director Donnelly then stated, and staff present confirmed, that these issues were addressed in the environmental document that was prepared for the project.

Mr. Donnelly asked the Board to confirm that any motion would include consideration of the CEQA findings. Mr. Hunting confirmed.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board, adopt the findings, and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$14,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79568(a), Water Code Section 79565 and Fish and Game Code Section 2932.2, and Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000, Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(7); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**23. University Heights
San Diego
\$1,281,750**

Mr. Donnelly introduced the project.

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) and to consider two Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grants to TECC to assist with the acquisition of 240± acres of land to protect key regional wildlife linkages, increase regional wildlife habitat corridors, and preserve core areas of habitat that support threatened and endangered species.

John Walsh presented the project.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located in an unincorporated area of San Diego County southwest of Escondido, near the rural communities of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove. Just to the south of the Property is the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve (Reserve), an open space park and recreational area developed by the Olivenhain Municipal Water District. The adjoining 244± acre parcel to the immediate east of the Property was purchased by the County of San Diego for preservation at the end of 2014. The Reserve is one of the cornerstone properties in the area which is also referred to as the San Diego County gnatcatcher core area, a key area for recovery of the Coastal California gnatcatcher.

The Property is approximately 4 – 5 miles southeast of the San Elijo Hills residential community of San Marcos. Most of the property in the general area is undeveloped rural acreage. Neighborhood and community shopping facilities are approximately five miles to the north within the City of San Marcos along the State Route 78 corridor.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Escondido Creek Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP is extremely important for the gnatcatcher as it supports the second largest population in northern San Diego County. The area covered by the CAPP serves as a core breeding area and critical regional wildlife movement corridor supporting a large intact block of coastal sage scrub habitat along with some chaparral and riparian elements.

The Property is included in the City of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Plan (HMP). Acquisition of the Property will help advance the HMP by securing key wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat.

The Property contains a fully-functioning ecosystem that requires little to no restoration/active management to benefit the covered species listed in the HMP. Acquisition and protection of the Property will greatly benefit the gnatcatcher core area. Development of the Property would further fragment the landscape and reduce an already constrained wildlife movement corridor.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed subgrants and grants for this project are being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to WCB's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing 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 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 grants proposed for this project have 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 six federally listed species: southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, San Diego ambrosia and Encinitas baccharis. By protecting the wildlife corridors and reducing development in the area, the species will have the potential to adapt to any impacts of climate change.

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

The City of Carlsbad HMP subarea plan was permitted in November 2004 and provides coverage for 54 species, including 19 federally listed as endangered or threatened and 35 unlisted species. The HMP commits to preserve an area of approximately 4,441 acres. The Property is within the HMP area and will help meet the goals of the HMP. 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 CDFW Escondido Creek Conceptual Area Protection Plan. The USFWS grants proposed for this project have also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TECC currently manages 1,750± acres of conservation lands in the vicinity of the Property. TECC will manage this property consistent with its management of its other properties. A resource management plan for the site will be developed with input from USFWS and CDFW. Possible future public access may include docent led tours and nature walks.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$4,127,000.00. 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 reduced value of \$4,000,000.00. The USFWS grant funds require a non-federal match that will be provided by the WCB grants.

The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grants and USFWS subgrants to TECC 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 either grant, WCB can require TECC to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB or another approved holder and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board- Subgrant of USFWS funds	\$2,000,000
Wildlife Conservation Board (non-federal match)	1,075,000
Wildlife Conservation Board- Subgrant of USFWS funds	728,250
Wildlife Conservation Board (non-federal match)	196,750
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$1,281,750</i>

It is estimated that above project-related administrative costs will include DGS appraisal review. The TECC will fund all escrow, title insurance costs and other related closing 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) which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and that implements or assists 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 WCB approve the project as proposed; allocate \$1,281,750.00 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 grants to The Escondido Creek Conservancy and project-related expenses; accept the two USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants in the amount of \$2,728,250.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to The Escondido Creek Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Walsh reported that Mary Beth Wolfe , USFWS and Ann Van Leer, Escondido Creek Conservancy were in the audience.

Director Donnelly reported that a letter of support had been received from Dan Silver, President of the Endangered Habitat League.

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

It was moved by Board Member Eric Sklar that Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,281,750.00 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 grants to The Escondido Creek Conservancy and project-related expenses; accept the two USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants in the amount of \$2,728,250.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds to The Escondido Creek Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

24. Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan

Mr. Donnelly introduced the item.

Staff will present next steps in implementation of the WCB Strategic Plan with recommendations to the Board for streamlining the Land Acquisition Evaluation/ Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP) processes, and developing a Public Access competitive grant program.

Peter Perrine gave an extensive recap of the Board's previous direction on implementing the Strategic Plan and then presented the following:

1. STREAMLINING LAE/CAPPS

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) is an independent board with authority to carry out acquisition projects on behalf of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and authority to award grants to others for acquisition, wildlife restoration and enhancement, and wildlife oriented public access projects. The WCB relies on CDFW to provide the biological and science based expertise necessary to ensure that the most worthy projects that compete for statewide general habitat funding are considered. Land acquisition proposals may be developed by CDFW personnel and/or other agencies, and conservation organizations. Proposals may outline the establishment or expansion of Department-managed lands (i.e. Wildlife Areas or Ecological Reserves), and/or the acquisition of lands or easements to be owned and managed by others for fish and wildlife conservation purposes.

Acquisition proposals prioritized by CDFW for the WCB typically fall into one of two categories:

1. Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) – An LAE typically focuses on a single or limited number of parcels and/or owners. The development of an LAE is often prompted by some information that the land owner(s) might be interested in selling their land (or an interest in their land) for conservation purposes.
2. Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) – CAPPs encompass larger geographic areas than an LAE and serve as planning tools for a region to protect large blocks of habitat. CAPPs typically cover an area with multiple owners, many of which may have no interest in selling at the present time. CAPPs include a prioritization of parcels where purchase or easement offers are first focused.

There are efforts underway by CDFW and the WCB related to the LAE/CAPP process and we are working to answer the following questions:

1. What are the purposes of LAE/CAPP documents?
2. What information should the document include or exclude?
3. How should the development, review, scoring and approval process be conducted?
4. Should the WCB's independent application processes be modified to conform as appropriate?
5. How can the LAE/CAPP process be more transparent?

While the LAE/CAPP process is internal to CDFW, the WCB clearly has a role in helping the DFW to focus or adapt these processes to changing environmental goals and objectives, funding opportunities or limitations, and wildlife oriented recreational need.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Work with CDFW to answer the five questions above.
2. Support the CDFW in modifying or amending the LAE/CAPP document and approval process as appropriate.
3. Present to the WCB at its May 2017 meeting.

2. PUBLIC ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) carries out a program that includes the development of facilities in cooperation with local agencies, NGOs and others for public access to hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation. The program is one of the original programs established with the creation of WCB in 1947. Since then, more than 700 public access projects have been completed throughout the State.

The program provides financial assistance to federal, state, local agencies and others for the development of such facilities as fishing piers, boat launching ramps, trails, boardwalks, and interpretive facilities. Support facilities such as restrooms and parking areas are also eligible for funding under this program. Projects must be reviewed and supported by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Project criteria include all the following:

- Projects must be supported by an existing and demonstrated wildlife oriented public access need in the area.
- Project improvements must be opened to the public during normal operation hours, in most cases daylight hours from sunrise to sunset.
- Projects must be ADA accessible to the extent feasible.
- Project Proponents must demonstrate an ability to maintain and operate the improvements over the management term (typically, 25 years).

There are a number of reasons to establish a competitive Public Access Program now, ahead of other programs:

1. It is relatively straight forward one-goal program: to provide enhancements for wildlife related recreational use.
2. It is a program in which we can identify specific targets quickly and simply.
3. Consistent funding is provided from year to year to direct toward this effort.
4. It is a program that is effective, well accepted and needed.

WCB's public access program can support the mission of the CDFW through four policies adopted by the Fish and Game Commission that are directly supportive of public access:

- Al Taucher's Preserving Hunting and Sport Fishing Opportunities.
- Youth Fishing Program.
- Public Information and Education.
- Multiple Use of Lands Administered by the Department of Fish and Game.

In addition to these, the following State Departments have grant programs that can assist directly with public access lands and facilities to wild lands, or that improve habitats and infrastructure to provide a more enjoyable experience to outdoor visitors: Natural Resources Agency, State Parks and Recreation, Fish and Wildlife, Water Resources, and all eight State Conservancies. There are no legislative considerations that would limit WCB's ability to implement a competitive public access grant program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION.

- Complete public scoping by March 2017.
- Prepare draft guidelines, criteria and solicitation by May 2017.
- Establish a focused Public Access competitive grant program by June 30, 2017

3. 2017 WORKPLAN/TIMELINE.

The three remaining Implementing Actions, including Application/Project Review, Program Review, and Monitoring will be completed and reported on over the coming year at regularly scheduled Board meetings as follows :

February 2017- Application/Project Review.

Specific recommendations will include the extent to which WCB's six direct application processes will be consolidated, and will clearly identify the new process for evaluation and subsequent recommendation to the WCB.

May 2017- Comprehensive Program Review.

Information reported will include an evaluation of each program for relevance, historic use and potential future uses. Analysis will include identifying overlap with other WCB programs, and identifying compatibility of each WCB program with other State programs. Measurable ecological goals will be identified and defined for each program. Recommendations will be presented to maintain, consolidate or eliminate an existing program. .

August 2017- Measuring Conservation Effectiveness (Monitoring)

A draft cost effective monitoring plan will be presented that will include measurable goals and outcomes for each program that will allow staff to effectively measure conservation success.

November 2017- Finalize WCB Monitoring Plan to measure conservation effectiveness.

Mr. Hunting reported the CDFW recently published their State Action Wildlife Plan (Plan) which determined that CAPPS are a valuable exercise for setting priorities for acquisitions and land-based protection in California and are very compatible with the Plan's goals and objectives. He continued saying that LAE process within CDFW has room for improvement and that it's important to be providing a biological lens on acquisitions but he believes there is a way that can be done in conjunction with the Board that is more streamlined than it is now and he is glad the WCB is looking into that.

Mr. Sklar thanked Mr. Perrine for capturing so well the discussion at the summit. He said he felt that the comments received at the summit regarding the efficacy of the appraisal process are very important, that he would like to see some work done on how to improve the process and get the best deal for the people of California with transparency. He said he wished to acknowledge this is a difficult process.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were questions or comments.

Dave Sutton, Land Director, The Trust for Public Land, commented on the importance of the plan. He said that CAPPs and LAEs are critical tools in establishing priorities and that he commends the WCB for going through the Strategic Plan process and looks forward to working together.

Mr. Donnelly noted that he feels the presented timeline is pretty aggressive and that it remains to be determined whether how these individual actions will be part of a regular meeting or a separate meeting but that WCB staff will at least be providing updates at each subsequent WCB meeting.

25. Resolutions

The following Resolutions are submitted for enactment by the Wildlife Conservation Board:

Mr. Donnelly said that all find this agenda item to approve two Resolutions bittersweet. He explained one was for Senator Fran Pavley for her service to the WCB and the other for Lois Wolk as both senators are, unfortunately, terming out of office. He continued to address Senator Pavley directly saying that he has appreciated her friendship and guidance and thanked her for the wise counsel over the years. He continues saying that the Senator had brought forward and supported some great projects. He said he looks forward to continuing to work with her from the private side and that she should feel free to call anytime. He then wished her luck as she transitions out of office.

Senator Pavley responded that the WCB gets the money out the door on projects that matter.

Mr. Hunting said that before the Resolution was read, he would like to express how very much he appreciates Senator Pavley's leadership, her work on the legislative committee, her landmark climate legislation which is more important than ever and to the central to the conservation community's mission and how it takes care of the state, and the landmark groundwater legislation so important to CDFW. He continued saying it is an enduring legacy and once again, expressed his thanks.

Board member Eric Sklar stated that while he has only been on the Board a short time but as he digs in, he finds her fingerprints are on so much that is already being protected. He continued saying that her work is going to outlive all of us.

Ms. Finn stated that she knows her boss, Michael Cohn, Director of the Department of Finance, would thank Senator Pavley for the insight and guidance she has given not only him, but previous directors as well.

Mr. Donnelly said he would like to read into record these resolutions and ask for Board approval.

Senator Fran Pavley

WHEREAS, Senator Fran Pavley, while a member of the California State Senate and Assembly, served with distinction as a member of the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee of the Wildlife Conservation Board, and

WHEREAS, as a member of the California State Legislature, she actively supported the Board's program through her tenure as a member and as Chairman of the California Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, and due to her unwavering resolve, was able to promote the Board's mission of wildlife resource conservation, resulting successful projects such as the conservation of Ahmanson Ranch; King-Gillette, and others;

WHEREAS, Senator Pavley, as a legislative advisor, has supported the Board's programs, making preservation, enhancement and restoration of wildlife habitat a true priority, for all of California; and

WHEREAS, all who have served with Senator Pavley have appreciated her consistent support, leadership, comments and advice, and have especially appreciated her ability to address and resolve resource issues in California, all of which have earned for her the esteem and respect of all who have worked with her; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to gratefully acknowledge her contribution to the works of the Board and the entire State of California; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee, and the Board staff convey to Senator Fran Pavley our sincere appreciation for her noteworthy contributions to the Board, and express our best wishes to her as she continues on with her personal endeavors; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be made a part of the official minutes of this Board meeting and that a copy be provided to Senator Pavley.

Senator Lois Wolk

WHEREAS, Senator Lois Wolk while a member of the California State Senate, served with distinction as a member of the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee of the Wildlife Conservation Board, and

WHEREAS, as a member of the California State Senate, she actively supported the Board's programs through her tenure as Chair of the Senate Budget Committee on Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy and Transportation and as a member of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, and due to her unwavering resolve, was able to promote the Board's mission of wildlife resource conservation, resulting in the success of conservation efforts such as the Woodland- Davis Clean Water Agency Joint Intake and Fish Screen Facility; and

WHEREAS, Senator Wolk, as a legislative advisor, has supported the Board's programs, making preservation, enhancement and restoration of wildlife habitat a true priority, for all of California; and

WHEREAS, all who have served with Senator Wolk have appreciated her consistent support, leadership, comments and advice, and have especially appreciated her ability to address and resolve resource issues in California, all of which have earned for her the esteem and respect of all who have worked with her; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to gratefully acknowledge her contribution to the works of the Board and the entire State of California; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee, and the Board staff convey to Senator Wolk our sincere appreciation for her noteworthy contributions to the Board, and express our best wishes to her as she continues on with her personal endeavors; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be made a part of the official minutes of this Board meeting and that a copy be provided to Senator Wolk.

Mr. Sklar shared that his relationship with Lois Wolk began 15 yrs ago while he was on the Napa City Council and when legislative districts were recently redrawn, she became his senator. He stated that she has served the State very well and has been a great friend to the Napa Valley and the wine industry and he thanks her for her record.

Mr. Donnelly reported that two Resolutions would also be presented at the February Board meeting as Assemblymembers Richard Gordon and Das Williams, both on the WCB Legislative Committee, would be terming out of office.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that Wildlife Conservation Board enact these Resolutions as submitted.

Passed Unanimously.

Sklar - Yes

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

26. 2017 Board Meeting Dates

Board will be asked to approve WCB meeting (regular) for 2017

Feb 23, 2017

May 25, 2017

Aug 24, 2017

Nov 30, 2017

All meetings 9:00am-12:00pm, locations to be determined

Mr. Donnelly stated these dates have been identified as the minimum, recognizing we may have additional meetings but we will not have fewer. He added that the WCB typically likes to hold Board meetings in the capitol but sometimes get bumped, and in that event, will meet in the Resources Building.

27. Other Business

Mr. Donnelly reported that the WCB is advertising for staff to fill two positions on the WCB's acquisition team that are/will be vacant due to the retirement of Teri Muzik in October and the impending retirement of Liz Yokoyama.

Mr. Hunting and Mr. Sklar thanked Ms. Yokohama for her service.

Mr. Donnelly reported that two pieces of legislation affecting the WCB will have been signed by the Governor. The first, Senate Bill 1089 (Pavley) expands the number of voting members on the WCB from three members to seven. Of the four additional members, two are to be appointed by the legislature and two are to be appointed by the Governor. Subject expertise is requisite of all appointees.

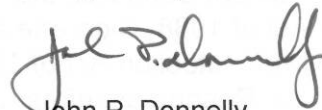
Mr. Donnelly continued, stating that the second piece of legislation, Assembly Bill 1716 (McCarty) creates the Lower American River Conservancy Program within the WCB. He said this Bill was originally written to create a new State conservancy but as it moved through the legislative process it instead became a program to be administered by the WCB. However, the structure of the advisory committee remains how it was originally conceived, 12 members to convene twice a year. He stated his goal is to have the committee in place by the next Board meeting and added that it's important to note that the legislation was envisioned with funding accompanying it and the program will only really be effective if new funding is received. He added that anyone interested in being on the committee is welcome to call the WCB for information on how to apply for consideration. He then outlined the criteria for eligibility.

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Mr. Sklar thanked Senator Pavley for sponsoring SB1089 saying he thinks it will improve the Board. He then expressed appreciation for WCB Executive Director John Donnelly and his staff noting that it has been a busy year.

Mr. Hunting then asked if there were any further business, comments or questions. As there were none, Mr. Hunting adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John P. Donnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on November 16, 2016, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$2,721,880,155.21 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	\$18,414,394.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement	52,919,998.92
Reservoir Construction or Improvement	5,737,699.00
Stream Clearance and Improvement.....	34,738,225.78
Stream Flow Maintenance Dams.....	542,719.86
Marine Habitat	5,465,581.57
Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	6,435,772.71
C. Fishing Access Projects.....	69,455,949.55
Coastal and Bay	9,469,773.14
River and Aqueduct Access	27,827,073.13
Lake and Reservoir Access	11,156,250.24
Piers	21,002,853.04
D. Game Farm Projects.....	146,894.49
E. Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement.....	2,485,890,658.52
Wildlife Areas (General)	468,700,348.95
Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	51,797,338.81
Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	805,647,210.77
Land Conservation Area	15,130,464.18

Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	46,064,378.73
Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	98,848,136.58
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	999,702,780.50
F. Hunting Access Projects	1,365,195.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	49,280,525.43
H. Special Project Allocations.....	1,892,420.35
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	40,634,315.25
State Owned	2,247,004.81
Grants	38,387,310.44
J. Sales and/or exchanges	1,879,803.07
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.....	\$2,721,880,155.21