



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

February 23, 2017

10:00 a.m.

California State Capitol, Room 112
Sacramento, California 95814

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, February 23, 2017, in Room 112 of the California State Capitol Building in Sacramento, California. Kevin Hunting, Deputy Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) called the meeting to order at 11:05am and invited John Donnelly, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), to perform roll call. Present were; Mr. Hunting, representing Board Chair and Director of CDFW, Chuck Bonham; Karen Finn, representing Director of the Department of Finance, Michael Cohen; Rachelle Caouette, representing Senator Jean Fuller; and Catherine Freeman, representing Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia. Director Donnelly observed that a quorum was established. Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments prior to the meeting proceeding. The only response came from Director Donnelly who introduced new WCB staff member Daniel Vasquez to the Board members and attendees.

1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members

Kevin Hunting
Chief Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Karen Finn
Department of Finance

Eric Sklar, Member
President Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Jean Fuller

Senator (*vacant*)

Senator (*vacant*)

Assemblymember (*vacant*)
Assemblymember Marc Levine -Alternate

Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago -Alternate

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Assemblymember (*vacant*)
Assemblymember *Richard Bloom -Alternate*

Executive Director
John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

Peter Perrine	Shawn Fresz,
Elizabeth Hubert	Chad Fein
John Walsh	Scott McFarlin
Nancy Templeton	Candice Marg
Colin Mills	Dawn Drowne
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	Dan Vasquez
Kurt Weber	

Others Present:

Robin Bierdan, Lakeside River Park Conservancy
Kevin Yarris, Yolo County
Eric Haney, CDFW
Brian Beck, RCA
Craig Garner, Ducks Unlimited
Tim Hermanson, CDFW
Denny Grossman, SGC
MacKenzie Wieger, SGC
Becky Bremser, Trust for Public Land
Virginia Getz, Ducks Unlimited
Sarah Stoner-Duncan, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Will Noel, Avenales L&C
Joel Trumbo, CDFW
Pat Fitzmorris, CDA
Chris Ladeas, CDFW

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Mary Loum, CDFW

Tasha Newman, CSG

Sarah Smith, Dubic

Darla Guenzler, Wildlife Heritage Foundation

Steve Ingram, CDFW

Kelly Velasco, Wildlife Heritage Foundation

Steve Sinton, Avenales Cattel

Jane Sinton, Avenales Cattle

Chris Coburn, RCD Santa Cruz

Katharine Moore, Senate Natural Resources and Water Cmte.

Paul Wisheropp, Dudek

Karen Buhr, CARCP

Natalie Keene, CCLT

Rick Gould, City of Santa Clarita

2. Funding Status
Informational

The following funding status depicts Capital Outlay and Local Assistance 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	0.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,000,000.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-900,000.00
Total Project Development	-5,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$95,000.00</i>
(b) 2016-17 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-185,328.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$20,477,672.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,747,000.00
Total Project Development	-4,288,240.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$14,442,432.00</i>
(c) 2015-16 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-7,995,459.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$12,667,541.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,042,811.00
Total Project Development	-4,604,501.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$7,020,229.00</i>
(d) 2014-15 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-16,986,622.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,676,378.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-242,172.00
Total Project Development	-3,434,206.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(e) 2013-14 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,874,590.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$788,410.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,742.00
Total Project Development	-783,668.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>

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(f)	2012-13 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-5,131,696.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$15,531,304.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-535,767.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$14,995,537.00</i>
(g)	2011-12 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-15,529,297.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,133,703.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-445,836.00
	Total Project Development	-1,681,308.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,006,559.00</i>
(h)	2010-11 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-19,305,500.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,362,500.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-34,397.00
	Total Project Development	-1,328,103.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(i)	2009-10 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-20,300,663.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$367,337.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-30,729.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$336,608.00</i>
(j)	2008-09 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2012-13 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-20,653,891.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$14,109.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-8,632.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,477.00</i>

(k)	2007-08 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2011-12 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,674,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-20,314,737.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$359,263.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$359,263.00</i>
(l)	2006-07 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-19,839,667.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$859,333.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$859,333.00</i>
(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	-15,180,125.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$43,875.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$43,875.00</i>
(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	-36,012,120.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$87,880.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-87,880.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(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	-10,807,019.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$192,981.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$192,981.00</i>

(p)	2003-04 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND, (6029) Budget Act 2016 (New Appropriation of Reverted Fund EY 2006) (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$1,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-25,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,475,000.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-1,475,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(q)	2001-02 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND, (6029) Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650)	\$273,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-257,238,918.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$15,761,082.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,166,600.00
	Total Project Development	-7,397,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$6,197,482.00</i>
(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)	\$32,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-32,500,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(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	-695,733,418.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$45,678,582.00</i>
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-260,000.00
	Total Project Development	-39,055,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$6,363,582.00</i>

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(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 Allocation	\$1,162,280.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$2,217,720.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-2,217,720.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$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	-3,639,660.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$1,160,340.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$1,160,340.00
(v)	2009-10 SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOODCONTROL, 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	25,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$5,175,000.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$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	-25,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$9,975,000.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-177,000.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$9,798,000.00
(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	-6,931,082.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$3,068,918.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-3,068,918.00

	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$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	-15,500,000.00
	<i>Balance</i>	\$8,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-5,099,012.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$3,400,988.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-437,000.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$2,963,988.00
(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	-12,691,681.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$2,808,319.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$2,808,319.00
(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	-13,733,743.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$11,266,257.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-11,266,257.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$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	-25,000,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$0.00
	February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$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	-143,075,880.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$21,624,120.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-21,525,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$99,120.00</i>
(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	-101,720,320.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$21,804,680.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-3,735,000.00
Total Project Development	-12,660,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,409,680.00</i>
(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	-15,000.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$38,385,000.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$38,385,000.00</i>
(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	-10,000.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,490,000.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,490,000.00</i>
(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	-20,171,278.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$18,228,722.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$18,228,722.00</i>

(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	-1,435,979.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,364,021.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,364,021.00</i>

Recap of Fund Balances

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND (A)	\$1,000,000.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-900,000.00
Total Project Development	-5,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$95,000.00</i>

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K) AND (L)	\$61,237,550.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,052,725.00
Total Project Development	-16,159,387.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$41,025,438.00</i>

SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (M) AND (N)	\$131,755.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-87,880.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$43,875.00</i>

CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (O), (P) AND (Q)	\$17,429,063.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,166,600.00
Total Project Development	-8,872,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$6,390,463.00</i>

WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (R) AND (S)	\$45,678,582.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-260,000.00
Total Project Development	-39,055,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$6,363,582.00</i>

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)	\$82,501,342.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,349,000.00
Total Project Development	-50,737,895.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$27,414,447.00</i>

WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND OF 2014 (AE), (AF) (AG) AND (AH)	\$61,467,743.00
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$61,467,743.00</i>

<i>TOTAL – ALL FUNDS</i>	<i>\$269,446,035.00</i>
February 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-11,728,325.00
Total Project Development	-114,917,162.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$142,800,548.00</i>

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

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 – 15)

Director Donnelly noted that Item 13 incorrectly states that the Coachella Valley Mountain Conservancy is a participant in the proposed project. The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission is the sole grantee for Item 13. Also, he reported that he was withdrawing Item 14 as he felt the proposal was not ready for consideration. He then provided an overview of how the meeting would proceed and described Items 2-15. Mr. Hunting asked if there were questions or comments. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve Consent Calendar Items *4 -*15 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations.

Passed Unanimously.
Finn - 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
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$56,883.43
Wildlife Restoration Fund	0.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$14,980.00
Other	\$0.00

Habitat Conservation Fund	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Anderson Ranch, Lassen County	1,195,000.00	-1,185,000.00	10,000.00
Big Valley Wetlands, Melo Property, Lake County	135,000.00	-110,000.00	25,000.00
Carrizo Canyon Ecological Preserve, Expansion 1, Suzanne Adams Trust Donation, Riverside County	5,000.00	-1,870.00	3,130.00
Eel River Wildlife Area Salt River Unit Wetland Restoration, Humboldt County	1,000,000.00	-1,000,000.00	0
Eel River Wildlife Area Salt River Unit Wetland Restoration, Humboldt County	545,000.00	-542,027.57	2,972.43
San Diego Mountain Ranch, San Diego County	10,000.00	-2,860.00	7,140.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2012) - Riverpark, Riverside County	818,500.00	-814,919.00	3,581.00
Willow Bend, Colusa County	418,000.00	-412,940.00	5,060.00
Willow Bend, Colusa County	12,000.00	-12,000.00	0
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			\$56,883.43

Wildlife Restoration Fund	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Lake Temescal Fishing Access Improvements, Alameda County	250,000.00	-250,000.00	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
Bufford Ranch Conservation Easement Expansion 1, Kern County	214,000.00	-208,940.00	5,060.00
Statewide Strategic Planning for Invasive Plants, Statewide County	273,000.00	273,000.00	0
Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, Expansion 7, Riverside County	66,250.00	61,250.00	5,000.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2012) -Terra, Riverside County	240,000.00	235,080.00	4,920.00
<i>Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</i>			<i>\$14,980.00</i>

Other	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Sutter Bypass Access Easement, Sutter County	0.00	-0.00	0
<i>Total Recoveries to Other</i>			<i>\$0.00</i>

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Recovery of Funds. Recovery totals include; \$56,883.43 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; \$0 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund; \$14,980.00 to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, and \$0 to Other.

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

***6 Mad River Hatchery Lot Line Adjustment
Humboldt County
\$40,000**

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of 2± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to resolve an encroachment onto adjacent private property at the Mad River Fish Hatchery (Hatchery). The encroachment consists of an existing filtration pond and fencing inadvertently built on the adjoining Green Diamond Resource Company (GDRC) property.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The proposed acquisition (Property) is next to the Mad River and the Hatchery, located at 1660 Fish Hatchery Road in Humboldt County. The Hatchery is along the Mad River. The surrounding area offers rivers, redwoods, mountains and beaches for outdoor activities. The Mad River is an outstanding steelhead fishery.

The History of the Mad River Fish Hatchery.

Construction of the Hatchery started in 1969 and was completed in 1971. The California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funded construction of the Hatchery to increase the Chinook salmon supply for commercial fisheries. One-half of the \$2.5 million construction cost was reimbursed with funds by Federal Anadromous Fisheries.

In 2004, the Hatchery was forced to close after 34 years of service due to the ongoing state budget crisis. With help from the Friends of the Mad River Hatchery, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, local businesses, community members and concerned students, the facility was able to re-open in 2005. This year, the Hatchery will release 155,000 Mad River Steelhead, plant five inland waters with 65,000 Rainbow trout, and will take in up to 300,000 triploid Chinook for the inland Chinook salmon program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed acquisition reflects an effort by the Green Diamond Resources Company (GDRC), in conjunction with CDFW, to clear boundary issues with respect to the encroachment by CDFW onto GDRC property.

During Hatchery construction, perimeter fences surrounding the housing units, as well as a hatchery filtration pond, were inadvertently built on GDRC property. GDRC did a routine survey several years ago and discovered the encroachment. GDRC notified the CDFW, offering to sell the Property to CDFW. The proposed acquisition will resolve the CDFW encroachment.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The 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 or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW. 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 requested the WCB complete this transaction.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will be the owner in fee simple and will add this Property to the Hatchery. Given the Property is adjacent to the Hatchery location, additional management funds for staffing will not be required. Public access to the Hatchery is currently provided for low-impact recreational activities, including hiking, wildlife viewing, birdwatching and photography.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$25,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the appraised fair market value of \$25,000.

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. If approved by the Board, the transaction will also be subject to review and approval by DGS.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	25,000
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>
Other Project Related Admin Costs	15,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal and environmental review.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development, rehabilitation, restoration, acquisition and protection of habitat that accomplishes one or more of the following objectives: promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems. Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(b).

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 15301, Class 1, operation of existing public structures and facilities, and Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. 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 \$40,000.00 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 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$40,000.00 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 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.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

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

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Marin Audubon Society (MAS) for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to restore tidal marsh habitat, including wetland-upland transition habitat, improve public access on 6± acres of filled former tidal wetlands to create a contiguous naturally functioning marsh connected to the existing historic and high marsh of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Corte Madera Ecological Reserve (Reserve), in Corte Madera in Marin County.

LOCATION

The 6± acre project site is located in the Town of Corte Madera, at the end of Industrial Way, and consists of parcels owned by Marin Audubon Society (MAS) totaling 5± acres, and another 0.9 acre piece of property owned by CDFW which is part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. The project is located in the Corte Madera Creek watershed, on Corte Madera Bay, a shallow tidally-influenced embayment. Corte Madera Creek and another smaller creek, San Clemente Creek, empty into Corte Madera Bay.

The project site was historically tidal marsh, part of a broad expanse of tidal marshes that extended several miles upstream along Corte Madera Creek from its mouth. All that is left of that system is a narrow fringe of tidal marsh along the edge of the San Francisco Bay, several pockets of tidal marsh upstream, and a ten-acre marsh on the north side of the creek mouth. The approximately 300-acre Reserve is at the mouth of the creek on the south side. The location of the project site, surrounded by wetland habitats, increases its ecological significance and the need to restore it.

The project site is surrounded on the north, south and east by the Reserve. The 95-acre Heerdt Marsh, one of just a few tidal marshes in the San Francisco Bay that has never been diked, abuts the project site on the south. The Heerdt tidal marsh surrounds the filled lands of the Reserve and the project site. Tidal waters have been gradually extending back into the filled area of the project site and other interface areas of the Reserve as a result of subsidence and sea level rise, resulting in conversion of some upland into high marsh. An unauthorized trail extends through this high marsh. These tidal and non-tidal habitats comprise the 100-acre northern section of the Reserve. In 2015, PG&E, as mitigation for impacts from work in the Heerdt Marsh, excavated approximately 0.65 acres on the Reserve to restore tidal marsh north of the project site.

A CDFW-owned parking lot is adjacent to the project site to the north. North of the parking lot is ruderal upland and a tidal marsh channel that MAS excavated 25 years ago to restore tidal marsh and isolate an area of upland as a high-tide refugia island.

Currently, the MAS property consists of filled uplands dominated by non-native weedy species. The MAS property is not actively managed and is utilized by the public in ways that disturb wildlife and degrade habitat on the adjacent Reserve. Users include model airplane and drone operators, bicyclists, and walkers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The restoration will be accomplished by excavating approximately 24,020 cubic yards of fill to lower the elevation of 2.68 acres on the MAS property and 1.00 acres on the CDFW property, and then restore 3.60 acres of tidal marsh and create 0.04 acres of refuge islands and 0.04 acres of seasonal wetlands. The excavated fill will be moved and relocated to the westerly portion of the project site to create a gradually sloping transition zone/high tide refugia. Channels will be excavated to direct tidal flows back into the project site. One channel will extend to the proposed public access path to the north; a second will extend to the north east and connect with a channel recently restored by PG&E. A third narrower channel will branch from the second channel and connect with a stagnant pond on the Reserve.

The marsh plain will be graded to 0.5 feet below local mean high water. This will allow sediment along with seeds of marsh plants to be deposited in this high-sediment area of the Corte Madera Bay which should result in recolonization with tidal marsh plants. The connection of the new marsh plain with existing marsh will be a gradual slope up to the current elevation of tidal marsh on the Reserve.

The primary channel just to the south end of the MAS property will be extended approximately 150 feet to connect the other two new channels within the MAS property and an existing channel north of the project site in the Reserve. The extension of the primary channel is designed to be the primary source of tidal flows to the project site.

The extension of the main channel will ensure that the tidal flows are adequate to sustain the restored marsh, creating high-quality marsh vegetation and wildlife habitat. The two interior marsh channels extending from the primary connecting channel will be 10-foot wide. One channel will be 325 feet long, ending at the new access trail. The second more-easterly channel will be approximately 575 feet long. Two small islands will be created in the marsh to serve as refugia habitat and possibly nesting habitat. Totaling 0.04 acres, these islands will be created by leaving patches of fill in place.

Tidal marsh will revegetate through natural processes. In the uplands, however, vegetation must be must planted, monitored and maintained. Native vegetation found in transition zones in the Central and North Bay will be planted on the transition zone. These species include gumplant, creeping wild rye, coyote brush, western goldenrod, and others.

To extend the primary channel, a long reach-excavator positioned in the uplands will likely be used. If equipment needs to work within the marsh footprint, mats will be placed in the marsh within the footprint of the new channel, to support the equipment and protect the marsh vegetation. Most of the 24,020 cubic yards of fill excavated will be retained onsite. The exception is a few piles of asphalt which will be hauled off to an approved disposal site.

An access path will be constructed along the north boundary of the MAS property. The path will be located to allow visitors to view the marsh and its wildlife without causing impacts to them. Interpretive signs adjacent to the path will explain about the marsh restoration and wildlife that may be seen in the marsh. A low fence (4 feet maximum height) will be installed adjacent to the path on the north to discourage people from walking into the marsh. A chain link fence will be installed along the western border of the property to prevent people from accessing the transition zone and the marsh and direct them to the public access path.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program such as coastal, tidal and threatened and endangered species habitats.

The project furthers the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

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

The proposed project will establish tidal marsh at an elevation relatively high in the tidal frame that will optimize the growth rate of the marsh plants. This is expected to produce robust stands of tidal marsh vegetation, which will maximize sediment accretion, giving these landscapes the greatest potential to rise with projected sea level rise. In addition, as the marsh rises, it is projected that carbon will be sequestered in the soil as new vegetation grows on previous generations of salt marsh vegetation.

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

Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species:

The project will create 1.78 acres of transition zone. The transition zone will have multiple benefits. It will reuse the fill for beneficial purposes including buffering rising seas by allowing the restored marsh to move landward and reclaim more marsh as the seas rise and inundate lower elevation marshes. Also, the transition zone will provide important high-tide refugia for the state and federally listed endangered Ridgeway's rails and foraging, resting and nesting habitat for several special status species (San Pablo song sparrow and saltmarsh yellowthroat) as well as for other species.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

MAS will be responsible for monitoring and maintenance. Long-term management will consist of MAS volunteers surveying the site on a regular basis to determine how the restoration is progressing and if there are any problems. If problems arise, the problems will be addressed in coordination with CDFW. Four visits per year for five years after completion of the project will be conducted to monitor progress of transition zone plants, and conduct needed maintenance such as removing invasive species and replacing mulch. MAS volunteers will check on the site between regularly scheduled visits. Plants that do not survive will be replaced.

MAS plans to donate its property to the CDFW after the marsh restoration project is constructed. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, MAS 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:

Project Task	Total Cost Per Task	WCB Funding Request	NCWC (USFWS)	Marin Audubon Society
Site Prep and Grading	530,080	134,303	395,777	0
Construction	81,090	27,030	54,060	0
Plants, Installation, and Maintenance	50,434	16,252	34,182	0
Project Management	139,119	39,657	79,313	20,149
Contingency	120,647	42,758	77,889	0
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$921,370</i>	<i>\$260,000</i>	<i>\$641,221</i>	<i>\$20,149</i>

Project costs will be for jurisdictional delineation, soils tests, conceptual design, preliminary and final project design, permit support (one agency meeting), construction oversight, monitoring, construction, plants, planting, maintenance, site preparation, grading, and MAS project administration.

The SCC approved a grant of \$400,000 in June 2015 to finalize a \$1,075,000 acquisition of the MAS site. Marin County provided an additional grant of \$100,000; MAS and Marin Baylands Advocates raised the remaining \$575,000.

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), which provides funding for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands, and coastal watershed lands within the San Francisco Bay Area.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The Town of Corte Madera, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$260,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$260,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***8. East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Campos)
Contra Costa County
\$236,200**

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (ECCCHC) as well as the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to sub-grant these federal funds to the ECCCHC, for a cooperative project with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to acquire 80± acres of land for the protection and preservation of existing regional wildlife linkages, including annual grassland habitat, within the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (ECCC HCP/NCCP) plan area.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) known as Campos is located along Armstrong Road in the southeast corner of the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area, near unincorporated Byron, in Contra Costa County. The Property represents an important opportunity to expand the ECCC HCP/NCCP preserve system and link with existing and proposed ECCC HCP/NCCP preserve properties. Surrounding land uses include the Byron Airport as well as Byron Airport Habitat Management Lands managed by Contra Costa County, rural home sites, agricultural properties and open space. The Property is one parcel away from existing ECCC HCP/NCCP preserve lands.

The ECCC HCP/NCCP designates the Property as a high priority for acquisition and protection because it supports high quality habitat for several key species the ECCC HCP/NCCP covers. Specifically, the Property supports breeding and movement habitat for San Joaquin kit fox, and serves a critical connectivity function. The Property is near previously conserved areas within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area. Over the past several years the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), USFWS, ECCCHC, and EBRPD have partnered to acquire over 13,200 acres of habitat within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area, helping protect essential habitat and connectivity for multiple wildlife species. The project is also consistent with action proposed under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Wildlife Action Plan (Plan). The project is located within the Plan's Central Valley and Bay Delta region. Two of the recommended conservation actions called out for this region are protection of upland linkages and reduction of habitat isolation in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is 80± acres in size and is currently used for cattle grazing. The topography is rolling with several areas that are level. Elevations range from approximately 90 feet in the northeast corner to approximately 190 feet at the top of the highest hill located on the western portion of the Property. Annual grassland is the primary habitat type found on the Property.

The Property is in close proximity to several previous acquisitions within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area. These linkages include a movement corridor for the state threatened and federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox. Acquisition of the Property will protect suitable habitat for the state-listed threatened California red-legged frog and a variety of other important and federally and/or state-listed wildlife species including California tiger salamander, golden eagle, western burrowing owl and Swainson's hawk.

WCB PROGRAM

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

This Project is guided by the WCB Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:
Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

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

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 identified as a high priority for acquisition and protection in the ECCC HCP/NCCP and supports the recovery of listed species.

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

CDFW was instrumental in the creation and support of the ECCC HCP/NCCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, CDFW works with numerous private and public partners to develop a regional protection plan identifying properties to acquire for long term protection of habitat for plants and animals.

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

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

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$560,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and the USFWS. The owner has agreed to sell the Property for less than the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by EBRPD bond funds and the proposed WCB grant to ECCCHC. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant to the ECCCHC 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 WCB and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	226,200
USFWS subgrant funds	241,800
East Bay Regional Park District	52,000
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>\$520,000</i>
Other Project Related Admin Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$530,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with 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 the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of \$241,800.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$236,200.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant to ECCCHC and to cover the project-related costs; 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 Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of \$241,800.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$236,200.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant to ECCCHC and to cover the project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***9. East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Viera North Peak)
Contra Costa County
\$437,000**

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (ECCCHC) as well as the acceptance of two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants and the approval to sub-grant these federal funds to the ECCCHC to acquire 165± acres of land for the protection and preservation of existing regional wildlife linkages, including chaparral, oak woodland, and oak savanna habitat areas, within the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (ECCC HCP/NCCP) plan area.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property), known as Viera North Peak, is located at the base of the Diablo Mountain range in an unincorporated area of Contra Costa County, approximately three miles southeast of Clayton. The Property is bordered by Mount Diablo State Park to the north and west. This acquisition is a priority acquisition within the ECCC HCP/NCCP. Surrounding land uses include existing natural park lands, private cattle ranching, and rural development.

The ECCC HCP/NCCP designates the Property as a high priority for acquisition and protection due to its location within a critical linkage between previously conserved areas within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area. Over the past several years the WCB, USFWS, ECCCHC and the East Bay Regional Park District have partnered to acquire just over 13,200± acres of habitat within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area, helping protect essential habitat and connectivity for multiple wildlife species. The project is also consistent with action proposed under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Wildlife Action Plan (Plan). The project is located within the Plan's Central Valley and Bay Delta region. One of the recommended conservation actions called out for this region is protecting upland linkages and reducing the risk of habitat isolation in the eastern San Francisco Bay area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is 165± acres in size and "L" shaped. It is currently used as rural agricultural grazing land. The terrain of the Property is steeply sloping. Elevations range from a minimum of about 1,300 feet to a maximum of approximately 2,250 feet in the central area of the western half of the Property. Habitat types found on the Property include chaparral, oak woodland, and oak savanna. Perkins Canyon Creek runs across the northeast portion of the Property. Two tributaries of Perkins Canyon Creek are located in the northeastern and southeastern portions of the Property.

The Property provides major ecosystem benefits to species both on and off the Property by linking with other protected lands within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area and preserving habitat corridors. Acquisition of the Property will protect suitable habitat for the conservation of a variety of rare and important plant and wildlife species including California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, California tiger salamander, golden eagle, western burrowing owl, Alameda whipsnake, Mount Diablo manzanita, Mount Diablo fairy lantern and Brewers dwarf flax. The Property also offers benefits to wildlife in terms of future climate change resiliency by providing and connecting with varied terrains and elevations for species movement. The ECCCHC anticipates transferring the Property to California State Parks in the near future to be incorporated into the Mount Diablo State Park area.

WCB PROGRAM

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

This Project is guided by the WCB Strategic Plan and supports the following outlined goals:
Goal A.1 – Fund projects and landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the face of climate change.

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

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 identified in the ECCC HCP/NCCP as a high priority for acquisition and protection and supports the recovery of listed species.

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

CDFW was instrumental in the creation and support of the ECCC HCP/NCCP through its NCCP program. Under the NCCP program, CDFW works with numerous private and public partners to develop a regional protection plan identifying properties to acquire for long term protection of habitat for plants and animals.

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

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

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Save Mount Diablo (SMD), which currently owns the Property, has agreed to manage the Property once it is acquired by ECCCHC. ECCCHC plans to enter into a management agreement with SMD and to establish a management fund. Funding of future management activities for this Property will be determined by ECCCHC and supported in part through lease revenue from prior acquisitions within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area and the

management fund. ECCCHC anticipates transferring the Property to California State Parks and may offer some opportunities for passive recreational use, an allowed use under the ECCCHCP/NCCP. The habitat will be maintained and managed in conjunction with other properties in the ECCCHCP/NCCP Preserve System.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,080,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. SMD has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the proposed WCB grant to ECCCHC, due diligence costs, and start-up habitat restoration and management funds. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant to ECCCHC provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	427,000
USFWS subgrant funds(FY12)	432,600
USFWS subgrant funds (FY15)	220,400
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>\$1,080,000</i>
Other Project Related Costs:	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$437,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review 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 75055c (SSJD-NCCP) that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for areas in and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that implement or assist in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of funds from two Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants from USFWS in the amount of \$653,000.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$437,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) (SSJD-NCCP) for the grant to East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and to cover the project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and 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 Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; approve the acceptance of funds from two Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grants from USFWS in the amount of \$653,000.00 and the subgrant of these federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; allocate \$437,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) (SSJD-NCCP) for the grant to East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and to cover the project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***10. State Lands Lease-PRC 9173.9
Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties
\$0**

This proposal was to authorize the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to execute a lease with the California State Lands Commission (CSLC) to conduct fish monitoring and management activities at 51 locations in the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and the confluence with the Merced River. The lease will encompass approximately 919± acres of land under the jurisdiction of CSLC.

BACKGROUND

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) stems from a Settlement Agreement reached as a result of a federal court action, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) et al. v. Kirk Rodgers et al., which challenged the renewal of long-term water service contracts between the United States and water contractors within the Central Valley Project Friant Division. One of the primary goals of the settlement is to restore and maintain fish populations in good condition, including naturally reproducing and self-sustaining populations of salmon and other native fish in the Restoration Area (defined as the main stem of the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the confluence with the Merced River). As an implementing State agency for the SJRRP, CDFW proposes to monitor and manage fish populations, including spring- and fall-run Chinook salmon, in the Restoration Area.

To accomplish monitoring and management of fish populations, CDFW will use rotary screw traps (RSTs) and fyke nets to collect adult and juvenile Chinook salmon to monitor their populations and to transfer them to appropriate habitats up or downstream (trap and haul), if necessary. Monitoring activities will also include the use of acoustic receivers placed throughout the Restoration Area to determine migration patterns and habitat utilization by tagged fish. Net pens will be used to provide a temporary rearing space to allow juvenile fish to acclimate to river conditions and allow mass releases, improving the chance for successful outmigration to the ocean. Monitoring equipment will be installed in the San Joaquin River channel, which is under the jurisdiction of CSLC. On December 18, 2015, CSLC authorized the development of a lease with CDFW for 51 parcels of land totaling 919 acres (PCR 9173.9 or Lease). The Lease will allow CDFW to conduct fish monitoring and management activities at any of the parcels until December 17, 2025.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Monitoring activities will take place in the Restoration Area. The CSLC lease includes 51 individual sites, each with a radius of 500 feet, totaling approximately 919± acres (Table 1). Sites were chosen based on equipment needs and available access, are located on CSLC land throughout the Restoration Area, and are surrounded by and accessed through both public and private lands. Surrounding land uses are primarily agriculture and open space with a small proportion of gravel mining and urban land uses.

The large number of locations is needed to adequately assess Chinook salmon movements. Work will only be conducted in areas below the ordinary high-water mark of the San Joaquin River. A 500-foot radius was used to allow flexibility with equipment placement while ensuring that CDFW does not take on unnecessary liability for unused areas of the river. Any and all of the disclosed activities can be conducted within 500 feet of any of the coordinate locations.

Table 1: Locations included in the lease for RSTs, fyke nets, acoustic receivers, or net pens

Site	Site Name	Latitude	Longitude	Reach
1	Hills Ferry Barrier Site	37.347417	-120.974989	5
2	Casey Property Site	37.344176	-120.976154	5
3	China Island	37.335432	-120.964331	5
4	Great Valley Grasslands	37.310630	-120.938013	5
5	SR 140 Bridge	37.310000	-120.930556	5
6	SR 165 Bridge	37.295364	-120.851181	5
7	Van Clief Road Site	37.281995	-120.833372	5
8	San Luis Wildlife Area	37.236111	-120.814722	4
9	Sack Dam	36.983855	-120.500187	4
10	Sack Dam Upstream	36.982203	-120.499776	3
11	Firebaugh	36.858333	-120.448889	3
12	Lower Mendota Pool	36.792842	-120.371911	3
13	Mowray Bridge RM 205	36.782081	-120.369139	2
14	Upper Mendota Pool RM 205.5	36.7859	-120.362467	2
15	Downstream (DS) San Mateo	36.782101	-120.312864	2
16	DS CBS RM 216	36.773258	-120.283356	2
17	Bifurcation Structure	36.773250	-120.285349	2
18	Upstream (US) CBS RM 216.2	36.773389	-120.285356	2
19	Gravelly Ford	36.798355	-120.161264	2
20	Grangani RM 227.5	36.798394	-120.161092	2
21	DS Skaggs Bridge RM 232.7	36.825442	-120.080083	1
22	US Skaggs Bridge RM 234.8	36.817233	-120.045575	1
23	Sierra Runway RM 238.4	36.829033	-119.992625	1
24	HWY 99 DS RM 242.6	36.836875	-119.935756	1
25	Highway 99 Bridge	36.843765	-119.932331	1
26	HWY 99 US RM 243.5	36.8467	-119.930692	1
27	Santa Fe RM 245.3	36.848431	-119.907706	1
28	Moosios RM 246.1	36.851911	-119.8901	1
29	Lower Milburn Unit	36.856704	-119.879482	1
30	Upper Milburn RM 247.3	36.854881	-119.875394	1
31	Upper Scout Island RM 250.8	36.855261	-119.837039	1
32	Lower Scout Island	36.857767	-119.838172	1
33	Sycamore Island Lower RM 252.5	36.849758	-119.820739	1

Site	Site Name	Latitude	Longitude	Reach
34	Sycamore Island Upper RM 254.1	36.866478	-119.805547	1
35	Wildwood Flow Split RM 255.2	36.877411	-119.791286	1
36	Woodward Park	36.876632	-119.787627	1
37	Sportsmen/Fort Washington RM 256	36.882306	-119.784864	1
38	Brown RM 257.5	36.899536	-119.785603	1
39	Vulcan Access Point	36.909747	-119.772481	1
40	Vulcan Lower (owl Hollow) RM 258.8	36.910642	-119.7688	1
41	Vulcan Upper RM 259.5	36.915878	-119.75845	1
42	Rank Island Split RM 260.2	36.923097	-119.752828	1
43	Willow ER RM 260.9	36.931125	-119.751353	1
44	Upper Willow ER RM 261.6	36.938667	-119.746983	1
45	Ball Ranch Bridge RM 262.2	36.943842	-119.738481	1
46	Ledger Island RM 263.4	36.953872	-119.742856	1
47	Lower Lost Lake RM 264.8	36.972039	-119.739194	1
48	Lost Lake RM 265.5	36.979908	-119.731361	1
49	Across From Interim Facility RM 266.3	36.986253	-119.721003	1
50	Friant Dam RM 267.4	36.996658	-119.708244	1
51	Friant Dam	36.999000	-119.706740	1

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CDFW will use RSTs, collection boxes, and fyke nets to collect adult and juvenile Chinook salmon for monitoring or trap and haul purposes. Monitoring activities will also include the use of acoustic receivers placed throughout the Restoration Area to determine habitat utilization by tagged fish. Net pens will be used to provide a temporary rearing space to allow juvenile fish to acclimate to river conditions and allow mass release improving the chance for successful outmigration to the ocean. All activities will be conducted within the San Joaquin River channel.

TERMS

The Lease, which expires on December 17, 2025, does not require any monetary consideration; rather, it simply allows CDFW to construct, manage, operate and maintain structures on the leased land at its sole expense.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The proposed activities will allow CDFW to fulfill objectives to monitor and conduct research that will direct Chinook salmon management within the Restoration Area. Proposed activities are critical to gathering information, guiding restoration actions, and ascertaining the scope and breadth of intervention necessary to achieve the SJRRP Restoration Goal, which seeks

to achieve an ecologically functional river system that will support a self-sustaining and naturally reproducing fishery. As restoration proceeds, it is necessary to monitor habitat conditions and reintroduction success to identify any actions that may be required to manage fish populations. Fish monitoring and research equipment and activities are funded by CDFW and/or the SJRRP, and the leased parcels will not result in any significant new or increased management costs. The SJRRP partners that may also take part in proposed activities include the United States Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed Lease 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 which WCB may authorize CDFW to acquire rights in real property by various means including leases.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

No funds are being requested for this project. There is no monetary consideration payable under the Lease.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

As Lead Agency, CDFW prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff have considered the EIR 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. CDFW will manage and operate the equipment in accordance with the lease provisions and any federal and state permit requirements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB authorize the CDFW to execute Lease No. PRC 9173.9 to place, use, and maintain equipment to trap, hold, and monitor fish at 51 locations in the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and the confluence with the Merced River, authorize staff and CDFW 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 Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board authorize the CDFW to execute Lease No. PRC 9173.9 to place, use, and maintain equipment to trap, hold, and monitor fish at 51 locations in the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and the confluence with the Merced River, authorize staff and CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

- *11. San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Pond Isolation
Plant Establishment and Restoration Project
Madera/Fresno Counties
\$177,000**

This Item was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

***12. Western Riverside MSHCP (2015) - McLaughlin
Riverside County
\$589,750**

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 Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the Authority, to acquire in fee 476± acres of land for the protection of threatened and endangered species.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located near Hemet and is accessible from State Route 74 (Florida Avenue), which is the main artery running through Hemet. The Property is located south of Florida Avenue, southwest of Citrus View Drive and Fairview Avenue in an unincorporated area of Riverside County. Direct access to the Property is from a private gate off Fairview Avenue.

Just north of the Property is a housing development known as Wilson Mesa, which consists of 2,000-3,000± square foot single family homes. The land on the east side of Fairview Avenue and south of Citrus View is owned entirely by the County of Riverside, and the land west and adjacent to the Property is the City of Hemet's Simpson Park. The balance of the immediate neighborhood is very rural and primarily undeveloped. Other points of interest include Diamond Valley Lake (4± miles west), Diamond Valley Golf Club (4± miles southwest), Lake Skinner Recreation Area (10± miles southwest), and the San Bernardino National Forest (3± miles east).

The Property is situated in an area known as the Eastern Foothills target acquisition area. This habitat area compliments and supports the ongoing habitat acquisitions of the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP). The goal of the WRC MSHCP is to secure properties within this key regional transition zone, which includes wildlife linkages and core habitat areas that contain naturally occurring biotic and abiotic components and ecological processes. These processes are necessary for the maintenance of fully functional ecosystems and provide core living and breeding habitat for covered species.

The WRC MSHCP was established under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program under the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991 (Fish and Game Code Section 2800, *et seq.*). The NCCP program is a cooperative effort that includes both private and public partners and takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An NCCP identifies and provides for the regional or area wide protection of plants, animals and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The Eastern Foothills target acquisition area will contribute to this conservation network by supporting the long-term viability of the greater Southern California ecoregion and accommodating elevational range shifts in response to climate change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of four irregularly shaped unimproved parcels situated in two separate zoning designations – Rural Mountainous (RM) and Agricultural (AG). The vast majority of the Property is located within the RM land use designation with only a small portion on the north side (10% of the Property) designated as AG. Both the RM and AG designations permit single family dwellings on minimum 10-acre homesites. The AG designation also permits agricultural use on the Property.

According to the Authority's biological studies, the vegetation on the Property includes chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and grassland, and is located within a known Stephens kangaroo rat area. Other species known to occur in the area include the federally endangered coastal California gnatcatcher, Quino checkerspot butterfly and the least Bell's vireo. Land acquisitions within the Eastern Foothills acquisition area also support the USFW's recovery goals for the Quino checkerspot butterfly. According to the USFWS, conservation of these properties will secure an elevational gradient within conserved Quino checkerspot butterfly habitat. This habitat area links the lower elevation occurrence complex of the butterfly with the populations that exist in the Southwestern Riverside County Multiple Species Reserve, the upper elevation in the Anza area, and the National Forest east of the Property. Furthermore, acquisition will also provide landscape connectivity by eliminating the threat of fragmentation caused by development for all resident wildlife species.

WCB PROGRAM

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

The project meets the following WCB 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.

One of the goals of the WRC MSCHP is to preserve existing habitat connections by expanding a network of protected linkages. The Property will connect to other WRC MSHCP conserved properties, which promotes maintaining the genetic viability of listed/sensitive species being conserved under the plan. Wildlife linkages also provide ecosystem responses to climate change by incorporating elevation gradients that allow species and vegetation communities to shift upward in elevation.

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

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

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

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

species found nowhere else in the world. The extensive growth and urbanization of the area has resulted in the decline of these habitat communities. Since 2006, WCB and the USFWS Section 6 grant program have supported and participated in funding several acquisitions in the WRC MSHCP area to combat such decline.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,665,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and the USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match in the amount of \$867,050, which will be funded in part by the Authority and by the proposed grant from the WCB. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and subgrant of USFWS funds to the Authority provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	582,750
Authority	284,300
WCB – Subgrant of USFWS Funds	797,950
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>\$1,665,000</i>
Other Project Related Admin Costs	7,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$589,750</i>

It is estimated that \$7,000 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review. The Authority, as project proponent, will fund all other project-related administrative costs for the acquisition, including but not limited to the environmental site assessment, appraisal, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of \$797,950.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority, allocate \$589,750.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the WCB grant and to cover internal project-related expenses, and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of \$797,950.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Authority, allocate \$589,750.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the WCB grant and to cover internal project-related expenses, and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***13. Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Area - MRBL Property
Riverside County
\$410,225**

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to CVCC for a cooperative project with the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy to acquire, in fee, 370± acres of land for the protection of natural communities within the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Conservation Area that supports several listed species identified within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan area (CV MSHCP/NCCP).

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located in the unincorporated community of Mecca, in Riverside County. Access to the Property is from Lincoln Street near State Routes 86 and 111. The Property is approximately 15 miles south of Interstate 10 near the city of Indio, 12 miles west of Joshua Tree National Park, 8 miles east of Anza-Borrego State Park, and just two miles from the north shore of the Salton Sea. The surrounding area consists of agricultural land and open space. Less than a mile west of the Property, the Whitewater River flows south into the Salton Sea. The Salton Sea is a shallow, saline lake with a closed drainage basin encompassing 378 square miles and is the largest lake in California. The Salton Sea has been termed a “crown jewel of avian biodiversity” due to the 400 bird species that have been documented there.

The Property is in a region known as the Coachella Valley (Valley) which extends for approximately 45 miles in Riverside County southeast from the San Bernardino Mountains to the northern shore of the Salton Sea. The Valley is bounded by the outlying mountain ranges of the San Jacinto Mountains on the west, the Santa Rosa Mountains on the South, and the Little San Bernardino Mountains on the north and east. Approximately 100 miles east of Los Angeles, the Valley is considered one of the fastest growing areas in Riverside County. With a population of nearly 600,000 people, it is part of the Inland Empire the 13th largest metropolitan area in the United States.

The Property is identified for protection within the Coachella Valley Stormwater and Delta Conservation Area, a designated conservation area within the CV MSHCP/NCCP area approved for the Valley portion of Riverside County. The purpose of the CV MSHCP/NCCP is to provide a regional vision for balanced growth to meet the requirements of federal and state endangered species laws, while promoting enhanced opportunities for recreation and tourism. The CV MSHCP/NCCP aims to conserve an additional 240,000 acres of open space to support the 500,000 acres of pre-existing conservation land for the protection of 27 plant and animal species. With the support of other conservation partners, the State and the federal government have helped conserve approximately 86,000 acres within the CV MSHCP/NCCP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of 370± acres with topography that is generally level with a slight slope to the south. The Property is currently zoned for controlled development and for watercourse, watershed, and conservation areas. Allowable uses for these designations include, but are not limited to, single family dwellings, various agricultural practices, hunting clubs, trail bike parks and aquaculture. The Property currently supports seasonal duck hunting which conforms to the present zoning. Utilities on the Property include electricity and

two water wells. The Property contains several ponds and scattered wetlands that drain into the Salton Sea, as well as the natural habitat communities of cismontane alkali marsh, arrowweed scrub, mesquite bosque, desert sink scrub, desert dry wash woodland, desert fan palm oasis woodland, and coastal and valley freshwater marsh.

This acquisition permanently protects the Property, preventing future development and ensuring preservation of habitat that supports several state and federally listed endangered species, including the desert pupfish, Yuma Ridgway's rail, and the desert tortoise. In addition, there are also numerous unlisted species that will benefit from the protection of this Property. These include the California black rail, Orocopia sage, desert tortoise, flat-tailed horned lizard, Le Conte's thrasher, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, southern yellow bat, and crissal thrasher.

WCB PROGRAM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the close of escrow, the Property will be owned, managed and monitored by the CVCC. CVCC established an endowment that will support the monitoring and management of the Property in perpetuity. The Property will be maintained in conjunction with other properties contained within the CV MSHCP/NCCP. The Property may be considered for future appropriate passive recreational uses.

TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$2,287,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy and WCB. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to CVCC and the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the CVCC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant 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	400,225
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	1,486,550
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission	400,225
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>\$2,287,000</i>
Other Project Related Admin Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$410,225</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 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, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and to further implement habitat conservation plans.

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 \$410,225.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses, accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning grant in the amount of \$1,486,550.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$410,225.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses, accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning grant in the amount of \$1,486,550.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

***14. Otay Mesa Habitat Restoration Project
San Diego County
\$384,600**

This Item was withdrawn from consideration.

***15. Regional Conservation Assessment Methodology**

Statewide

\$290,000

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) for a cooperative project with the Conservation Biology Institute (CBI), the California Energy Commission (CEC), and the Bechtel Foundation to support the SGC's Integrated Regional Conservation and Development conservation planning program, which will result in the refinement of a technology platform that will allow the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) staff and others to better evaluate and prioritize conservation across the State.

LOCATION

The proposed project is envisioned to be a statewide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis (Program). The resulting product is intended to advance regional conservation actions. The Program will be developed and refined through this project by applying it to two United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) ecoregions that represent different data conditions across California. The two geographies proposed for this project include the Mojave Ecoregion, which represents a data-rich ecoregion, and the Modoc Plateau, which represents a region where conservation information is less well developed. The results from these demonstration pilots will be refined for broad application across all of California's ecoregions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The goal of this project is to integrate common goals and objectives of the WCB, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and SGC. The WCB's Strategic Plan calls for the development of a conservation vision for the State of California and the identification of the WCB's role in implementing that vision. For CDFW, the Governor signed legislation in 2016 (AB 2087) to create CDFW's Regional Conservation Investment Strategy pilot program, which encourages a voluntary, non-regulatory regional planning process intended to result in higher-quality conservation outcomes and includes an advance mitigation tool. One of the goals of that program is to create Regional Conservation Assessments (RCAs). A RCA is a voluntary, non-regulatory, non-binding conservation assessment that includes information and analyses of important species, ecosystems, protected areas and habitat linkages at the USDA ecoregion scale and may include more than one ecoregion. RCAs include information supporting development of long-term conservation priorities including ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water conservation, and preservation of agricultural lands.

The SGC was created in statute to support sustainable communities, social equity and environmental stewardship through the coordination of state agency activities. Separate from WCB's Strategic Planning process, SGC also identified the need for a "State Conservation Vision" to support a sustainable planning approach for development and conservation across each ecoregion. By working with SGC, a more unified process for evaluating conservation actions can be achieved.

SGC launched the Integrated Regional Conservation and Development (IRCAD) program in 2015 to advance its objectives. The IRCAD program is working toward a standardized approach to RCAs that would result in the identification of conservation priorities and sustainable protection strategies across ecoregions. RCA products will inform regional planning efforts to ensure impacts from development activities are minimized, and ensure

conservation activities are focused on regional conservation priorities. SGC established an inter-agency IRCAD Methods Working Group, consisting of members from CDFW, Caltrans, Department of Conservation, CEC, UC Davis, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, and Department of Water Resources to advance standards for the identification of priority conservation actions and implementation strategies.

This project will refine RCA methodology, data collection, and support technology to implement a transparent scientific process for the selection and monitoring of potential conservation investments. The Program will be a tool to select species and ecosystems as conservation priorities within an ecoregion, identify areas where these conservation values are present, and incorporate factors that will ensure the probability of long-term conservation success. Standards developed by the IRCAD Interagency Working Group will focus on the identification of conservation targets, development of conservation goals, determination of conservation values, and mapping these values for individual and specified target groups across an ecoregion. The information from the IRCAD will be integrated into the Program.

The Program, and its effectiveness, will be tested through pilot application in two ecoregions. SGC will implement, and WCB and CDFW will review, application of the Program within these two ecoregions and its effectiveness in identifying priority areas for conservation and restoration. The Program will include a technology decision support platform developed to integrate and manage regional conservation information for use by WCB, CDFW, and others in support of regional conservation decision-making and reporting. Customized functions will be created to define conservation priorities within an ecoregion and to identify general areas where these resources occur with optimal conditions for long term conservation success. These areas are defined by probability of occurrence, existence of opportunity factors (connectivity, landscape intactness, ownership), lack of threat factors (probability of development, susceptibility to climate change, presence of invasive species), and presence of ecosystem service co-benefits (carbon, water and agriculture).

The methodology and technology will be defined and developed through the WCB, CDFW and SGC partnership over the course of this project, and refined through its application to two demonstration ecoregions. The resulting Program could be a tool for future WCB project evaluation and will also be used to help identify areas for conservation and restoration statewide, and within identified USGS ecoregions.

WCB PROGRAM

The project supports multiple WCB Programs because it is anticipated it will be used for the development of scientific data, habitat mapping and other research information to complement other efforts in the development of statewide priorities for habitat restoration and for acquisitions of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, identify for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities.

The project furthers the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

Goal A. Environmental Protection and Conservation

- Focus habitat protection on statewide conservation priorities, including projects and landscape areas that are resilient to the impacts of climate change, provide conservation of water resources for fish and terrestrial wildlife, or provide for wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity.
- Continue funding the implementation of Natural Community Conservation Plans and projects that support the recovery of listed species.
- Seek to maximize environmental service benefits, such as protection of watersheds, water quality and sequestration of carbon.

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.

In addition, the proposed project will develop models that will advance the following priorities outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan as follows:

- Improve transparency and efficiency of WCB and CDFW project evaluation and recommendations to approve or deny applications.
- Provide species strongholds or refugia.

The project supports WCB’s achievement of one of its Guiding Principles which is to focus on statewide habitat conservation priorities and priority landscapes that fully represent California’s major ecoregions while allowing flexibility for conservation projects of local and regional significance

PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	SCG	CBI	CEC	Bechtel	Totals
RCA Methodology, Standards	70,000	40,000	0	100,000	170,000	380,000
RCA Demonstration Pilot	60,000	40,000	0	250,000	300,000	650,000
RCA Technology Support System	60,000	40,000	500,000	250,000	150,000	1,000,000
RCA Process, Prioritization	100,000	40,000	0	0	0	140,000
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$290,000</i>	<i>\$160,000</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>	<i>\$600,000</i>	<i>\$620,000</i>	<i>\$2,170,000</i>

Project costs will be for GIS tool development, developing technology and pilot demonstration map tools, team coordination, and travel. Additional contributions will be provided by the SGC, the CBI, the CEC, and Bechtel Foundation.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b), which can be used for the development of scientific data, habitat mapping and other research information necessary to determine the priorities for restoration and acquisition statewide.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends 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 a feasibility and planning study for possible future actions which the Board has not approved, adopted, or funded and is also categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15306 as information collection consisting of data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities. Subject to Board approval, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$290,000.00 from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$290,000.00 from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

16. Shasta Valley Wildlife Area Fishing Access

Siskiyou County

\$900,000

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to construct a boat launch facility on Trout Lake, renovate the entrance road, and replace a bridge over the Little Shasta River on CDFW's Shasta Valley Wildlife Area, (SVWA).

Peter Perrine presented the project.

LOCATION

Located approximately eight miles east of the city of Yreka and approximately 1.5 mile east of Montague in Siskiyou County, the SVWA was acquired by the CDFW and designated as a wildlife area by the Fish and Game Commission in 1991. It contains approximately 4,700 acres of Great Basin juniper woodland, riparian forest, seasonal wetlands, and crop lands, with Mt. Shasta as a backdrop. Sandhill cranes, waterfowl, raptors, and shorebirds are commonly seen at Shasta Valley. Deer, porcupines, and coyotes are among the mammals that can be seen. There are three deep water reservoirs, including Trout Lake, and numerous seasonal wetlands on the wildlife area. The SVWA is.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SVWA is a very popular recreational destination for thousands of northern California residents, receiving upwards of 15,000 day-use visitors a year for wildlife oriented recreation. Most come to fish the well-stocked lakes on the property. Visitors to the area come from a number of local small towns with combined populations of around 20,000 and several large cities within an hour's drive with populations of 100,000 or more.

Unfortunately, an entrance bridge is failing; restricting public access to the Trout Lake boat launching facility (BLF) and the entrance road is very narrow and unsafe. At the Trout Lake BLF, the existing gravel launch ramp can only be used under the best weather conditions and only by small boats and trailers. The facility is not accessible pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To address these problems, the SVWA Fishing Access project will widen and repave the wildlife area entrance road, replace/repair the public access bridge located on the Little Shasta River, and improve the boat launch facility at Trout Lake. The improvements at Trout Lake will include the replacement of a single lane gravel boat ramp with a new two lane concrete boat ramp and construction of a new boarding float system. Improvements also include the installation of a new fishing pier and paved parking for single car users and boat trailers. ADA compliant parking and walkways will be provided to allow full access to the pier, ramp and restroom.

The purpose of the project is to improve launching capabilities and provide safe access to the fishing opportunities at Trout Lake to accommodate the expected increase in annual usage of the facility. The objectives of this project are to provide safe facilities, reduce vehicle congestion for users by providing an efficient launching facility and improved parking, and provide for an increase in overall service capability for a higher volume of boat launchings and users. With these improvements, the area's day-use is expected to increase by 20%.

To implement this project, licensed engineers with CDFW will design the facility, prepare bid packages and hire contractors. The project will be implemented in three phases beginning with the bridge, followed by the boat launch facility, with the entry road constructed last. It is expected that three separate contracts will be awarded for the identified phases of work.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Public Access Program and meets the program's goal of providing public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSISTENCY

The project furthers the following goals outlined in the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Strategic Plan:

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.

Goal C. 4 – Place greater emphasis on projects that accommodate compatible wildlife-oriented public uses, while supporting urban areas and disadvantaged communities.

The Construction of the Trout Lake boat launch will provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for visitors, and will provide a variety of wildlife-oriented recreational activities including fishing, boating, and bird watching. These activities are compatible with the extraordinary diversity and beauty of the SVWA.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The useful life of the entry road should be approximately 20 years, with yearly maintenance required to assure the drainage swales on either side are maintained and the road shoulders remain intact. The bridge will have a useful life of 50 years or more and should require little to no maintenance. Trout Lake BLF will have a useful life of more than 20 years, and is designed to withstand heavy use with minimal maintenance. The project will be managed by CDFW.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Item	Cost
Entry Road	106,974
Bridge Replacement	75,285
Trout Lake BLF	553,707
Entry Sign	9,639
DGS Project Management	154,395
<i>Total Cost Estimate</i>	<i>\$900,000</i>

Project costs will be for the installation of an entry sign; the renovation of the entry road to the SVWA; the replacement of the bridge over the Little Shasta River; and the installation of a two-lane boat ramp, boarding floats, fishing pier, paved parking, sidewalks and other amenities at Trout Lake. In addition to these costs, \$154,395 is expected for the Department of General Services' (DGS) project management.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Restoration Fund, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. A Federal Sport Fish Restoration Act grant has been awarded, which will reimburse 75% of project costs to WCB upon completion of the project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration (ND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the ND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed the project and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$900,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; authorize the acceptance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFRA) reimbursement; authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Perrine said the project had been awarded a SFRA Fish and Wildlife Service Grant, that will reimburse the WCB 75% of the cost of the project and that Chris Ladeas and Eric Haney, both of CDFW, were present to answer any questions.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the public or the Board. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$900,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; authorize the acceptance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Act reimbursement; authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

- 17. Sacramento River Riparian Restoration, Rancho Breisgau
Shasta County
\$1,195,000**

This Item from consideration at this time.

18. Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area Engineering Study
Butte County
\$590,000

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited (DU) for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to conduct an engineering assessment of the water conveyance systems on CDFW's Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area (UBBWA) and develop a conceptual plan for the comprehensive upgrade of the water conveyance system, which will identify how to improve water use efficiency, water and habitat management, and public wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities.

Shawn Fresz presented to project.

LOCATION

The UBBWA is located approximately 11 miles west of Highway 99 on Highway 162 in Butte and Glenn Counties. UBBWA consists of about 9,692 acres and includes three units: Llano Seco (LS), Howard Slough (HS), and Little Dry Creek (LDC).

Historically, the lands included in UBBWA primarily supported seasonal wetlands and riparian habitat. Most of these lands were subsequently converted to agricultural production and used primarily to grow rice. UBBWA was acquired for CDFW by WCB through several transactions. These properties were acquired in order to preserve, restore, and enhance historic interior wetlands and waterfowl habitat, to provide agricultural wetlands for waterfowl, to protect, restore, and enhance wetland, riparian, and valley oak woodland ecosystems, and to help recover special-status species that may be present in the area. In addition, the UBBWA provides wintering and nesting habitat for waterfowl, added habitat benefits to both game and non-game species, and increases opportunities for public recreation such as hunting, warm-water fishing, and outdoor education.

General habitat types on UBBWA include wetlands, grasslands, riparian woodlands, and agricultural lands. Over 240 species of wildlife have been recorded on UBBWA. The area's wetlands provide critical breeding, migration, and wintering habitat for Pacific Flyway waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds. These wetlands support a peak wintering population of over 600,000 ducks. UBBWA also provides potential habitat for 21 special-status wildlife species, 14 of which have been observed in the area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Water conveyance capabilities on UBBWA's three units are currently limited and none of the units has a comprehensive water distribution system. Some of the existing water conveyance infrastructure is undersized, creating multiple chokepoints for water delivery in the systems. In addition, some of the wetland cells lack independent drain and fill capabilities. The LDC Unit lacks the necessary infrastructure to allow CDFW to integrate water management on that property with water management on the entire UBBWA. Due to topographic variation and location of existing water conveyance infrastructure on the HS Unit, water has to be lift-pumped multiple times to distribute it throughout the unit and this process is costly. Delivery conveyance canals that service UBBWA are owned by Western Canal. These canals are metered at outtakes that drain the HS Unit. Currently, outfalls from HS drain back to the metered canal system and are

pumped again back into the HS unit for irrigation and are respectively charged a fee multiple times. The water conveyance system improvement plan will identify these conveyance deficiencies and provide guidance in planning future infrastructure and wetland designs that will eliminate multiple charges for the same water to be used on the Area.

In order to increase water use efficiency at UBBWA, an engineering assessment of the water conveyance system on each unit is needed. The proposed assessment will document the capabilities of the existing systems and develop a conceptual plan for a comprehensive upgrade of the water conveyance system on each unit. When fully implemented in a separate phase, these identified system improvements will increase water use efficiency, habitat management capabilities, and reduce CDFW's operation and maintenance costs over the long term.

The proposed water conveyance system improvement plan will cover the entire 9,692-acre UBBWA. It will provide necessary studies and plans leading to a planned comprehensive upgrade of the water conveyance system on each unit, and plans for integrating the units within the system. The plan will identify system renovations that are needed to improve water use efficiency, water and habitat management capabilities, operational flexibility, and public opportunities for wildlife-oriented recreation; provide independent drain and fill capabilities to the maximum number of fields within each unit; maximize use of gravity flow and minimize use of lift pumping for water conveyance; reduce the number of times water must be lift-pumped within each unit; reduce mosquito production and the annual costs of mosquito control; decrease CDFW's staff time and annual costs to operate and maintain the water conveyance system and manage wildlife habitats on each unit; allow integration of potential future acquisition areas; provide system resiliency in drought or flood years. The resulting plan will not compromise existing water conveyance capabilities of neighboring properties and, it is hoped, it will actually improve the water conveyance capabilities of those properties. The conceptual plan will also prioritize system improvements, summarize existing water rights, identify opportunities to increase the water supply, and conduct future habitat restoration on each unit.

The plan will consider soils, archeological resources, and habitat for special-status species when identifying specific system improvements. The recommendations for water conveyance system improvements and opportunities for habitat restoration that are addressed in the plan will be consistent with the objectives of the Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area Final Land Management Plan that CDFW completed in 2013. When implemented, these system improvements should ultimately reduce operation and maintenance costs, improve water use efficiency, and improve habitat conditions for a diversity of wildlife, including several special-status species.

WCB PROGRAM

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 California's Central Valley. In addition, this project is consistent with wetland water supply goals for Butte County specified in the Central Valley Joint Venture 2006 Implementation Plan. This project will result in more efficient restoration planning and use of water and decrease the cost of annual water acquisition fees.

The project furthers 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 result in more efficient restoration planning, and future implementation should provide improved ability to move water efficiently in the future, and should enhance water resources for wildlife.
- Increasing water use efficiency will result in enhanced habitat for migratory birds and wetland dependent species.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The resulting water conveyance system assessment on each unit will document the existing capabilities and limitations of the systems and allow the development of a conceptual plan for the comprehensive upgrade of the water conveyance system on each unit and integration of each unit within the wildlife area system.

PROJECT FUNDING

Budget for UBBWA Water Conveyance System Improvement Plan Project

Cost Categories	WCB (Cash)	DU (In-Kind)	Totals
Topo Survey and Field Survey	146,724	0	146,724
Project Management, Stakeholder Coordination	98,400	0	98,400
Data Analysis and System Evaluation	151,530	0	151,530
Conveyance Improvement Plan Preparation, Maps	95,921	0	95,921
Travel and Expenses	27,778	0	27,778
Contingency (@7%)	36,329	0	36,329
Subtotal:	556,682	0	556,682
Project Administration (6% on WCB Cash)	33,318	0	33,318
Project Administration (8.02% on WCB Cash)	0	44,536	44,5360
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$590,000</i>	<i>\$44,536</i>	<i>\$634,536</i>

Project costs will be for project management, engineering surveys, data analysis, plan preparation and mapping.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as statutorily exempt pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262: Feasibility and Planning studies, as it involves feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$590,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), (Proposition IE) Inland Wetland Conservation Program; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Fresz reported that in the audience were; Ms. Virginia Getz and Craig Garner, both of Ducks Unlimited, and Tim Hermanson, CDFW.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the public or the Board. There were none.

Mr. Hunting commented that water efficiency efforts are taking place statewide and this is one piece in the Central Valley that will be accomplished with drought funding that CDFW has received and he is glad to see it happening.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$590,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), (Proposition IE) Inland Wetland Conservation Program; 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.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

19. Knights Landing Boat Launch Facility Construction
Yolo County
\$1,435,000

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the County of Yolo to re-construct the boat launch facility on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Knights Landing Public Access property, located in Knights Landing in Yolo County.

Peter Perrine presented the project.

LOCATION

The Knights Landing Boat Launch Facility is located on a 4±acre parcel (Property) near Knights Landing, adjacent to State Route 45 in northeastern Yolo County. The site adjoins Sycamore Slough, just west of the slough's confluence with the Sacramento River at River Mile 90. The Property is owned by CDFW, and is managed by Yolo County under a long term agreement. Knights Landing surrounds the site on the east and south, farmland and a small riparian area borders the site on the west, and the Sacramento River runs adjacent to the site on the north. The Property is located at the terminus of the Colusa Drain where it empties into the Sacramento River.

In 1958, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) acquired the Property for CDFW, and it was managed as a river access point. A permanent one-lane ramp was installed in 1970. Yolo County entered into a management agreement in 1978 and has operated and maintained the site ever since. Improvements completed since 1978 include a ramp extension and aluminum boarding floats and associated new wooden pilings.

The Knights Landing Boat Launch Facility is one of three public river access points along the Sacramento River that are managed by Yolo County; the others being at Elkhorn Regional Park, 20 river miles south of Knights Landing, and in the Delta at Clarksburg. Upstream on the Sacramento River, the nearest public boat launch is 55 river miles to the north at Colusa. The Property is well used for fishing, but also for hunting, water skiing, and incidental shore fishing and day use activities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Yolo County Parks Division completed a Parks and Open Space Master Plan (OSMP) in 2005 which recommended expansion of the boat launch facility at this site to increase the number of users and improve services to the public. The OSMP recommended a permanent restroom facility with running water, a fish cleaning station, an onsite park host, additional parking, and improved picnic facilities for expanded day use. The master plan also recommends on-site environmental enhancements such as preservation and restoration of riparian habitat.

In late 2008, Yolo County accepted a design grant from the California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) for capital improvement projects at the Knights Landing Boat Launch Facility, the majority of which were outlined in the OSMP. The DBW grant, which provided funding for engineering plans, was completed in 2015. The proposed project improvements reflected in the engineering plans will provide multiple user types opportunities to enjoy the site while enhancing park security and stability. Based upon the existing plans, Yolo County proposes to construct the following specific facility improvements:

- Replacement of the existing boat ramp with a longer and wider two-lane boat launch ramp and the installation of an 8-foot wide cabled fiberglass boarding float centered within the ramp for docking boats on either side.
- Expansion, re-pavement, striping, and curbing of the parking lot.
- Construction of a permanent waste vault for the park host site, and a fully contained restroom.
- Construction of a basic host reception/operations facility with essential utility hookups: electrical, phone, security, potable water, above ground water tank.
- Replacement of the existing Iron Ranger with an automated pay station.
- Construction of a new facility sign and interpretive kiosk adjacent to the public restroom.
- Stabilization of the slough banks with confinement fabric to reduce wake damage, and planting of native vegetation to stabilize the slopes and provide wildlife habitat.

Providing new and improved amenities at this site will increase site safety and convenience, help alleviate existing congestion during high-use periods, and expand public access opportunities to the Sacramento River.

The project is identified in and supported by DBW's *California Boating Facilities Needs Assessment* of 2000 (BNA), which is DBW's statewide comprehensive assessment of all boating facilities that the State provides to the public. The BNA includes projections of boating facility needs through 2020. The Sacramento River is listed as the "number one most used waterway" in the BNA's Sacramento Basin Region. The Knights Landing Boat Launch Facility, located in a section of the river with limited access points, satisfies a critical need on a highly used waterway.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Public Access Program and meets the program's goal of providing public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSISTENCY

The project furthers the following goals outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan:

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 provides boating access for a variety of activities to a section of the Sacramento River that has very few boat launching facilities.

Goal C. 4 – Place greater emphasis on projects that accommodate compatible wildlife-oriented public uses, while supporting urban areas and disadvantaged communities.

Knights Landing Boat Launching Facility provides direct public access for citizens in the small, disadvantaged community of Knights Landing. In addition, this popular facility attracts boaters from a many miles around, including the cities of Sacramento, Davis, Woodland, Marysville and Yuba City, who help support the local economy.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Yolo County identified the following key factors for successfully maintaining and managing the Knights Landing Boat Launch upon completion of this project:

- Maintain the site to a standard that attracts boaters to the boat launch facility.
- Meet current and long-range needs of the community and of boaters in the region.
- Successfully maintain the boat launch facility infrastructure.

To ensure long-term construction durability, 4” concrete will be utilized for all sidewalks, curbs and patios. Additionally, the parking lot and driveways will be 4” concrete asphalt. The restroom structure will be made from precast concrete with structural steel rebar. Restroom interior fixtures and hardware will all be commercial grade metal. Plant landscaping will be used for storm water and erosion best management practices in and around the perimeter of the parking lot, along with rock riprap for embankment stabilization. All materials used will only require periodic cleaning and no maintenance. The County estimates the life expectancy of the project to be 40-50 years.

This site is and will remain open to the public daily from dawn to dusk. Yolo County General Services, Parks Division, will be responsible for the long-term management of the site and project. The property is maintained under an existing Cooperating Agreement for Operation and Maintenance, entered into between the WCB, acting on behalf of the CDFW, and the County of Yolo. In addition, the WCB and the State Lands Commission (SLC) entered into a lease on SLC lands to assure the long-term viability of the boat launch facility. Finally, if at any time during the 25-year life of the project Yolo County does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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	Yolo County	Totals
Construction	1,166,000	41,765	1,207,765
Project Management	0	80,000	80,000
Permitting	185,000	0	185,000
Engineering	0	31,000	31,000
Contingencies	84,000	86,852	170,852
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$1,435,000</i>	<i>\$239,617</i>	<i>\$1,674,617</i>

Project costs will be for construction of a two lane boat launch ramp, installation of a boarding float for docking boats on either side, improvements to the parking lot, construction of a permanent waste vault and a fully contained restroom, construction of a host reception/operations facility with essential utility hookups, replacement of the existing Iron Ranger with an automated pay station, construction of a new facility sign and an interpretive kiosk, and stabilization of the slough banks.

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 development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. In addition, the project also qualifies for, and WCB staff has applied for, a Federal Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFRA) grant that will reimburse the WCB 75% of project costs.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The County of Yolo, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration (ND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the ND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,435,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize the acceptance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Act reimbursement; authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Perrine invited questions and reported that Kevin Yarris, Yolo County Public Works Director was in attendance and also available for questions.

Ms. Finn asked if the design has been developed and Mr. Perrine confirmed that it has been done. She also asked who will be responsible for any cost overruns, Mr. Perrine replied that Yolo County would be responsible. He added that a SFRA Fish and Wildlife Service Grant has been applied for and if awarded, would reimburse 75% of the costs.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any further questions or comments from the public or the Board. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,435,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize the acceptance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Act reimbursement; authorize staff and the CDFW to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**20. North Monterey County Amphibian Habitat Enhancement
Monterey County
\$347,000**

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC) for a cooperative project with State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), California Conservation Corps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and North Monterey County Unified School District (School District) to restore wetlands and uplands and enhance habitat for Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders.

Scott McFarlin presented the project.

LOCATION

The proposed project site is located on approximately 25 acres of land adjacent the north side of the North Monterey County High School (NMCHS) campus on Castroville Blvd, near Castroville in unincorporated Monterey County.

In 2005, the School District planned to construct a new middle school adjacent to the existing High School, at the proposed project site. These plans were never implemented, due to permit restrictions and a utility easement which prohibited building construction within the easement boundary.

The site was extensively graded in 2005-2006 before the building plan was cancelled. Dense stands of invasive vegetation intermixed with native plants currently dominate the site. Remnant spoil piles and depressions also remain in the project area, creating four ponds and seasonal wetland habitat. Historical aerial imagery indicates that the site was most likely used for grazing and that it did not originally support isolated seasonal wetlands before the site was graded.

During winter surveys in 2006-2008, both Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders (SCLTS) and California tiger salamanders (CTS) were captured on-site, indicating limited migration across the project site uplands for both species. Spring aquatic surveys in 2010 did not find evidence of breeding for either species onsite.

Starting in 2014, the School District coordinated with the Central Coast Wetlands Group (CCWG), the Elkhorn Slough Foundation, the Resources Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC), the USFWS, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to create plans to restore the environmentally sensitive upland and wetland habitat at the site, and to initiate new educational opportunities there.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will restore wetland and upland habitat for the SCLTS within the 25 acre parcel. Project work includes removing invasive vegetation, restoring and enhancing upland habitat, enhancing riparian corridors, reducing erosion, and installing trails. Enhancing the ponds will benefit breeding habitat, riparian corridors will assist amphibian migration, and restoration of upland habitat will benefit SCLTS. Trails will also provide recreational and educational opportunities to students and the public and protect sensitive habitat.

Several zones for vegetation enhancement have been identified. These areas, described below, will provide a continuous wildlife corridor for the SCLTS beginning in the Moro Cojo Slough, passing through potential breeding ponds, and ending in protected upland habitat that provides generous cover.

- *Riparian Zone:* Willow, dogwood, elderberry, blackberry, and mugwort will be planted. The riparian zone will extend around the ponds and between ponds where feasible.
- *Pond, Sedge and Juncus Zone:* The existing ponds are currently overgrown with bulrush and cattail limiting the ponds' potential as SCLTS breeding habitat. Removal of this vegetation will be a key part of the vegetation management plan. Rushes and sedges will be planted on the pond edges.
- *Native Grassland Zone:* Existing locations of native grassland will be preserved and enhanced through planting of creeping wild rye, purple needle grass, California fescue, and California poppy.
- *Oak Woodland Zone:* An oak woodland zone will be created on the back side of the restoration site beyond the shrub zone. Oak woodlands provide excellent upland habitat for the SCLTS. Native shrub species such as black sage and coffeeberry will be planted in the understory as well as blue wild rye and blue-eyed grass.
- *Shrub Zone:* The shrub zone is currently dominated by nonnative grass and shrubs as well as coyote brush. Female coyote brush will be removed to inhibit reproduction of this species. Other native shrubs such as coffeeberry, black sage, manzanita, and California lilac will be planted.
- *Corridor Zone:* The corridor zone will provide a key migration path from the Moro Cojo Slough towards the ponds. This zone will provide connection within the wetter riparian areas to uplands. This zone will be planted with species such as box elder, yellow lupine, elderberry and cottonwood. The corridor zone will provide cover for the SCLTS between riparian areas and ponds.
- *Locust Replacement Zone:* Nonnative locust trees will be removed and re-planted with native shrub species, such as California lilac manzanita, and coffeeberry. The shrubs will act as a transitional zone between the riparian zone, shrub zone, and oak woodland.

The site's main central pond provides good habitat for wildlife, including the threatened California red-legged frog, and wetland plants. The southeast arm of the pond will be excavated to create additional habitat. Additional work will include erosion control on actively-eroding gullies, and re-grading of upland soil mounds. Grading will increase topographic variability and provide an upland habitat complex for the SCLTS.

A network of approximately one mile of walking trails will be installed throughout the wetland and upland area. Three culverts will also be installed in key locations to provide drainage.

The project is consistent with the State Wildlife Action Plan, and it's identified priority to restore and protect wetlands on the central coast; the California Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan; and the Draft Recovery Plan for SCLTS (USFWS),

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD (WCB) PROGRAM

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

The project furthers 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 establishing native grasses and sedges in the planned seasonal wetlands and grasslands. This will result in the vertical accretion of soil at a rate higher than anticipated sea level rise.
- The project will provide corridors for SCLTS

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

Promotes student participation in onsite environmental education curriculum and stewardship

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

- Provide or enhance habitat connectivity and corridors
- Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The RCDSCC and technical partners will conduct biological monitoring for three years after construction. Success criteria will be determined using standard monitoring and assessment methods. Once the success criteria are achieved, active management of the site will be complete and long term maintenance strategies will be implemented. Long-term management will be the responsibility of NMCHS in cooperation with the RCDSCC, with technical assistance from the Central Coast Wetlands Group (CCWG) and USFWS.

Maintenance of constructed features supported by these grant funds will be overseen by the School District and under the WCB Grant Agreement will remain functional for the next twenty-five years. The USFWS will assist NMCHS with the long-term amphibian monitoring of the project and CCWG will assist with long-term vegetation monitoring of the project.

If at any time during 25-year life of the project, the RCDSCC does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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:

Project Task	WCB	USFWS	NOAA	SCC	Others	Total Cost Per Task
Construction	281,036	159,000	100,000	0	16,120	556,156
Project Management	44,134	0	0	53,000	0	97,134
Personnel	12,356	0	0	0	0	12,356
Operating Expenses	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000
Project Administration	8,474	0	0	0	0	8,474
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$347,000</i>	<i>\$159,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$53,000</i>	<i>\$16,120</i>	<i>\$675,120</i>

Project costs associate with this proposed project will be for earthmoving, revegetation, signs, trails, monitoring and project management.

The 25-acre restoration plan design was funded by a grant awarded to the RCDSCC by the State Coastal Conservancy. The plan design was facilitated by the CCWG and developed in consultation with a Technical Advisory Committee that included staff from USFWS, CDFW and the Monterey and Santa Cruz County RCDs.

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 threatened and endangered species, to provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The Resources Conservation District of Monterey County, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$347,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a) for the project; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Finn noted that the grant is to the Conservation District but asked for clarification on who would be responsible for maintenance and whether those responsible are qualified to maintain a restoration site.

Mr. McFarlin said there were those in attendance who could better answer and introduced Chris Coburn, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County. Mr. Coburn stated that initially, oversight and maintenance would be handled by the Central Coast Wetlands Group. Eventually, site maintenance would be overseen by the high school with the Resource Conservation District remaining the responsible party.

Director Donnelly added that the Grant agreement states that the site will be maintained for at least 25 years.

Mr. Hunting noted that he had a speaker card from Mr. Coburn and asked if he would like to say anything else.

Mr. Coburn thanked the Board for supporting the project.

Mr. Hunting reported a speaker card from Sarah Stoner-Duncan. Ms. Stoner-Duncan said the Central Coast Wetlands Group has been working with the school for several years and has participated in the design of the project. She said it's a great site given the close proximity to the school and that they are excited about the project.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were further any questions or comments from the public or the Board. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$347,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a) for the project; 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.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**21. Avenales Ranch
San Luis Obispo
\$2,395,000**

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Rangeland Trust (CRT) for a cooperative project with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to acquire conservation easements over 12,710± acres of land for the protection of open space and significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, including native oak woodlands, chaparral, annual grasslands, and riparian areas and watersheds, that benefit Tule elk and other wildlife, as well as to promote the preservation of habitat linkages and corridors between existing protected lands.

Jasen Yee presented the project.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property), known as Avenales Ranch, consists of 21 contiguous and non-contiguous assessor parcels involving a family ownership consisting of two parcels totaling 306± acres owned by the Schoettler Family Partnership, and 19 parcels totaling 12,404± acres owned by the Avenales Land & Cattle Company. Based on this ownership structure, two separate conservation easements will encumber the Property.

The Property 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 20 miles inland from the coast, in the central eastern region of the County, approximately 28 miles southeast from State Route 101 near Atascadero and 20 miles east of San Luis Obispo. Primary access to the Property is provided by Avenales Ranch Road, which provides entry at the northern boundary main gate and extends 10± miles through the central portion of the Property to the ranch headquarters.

The majority of the Property borders the Los Padres National Forest, including the Garcia Wilderness to the southwest, and the Machesna Mountain Wilderness to the northwest. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)-funded Carrizo Plains Ecological Reserve and the Carrizo Plains National Monument lie to the east of the Property. Nick Ranch, which entered into a WCB-funded conservation easement in 2011, adjoins the Property's northern boundary. The western portion of the Property serves as the starting point for the headwaters of the Salinas River, eventually draining into Monterey Bay. The eastern portion of Property serves as the watershed for Alamo Creek, a major tributary into the Santa Maria River, eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean near Guadalupe in Santa Barbara County.

The surrounding area includes a number of small to large scale ranches dedicated to cattle grazing, hay production and recreation, with some undergoing fairly recent conversions to vineyards over the last 20 years. There are also a number of scattered, small, home sites and retreat properties. These uses have become a popular trend for owners usually employed in the nearby cities, seeking a rural lifestyle with a reasonable commute. It is this conversion to vineyards along with smaller scale home sites that threatens the break-up of some of the larger scale habitat areas and corridors available to wildlife in the area.

Under the terms of the easements, rural residential subdivisions will be prohibited, preventing the fragmentation of the Property and preserving the habitat linkages and corridors created with the adjacent protected lands. Cattle ranching and grazing, along with agricultural practices will continue to be allowed, but managed and monitored to ensure the conservation values of the Property are not compromised.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property parcels form an elongated irregular shape approximately 13 miles long, running northwest to southeast, and up to 5± miles wide due to the outlying non-contiguous parcels. The topography varies from gently to steeply sloping terrain with elevations ranging from about 1,200 to 3,123 feet. The Property currently supports cattle ranching and recreation which conforms to the present zoning of agriculture. Under this designation, agricultural and accessory residential, storage, and processing uses are allowed. The Property currently qualifies for Certificates of Compliance on 89 underlying legal parcels for future potential development. Major improvements on the Property are contained to two areas; the Cotter Homestead in the northwestern portion and the Ranch Headquarters in the southern portion. The Cotter Homestead includes a 1,587 square foot single family residence, a barn, corrals, and perimeter fencing. The Ranch Headquarters includes four residences totaling 3,500 square feet, three barns, a shop/garage and perimeter fencing. Stock water for the Property is provided by the Salinas River, Machesna Creek, and Alamo Creek, as well as numerous springs, ponds, and wells.

The Property supports a variety of habitats characterized by extensive rolling annual grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian woodland and scrub, and chamise and buckbrush chaparral. Commonly observed species benefiting from these habitats include Tule elk, black-tailed deer, wild turkey, bobcat, coyote, black bear and mountain lions. Mallard ducks and western pond turtles are common in the various water sources of the Property.

Tule elk were voluntarily released on the Property in the early 1980's as part of a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) program to expand their range and provide an opportunity to increase genetic diversity within the species. A total of approximately 50 animals were released on three occasions, with some animals migrating from the Property to the Pozo and Alamo Creek areas. The current population on the Property is approximately 80 animals. Ten to thirteen calves are born each year, and up to four mature elk are taken annually by hunters who receive tags, as part of the CDFW Private Lands Management (PLM) program for elk hunting. Under this program, property owners implement habitat enhancement projects that benefit all wildlife such as building brush piles and improving year-round water availability. In exchange, the Property receives elk tags and can sell them to hunters, thereby offsetting costs associated with habitat improvement.

Hunting on the Property is limited to participants of the CDFW PLM program, along with the members of the private Avenales Sportsman's Club which allows approximately 25 hunters and guests to pursue deer, turkey and other animals.

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.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

Goal A.1 - Fund Projects and Landscapes that provide resilience for native wildlife and plant species in the of climate change.

The project preserves corridors that provide transitional habitat for wildlife to adapt to climate change by moving between the Property's lower elevation grasslands to the higher elevation habitat consisting of more diverse vegetation.

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

The Property is part of a LAE reviewed and approved by CDFW. Both the habitat and wildlife value, along with the potential to promote the preservation of existing linkages and corridors, supported the Property's identity as a priority for protection.

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

The conservation easements are being acquired with WCB funds leveraged by the funding partnership of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Also, CRT negotiated a purchase price that is below the approved DGS fair market value of the Property.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CRT will hold, monitor and enforce the terms of the conservation easements, which provide that the Property will be used primarily as an open space working landscape supporting cattle ranching and recreational uses. CRT currently holds 56 conservation easements covering over 282,000 acres. The landowner will donate funding into a CRT stewardship endowment to cover easement monitoring costs.

TERMS

The conservation easements have been appraised as having a combined fair market value of \$5,085,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owners have agreed to sell the conservation easements for a total price of \$4,085,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to CRT 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 seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the conservation easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	2,385,000
California Rangeland Trust	1,500,000
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	200,000
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>4,085,000</i>
Other Project Related Admin Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$2,395,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 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 and protection of habitat that accomplishes one or more of the following objectives: (a) promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, (b) protects habitat corridors, (c) protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems such oak woodlands, riparian and wetland areas, and other significant habitat areas. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b).]

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 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; allocate \$2,395,000.00 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 CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Yee shared a piece of video showing a mountain lion and her cubs hunting on the property.

Mr. Yee reported that in the audience were; Joe Navari and Michael Delbar, California Rangeland Trust; Will Noel, Avenales L&C; and Landowner, Steve and Jane Sinton, Avenales Cattle.

Mr. Hunting reported a speaker card from Will Noel. Mr. Noel said he grew up working on the ranch and appreciates its beauty and abundant wildlife. Thank you for preserving it.

Mr. Hunting reported a speaker card from Steve Sinton. Mr. Sinton said he is the fourth generation of his family on the ranch. He said all his life his father has talked about how important the ranch is and how it must be protected and that approval of this project today will make a 100 year old man (his father) very happy and thanked the Board.

Mr. Hunting said that was great to hear and thanked Mr. Stinton for sharing, he then asked if there were any further questions or comments from the public or the Board. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,395,000.00 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 CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

22. Valley Vista
Los Angeles County
\$1,010,000

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Santa Clarita (City) for a cooperative project with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) to acquire 200± acres of land to assist recovery of federally threatened and endangered species, provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, and provide the potential for future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

Brian Gibson presented the project.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The property (Property) is located within a larger region of undeveloped mountainous terrain on the southern border of the City in northern Los Angeles County, northwest of the intersection of Interstate 5 and State Route 14, approximately 35 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. The Property is accessible from The Old Road, which connects to the Calgrove Boulevard off/onramp from Interstate 5 to the north.

Located within the Santa Clarita Conservation Corridor Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), the Property is adjacent to public lands within the northern and westerly terminus of the greater Transverse Mountains ecosystem. These public lands include the Angeles National Forest and City protected open space within the San Gabriel Mountains to the east as well as SMMC protected lands within the Santa Susanna Mountains to the west. These public lands are themselves connected to additional SMMC lands, California State Parks Lands, and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation lands to the southwest within the Santa Monica Mountains. All of these areas including the Property effectively constitute a contiguous wildlands connection referred to as the "Rim of the Valley." The Property is immediately adjacent to the 302± acre Gateway Ranch property that was successfully acquired for conservation in October 2014 and partially funded by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is situated in a north-south canyon pass that connects the San Fernando Valley with the Santa Clarita Valley to the north. The Property is irregularly shaped and undeveloped. The Property is steep, with a 500± foot elevation differential between the high point at 2,100± feet and the lowest point at 1,600± feet. The zoning is A-2-1 Los Angeles County which is "Heavy Agricultural" and permits churches, mobile home parks, adult care, cemeteries, golf courses, and low-density single family residences. The Property is a portion of a larger conservation project which includes an additional forty (40) acres which the City will acquire concurrently with this acquisition.

The Property contains oak woodlands, riparian thickets, mixed conifer forests, and slumberous sub-associations of increasingly threatened Coastal Sage Scrub and Chaparral natural communities. The apex of a portion of two major watersheds, the Los Angeles River basin and the Santa Clara River basin as well as several perennial streams, springs and ephemeral drainages are located on the Property. Acquisition of the Property would protect an important linkage within a wildlife movement corridor connecting areas in the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Susana Mountains, Santa Monica Mountains, an area of critical habitat for the California condor in the Sespe Mountains, and critical habitat for least Bell's vireo in the Santa Clara River. The acquisition parcels are also included within designated critical habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher.

The Property will also protect habitat for the following federal Species of Concern: Davidson's bush mallow, Lawrence's goldfinch and oak titmouse; the following state Species of Concern: Blainvill's (Coast) horned lizard, coastal, Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, San Diego desert woodrat; and the following plants listed on the California Native Plant Society's Priority Lists: Parish's sagebrush, Peirson's morning glory, slender mariposa lily, and Plummer's mariposa lily. Securing and maintaining habitat, and habitat connectivity within this linkage, must be accomplished in an area where natural habitat is rapidly being lost to urban development and the acquisition parcels have been considered for commercial development in the recent past.

To accomplish anticipated shifting in distributions of vegetative communities and associated habitats resulting from climate change, species will need a range of large core habitat areas connected by landscape-level linkages. Regional planning and species recovery plans should continue to take into account species' habitat needs and linkages necessary to support movement and habitat fluctuations. It is important to continue the acquisition of linkages and corridors between major core habitat areas to allow for range shifts and migration of species. Acquisition of the Property will assist in completing an important linkage within a wildlife corridor allowing access to large areas of core habitat in areas of higher elevations up to 10,000± feet.

WCB PROGRAM

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

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

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

A.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 listed in the CDFW Santa Clarita Conservation Corridor Conceptual Area Protection Plan as a priority acquisition which will enhance a permanently protected wildlife movement corridor.

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

The Property is proposed to be acquired with WCB funds leveraged by matching funds from multiple funding sources.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The City will own and manage the Property after its acquisition. Funds for the management of the Property will come from the City’s Open Space Preservation District Fund. The City facilitated the preservation of over 8,500± acres of open space across the valley. Open space, unlike developed parkland, is not intended to have improvements or infrastructure beyond fencing, gates, American Disabilities Act required access improvements, and information kiosks. Hunting and off-road vehicles will be prohibited.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$3,265,608. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$3,250,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	1,000,000
City of Santa Clarita	1,111,000
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Prop 84	639,000
California Natural Resources Agency (EEMP)	500,000
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	<i>3,250,000</i>
Other Project Related Administrative Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$1,010,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000 will be needed to cover project related costs, including DGS appraisal review costs.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND State Recommendation

The project has been reviewed 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 \$1,010,000.00 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 to the City and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson stated that in attendance are Rick Gould, City of Santa Clarita, and Becky Bremser, The Trust for Public Land.

Director Donnelly reported that a letters of support had been received from; Assemblymember Dante Acosta; Dan Silver, Executive Director of the Endangered Habitats League; Paul Edelman, Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority; Cameron Smith, Mayor of the City of Santa Clarita, and Katherine Barger, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

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

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,010,000.00 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 to the City and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**23. Hanson El Monte Pond Restoration
San Diego County
\$426,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Lakeside's River Park Conservancy for a cooperative project with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to restore 97± acres of riparian habitat for threatened and endangered species, located on Endangered Habitats Conservancy property along the San Diego River in San Diego County.

Project presented by Don Crocker.

LOCATION

The project is located in the El Monte Valley in the city of Lakeside. The project site is north of El Monte Road, south of the San Diego River, approximately 5 miles west/downstream of El Capitan Reservoir, and immediately east of the Helix Water District's and the San Diego County Water Authority's pipeline easements and access roads. The project site was previously a sand mining operation, discontinued in the late 1990s, and the property was subsequently purchased by the Endangered Habitats Conservancy in 2009. The site was disconnected from the San Diego River in the late 1990's with the construction of a large levee to prevent pit capture during flood events. As a consequence, the site no longer receives water from the San Diego River to support a dynamic suite of riparian habitats and no longer supports its historic floodplain which increases the risk of downstream flooding.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to restore and enhance riparian vegetation communities that are currently present and sustaining in the vicinity of the project site. The correct growing condition will be ensured by testing the soil prior to planting and amending the soil for proper plant growth, if needed. Typical riparian species native to the site will be planted and are expected to be successful during and following the 5-year maintenance and monitoring period. Weed control measures will follow installation work. A temporary system of quick coupling valves will be provided to allow for the occasional deep watering of container plants to ensure their survival until they have developed an extensive root system and are acclimated to natural rainfall cycles. In addition, wetland establishment areas will be provided with the appropriate hydrology based on an extensive review of climate data and historic pond surface elevations in addition to groundwater data collected during geotechnical studies performed in 2013.

The project includes approximately 5.1 acres of riparian enhancement, 2.7 acres of riparian establishment, 0.5 acre of riparian restoration, 3.1 acres of freshwater marsh establishment, and 18.5 acres of freshwater marsh conversion and restoration. Freshwater marsh will be converted from open water through filling and raising the pond bottom elevations within the southern portions of the pond. Wetland enhancement activities will include removing invasive species and replacing them with native container plants and seeds. In addition, revegetation will include Diegan coastal sage scrub/broom baccharis enhancement, Diegan coastal sage scrub establishment, and coastal sage scrub restoration. The proposed project results in approximately 27.2 acres of wetlands establishment and restoration and 16.7 acres of coastal sage scrub restoration.

The revegetation areas will be planted with one-gallon and four-inch plant material combined with hydroseed. All container species and seeds will be common to the project's watershed area and appropriate locations in San Diego County. Plant and seed species composition will be subject to minor adjustments during revegetation construction plan preparation and

reviews.

Non-native plant control measures will include hand removal, cutting with mechanical devices, and herbicide application. Hand removal of non-natives is the most desirable method of control and will be used around individual native plants. Chemical herbicide control will be used for perennial/invasive species that are difficult to control by hand pulling. Weed control will be conducted carefully during the migratory bird nesting season to avoid disturbing active nests. Weed control efforts will avoid removal of invasive shrubs or trees during nesting period (March 15th-September 1).

Enhanced and established uplands and wetlands vegetation communities will provide additional nesting and foraging habitat for several animal species, including several special-status avian species including least Bell's vireo, southern willow flycatcher, tri-colored black bird, osprey, California gnatcatcher, yellow warbler, and cactus wren. Improved vegetation cover will provide better soil stability and result in less erosion and associated sedimentation. Less erosion is expected to result in improvements to water quality within the pond due to reduced turbidity. Improved vegetative cover by native species will help the site resist invasion by non-native perennial and annual weed species.

The Project is consistent with the San Diego River Conservancy Strategic Plan, San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan, and San Diego River Watershed Management Plan. These plans support integrating wildlife and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species into flood control activities.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD (WCB) PROGRAM

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

The project furthers 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 fish and wildlife habitat year round in the forms of enhanced/restored freshwater wetland and upland habitats,
- The project restores and enhances wetland habitats that support waterbirds, including migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

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 passive recreation, research, and educational use that are compatible with the environmentally sensitive resources of the area.

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

This project is a cooperative effort between Lakeside’s River Park Conservancy (Grantee), the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (Landowner), and the County of San Diego, which owns an easement over a portion of the property for trails and habitat. Project maintenance and management will be accomplished in three tiers. Monitoring and plant survivorship will be surveyed, recorded and photographed. Long-term maintenance will be implemented by the Landowner.

Monitoring will consist of qualitative field monitoring visits, and quantitative transect data collection conducted by the Grantee. An annual biological monitoring report outlining the results of the progress of the site will be submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board at the end of each year during the five-year maintenance and monitoring period.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the Lakeside’s River Park Conservancy does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	DWR ¹	Caltrans ²	Totals
Project Management	161,736	468,560	0	630,296
Environmental Permitting/Design	0	815,000	0	815,000
Construction	0	1,945,096	0	1,945,096
Revegetation	225,519	0	350,000	575,715
Contingency	38,745	0	0	0
<i>Totals</i>	\$426,000	\$3,228,656	\$350,000	\$4,004,852

¹ DWR: Flood Protection Corridor Program

² Caltrans: Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program

Project costs will be for project management, reporting, purchase of native plants and seeds, temporary irrigation, and miscellaneous supplies.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass outside the Central Valley. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley]

CEQA AND CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (CDFW) REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

As Lead Agency, San Diego County has prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the EIR and prepared proposed, written findings documenting the 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 recommends that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$426,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Director Donnelly addressed the group encouraging anyone wanting to speak to do so, he said that while the meeting began a little later than expected, there is plenty of time and the Board is happy to listen.

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

Don Crocker reported that Robin Rierdan, Lakeside River Park Conservancy was in the attendance.

Mr. Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the public or the Board. He reiterated that comments are welcome. There were none.

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$426,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**24. San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area Salt Cedar Eradication
San Diego County
\$552,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to California Deer Association for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to remove salt cedar from 418± acres of riparian habitat in order to improve habitat conditions for the federally listed bighorn sheep, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and yellow-billed cuckoo.

Project presented by Don Crocker.

LOCATION

The project area is located within the boundaries of San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area (SFVWA) in eastern San Diego County approximately 10 miles northeast of Julian between State Highways 78 and 79. The SFVWA is in the upper San Felipe Creek Watershed. SFVWA is situated in a unique location within the transition zone between the Volcan Mountains and the Colorado Desert, where the mountains and foothills converge, with the Volcan Mountains on the west and the San Felipe Hills on the east. The valley begins below the Teofulio Summit headwaters of San Felipe Creek and widens as it extends from north to south, along San Felipe Creek.

The SFVWA consists of approximately 17,800 acres that CDFW acquired and manages primarily for the protection and enhancement of mule deer and desert riparian habitat. The wildlife area consists of two large contiguous properties, previously known as the Rutherford Volcan Mountain Ranch (Rutherford Ranch) and Rancho de Valle San Felipe (Rancho San Felipe). The proposed project will be located entirely on the Rancho San Felipe portion of the wildlife area. Rancho San Felipe was a family-owned operation for nearly a century. Historically it was used for cattle grazing, limited agriculture, and private recreational uses.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Many riparian systems within the western Colorado Desert are infested with invasive and non-native plant species such as salt cedar, which can pose a major threat to these sensitive desert habitats. Dense stands of small to large salt cedar occur within the riparian zone of San Felipe Creek and its numerous side channels, and in the upland areas between stream channels. Salt cedar has the potential to be damaging to riparian and marsh habitats, and is therefore a species of particular concern for property owners and land managers in this region.

Like many invasive plants, salt cedar has no natural limiting factors outside its native range. Once established, it can out-compete native plant species and form dense, monotypic stands. Wildlife habitat quality is significantly degraded by these changes in vegetation structure and, in some cases, by the creation of physical barriers that can prevent wildlife access to water sources. Additionally, salt cedar is a prodigious water user that can reduce water availability for native plant and animal species.

Additional concerns about salt cedar are related to changes in natural water flow patterns and soil chemistry. Dense stands create large amounts of excess biomass that can potentially impede water levels and heighten flood risk during periods of high water flow. Increased erosion, streambank scouring and altered hydrology are frequently the result of dense infestations. Salt cedar also accumulates high salt concentrations in its foliage.

Subsequent drop of these high salt content leaves may increase soil salinity and discourage the growth of more desirable plant species at infested sites.

Salt cedar has been identified and mapped on a total of 591 acres of the SFVWA. CDFW has successfully treated approximately 173 of the 591 infested acres. This project proposes to conduct salt cedar eradication on the remaining 418 acres. If left untreated, the infestation could jeopardize the success of previous eradication efforts.

Salt cedar removal will enhance and protect biodiversity, watershed health and special status species while also reducing the risk of wildfire to the nearby communities of Julian and Shelter Valley. San Felipe Creek has long served as a primary stopover for migrating birds in the arid Colorado Desert and is an important resource for state and federally-listed species such as peninsular bighorn sheep, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and yellow-billed cuckoo.

The continued efforts of eradicating salt cedar in the project area will further benefit the peninsular bighorn sheep population by improving and protecting the San Felipe Creek water supply. Peninsular bighorn sheep occupying the San Felipe Hills and Sentenac Canyon areas of the Vallecito Mountains obtain water at various sites along San Felipe Creek immediately downstream of the project area. Prior to 2006, surveys for bighorn sheep documented only occasional use of the area by male bighorn sheep. However, recent surveys have revealed regular use by a small group of bighorn sheep containing both adult males and females. This represents establishment of a new ewe group within the Vallecito Mountains.

Successful completion of salt cedar removal and riparian habitat restoration on SFVWA and in the San Felipe Creek watershed would fulfill objectives of the multi-agency MOU regarding conservation and management of desert watersheds in San Diego and Imperial Counties signed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, CDFW, California Department of Parks and Recreation, University of California Davis, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey. Restoration of natural conditions along this valuable riparian system, as well as the protection of rare, threatened, endangered, and other special status species, are prime concerns of the state and federal land management agencies managing lands near the SFVWA. The removal of salt cedar in the project area will also meet recovery actions outlined in the 2000 USFWS Recovery Plan for bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, which include removing salt cedar and other invasive exotic plant species in areas within or nearby bighorn sheep habitat.

WCB PROGRAM

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

The project furthers 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:

- Provide climate change resilience by improving the diversity of habitats through the removal of salt cedar which can out-compete native plant species and form dense, monotypic stands.
- The project will enhance water resources for fish and wildlife by removing salt cedar which is a prodigious water user that can reduce water availability for native plant and animal species.

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

Provide or enhance habitat connectivity and corridors:

- The project will enhance desert riparian habitat at the project site that will be connected to previous salt cedar eradication project sites on adjacent CDFW, State Park and Bureau of Land Management-managed lands.

Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species

- The project will enhance habitat for state and federally-listed species such as peninsular bighorn sheep, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and yellow-billed cuckoo.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will monitor the project site at least twice annually for salt cedar re-infestation. Newly-discovered salt cedar plants will be mapped using GIS/GPS and immediately removed via hand-pulling or digging or herbicide application. CDFW will also monitor the project site at least two times annually for the recovery of native plant species, especially tree species. The Grant Agreement requires this long-term monitoring to take place for at least 25 years after the initial salt cedar removal project has been completed. This work will be done in cooperation with the California Deer Association.

The SFVWA Land Management Plan identifies periodic monitoring of all potential vireo, flycatcher, and cuckoo habitat in the wildlife area for species' occurrence. Coupled with the recovery of native tree species in the project area, this monitoring of listed bird species could provide important insights into the impacts that introduced tree species like salt cedar have on riparian bird populations.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the California Deer Association does not manage and maintain the eradicated sites, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	CDFW	Totals
Invasive Species Control	460,040	0	460,040
Technical Support, Management, Travel	91,960	17,189	109,149
Monitoring	0	2,949	2,949
	\$552,000	\$20,138	\$572,138

Project costs will be for the removal of invasive salt cedar and for project management.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of riparian habitat. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f)]

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends 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 in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$552,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife] to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

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

Don Crocker reported that in the audience were Pat Fitzmorris, California Deer Association, and Joel Trumbo, CDFW.

Ms. Finn asked how the eradication occurs. Joel Trumbo explained that eradication is a combination of physical removal and herbicide to treat the cut stump of the trees. The combination delivers a complete kill of the tree.

Mr. Donnelly said his initial concern regarding this project was the extent of tamarisk up the watershed but that CDFW has done a good job eradicating on their property upstream and that there is no visible infestation in either of the reaches. He said he now thinks the project will accomplish its goal.

Pat Fitzmorris, California Deer Association, thanked the Board for their consideration and also stated confidence that infestation is diminishing.

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

It was moved by Board Member Karen Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$552,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife] to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

**25. Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan
Informational**

Mr. Peter Perrine presented.

ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESSES

Because historical methods of evaluating projects for Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) consideration and ultimate funding are becoming increasingly insufficient as the WCB evolves, WCB staff in consultation with Board members, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and our partners, have researched and assessed alternatives to processes currently in place to evaluate projects for WCB consideration and ultimate funding.

Up until the early 1990's WCB authorities were specific to supporting the work of the CDFW through land acquisition, public access infrastructure, habitat restoration and fish hatcheries. Post 1990 WCB authorities were broadened from CDFW specific actions to allow the WCB to make grants to other State, federal and local agencies as well as non-profit organizations. At this same time, new programs were created and funding was allocated through legislation or bond acts to assist the WCB in providing a more focused approach to funding projects under specific habitat types, (i.e., Inland Wetlands, Riparian, Oaks, Forest, etc.). Today, the WCB manages eleven separate programs that offer opportunities to provide funding support for wildlife habitat acquisition, restoration and enhancement projects and wildlife oriented public access infrastructure.

To facilitate project evaluation under these eleven different programs, staff developed, and the WCB approved, independent application processes for each. For acquisition funding, these processes have not always been clear nor have they been transparent and easily understood by those who are looking to access WCB funding. For example, some require a direct application to WCB while others require application directly through the CDFW's Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan process (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP process was developed early in the history of the WCB to facilitate evaluation of acquisition projects for ownership and management specifically by the CDFW. The LAE/CAPP process was later modified to allow for the consideration of grants to other organizations, while maintaining the biological and scientific support necessary to advance a project to Board approval. However, uncertainty by those who are looking to apply for acquisition funding from the WCB continues because applicants are unsure whether they need to apply through the LAE/CAPP process, through WCB's direct application process, or both.

The process to apply to WCB for funding for habitat restoration and enhancement of public access infrastructure funding appears to be better streamlined and more efficient for those interested in securing grants from the WCB. This process requires initial consultation with WCB staff and a summary document describing the problem, goals and project outcomes. If staff determines that the project warrants further consideration, a full grant application along with DFW consultation is requested. Once WCB staff receives the full application, it is peer reviewed and prioritized and the project is developed for presentation at a subsequent WCB public meeting.

To better understand the options associated with accessing WCB funding, the following table illustrates the types of grant available under each program and identifies the process currently in place to evaluate a particular proposal:

Program Name	Type		Funding Request Process	
	Land or Water Acquisition	Restoration/ Enhancement	Direct WCB Application	LAE/CAPP
Acquisition	X			X
Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands		X	X	
Forest Conservation	X	X	X	X
Habitat Enhancement/ Restoration		X	X	
Oak Woodlands	X	X	X	X
Public Access	X		Construction	Acquisition
Rangeland	X		X	
Riparian	X	X	Restoration	Acquisition
Stream Flow	X	X	X	
Inland Wetlands	X	X	Restoration	Acquisition
Tax Credit	X			

Given the desire for a more streamlined and transparent process for acquisitions, WCB and CDFW staff have worked on developing a document and process to facilitate acquisition project reviews, with the goal of unifying the two funding request processes identified above. Working closely with CDFW staff, the unified process will identify how potential projects shall be evaluated, how they will be scored and by whom, and how to most efficiently move the successful proposals to the Board to be considered for funding. Once the process is complete, it is contemplated that all acquisition proposals, with the exception of Stream Flow, Public Access and Tax Credit acquisition proposals, will be solicited and evaluated under the same application and review process.

Mr. Donnelly offered a reminder that this Item is an update on one of four actions the Board charged WCB staff with in the continuing implementation of the WCB's Strategic Plan. The four steps were identified in September. This step specifically required staff to focus on the assessment and evaluation processes that the WCB uses to bring projects forward to the Board.

Director Donnelly stated that he would like to explain how the process became bifurcated. He said that before 1990 the WCB did not have authority to make grants to other organizations. The WCB was strictly the acquisition organization on behalf of CDFW. He explained that while the WCB independently did restoration and public access projects, any acquisition that the Board approved was an acquisition on behalf of CDFW. Post 1990, several legislative actions, as well as Bond acts, passed, creating new programs that not only provided funding for the WCB but also dedicated that funding to specific programs.

Along with those programs came the decision to implement a separate application process, internal to the Board. Subsequently, people would apply directly to the WCB. However, the WCB would turn right around and provide the application to CDFW for help scoring and evaluating the project. Over time, it became evident to staff that it made sense to consolidate this all into one land acquisition evaluation (LAE), which is for all intents and purposes, a grant application. So whether the applicant is CDFW or a non-profit, whatever we call it, the process is the same, it is an LAE. I hope that helps.

Director Donnelly also stated that his purpose at this meeting, as it relates to the LAE, is to ensure he has the Board's support for the concept. Assured of that support, WCB staff will continue to develop the document. When the document is available to be adopted, staff will present it, complete with the application questions and an explanation of the scoring process, to the Board and the public, proposing future use of the LAE for all acquisition programs at the WCB. He stated that it would be three to six months before the document is completely vetted. He added that another important concept the WCB is working with CDFW staff on, is a web-based tool that would allow people to apply on-line.

Mr. Hunting said he applauds the unified approach. He said that CDFW is also reviewing how they develop their internal proposals to go the WCB, more explicitly relying on the ACE model, and most importantly, relying on our state wildlife action plan, which was published last year. That is really our template for setting priorities on a regional basis.

Ms. Finn confirmed that it would all be public, including the scoring matrix:

Director Donnelly said that is correct. He stated that he envisions the LAE being handled the way the Streamflow Enhancement Program is handled now and how we will be handling the Public Access Program. The document, application questions, instructions of how to complete and an explanation of how the application will be scored will all be available on the WCB website. It will be transparent and efficient.

Mr. Hunting reported that he had on public comment card on this item: Darla Guenzler, Executive Director of the Wildlife Heritage Foundation, expressed appreciation and continued support for the WCB.

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

26. Resolutions

Executive Director Donnelly read the following into the official record:

Assemblymember Richard Gordon

WHEREAS, Richard Gordon, while a member of the California State 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 Assembly, he actively supported the Board's programs through his tenure as a member of the Assembly Budget Committee on Resources and Transportation and due to his unwavering resolve, was able to promote the Board's mission of wildlife resource conservation.

WHEREAS, Assemblymember Gordon, 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 Assemblymember Gordon have appreciated his consistent support, leadership, comments and advice, and have especially appreciated his ability to address and resolve resource issues in California, all of which have earned for him the esteem and respect of all who have worked with him; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to gratefully acknowledge his 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 Assemblymember Gordon our sincere appreciation for his noteworthy contributions to the Board, and express our best wishes to him as he continues on with his 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 Assemblymember Gordon.

Assemblymember Das Williams

WHEREAS, Das Williams, while a member of the California State 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 Assembly, he actively supported the Board's programs through his tenure as a Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and as a member of the Assembly Budget Committee on Resources and Transportation, and due to his unwavering resolve, was able to promote the Board's mission of wildlife resource conservation.

WHEREAS, Assemblymember Williams, 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 Assemblymember Williams have appreciated his consistent support, leadership, comments and advice, and have especially appreciated his ability to address and resolve resource issues in California, all of which have earned for him the esteem and respect of all who have worked with him; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to gratefully acknowledge his 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 Assemblymember Williams our sincere appreciation for his noteworthy contributions to the Board, and express our best wishes to him as he continues on with his 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 Assemblymember Williams.

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

Director Donnelly said he especially appreciated Rich Gordon's help with the appraisal processes and that his perspective had been invaluable. He also voiced appreciation for Assemblymember Williams help on budget matters.

Mr. Hunting echoed Director Donnelly's sentiments saying the recognition is well deserved.

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

Passed Unanimously.

Finn – Yes

Hunting – Yes

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

Respectfully Submitted

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director