



Notice of Meeting  
**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

May 25, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 112  
Sacramento, California 95814

*Final Agenda*

<u>Item Number</u>		<u>Page</u>
1.	Roll Call	1
2.	Funding Status — Informational	2
3.	Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 – 11)	10
*4.	Approval of Minutes- <a href="#">February 23, 2017 - Draft (pdf)</a>	10
*5.	Recovery of Funds	10

\*Proposed Consent Calendar

- \*6. [Rainbow Ridge](#) 13  
Siskiyou County  
\$40,000  
To consider the acquisition of a conservation easement (Easement) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007 and AB 32; California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. The Easement will protect 597± acres of land containing significant scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, wildlife, and increased direct carbon sequestration through increased growth and inventory, located near the city of Mt. Shasta in Siskiyou County. 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, promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species, protects habitat corridors, significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, mixed conifer forests, and riparian and wetland areas. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)]
- \*7. [Russian Gulch East Branch Fish Passage Improvement](#) 16  
Sonoma County  
\$52,000  
To consider the allocation for a grant to The Wildlands Conservancy for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and Natural Resources Conservation Service, to modify six large wood debris jams to improve fish passage conditions within the Russian Gulch East Branch, located on The Wildlands Conservancy's Jenner Headlands Preserve, approximately two miles north of Jenner in Sonoma County. 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 and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f)]
- \*8. [San Joaquin River Parkway, Jensen River Ranch](#) 20  
Jenco Farms Property Habitat Enhancement Project  
Fresno County  
\$271,800  
To consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to enhance 20± acres of riparian and upland habitat on the SJRC Jenco Farms Property, located approximately one mile upstream of State Route 41 in Fresno County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Parkway. [Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), California Water Code Section 79731(g)]

- \*9. [Simi Hills - 118 Freeway Wildlife Connector](#) 24  
Ventura County  
\$600,000  
To consider the allocation for a grant to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for a cooperative project with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to acquire in fee 213± acres of wildlife habitat, to maintain a migration corridor for the Northeastern Simi Hills mule deer herd, to enhance wildlife linkages, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located in the Simi Hills, near Simi Valley in Ventura County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)]
- \*10. [North Shore Ranch – Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Area](#) 27  
Riverside County  
\$407,500  
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 grant to CVCC to acquire in fee 76± acres of land for the protection of natural communities within the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta area that supports several listed species identified within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan area, located near the city of Indio, in the unincorporated community of Mecca in Riverside County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)]
- \*11. [Wildlife Conservation Board Sponsorships](#) 31  
Various Counties  
\$25,000  
To consider the allocation of up to \$25,000 annually from WCB's Operating Expenses and Equipment Budget to be used to sponsor meetings, conferences, workshops or other outreach methods that promote and support WCB's mission and Strategic Plan.
12. [Eel River Wildlife Area, Ocean Ranch Unit, Planning and Design](#) 33  
Humboldt County  
\$750,000  
To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and California State Coastal Conservancy to develop final restoration design, complete environmental review, and prepare permit applications to restore 473± acres of tidal wetlands and 329± acres of coastal dunes in the Eel River estuary, to aid recovery of listed fish and rare plant species, located on CDFW Eel River Wildlife Area 4 miles northwest of Loleta in Humboldt County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources, which allow for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands outside the Central Valley [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley] and 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. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

13. [Mailliard Middle Ranch](#) 37

Mendocino County  
\$2,389,179

To consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League to acquire a conservation easement over 4,046± acres of land for the conservation and protection of managed forest lands and forest reserve areas that include Douglas fir, old growth redwood, riparian corridors, coastal watersheds and riverine habitats, and support salmonids and other rare wildlife species located within the Garcia and Navarro River watersheds near Yorkville in Mendocino County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

14. [Mailliard West Ranch](#) 41

Mendocino County  
\$2,380,822

To consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League for a cooperative project with California Natural Resources Agency, to acquire a conservation easement over 7,193± acres of land for the conservation and protection of managed forest lands and forest reserve areas that include Douglas fir, old growth redwood, riparian corridors, coastal watersheds and riverine habitats, and support salmonids and other rare wildlife species located within the Garcia and Navarro River watersheds near Yorkville in Mendocino County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

15. [Carpenter Valley](#) 45

Nevada County  
\$3,510,000

To consider the allocation of a grant to the Truckee Donner Land Trust to acquire in fee 600± acres to help preserve montane meadow, wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, and to provide wildlife oriented public use opportunities located just northwest of the town of Truckee in Nevada County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of corridors linking

separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Proposition 84, PRC Section 75055 (b)]

16. [Garibaldi Land Exchange](#) 48  
Solano County  
\$440,000  
To consider the exchange of 278± acres owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for 289± acres, owned by Pacific Flyway Fund to serve as an expansion to CDFW's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area located in Suisun Marsh in Solano County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program]
  
17. [Grasslands Water Improvement Efficiency Project](#) 51  
Merced County  
\$688,000  
To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enhance 17,000± acres of habitat and to install water control and monitoring infrastructure within Los Banos Volta, and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas in Merced County, approximately 4 miles northeast of the City of Los Banos, CA. 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 inland wetlands [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786, Inland Wetland Conservation Program]
  
18. Los Angeles River - Taylor Yard G2 54  
Los Angeles County  
\$20,050,000  
This Item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.
  
19. Red Hill Bay Shallow Water Habitat, Augmentation 55  
Imperial County  
\$1,493,000  
This Item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.
  
20. [Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan](#) 56  
Informational/Action  
Staff will present next steps in the implementation of the WCB Strategic Plan by providing a draft of the guidelines, criteria and solicitation package for a new Public Access competitive grant program. In addition, staff will present an evaluation of all of the Board's funding programs to provide recommendations for any necessary modifications and to identify measurable goals for each.

21. [California Streamflow Enhancement Program](#) 62  
Informational/Action  
The 2017/18 final Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation) for the California Streamflow Enhancement Program will be presented to the Board for discussion and approval pursuant to the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), authorized by the voters in November 2014.
22. [Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Island Restoration Projects Funded by WCB](#) 64  
Informational  
Staff will offer a brief presentation on the success of these projects.

#### PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department's EEO Officer at (916) 653-9089 or [EEO@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:EEO@wildlife.ca.gov). Accommodation requests for facility and/or meeting accessibility should be received by May 18, 2017. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the EEO Officer immediately.



EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor  
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**  
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## WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

May 25, 2017  
10:00 a.m.

California State Capitol, Room 112  
Sacramento, California 95814

### 1. Roll Call

#### Wildlife Conservation Board Members

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

Michael Cohen, Member  
Director, Department of Finance

Eric Sklar, Member  
President Fish and Game Commission

Diane Colburn, Public Member

Mary Creasman, Public Member

#### Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Jean Fuller

Senator *(vacant)*

Senator *(vacant)*

Assemblymember *(vacant)*  
*Assemblymember Marc Levine -Alternate*

Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia  
*Assemblymember Miguel Santiago -Alternate*

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

#### Executive Director

John P. Donnelly

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	-900,000.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$100,000.00</i>
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
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	-1,932,328.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$18,730,672.00</i>
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-642,000.00
Total Project Development	-11,657,760.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$6,430,912.00</i>
(c) 2015-16 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-9,038,270.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$11,624,730.00</i>
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-980,111.00
Total Project Development	-8,781,890.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,862,729.00</i>
(d) 2014-15 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-17,228,794.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,434,206.00</i>
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-475,460.00
Total Project Development	-2,670,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$288,746.00</i>
(e) 2013-14 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
Non-budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,879,332.00
<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$783,668.00</i>
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,840.00
Total Project Development	-780,828.00
<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	-5,667,463.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$14,995,537.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	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	-15,975,133.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$4,687,867.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-1,671,897.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,015,970.00</i>
(h)	2010-11 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-19,339,897.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,328,103.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	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>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-237,089.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$130,248.00</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>
	May 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>	\$359,263.00
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$359,263.00
(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>	\$859,333.00
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$859,333.00
(m)	2006-07 SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND, (0005) (2015-16 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Capital Outlay Budget [Sections a3, a5 & a6]	\$15,224,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-15,170,125.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$53,875.00
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$53,875.00
(N)	1999-00 SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND, (0005)	
	Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]	\$36,100,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-36,012,120.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$87,880.00
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-87,880.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$0.00
(o)	2004-05 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND, (6029)	
	2014-15 Reappropriation	\$11,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-10,807,019.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	\$192,981.00
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	\$192,981.00

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(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>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,475,000.00</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	-259,405,518.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$13,594,482.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-600,000.00
	Total Project Development	-7,100,600.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,893,882.00</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>
	May 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	-695,993,418.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$45,418,582.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-21,543,000.00
	Total Project Development	-19,010,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$4,865,582.00</i>

(t)	2010-11 SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006, (6051) (2014-15 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$3,380,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-1,162,280.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$2,217,720.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-2,217,720.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(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>	<i>\$1,160,340.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$1,160,340.00</i>
(v)	2009-10 SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006, (6051) (2015-16 REAPPROPRIATION)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$5,200,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	25,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,175,000.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$5,175,000.00</i>
(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	-202,000.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$9,798,000.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-177,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$9,621,000.00</i>
(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>	<i>\$3,068,918.00</i>

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	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-2,485,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$583,918.00</i>
(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
	Balance	\$8,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-5,536,012.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$2,963,988.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	-2,963,988.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(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>	<i>\$2,808,319.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	5,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$2,803,319.00</i>
(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>	<i>\$11,266,257.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	-11,266,257.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
(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>	<i>\$0.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>

(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>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-4,770,001.00
	Total Project Development	-16,759,999.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$94,120.00</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	-105,455,320.00
	<i>Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$18,069,680.00</i>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-3,550,000.00
	Total Project Development	-4,150,000.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$10,369,680.00</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>
	May 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>
	May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-271,800.00
	Total Project Development	-0.00
	<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$3,218,200.00</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>
	May 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>
May 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)	\$100,000.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
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)	\$57,184,825.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,337,500.00
Total Project Development	-26,899,110.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$27,948,215.00</i>
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (m) and (n)	\$141,755.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-87,880.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$53,875.00</i>
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (o), (p) and (q)	\$15,262,463.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-600,000.00
Total Project Development	-7,100,600.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$7,561,863.00</i>
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (r) and (s)	\$45,418,582.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-21,543,000.00
Total Project Development	-19,010,000.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$4,865,582.00</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)	\$78,152,342.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-8,320,001.00
Total Project Development	-40,024,964.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$29,807,377.00</i>

Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (ae), (af) (ag) and (ah)	\$61,467,743.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-271,800.00
Total Project Development	-0.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$61,467,743.00</i>

TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$257,727,710.00
May 2017 Board Meeting Allocation	-33,072,301.00
Total Project Development	-93,127,554.00
<i>Projected Unallocated Balance</i>	<i>\$131,527,855.00</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 – 11)**

**\*4. Approval of Minutes- February 23, 2017**

**\*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	\$38,347.19
Wildlife Restoration Fund	\$0.00
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$47,666.39
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	\$2,602,102.85
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$19,718.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$3,809,049.00



<b>Habitat Conservation Fund</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Elkhorn Slough Land Exchange, Moro Cojo Slough - Calcagno, Monterey County	52,817.00	-45,120.00	7,697.00
Elkhorn Slough Land Exchange, Moro Cojo Slough - Calcagno, Monterey County	17,256.00	-7,630.95	9,625.05
Eticuera Creek Watershed Habitat Restoration, Napa County	370,000.00	-362,944.86	7,055.14
Irish Hills, Waddell Ranch, San Luis Obispo County	464,810.00	-459,810.00	5,000.00
Irish Hills, Waddell Ranch, San Luis Obispo County	40,190.00	-40,190.00	0.00
Pine Creek Linkages (Rose Ranch), Tehama County	1,547,000.00	-1,538,030.00	8,970.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund</b>			<b>\$38,347.19</b>

<b>Wildlife Restoration Fund</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Cayucos Fishing Pier Replacement, San Luis Obispo County	750,000.00	-750,000.00	0.00
Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area Ponds 1 and 3 Enhancement, Solano County	73,147.00	-\$73,147.00	0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Wildlife Restoration Fund</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
DFG Land Management Plans, Central Coast Region, Phase II, Various	442,000.00	-442,000.00	0.00
DFG Land Management Plans, Central Coast Region, Phase II, Augmentation, San Luis Obispo County	69,000.00	-69,000.00	0.00
DFG Land Management Plans, Central Coast Region, Phase II, EIR Augmentation, San Luis Obispo County	259,000.00	-215,214.61	43,785.39
Eticuera Creek Watershed Habitat Restoration, Napa County	145,000.00	-141,119.00	3,881.00
<b>Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>			<b>\$47,666.39</b>

<b>Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Chesebro Meadow, Los Angeles County	3,355,000.00	-3,350,000.00	5,000.00
Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area Ponds 1 and 3 Enhancement, Solano County	1,550,000.00	-1,262,714.01	287,285.99
Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project, Imperial County	3,315,000.00	-1,005,183.14	2,309,816.86
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>			<b>\$2,602,102.85</b>

<b>Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Bodega Marine Reserve Security and Resource Protection Project, Sonoma County	60,000.00	-60,000.00	0.00
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Coelho), Contra Costa County	464,239.00	-456,839.00	7,400.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, Jenco Farms, Fresno County	911,400.00	-911,400.00	0.00
Stewarts Point Ranch, Sonoma County	3,020,000.00	-3,007,682.00	12,318.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>			<b>\$19,718.00</b>

<b>Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Firebaugh Madera, Madera County	3,364,500.00	-0.00	3,364,500.00
Firebaugh Madera Floodplain Project, Madera County	104,549.00	-0.00	104,549.00
Spencer Ranch Water Rights, Siskiyou County	340,000.00	-0.00	340,000.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>			<b>\$3,809,049.00</b>

**\*6. Rainbow Ridge  
Siskiyou County  
\$40,000**

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of a 597± acre conservation easement (Easement) by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007 (CFLPA) with some funding provided by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB32) Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF). The Easement will protect 597± acres of land in Siskiyou County containing significant scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, cultural, carbon sequestration, and environmental values.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located approximately 2 miles northwest of the city of Mount Shasta, in the rural southern unincorporated area of Siskiyou County. The Easement lies within the Mt. Shasta Headwaters Forest Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), which encompasses approximately 3.1 million acres of land in the forest-dominated watersheds that feed the Sacramento River. Rainbow Ridge, a 3,500± acre area identified as a forest stewardship project area with conservation partners (Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District and U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service) is contained within this CAPP. Castle Crags State Park, Castle Lake, Lake Siskiyou, the Callahan Sisson Trail, and the Pacific Crest Trail are public recreation lands accessed at the southern end of Rainbow Ridge, and are located within several miles of the Property. The area is increasingly populated and there is development potential on portions of the Property. Subdivision of the Property's larger parcels is currently permitted by local zoning.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Easement provides an excellent opportunity to match the guiding principles of the Forest Legacy Program with the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Acquiring the Easement provides the impetus for additional forest stewardship on Rainbow Ridge, a priority area identified by CALFIRE and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The Easement will provide protection of a diverse mix of habitat communities, including connectivity of spring water to the Wagon Creek drainage of the Upper Sacramento River, providing wildlife habitat and drinking water along with permanent reduction in wildland fire risk to national forest land, neighboring residences, and city of Mt. Shasta. It will also ensure a significant portion of the Rainbow Ridge landscape remains intact as managed forestland. The Easement will create permanent protection from subdivision and residential development, and guarantee scenic viewshed in an area visited for its natural beauty. The Easement requires a forest management plan to be reviewed and approved every ten years by the easement holder and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

Adjoining public land managed by the United State Forest Service's (USFS) Shasta-Trinity National Forest are protected by a Late Successional Reserve management prescription that hosts a pair of spotted owls and other species associated with late seral stage forests.

The Property is within the Upper Sacramento River Watershed. The headwaters and stream channels within the Property are relatively undisturbed. By eliminating the possibility of development of this Property, the Easement will prevent degradation of this watershed.

## WCB AND CALFIRE PROGRAMS

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the CFLPA. The CFLPA, adopted in 2000 and amended in 2007 (Public Resources Code section 12200, *et seq.*), allows CALFIRE to accept lands and interests in lands to protect environmentally important forestlands that are threatened by present or future conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is to be given to lands that can be effectively protected and managed, and that have important scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural and environmental values. Under the CFLPA, WCB may acquire conservation easements on behalf of CALFIRE (Public Resources Code section 12240).

Proposals under the CFLPA are evaluated and recommended for funding by CALFIRE staff based on criteria established under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007. Eligible properties may be working forests where forestland is managed for the production of forest products and traditional forest uses are maintained. These forest uses include both commodity outputs and non-commodity values. The purpose of these easements is to maintain these forests intact to provide such traditional forest benefits as timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and increased carbon sequestration through increased growth and inventory and long-term management of the timberlands.

This proposal conforms to 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 Easement preserves existing habitat and wildlife linkages by expanding a network of protected lands. Habitat connectivity is essential in maintaining the genetic viability of the region's listed/sensitive species. By protecting wildlife corridors and reducing development in the area, the species will have the potential to move and adapt in response to climate change impacts.

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

This project will protect sources of water for the Sacramento River coming from numerous springs and tributaries on the Property. Protection of the Property's natural floodplain and riparian vegetation will allow for improved water quality and reduction of downstream flooding on the lower portions of the Sacramento River.

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

Under the California Forest Legacy Program, WCB is to assist CALFIRE with the acquisition of the Easement using Forest Legacy funds awarded to CALFIRE by the USFS and State GGRF administered by CALFIRE.

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CALFIRE will enter into the Easement with the Landowner and monitor the Property for compliance with the terms of the Easement. The Easement allows access by CALFIRE or its agents annually and once every three years by WCB and USFS for monitoring purposes.

**TERMS**

The property owner has agreed to sell the Easement to CALFIRE for \$470,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB and CALFIRE staff and reviewed and approved by the USFS and the Department of General Services (DGS).

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

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Federal Forest Legacy Grant (CALFIRE)	352,500
State Forest Legacy Grant through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF)	117,500
Total Purchase Price	\$470,000
Other Project Related Admin Costs	40,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>

It is estimated that an additional \$40,000 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs. These costs will be reimbursed by CALFIRE.

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006. [Proposition 84, Public Resources Code Section 75055 (b)]

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; approve the acquisition of the Easement over 597± acres on behalf of CALFIRE under the California Forest Legacy Act; 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) to cover the project related expenses; authorize staff and CALFIRE to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff, CALFIRE, and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

**\*7. Russian Gulch East Branch Fish Passage Improvement  
Sonoma County  
\$52,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and Natural Resources Conservation Service, to modify six large wood debris (LWD) jams to improve fish passage conditions within the East Branch of Russian Gulch located on TWC's Jenner Headlands Preserve (JHP), approximately two miles north of Jenner in Sonoma County.

**LOCATION**

The JHP totals approximately 5,630 acres and is located just north of the towns of Jenner and Duncans Mills. The property has been ranched and logged as commercial forestland since the late 1800s. In 2009, the Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) purchased the property with a number of partners providing acquisition funding. WCB provided \$8 million of the \$36 million purchase price of the property. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District holds a conservation easement on the property protecting it as open space in perpetuity. In 2013, SLT transferred the fee title of the property to TWC for the long-term management of its natural and cultural resources.

The Russian Gulch creek is located approximately two miles north of Jenner. The mainstem of Russian Gulch flows through the northern portion of the JHP and discharges into the Pacific Ocean downstream of the Highway 1 crossing. Approximately one mile upstream from its mouth, the mainstem forks into three tributaries referred to as the West, Middle and East Branches. A majority of the East Branch and contributing watershed is located on the JHP. The mainstem and the lower reaches of the three branches support current populations of the Northern California steelhead and historic populations of Central California Coast coho salmon.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

CDFW conducted stream inventories on the Middle and East Branches in 1965 and 2005. Among several of the recommendations from the 2005 survey, CDFW called for the removal of LWD jams in the East Branch. This recommendation is consistent with the recommendations in the Jenner Headlands Instream Habitat Assessment for the 2012 East Branch Russian Gulch Restoration Forestry Timber Harvest Plan (Fawcett Environmental Consulting, prepared for SLT) and the 2013 Russian Gulch Enhancement Plan (GHD, Inc., prepared for the SLT and TWC).

The Russian Gulch Enhancement Plan identified five sites containing six LWD jams that are critical fish passage and stream habitat impediments in the East Branch. It is likely that the wood within the jams are the remnants of historic logging activities within the watershed. Many of the LWD jams have at least one large key stump, with an intact rootwad providing the foundation of the jam. The log jams are so large and dense that they serve as barriers to anadromous fish. The barriers are as high as 14 feet and span the entire channel. The LWD jams block more than 3 miles of channel of the East Branch, much of it high quality anadromous habitat, significantly reducing available spawning and rearing habitat.

In consultation with several regulatory agencies including CDFW, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, TWC developed the preliminary design plans for removal or modification of the LWD jams in the East Branch. All work will be completed by hand crews, likely using methods discussed in the Russian Gulch Enhancement Plan.

The proposed project will modify six LWD jams to improve fish passage conditions within the East Branch. The modification will open the channel and restore habitat connectivity, benefiting steelhead populations in coastal streams and aiding in the repopulation of federally endangered coho salmon. The LWD barriers will be removed with hand tools and the woody material will be placed above high flow elevations or broken into smaller pieces to be carried through the system.

Two of the six LWD jams will be removed over two seasons to control the release of sediment. The remaining four LWD jams have little to no stored sediment that will be released by removal of the LWD jam, therefore they will be removed in a single season.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration, threatened and endangered species habitats, and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

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 enhance water resources for fish and wildlife that support migration and movement of species by restoring natural system hydrologic functions.
- Restore habitats for anadromous salmonids by improving watershed health, in-stream flows and fish passage.

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

- Provide or enhance habitat connectivity and corridors by protecting and restoring aquatic, wetland and migratory bird ecosystems including fish and wildlife corridors.
- Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species by improving fish passage and watershed health.
- Under-served communities will benefit. This project will aid in the restoration of the local fishery, providing economic benefits to the coastal communities around Jenner, a disadvantaged community.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Building upon the previously developed Russian Gulch Enhancement Plan, the Project Team will develop a Final Implementation and Monitoring Plan (Final Plan) to provide implementation guidance on removal of the wood debris. The Final Plan will specify hand removal methods previously approved by the permitting agencies, site access, sequencing, reuse of removed wood debris and best management practices.

The Final Plan to be developed as part of this project will provide specific details on pre- and post-project monitoring. Prior to any construction work, pre-project monitoring will be conducted. The objective of the pre-project monitoring is to set the baseline conditions against which the project will be compared. Project monitoring will establish pre- and post-construction physical monitoring protocol for the East Branch. The purpose of the monitoring is to determine the geomorphic response of the LWD jam modification. TWC will also work with CDFW, USFWS and NMFS to develop a biological monitoring plan to assess the ecological response for the project. The monitoring of the geomorphic response to the modifications will determine if the second removal season should occur in the second or third summer. The criteria for this determination will be identified in the Final Plan.

A Project Report will be developed including the Final Plan approved by CDFW/NOAA, a summary of the work completed, and the monitoring results. The monitoring results will include a post longitudinal profile for the different sites as well as other data collected.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, TWC 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:

Task	WCB	SCC	TWC	NRCS	Totals
Permitting		7,500	5,600		13,100
Planning	1,450	20,600	3,030		25,080
Construction	50,550	146,540	53,500	5,798	256,388
Monitoring and Reporting		25,360	21,610		46,970
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$52,000</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>	<i>\$83,740</i>	<i>\$5,798</i>	<i>\$341,538</i>

Project costs will be for preparing permit applications and supporting documents, finalizing implementation and monitoring plans, construction and oversight, monitoring and final report.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f), which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout.

#### CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The 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 15333, Class 33), as a small habitat restoration project of less than five acres in size to assure the restoration, enhancement or protection of habitat for fish. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$52,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

**\*8. San Joaquin River Parkway, Jensen River Ranch  
Jenco Farms Property Habitat Enhancement Project  
Fresno County  
\$271,801**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to enhance 20± acres of riparian and upland habitat on the Jensen River Ranch, Jenco Farms Property (Jenco Farms). Jenco Farms is a State-owned property under the management of the SJRC located approximately one mile upstream of State Route 41 in Fresno County.

**LOCATION**

The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is defined by state law as an area to encompass 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two mile long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and State Route (SR) 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources, and provide educational and recreational opportunities to local communities. The SJRC mission is to implement the Parkway Master Plan, including providing public access and restoring habitat within the Parkway.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved the acquisition of Jenco Farms for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in 2015, after which WCB facilitated transfer of control and possession of the property to the SJRC for inclusion in the Parkway for future conservation, open space, and public access purposes. Jenco Farms and the surrounding area are rural and historic uses of the property included agriculture. Jenco Farms lies between Friant Expressway and the County of Fresno's open space bluffs to the east and the San Joaquin River (river) to the west in the incorporated City of Fresno. The Parkway's Lewis S. Eaton Trail runs along the eastern border of the property and river frontage along the western boundary is approximately 1,250 feet. Jenco Farms provides habitat and public open space connectivity to the SJRC's 156-acre Jensen River Ranch just downstream and to the south as well as to the Trust's 28-acre Caglia Property to the north. Additionally, several private parcels with residential homes are directly to the northeast of Jenco Farms.

Jenco Farms is located on the river floodplain and gently slopes toward the river channel. The property contains retired pasture that has returned to nonnative annual grassland and a 50 to 100-foot wide band of riparian habitat adjacent to the river. Small mammals, songbirds, raptors, deer, and coyotes live and forage on site.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Trust proposes to enhance riparian and upland habitat on 20 acres within the 23-acre Jenco Farms. The project site is the gently sloping retired pasture east of the existing band of riverside riparian habitat. Since agricultural uses ceased in approximately 2000, the project site has remained relatively unchanged as an open field of annual grassland with no natural recruitment of native vegetation. Static conditions leave the project site at risk of further colonization by invasive exotic vegetation.

The proposed project includes planting and irrigation system design, permitting, onsite habitat enhancement, data collection and analysis, and environmental monitoring. Project implementation tasks include:

*Design and environmental permitting:* Design and environmental permitting will require approximately six months to complete. The Trust will collaborate with the SJRC and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to receive operating information and identify environmental requirements for connecting to an existing irrigation source previously installed by DWR on the adjacent Jensen River Ranch. Project design will avoid extensive earthwork. Soil and ground water analyses, along with irrigation design and planting plans will be contracted with qualified firms. Environmental permits will include a Streambed Alternation Agreement and other necessary permits.

*Planting and plant establishment:* Planting, maintenance, and monitoring are expected to take approximately three and one-half years to complete. The 20-acre project site will be prepared by pulling back small amounts of grassland vegetation; planting trees and shrubs using a low-impact, no-till method; applying weed-inhibiting materials such as mulch to reduce weed growth, retain moisture, and improve soil health; and installing protective cages around plants to reduce animal browsing, and installing an irrigation system. The Trust will contract with the Fresno Economic Opportunity Commission Local Conservation Corps (FEOC LCC) for assistance with tasks such as plant collection and propagation, planting, and plant protection. Subsequently, the Trust will check and maintain the irrigation system and weed around each plant. Survival rates will be monitored, and photo-monitoring will be completed. Based on monitoring analysis, the Trust will determine if the planting design requires alteration and will replace dead plants. Reporting will be done based on adaptive management and data analysis.

#### WCB PROGRAM

Proposition 1 grants recommended by the evaluation panel are the result of the competitive application and evaluation process contained in the SJRC Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Package approved by the SJRC Board. The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), California Water Code Section 79731(g), allocates funds for projects that provide multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects located within the boundaries of the Parkway and is consistent with the objectives of this Project.

WCB assists with the administration of project funding for the SJRC. The WCB, represented by its Executive Director, holds a position on the 15-member SJRC Board along with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), represented by the Central Region Manager. The SJRC Board reviews and approves projects to ensure they are viable and consistent with the goals of the SJRC Parkway Master Plan (1997) (Parkway Master Plan), prior to consideration by the WCB.

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 fresh water habitats, grasslands, and threatened and endangered species habitats.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The proposed project will improve habitat connectivity and diversity while increasing the acreage and quality of riparian and woodland habitat for resident and migrating wildlife. Enhancing habitat at Jenco Farms and creating natural connectivity with SJRC Jensen River Ranch and the Trust's Caglia Property are an important component to restoring the Parkway. The Trust draws on years of experience developing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects along the river, including within the San Joaquin River Parkway.

The goals and objectives of the project broadly include habitat enhancement and protection of ecosystems, wildlife corridors, and floodplains; and implementation of habitat improvements that benefit federal and state threatened and endangered species. These goals and objectives are consistent with the policies, goals, and objectives in the Parkway Master Plan, which include:

*Fundamental Goals*

- Preserve and restore a riparian corridor of regional significance on the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the Highway 99 crossing.
- Protect wildlife species that depend on or prefer the river environment.

*Natural Resources Goals (NRG)*

- NRG1. Promote the long-term preservation, enhancement, and public enjoyment of the aquatic, plant, and wildlife resources of the San Joaquin River and the river bottom.
- NRG2. Preserve existing habitat and maintain, enhance, or restore native vegetation to provide essentially continuous riparian and upland habitat for wildlife along the river between Friant Dam and Highway 99.

*Natural Resources Objectives (NRO)*

- NRO2. Protect and manage existing publicly owned land with suitable habitat as natural reserves and segments of wildlife corridor.
- NRO5. Revegetate with native species to close gaps in the wildlife corridor or enhance the effectiveness of buffer zones.

*Natural Resources Design Policies (NRD)*

- NRD1.3. Areas suitable for habitat restoration shall be restored by replanting or habitat management to encourage the establishment and growth of natural vegetation. Selection of restoration species shall be made primarily based on the hydrological climatic, and soil conditions, and secondarily on the objectives for recreational uses. Native indigenous riparian species shall be used to the greatest extent possible.

*Natural Resources General Policies (NP)*

- NP8.2. Preserve and incorporate natural features and supporting artificial features into the development's site design such that those features can serve as a buffer for, and enhance the ecological values of the river, wildlife corridor, natural reserve, or multipurpose trail.
- NP8.3. Incorporate the site's natural topography with respect to the design and siting of all physical improvements in order to minimize grading.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Item	WCB	Trust	Totals
Habitat Plans, Permits, Monitoring	11,880		11,880
Irrigation Design and Installation	35,000		35,000
Propagation and Planting	74,000	6,000	80,000
Maintenance and Irrigation	90,000		90,000
Contingency (10%)	20,000		20,000
Project Management	20,000		20,000
Negotiated Federal Indirect Cost Rate (15.16%)	20,921		20,921
<i>TOTALS</i>	<i>\$271,801</i>	<i>\$6,000</i>	<i>\$277,801</i>

The grant will cover project costs such as permit preparation and fees, environmental resources monitoring, plans and specifications; design and irrigation plans and installation of irrigation equipment; propagation, installation, and protection of new plants; and project management.

The Trust will contribute \$6,000 in in-kind services, consisting of volunteer hours to be spent planting the site.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of the proposed project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), California Water Code Section 79731(g), which provides for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Parkway.

**CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed project is included among the projects recommended by the SJRC Proposition 1 Evaluation Panel and considered by the SJRC Board. The project was approved for submittal to WCB by the SJRC Board on March 1, 2017.

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land, water and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$271,801.00 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), California Water Code Section 79731(g); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

**\*9. Simi Hills - 118 Freeway Wildlife Connector  
Ventura County  
\$600,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) for a cooperative project with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) to acquire in fee 213± acres of land for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, maintain a migration corridor of the Northeastern Simi Hills mule deer herd, enhance wildlife linkages, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located just south of the city of Simi Valley, in the southeast corner of Ventura County. The Property is situated roughly a mile southeast of the 118 Freeway, a quarter mile north of North American Cut Off Road, a quarter mile west of Black Canyon Road, and a mile and a half west of the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.

The Property is an essential component of the Santa Susana Pass inter-mountain range habitat linkage, which connects the Santa Susana Mountains to the Simi Hills across the 118 Freeway via a wildlife undercrossing. The Property is in the National Park Services' proposed Rim of the Valley Corridor, a proposal for expanding recreational area that would more than double the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. Nearby Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) projects include Ahmanson Ranch, a 2,959± acre project approved in 2003, Alamos Canyon, a 326± acre project approved in 2015, and Chesebro Meadows, a 71± acre project approved in 2016.

The Property is in two Conceptual Area Protection Plans (CAPP) developed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). It is a Priority 1 parcel in both the Chatsworth-Simi Divide CAPP and the Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP. The Chatsworth-Simi Divide CAPP encompasses 847± acres and was developed to provide long-term genetic health and ensure habitat linkages for species migration for ten sensitive species, including the State-listed-rare (California rare plant rank 1b) Santa Susana tarplant, and ten potentially present sensitive wildlife species, including the mountain lion. The Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP encompasses 166,411± acres was developed to link over two million acres of already protected habitat to create an expansive intact habitat containing about 40 different natural communities with over 50 species listed as threatened, endangered, or sensitive, and was designed based on the habitat and movement requirements of 20 focal species, including mule deer and mountain lion.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is undeveloped open space located on the north-facing slope of the Simi Hills and includes a hilltop with 360-degree mountain views. The landscape contains unique sand stone formations, rocky outcrops, caves, drainages, and at least 2,800± feet of an unnamed perennial stream within the Arroyo Simi – Calleguas Creek watershed. The vegetation communities include oak woodland, bay laurel woodland, chaparral, southern willow scrub, and coastal sage scrub.

The Property is irregularly shaped and is located on a steep slope with elevation varying from 1,150± feet to 2,100± feet above sea level. The ridgelines, rock outcrops, and steep slopes provide significant habitat and wildlife linkages between public lands to the north, northeast, south, and west. It is located in one of two such relatively undeveloped areas where linkage between the Los Padres National Forest to the Santa Monica Mountains is possible.

Preservation of the Property is a priority in preventing residential development from inhibiting species migration, protecting multiple gene pools for species, and protecting threatened species. The Property is a high priority since it borders Corriganville, a residential neighborhood in Simi Valley, on the north and borders undeveloped land, which can be developed for housing, on the east.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

Acquisition of the Property will preserve corridors that provide for transitional habitat to adapt to climate change by moving between the Property's lower elevation to higher elevation habitat and increase the wildlife migration by providing additional area in the Rim of the Valley Corridor.

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

The Property is identified as a Priority 1 parcel for protection in both of CDFW's Chatsworth-Simi Divide CAPP and Santa Monica Sierra Madre Linkages CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,960,000. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$1,200,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to RSRPD provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to

disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB or another entity approved by WCB and seek reimbursement of funds.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	600,000
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	480,000
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	120,000
Total Purchase Price	\$1,200,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$600,000</i>

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)]

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as 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 WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$600,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a), for the grant; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



**\*10. North Shore Ranch, Coachella Valley- Stormwater Channel and Delta Area  
Riverside County  
\$407,500**

This proposal is 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 to acquire, in fee, 76± 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 Habitat 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 Johnson Street near State Routes 86 and 111. The Property is approximately 15 miles south of Interstate 10 near the city of Indio, 12 miles southwest of Joshua Tree National Park, 30 miles northeast of Anza-Borrego State Park, and just 1 mile from the north shore of the Salton Sea. The surrounding area consists of agricultural land, duck farms, and open space desert land. Approximately one 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. The Valley’s urban and residential development has been growing quickly and, with a population of nearly 500,000 people, it is part of the Inland Empire the 13<sup>th</sup> 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, tourism, and job creation. 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 89,000 acres within the CV MSHCP/NCCP.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of 76± acres with level topography. 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 duck farming which conforms to the present zoning. Utilities on the Property include electricity and four groundwater wells. The Property contains three 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, 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:  
*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 CV MSHCP/NCCP as a priority acquisition that 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 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. The Property lies within the CV MSHCP/NCCP.

*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 leveraged by the matching funds from the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition 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 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 \$1,150,000. 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 WCB grant. 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	402,500
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	747,500
<i>Total Purchase Price</i>	\$1,150,000
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	5,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$407,500</i>

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

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

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

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$407,500.00 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 Plan grant in the amount of \$747,500.00 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.

**\*11. Wildlife Conservation Board Sponsorships**

**Various Counties**

**\$25,000**

This proposal is to consider using up to \$25,000 annually from WCB's Operating Expenses and Equipment Budget to sponsor meetings, conferences, workshops or other outreach methods that promote and support WCB's mission and Strategic Plan.

The Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) mission is to protect, restore and enhance California's spectacular natural resources for wildlife and for the public's use and enjoyment in partnership with conservation groups, government agencies and the people of California. In 2014, WCB developed its first ever Strategic Plan to establish the framework for implementing WCB's vision to support this mission. As part of that Plan, WCB adopted the goal of raising public awareness of key conservation issues and goals, and to educate and support local resource agencies and private landowners in protecting and enhancing habitat. To accomplish this goal, WCB committed to expand its outreach methods, including the support for conferences, meetings, workshops, events and other outreach methods, both for WCB staff and for its partners.

To accomplish this, staff expects to use up to \$25,000 annually from its operations budget to support these efforts, with up to \$5000 to be used for any one proposal. Applicants would provide a brief application and funding request, and identify the goal and expected benefits of the proposal. WCB staff will evaluate each proposal based on its ability to support the WCB mission and programs. Funding would be available only to State, federal and local agencies; tribes; and eligible Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Organizations.

Sponsorship criteria must include all of the following:

- WCB sponsorship supports the WCB mission/vision and effectively addresses one or more of the WCB program goals
- There is a public benefit component resulting from the WCB sponsorship
- The WCB will receive some type of reciprocal benefit from the sponsorship, such as free attendance for WCB staff, copies of materials developed, and/or public acknowledgement of WCB sponsorship
- The WCB sponsorship will promote the mission and vision of the WCB throughout a significant portion of the State.
- Recipients of a sponsorship will include WCB in any signs, demonstrations, promotional materials, advertisements, web sites, publications press releases, and exhibits associated with the proposed activity.

Other criteria taken into account when evaluating the strength of a proposal include the following:

- The WCB sponsorship will leverage other funding sources
- The WCB sponsorship will help catalyze the achievement of a WCB goal
- The WCB sponsorship will further partnerships throughout the State.

An example of the type of proposal WCB staff would support is a summit to be held in Davis, California, in October 2017: *2017 Riparian Summit, Confluence to Influence: Preserving and Enhancing the Multiple Functions and Services of Riparian Zones in a Changing Climate*. The Riparian Habitat Joint Venture (RHJV), which is the sponsor and lead of this conference along with UC, Davis and the Department of Water Resources, has a long and critically important history with WCB. Established in 1994, two years after the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program was created within WCB, the RHJV is a consortium of 18 agency and non-profit organizations, with the role of providing leadership and guidance to

promote the effective conservation and restoration of riparian habitats in California. WCB is one of the founding members of this joint venture and has benefited from the promotion by the RHJV of the science of riparian habitat restoration and management. The Summit will emphasize the role of science, policy, management and social factors in river-riparian management and restoration.

Summit topics will include the following:

- The multiple benefits of well-functioning riparian ecosystems (including recreation, water quality, climate change mitigation, wildlife habitat, and others).
- Riparian as infrastructure; e.g., flood mitigation, green infrastructure, transportation.
- Riparian responses to changing climate.
- Tools and methods to advance riparian management.
- Revitalizing riparian habitats in urban landscapes.
- Art and human interactions with riparian systems.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize use of up to \$25,000.00 annually from the Wildlife Conservation Board Operating Expenses and Equipment budget; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

**12. Eel River Wildlife Area, Ocean Ranch Unit, Planning and Design  
Humboldt County  
\$750,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to complete environmental review, develop final restoration design, and prepare permit applications for a potential future project to restore 473 acres of functioning tidal wetlands and 329 acres of coastal dunes in the Eel River estuary on the CDFW's Eel River Wildlife Area. The Wildlife Area is located 4 miles northwest of Loleta and 13 miles south of Eureka in Humboldt County. The restoration project would aid in the recovery of listed fish and special status plant species.

**LOCATION**

The project site is located on the Ocean Ranch Unit (ORU) of the Eel River Wildlife Area. The ORU extends along the north spit of the Eel River estuary until it meets Table Bluff at the south end of Humboldt Bay. The property currently contains five distinct muted tidal and seasonal wetland areas totaling 473 acres and is bordered by 329 acres of coastal dunes to the west.

Historically, this area was a part of the extensive floodplain of the Eel River estuary. Nearby areas were inhabited by the Wiyot Indians, who lived in villages near the mouth of the Eel River. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, settlers built levee systems to block tidal waters and facilitate agricultural activities. In 1986, CDFW purchased the property with Wildlife Conservation Board coastal wetland acquisition funds. Since that time CDFW has managed the site for wildlife habitat.

The property is located on the lower Eel River estuary, which contains approximately 33,000 acres of coastal floodplain. The ORU contains 473 acres of historic tidal wetland habitat with aging levee systems and tide gates that were built by settlers in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The intent of this infrastructure was to reclaim State tidelands for agricultural purposes and permanently block tidewaters from inundating the reclaimed land. During this process historic tidal channels were filled. Drainage ditches, fencing, roads and internal berms remain throughout the ORU, and are in a state of decay. Outside the levees, tidal marshes have expanded along Hawk Slough and McNulty Slough. Aerial photo sequences suggest that local erosion and widespread sedimentation occurred between 1948 and 1965, which contributed to the expansion of tidal marshes near the ORU.

The Eel River, California's third largest river system, has experienced an almost complete collapse of its once historic salmon fishery. Eel River's historic steelhead and salmon populations, with more than one million fish in good years, have declined to runs in the lower thousands. Degradation and loss of critical estuarine habitat through the construction of levees and dikes, primarily for conversion to agriculture, is one of the significant drivers of this collapse. Restoration of these habitats is vital to the recovery of anadromous salmonid populations in the Eel River, since estuaries provide critical nursery and rearing conditions for juveniles prior to ocean entry. Significant efforts are underway, in concert with the local agricultural community, to restore poorly functioning agricultural areas in the Eel River estuary to tidal marsh and freshwater riparian areas, thereby restoring significant areas of salmon rearing habitat.

A natural levee breach occurred in 1994 that allowed tidal inundation into the ORU via McNulty Slough. Several other breaches through existing infrastructure within the ORU have occurred, and at least one former road crossing is submerged at high tides. The levee surrounding a large freshwater pond was breached in 1998 and was repaired in 2006.

The site is located in a key portion of estuary that is utilized by multiple listed fish species. Given that this hard to maintain site is owned by CDFW, is partially breached, and provides opportunities to create fully functional tidal brackish wetlands critical to the recovery of listed fish species, this site is ideal for restoration to full tidal marsh by removing and breaching the remaining levees.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The primary goal of the proposed project is to complete planning, design and permitting for future implementation of a project to restore 473 acres of functioning tidal wetlands and 329 acres of coastal dunes in the Eel River estuary, to aid in the recovery of listed fish and special-status plant species.

In 2015, CDFW, the State Coastal Conservancy, and DU jointly funded a detailed feasibility study, with alternative design plans for tidal wetland restoration at the site. The feasibility study also included sections on the historic conditions of the site, hydraulic modeling, and project opportunities and constraints.

Project planning is the next critical step to achieving the restoration objectives. The project will include completion of appropriate environmental review, hydrodynamic modeling, wetland delineation, and special-status species surveys; submission of all required permit applications; and final restoration designs, specifications and construction cost estimates necessary to implement the project. Staff will coordinate meetings with project partners and local stakeholders to continue engagement and solicit feedback on the project.

To date, only one large-scale tidal wetland restoration (Salt River Ecosystem Restoration Project, Riverside Ranch, partially funded by WCB) has been implemented on the Eel River estuary. The proposed project will utilize the successful tidal restoration efforts at Riverside Ranch, as well as regional invasive species management plans, to guide restoration planning.

With the proposed grant funding, DU will complete the planning work for the construction of the Ocean Ranch Restoration Project (ORRP): a multi-benefit project including tidal wetland and coastal dune restoration, anadromous fish habitat enhancement, invasive species management, and coastal public access features. The proposed project will lead to a shovel-ready project, implementation of which would yield immediate habitat and species benefits.

Deliverables for this project include:

- Hydrodynamic modeling report
- 60% design plans (all alternatives for environmental compliance)
- Joint CEQA/NEPA document
- 90% and 100% design plans, specifications and cost estimates (preferred alternative)
- Permit application submittals



Planning, design, a joint CEQA/NEPA document, and permit applications will build upon information available from the previously completed feasibility study. This project will lead to the next phase of the ORRP which will include implementation and monitoring, for which the grantee plans to pursue state, federal, and private funding opportunities with project partners.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

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 assess the potential effects of climate change and sea level rise on the project area.

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

*Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species:*

The ORRP is uniquely situated to benefit several fish species through the restoration of estuarine wetlands, which serve as critical nursery and rearing habitat for anadromous species. The species include coho salmon (federal and state threatened), tidewater goby (federal endangered), Chinook salmon (federal threatened), steelhead (federal threatened), and longfin smelt (state threatened).

*Provide or enhance habitat connectivity and corridors:*

The design plans for the future implementation phase of the ORRP, when constructed, will allow for the restoration and reconnection of 473 acres of tidal wetland, critical estuarine nursery habitat for several listed fish species, to the Eel River estuary.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

This project supports the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (North Coast Resource Partnership 2014), which has a goal of ecosystem conservation and enhancement. This project supports the objectives of restoring functions to aquatic ecosystems and enhancing salmonid populations by conserving, enhancing, and restoring required habitats and watershed processes.

The project is also coordinated with the Lower Eel River Watershed Assessment (LERWA) (CDFW 2010), which recommends seeking ways to increase the overall tidal prism and tidal connectivity of estuarine wetlands within the Eel River estuary. The LERWA identified that extensive diking within the estuary has led to a decreased tidal prism and tidal flushing, and a resultant accumulation of sediments in the many now dead end sloughs. Increasing the tidal prism in McNulty Slough at Ocean Ranch will increase flushing and scour of accumulated sediments and help to maintain McNulty Slough channel depth. The proposed tidal restoration is cited by the LERWA as "likely the most feasible and practical action to achieve immediate benefits to increase productivity and restore fishery habitats."

The ORRP would restore the area to its historic condition as tidal wetland by creating new breaches in historic slough locations and excavating channels to help improve hydraulic connection to the surrounding network of sloughs. These changes would reduce costs to CDFW for maintenance, provide important estuarine habitat for fisheries, and allow for the management of invasive species both within the wetland and the adjacent dunes.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Task	WCB	CDFW	Total Cost
Project Management, Meetings, Coordination	60,000	-	60,000
Engineering Design	135,000	-	135,000
Hydrodynamic Modeling	80,000	-	80,000
Environmental Compliance	402,500	50,000	452,500
Project Administration	67,750	-	67,750
Contingency	\$4,750		4,750
<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>\$750,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$800,000</i>

Project costs will be for project design, permitting, engineering, environmental studies and analysis, restoration plan development, administration and project management.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, which provides for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands outside the Central Valley and 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 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 feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$600,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) and \$150,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

**13. Mailliard Middle Ranch  
Mendocino County  
\$2,389,179**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League (League) to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 4,046± acres of land for the conservation and protection of managed forest lands and forest reserve areas that includes Douglas fir, old growth redwood, riparian corridors, coastal watersheds, riverine habitats, and supports salmonids.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located north of Fish Rock County Road, 11 miles inland from the Pacific Coast, and west of Highway 128, approximately 7 miles west of the town of Yorkville. League is also requesting funding to support its 7,193± acre Mailliard West Ranch conservation easement project, Item 14, following in this Agenda, adjacent to this Property to the east, which, if approved, will record concurrently with this project.

Additionally, the League is separately pursuing placing a conservation easement on the 3,659± acre Mailliard East Ranch property to the east. The Mailliard Redwood State Natural Reserve is adjacent to the Middle Ranch to the south and Garcia River Forest is adjacent to the West Ranch on its western boundary. These protected lands, including both Mailliard conservation easement projects presented, if approved, will result in over 82,314± acres of contiguous permanently protected lands, including the Gualala River Forest, the Buckeye Forest, and conservation easements held by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District on the Flat Ridge and Cooley ranches.

The Easement will protect some of the last remaining groves of significant old-growth redwood forest and includes 8 miles of fish-bearing streams that feed into the Garcia River watershed and expands into the Navarro River watershed.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property consists of 16 APNs consisting of 4,046± acres; if approved, this project will prohibit subdivision of the Property into small ranchettes and vineyards. The terrain varies from flat valley floor to steep canyons to gentle ridgetops with slopes ranging from 0% to 80% and the elevations range from 400± feet above sea level along the Rancheria Creek to 2,100± near the center, which allows for species migration, in response to climate change. The Property consists of conifer forest, significant old growth and mature late seral state redwood groves, pristine riparian habitat, managed forest of mixed redwood and Douglas fir, grasslands, oak woodlands, and chaparral.

The Property is located in the Garcia and Navarro River watersheds, which are designated Critical Coastal Areas by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Board and are important to anadromous fisheries restoration, particularly for the populations of federally endangered coho salmon and steelhead. The Property and its diverse assemblage of high quality redwood, oak woodland, chaparral, hardwood, and conifer also supports the northern spotted owl. Additionally, this Property supports Townsend's big-eared bats, golden eagles, red tree vole, black-tailed deer, red and yellow-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, and marbled murrelets, as well as at least 59 native plant species.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, and utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry

expertise from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and CALFIRE. The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

The Property affords a variety of different terrain, landscapes, resources and elevation gradients, in addition to its proximity to other protected lands, which will further enhance habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity for numerous threatened and endangered species. Once protected, this Project will preserve habitat corridors stretching for thousands of acres west from the Garcia River headwaters to the coast, and thousands of acres south to the Buckeye Forest. This preservation of corridors, connectivity, and elevation change will allow species to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

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

The project will add to the significant protected forestlands nearby in Mendocino County, including the Garcia River Forest and the Mailliard Redwoods State Natural Reserve, thereby creating 82,000 acres of contiguous protected forests, habitat linkages, and fisheries resources. This will help preserve water resources for fish and wildlife.

*Goal A.5 – Improve transparency and efficiency of WCB and CDFW project evaluation and recommendations to approve or deny applications.*

The project was submitted under WCB's Forest Conservation Program. To qualify and be approved under the Program, the application must be reviewed and assessed by a review panel comprised of qualified biologists and foresters. The review panel consists of members representing CALFIRE, CDFW, and the WCB. All aspects of the project are evaluated by the panel to determine whether the project meets all Program requirements. This project has met all requirements under the Program. Any concerns uncovered during the evaluation have been addressed by the landowner and/or have been incorporated in the terms of the Easement.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The League will meet with the landowner and monitor the Property at least once a year to ensure the Easement terms are being honored, including implementation of forest management and grazing plans. A written report documenting the visit will be prepared and will note any significant changes to the resources or any compliance issues. If necessary, corrective action will be recommended and noted in the report. A copy of the report will be provided to WCB in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. The League informed the WCB that the landowner intends to register the Property for a carbon sequestration project.

**TERMS**

The Easement was appraised as having a fair market value of \$10,350,000. 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 Easement for \$6,268,355. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the League provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require specific performance by the League of the grant agreement or require the League to convey its interest in the Easement to WCB or, at the election of WCB, another entity or organization authorized by California law to acquire and hold conservation easements and that is willing and financially able to assume all of the obligations and responsibilities of the League.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	2,384,179
Save the Redwoods League	3,884,177
Total Purchase Price	\$6,268,356
Other Project Related Admin Costs	5,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$2,389,179</i>

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

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,389,179.00 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(a) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

**14. Mailliard West Ranch  
Mendocino County  
\$2,380,822**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League (League) for a cooperative project with California Natural Resources Agency, to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 7,193± acres of land for the conservation and protection of managed forest lands and forest reserve areas that includes Douglas fir, old growth redwood, riparian corridors, coastal watersheds, riverine habitats, and support salmonids and other rare wildlife species.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located north of Fish Rock County Road, 11 miles inland from the Pacific Coast, and west of Highway 128, approximately 7 miles west of the town of Yorkville. League is also requesting funding to support the adjacent 4,046± acre Mailliard Middle Ranch conservation easement project, Item 13 on this Agenda, which, if approved, will record concurrently with this project. Additionally, the League is separately pursuing placing a conservation easement on the 3,659± acre Mailliard East Ranch property to the east. The Mailliard Redwood State Natural Reserve is adjacent to the Middle Ranch to the south and Garcia River Forest is adjacent to the West Ranch on its western boundary. These already protected lands, including both Mailliard conservation easement projects presented herein, will result in over 82,314± acres of contiguous permanently protected lands, including the Gualala River Forest, the Buckeye Forest, and conservation easements held by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District on the Flat Ridge and Cooley ranches.

The Easement will protect some of the last remaining groves of significant old-growth redwood forest and includes 15 miles of fish-bearing streams that feed into the Garcia River watershed and expands into the Navarro River watershed.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property consists of 35 APNs consisting of 7,193± acres; if approved, this project will prohibit subdivision into small ranchettes and vineyards. The terrain varies from flat valley floor to steep canyons to gentle ridgetops with slopes ranging from 0% to 80% and the elevations range from 400± feet above sea level along the Rancheria Creek to 2,100± near the center, which allows for species migration in response to climate change. The Property consists of conifer forest, significant old growth and mature late seral state redwood groves, pristine riparian habitat, managed forests of mixed redwood and Douglas fir, grasslands, oak woodlands, and chaparral.

The Property is located in the Garcia and Navarro River watersheds, which are designated Critical Coastal Areas by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Board and are important to anadromous fisheries restoration, particularly for the populations of federally endangered coho salmon and steelhead. The Property and its diverse assemblage of high quality redwood, oak woodland, chaparral, hardwood, and conifer also supports the northern spotted owl. Additionally, this Property supports Townsend's big-eared bats, golden eagles, red tree vole, black-tailed deer, red and yellow-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, and marbled murrelets, as well as at least 59 native plant species.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, and utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry

expertise from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and CALFIRE. The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

The Property affords a variety of different terrain, landscapes, resources and elevation, in addition to its proximity to other protected lands, which will further enhance habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity for numerous threatened and endangered species. Once protected, this Project will preserve habitat corridors stretching for thousands of acres west from the Garcia River headwaters to the coast, and thousands of acres south to the Buckeye Forest. This preservation of corridors, connectivity, and elevation change will allow species to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

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

The project will add to the significant protected forestlands nearby in Mendocino County, including the Garcia River Forest and the Mailliard Redwoods State Natural Reserve, thereby creating 82,000 acres of contiguous protected forests, habitat linkages, and fisheries resources. This will help preserve water resources for fish and wildlife.

*Goal A.5 – Improve transparency and efficiency of WCB and CDFW project evaluation and recommendations to approve or deny applications.*

The project was submitted under WCB's Forest Conservation Program. To qualify and be approved under the Program, the application must be reviewed and assessed by a review panel comprised of qualified biologists and foresters. The review panel consists of members representing CALFIRE, CDFW, and the WCB. All aspects of the project are evaluated by the panel to determine whether the project meets all Program requirements. This project has met all requirements under the Program. Any concerns uncovered during the evaluation have been addressed by the landowner and/or have been incorporated in the terms of the Easement.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The League will meet with the landowner and monitor the Property at least once a year to ensure the Easement terms are being honored, including implementation of forest management and grazing plans. A written report documenting the visit will be prepared and will note any significant changes to the resources or any compliance issues. If necessary, corrective action will be recommended and noted in the report. A copy of the report will be provided to WCB in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. The League informed the WCB that the landowner intends to register the Property for a carbon sequestration project.



**TERMS**

The Easement was appraised as having a fair market value of \$10,950,000. 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 Easement for \$6,220,092. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the League provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require specific performance by the League of the grant agreement or require the League to convey its interest in the Easement to WCB or, at the election of WCB, another entity or organization authorized by California law to acquire and hold conservation easements and that is willing and financially able to assume all of the obligations and responsibilities of the League.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	2,365,822
California Natural Resources Agency	500,000
Save the Redwoods League	3,354,271
Total Purchase Price	\$6,220,093
Other Project Related Admin Costs	15,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$2,380,822</i>

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

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. 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 the authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,380,822 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(a) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

**15. Carpenter Valley**  
**Nevada County**  
**\$3,510,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) for a cooperative project with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) and the Northern Sierra Partnership, to acquire 600± acres of land to help preserve alpine forests and meadows, wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, and to provide wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located northwest of the town of Truckee, in the Truckee Donner area, north of Interstate 80 and west of Highway 89 within Nevada County. The Property covers 600± acres on both sides of Carpenter Valley Road in Carpenter Valley near Donner Summit. Resource values and outdoor amenities include mountain meadows, alpine forests, and streams. Surrounding development includes the Tahoe Donner community which consists of approximately 6,500 home sites, cross country and downhill ski areas, an equestrian center, golf course, and lodge. Independence Lake, which the Wildlife Conservation Board helped fund conservation of in 2009, is located immediately north of the Property on the north side of Carpenter Ridge.

The Property falls within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Sierra Valley – Truckee Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The objectives within the CAPP are to protect wetland, wet meadow, riparian, bitterbrush, and sagebrush habitats for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd as well as for many other wildlife species. The population of the interstate Loyalton-Truckee deer herd has declined over the last twenty years. One of the primary threats to the viability of this deer herd is habitat conversion and fragmentation from residential or industrial development and highway construction. It is imperative to protect summer ranges and important migration corridors for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd within the CAPP area.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property contains six Assessor's parcels and is irregular in shape. The ownership extends through Carpenter Valley. Carpenter Valley lies in the Prosser Creek and Truckee River watersheds and contains ideal habitat for willow flycatcher, Lahontan cutthroat trout, and many other species including mule deer, upland game birds, and waterfowl. The valley is a pristine riparian meadow system with topography ranging from gentle along the valley floor and meadow to upsloping to the south and north. The Property contains roughly two miles of frontage along the North Fork of Prosser Creek, which flows in a generally southeast direction through the south portion of the Property. The Property is unimproved with the exception of several dirt roads and a bridge spanning the North Fork of Prosser Creek.

The Property contains a variety of habitat types and is a top priority for biodiversity conservation in the Sierra Nevada by providing an extremely large, complex mixture of high quality Sierran habitat. The Property also has wet meadow, fresh water emergent wetland, riverine, and fen habitat types, as well as red fir, lodgepole pine, and mixed conifer forest. The Property supports wildlife species including black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, and various bird species and is summer range for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd. Several special status species may occur on the Property including willow flycatcher, wolverine, mountain yellow-legged frog, and Pacific fisher. Conservation of this Property will protect a valuable landscape from development, maintain habitat corridors, preserve views, and keep it available for a variety of outdoor recreation activities popular in the Truckee-Tahoe Area.

## WCB PROGRAM

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

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.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 Sierra Valley-Truckee Conservation Corridor Conceptual Area Protection Plan as a priority acquisition, which will enhance a permanently protected wildlife movement corridor.

*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 leveraged by matching funds from an additional funding source.

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TDLT will own and manage the Property. In the summer, TDLT will manage the Property for non-motorized public use. There is an existing network of trails which the public uses. In the future, TDLT may pursue opportunities to improve the existing trail system by adding new trails, dedicated trailheads, and signage, both directional and interpretive. TDLT currently manages over 15,000 acres and has experience in building and maintaining trails (over 25 miles), habitat restoration, forestry, and managing public access compatible with the natural resources.

Due to the success of its recent fundraising, TDLT has the financial resources to responsibly manage the Property and improve the wildlife habitat and resource values. For future management, TDLT will have an endowment of at least \$1,300,000, the interest of which will generate sufficient funds for annual management in perpetuity. TDLT also expects to receive additional public funds for forestry management, meadow restoration, and recreation.

## TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$4,350,000. 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 \$4,350,000. 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

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	3,500,000
CNRA EEMP grant funds	850,000
Total Purchase Price	\$4,350,000
Other Project Related Admin Costs	10,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$3,510,000</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 acquisition of corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)]

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,510,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

## **16. Garibaldi Land Exchange**

### **Solano County**

**\$440,000**

This proposal is to consider the exchange of 278± acres owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for 289± acres owned by Pacific Flyway Fund (PFF) to serve as an expansion to CDFW's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area (GIWA), Grizzly Island Unit in Solano County.

#### **LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The subject exchange properties are located in the Suisun Marsh in southern Solano County about 35 miles northeast of San Francisco. The marsh is bordered on the east by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, on the south by Suisun Bay, on the west by highway 680, and on the north by highway 12 and the cities of Suisun and Fairfield. The CDFW owned property (Exchange Property) is adjacent to highway 680 and is a portion of the 559± acre Garibaldi Unit of the GIWA. Public access is not allowed on the Garibaldi Unit which was acquired by CDFW for the purpose of conserving and enhancing wetland wildlife habitat and to act as a resting area for wintering waterfowl. The PFF owned properties (Acquisition Properties) are located six miles east of I-680 and are adjacent to the 8,700± acre Grizzly Island Unit of the GIWA. The Grizzly Island Unit is open to the public and provides various recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and hiking.

With 88,000 acres of land, bays, and sloughs, the Suisun Marsh is the largest contiguous estuarine marsh in the entire United States. The GIWA complex covers approximately 12,900 acres of this prime habitat and is a patchwork of 10 distinct land unit parcels, many of which are not connected and are surrounded by private land. The GIWA complex offers a variety of recreation opportunities and acts as a buffer against potential development pressures. The GIWA complex is a combination of natural tidal wetlands and artificially diked marshes that supports seasonal and tidal wetland habitat that is of particular importance to migratory waterfowl of the Suisun Marsh and the Pacific Flyway. The Pacific Flyway is a major north-south flyway for migratory birds in America, extending from Alaska to Patagonia. Every year, migratory birds travel some or all of this distance both in spring and in fall, following food sources, heading to breeding grounds, or travelling to overwintering sites. Numerous other species of wetland wildlife also use the GIWA complex including herons, egrets, shorebirds, and tule elk.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Exchange Property totals 278± acres and is bordered by I-680 to the west, private land to the north, and the retained portion of the GIWA Garibaldi Unit to the east and south. The Acquisition Properties total 289± acres and are adjacent to the Grizzly Island Unit to the east and private lands to the north, south, and west.

PFF is a non-profit corporation which has a charitable purpose of promoting the education and conservation of the Pacific Flyway. The proposed land exchange was requested by PFF so it could pursue its vision of permitting and constructing a Pacific Flyway Center (PFC) on the Exchange Property. The proposed PFC would be a nonprofit educational and interpretive facility that would introduce the public to the history and importance of the Pacific Flyway, and promote wildlife conservation by educating the public about land stewardship. The PFC would promote the restoration of wetlands, and allow the public to access and learn about the benefits wetland wildlife receive from restoration projects.

CDFW is agreeable to the land exchange for several reasons. The Acquisition Properties total acreage is slightly larger and more biologically valuable in terms of habitat types and diversity of wildlife species than the Exchange Property. In addition, the Acquisition Properties will increase the contiguous border within the Grizzly Island Unit of the GIWA, which will make management of the area more uniform and cost effective. As a condition and as consideration for CDFW agreeing to this exchange, CDFW will reserve covenants and restrictions over the Exchange Property for the benefit of CDFW. These covenants and restrictions will restrict future use and development of the Exchange Property. PFF will only be allowed to construct the PFC on the Exchange Property and in the interim, or if the PFC is never built, PFF is restricted in its ownership of the Exchange Property and is required to keep it in its existing natural condition to function as wildlife habitat. CDFW will also reserve an easement over the Exchange Property to access the retained portions of the Garibaldi Unit.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed exchange is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, et seq.), which authorizes WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with the acquisition of properties. Under Fish and Game Code section 1348(c)(2), WCB may authorize the exchange of real property or rights in real property held under the jurisdiction of CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

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

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

The Acquisition Properties provides a high level of wetland habitat integrity that supports migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

*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 submitted a Land Conversion Evaluation to WCB detailing the reasons and justifications for entering into and completing the proposed exchange of properties.

*Goal C.1 – Support a wide range of recreational activities in conjunction with other uses and without degrading environmental resources.*

The Acquisition Properties will be managed by CDFW staff to provide the public an additional 289± acres to recreate in the form of hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and fishing.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

#### TERMS

The Acquisition Properties have been appraised as having a fair market value of \$900,000. The Exchange Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$500,000. WCB will compensate PFF \$400,000 for the difference in value between the Acquisition Properties and the Exchange Property. The appraisals covering all the properties have been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, exchange documents, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to the exchange.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The Proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	400,000
Total Purchase Price	\$400,000
Other Project Related Admin Costs	40,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$440,000</i>

It is estimated that an allocation of \$40,000 will be needed to cover upfront project related administrative costs by WCB, including the DGS appraisal and transactional review. All project related expenses will be reimbursed by PFF and the amount will be deposited back into the fund from which it was paid. PFF will also bear the cost of all environmental assessments, appraisal report, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs related to the exchange.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands in the Central Valley. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program]

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

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this exchange project as proposed; allocate \$440,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) to pay for the difference between the exchange property and the acquisition properties, and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to accept reimbursement of internal project-related expenses by PFF; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



## 17. Grasslands Water Improvement Efficiency Project

### Merced County

**\$688,000**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to enhance 17,000± acres of habitat and to install water control and monitoring infrastructure within the Los Banos, Volta, and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas (WA) approximately 4 miles northeast of the City of Los Banos.

#### LOCATION

The project will occur on three CDFW Wildlife Areas including the North Grasslands Wildlife Area, Volta Wildlife Area, and Los Banos WA. Currently, they are primarily managed as seasonal wetland habitat.

In 1929, the California Fish and Game Commission purchased 3,000 acres to create the Los Banos Wildlife Area (LBWA), which was the first of a series of waterfowl refuges established throughout the state to manage habitat for wintering waterfowl. LBWA was designated as a wildlife area in 1954 and has since been expanded to 6,200 acres. The North Grasslands Wildlife Area (NGWA) was historically grazed by cattle and hunted prior to purchase by the State of California in the early 1990s and has been expanded to 7,400 acres of habitat. CDFW acquired the Volta Wildlife Area (VWA) to protect agricultural crops from waterfowl depredation, protect waterfowl wintering habitat, and accommodate public waterfowl hunting. Each of the three wildlife areas consists of seasonal wetlands, semi-permanent emergent wetlands, and uplands with a focus on waterfowl habitat management. All wildlife areas are open to the public with a focus on waterfowl hunting.

The Los Banos, Volta, and North Grasslands WA are included within the Grasslands Ecological Area. This zone within the San Joaquin River basin supports the largest remaining block of wetlands in the Central Valley. These wetlands, dispersed riparian corridors, and associated grasslands, complemented by national wildlife refuges and multiple state wildlife areas, comprise over 160,000 acres. This area is extremely important to Pacific Flyway populations of 19 duck species and six goose species. The Grasslands Ecological Area has been officially recognized as an integral unit of the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network. Large concentrations of migratory waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds are common and easily observed during late winter and early spring.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project will improve water conveyance, supply, habitat, and management capabilities of the WA. This work will ultimately improve 17,000± acres of habitat.

##### Water Control/Monitoring:

*Broad Crested Weirs* – Ten broad crested weirs will be installed to measure water flow in an open ditch. The water is delivered by Grasslands Water District, San Luis Water District, and California Irrigation District. Wildlife Area managers need to more accurately measure water to ensure they are being supplied with the correct amount of water and that there is no overuse. The need for the weirs is significant in order justify the water supply for refuge lands in Merced County. The increased measurement accuracy will vastly help with water budgets, management, water conservation, and water re-allocation plans.

*Staff Gauges* – 205 staff gauges will be installed in wetland units throughout the wildlife areas to measure wetland water levels. The new staff gauges will create a universal landmark where the reading will be the same regardless of who checks the water levels.

This will greatly improve the measurement accuracy and allow for area staff to record water levels over time.

*Drop-down gate, Flash Board Riser & Screwgates* - An overshot gate or drop down gate/weir will be installed for measuring water and accelerating water flows. This will help to meet the goals of timely drainage and water quality issues within the San Joaquin River. The gate will be located at the exit of Buttonwillow Lakes and is the main drain for LBWA managed wetlands (including 75% of LBWA wetland water). This gate is required to meet water quality concerns on the San Joaquin River during the spring draw down. The drop down gate will allow staff to release water quickly when TMDL levels allow for them and hold water when the TMDL levels do not allow for releases. The weir will allow for the drainage of wetlands during these brief times. The weir will also eliminate the need for beaver control on Buttonwillow Lakes.

Pipelines:

*Pipeline Enhancement* - Currently two 21" pipelines have gathered large quantities of silt that are impeding the ability to deliver water to wetland units. To address this issue, the pipelines will be cleaned out and extensions will be added to the existing pipeline. These enhancements will enable area staff to better manage water to specific units and increase moist soil plant production.

Earthwork:

*Earthwork* - The levee surrounding Buttonwillow Lakes is located along a public access route at LBWA. Approximately 100 yards of this levee has had some erosion over time. This section and portions of the adjacent road will be refurbished and widened, allowing vehicles to pass. The drop-down gate in the Buttonwood Lake levee will be upgraded to be used at spring water draw-down. Swale excavation, levee enhancement, and an additional small levee are proposed on the LBWA Gadwall Unit. The swales will be excavated to promote better soils within the moist soil management units. The swales will also improve drainage, which will reduce ponding water, and mosquito related issues. All swales will be connected the inlets and outlets of wetland units to facilitate water movement and water savings.

## 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 mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

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 provides water-wise wetland habitat in a very wetland-limited region in critical times for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife.

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

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

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

*Provide species strongholds or refugia.*

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The restored habitats will be managed by CDFW staff pursuant to the management plan for each Wildlife Area. The upgraded infrastructure will allow CDFW to manage these properties with less effort and at a lower cost as well as utilize water more efficiently.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

Task	WCB	CWA	CDFW	Totals
Project Management:	96,225			
Water Controls:	482,850			
Pipelines:	7,000			
Earthwork:	101,925			
Project Development:		5,300.00	3,000.00	
<i>Total:</i>	<i>\$688,000</i>	<i>\$5,300.00</i>	<i>\$3,000.00</i>	<i>\$696,300</i>

Project costs will be for construction and project management. CWA and CDFW will provide project development and planning for this project.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

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

#### CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife 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 15301, Class 1, as the repair or minor alteration of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use; and Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land, water and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$688,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

**18. Los Angeles River - Taylor Yard G2**  
**Los Angeles County**  
**\$20,050,000**

This proposal has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

**19. Red Hill Bay Shallow Water Habitat, Augmentation  
Imperial County  
\$1,493,000**

This Item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

## 20. **Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan Informational**

### PUBLIC ACCESS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

The Public Access Competitive Grant Program, developed pursuant to the Strategic Directions identified in the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) Strategic Plan and through consultation with partners, stakeholders, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), includes Program Guidelines (Guidelines) and the 2017 Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation). One million dollars will be made available for the Program in the 2017/18 fiscal year from the Wildlife Restoration Fund upon approval of the budget by the legislature.

The proposed [Program Guidelines \(pdf\)](#) establish the process, procedures, and general requirements through which WCB will administer the Program. [The Solicitation \(pdf\)](#) provides general eligibility information as well as priorities, pertinent dates, scoring criteria, and important documents specific to the 2017 grant cycle. This procedure is to be used for all public access projects in 2017/18, with one exception. A project to improve a boat launch facility on the Sacramento River in Colusa County has been under development for several years, and WCB applied for and received U.S. Fish and Wildlife Sport Fish Restoration Funding for the planning. Construction is expected to begin in 2018, and WCB will request and is expected to receive assistance from the FWS to implement the project.

Grant funding will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects adhering to the mission of the WCB that provide enhanced access to nature and wildlife-oriented activities for three targeted populations; youth, disadvantaged communities, and urban-focused residents.

In an effort to inform the solicitation, staff developed and sent an electronic survey to 235 selected stakeholders. The survey was available for two weeks and consisted of ten questions focused on identifying the public access needs of our target populations as understood by WCB's partners. The three most critical barriers hindering our target population from experiencing wildlife oriented recreation were identified as affordable transportation, lack of mentors/leaders, and insufficient infrastructure/access points. Our [stakeholders responded \(pdf\)](#) that the best support WCB can provide is to award funding for support facilities (parking lots, restrooms, bus turnouts, etc.), trails, and interpretive facilities, consistent with WCB's mandate to provide funding for capital outlay. The first two barriers, affordable transportation and lack of mentors/leaders, are more likely to require an annual commitment of funds. These will need to be addressed with alternate funding sources that allow for community based programs and organizations, such as providing affordable transportation services or passes, or offering scholarships for environmental education outdoor programs.

In response to our stakeholders, staff has developed the 2017 Solicitation to provide funding for projects that best demonstrate how barriers to accessing wildlife-oriented recreation are or will be addressed in a way that provides the strongest correlation to the proposed project, and clearly provides enhanced access to nature and wildlife-oriented activities for the three target populations.

The WCB Program 2017 projected timeline is shown below.

Milestone / Activity	Schedule
Scoping survey to solicit input for 2017 grant cycle	April 14– April 28, 2017
Public Board Meeting, Board vote on Program Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Notice	May 25, 2017
Proposal consultation period	June 1 – June 30, 2017
Release 2017 Solicitation and Application	July 1, 2017
Complete project proposals due to WCB	August 31, 2017
Administrative Review (pass/fail)	September 1 - September 15, 2017
Responsive proposals scored by Technical advisory Committee (TAC) and Selection Panel.	September 16 – November 10, 2017
Public Board Meeting - Board vote on final funding decisions	November 30, 2017
WCB works with successful applicants to develop and execute grant agreements.	December 1, 2017- May 31, 2018
Allocated funds available for construction	January 1, 2018 - April 30, 2020

Staff Recommendation for Public Access Program. Staff recommends that the Board authorize staff to finalize and release the proposed Public Access Competitive Grant Program Guidelines and 2017 Proposal Solicitation Notice.

### **Comprehensive Program Review**

Overview: The information contained here includes an evaluation of WCB programs to identify their current relevance, any overlap with other WCB programs, and their compatibility with other State programs. Specific ecological goals are identified and defined to allow WCB staff to measure success.

Program Review: Pages 10-13 of the [WCB Strategic Plan \(pdf\)](#), a comprehensive overview of ten of the eleven WCB programs (the Stream Flow Program was developed after the Strategic Plan was implemented), identifying the Purpose, Implementation Methods, Eligible Applicants, and History and Authority for each. WCB staff evaluated the relevance of each of the existing programs and determined that each had a specific function in providing the necessary flexibility and scope of WCB's mission.

We then looked at how these programs overlap. Two programs, Land Acquisition and Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program (HERP), are broad categories that overlap with many of the other WCB programs. For instance, either of these two programs could be used to acquire (Land Acquisition) or restore (HERP) riparian habitat under the California Riparian Habitat Program (CRHCP). Similarly, the Tax Credit program overlaps with every program that provides for land or water acquisition because the program allows for the State to achieve its goals at a fraction of the appraised value of the land by providing tax incentives for donations of land or water rights. These broad programs give WCB the needed flexibility to acquire or restore those specific habitats not covered by more specific programs (e.g., deer migration corridors or sage grouse breeding grounds), that may be some of the most critically important habitats in the State.

More specifically, there are three scenarios where individual programs overlap that are worth mentioning. First, the Inland Wetland Conservation Program (IWCP) was established specifically to assist the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) to achieve its goals. Originally those goals focused on conserving waterfowl habitat, but were subsequently expanded to provide habitats for all birds, with an emphasis on wetlands and riparian habitats. The program dovetails with the CRHCP whenever riparian habitats are acquired or restored in the Central Valley. Second, the Ecological Restoration on Agricultural Lands program (ERAL) interacts with the CRHCP where farms abut streams containing riparian habitats. Finally, the ERAL and the IWCP intersect because the CVJV specifically identifies the improvement of habitats on working lands, particularly ricelands, as one its main goals. Many farms and ranches in the Central Valley are managed in ways that provide significant wildlife habitat, or contain ponds, wetland areas or field margins that can be enhanced to increase wildlife populations. In all three cases described above, keeping the programs separate allows WCB staff to track objectives individually for each program, each with their specific habitat types and program goals.

The programs mesh with other State programs in ways too numerous to cover. WCB has partnered with every State and federal agency that provides funding for natural lands. In addition, in the last year alone, WCB has worked with 130 different public and non-governmental organizations to protect and restore habitats. WCB's flexibility and State-wide scope allow for unmatched ability to work with many, many partners to conserve wildlife habitat well into the future.

In the future, we recommend that most programs can and should continue as they have in the past. However, for two working lands programs, an increase in flexibility would allow for increased ability to work with ranchers and farmers across the State. The Rangelands program is limited to acquisition of conservation easements on working ranches, and the ERAL program is limited to improving habitats on working farms. There are two ways of improving these two programs, either by expanding both programs to allow funds to be used for restoration on rangelands and to allow for the protection of working farms, or, perhaps more simply, to combine the two into a Working Landscapes Program with flexibility to protect or restore important habitats on either farms or ranches. Any change would require legislation.

#### MEASURABLE GOALS FOR ACQUISITIONS.

The WCB is committed to focusing its resources on statewide priority conservation objectives. This means that WCB acquisitions should be concentrated in areas that provide state-wide ecological benefits that are self-sustaining and resilient to climate change, and that provide the maximum amount of public use opportunities. This is WCB's goal no matter which habitat types are protected or which program funds are used. At this time, WCB is proposing that these goals are specific to the acquisition program for the following reasons. First, from a practical standpoint, the goals identified below are included in one document: the Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP) proposal form, which is specific to acquisition projects. Second, goals for restoration projects will not overlap completely with those for acquisition projects. Goals for restoration should include evaluations of need for restoration and an evaluation of the likely success of that restoration. Third, restoration projects almost invariably fall on properties that have already been protected, so it is critical now to develop goals for acquisitions, which will be protected in perpetuity. Finally, goals for determining the success of restoration must include an evaluation of how successfully the degraded habitats have been restored, i.e., how well was the problem fixed, which requires a different set of evaluation tools from those for acquisition. These tools are being developed now.



In order to accomplish WCB's goals, certain broad ecological values need to be supported. For example, larger acreages are more resilient, more likely to provide habitats for a broader range of species, and more likely to provide sufficient space for larger, widely-ranging species such as mountain lions or bobcats. Also, areas of the state that are more likely to provide long-term benefits in the face of climate change should be targeted for protection. The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) has been developed by the CDFW to provide guidance state-wide on the most critical habitats, and the recommendations included there should carry considerable weight. Given that just under half of California is privately owned, and most of that is made up of working lands (farms, ranches and working forests), no ecological goals can be reached without considerable commitment to working landscapes. And finally, compatible public access must be encouraged whenever possible to assure public interest in maintaining these valuable landscapes.

To get a true method for determining the success of WCB's acquisition programs, we identified six different criteria that can be measured to provide an accurate evaluation of accomplishments. These six criteria are biodiversity, climate change resiliency, support of the priorities in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), protection of working landscapes, protection of wetlands/riparian habitats, and providing enhanced public access opportunities. All of these criteria are identified and evaluated in the LAE/CAPP proposal form, the latest draft of which is currently under development. Should that document change, the details identified within the goals listed below could be altered to some extent, but the concepts behind the goals will not.

The goals described below will assure that WCB is working toward accomplishing the larger conservation needs of the State in ways that can be evaluated. Compliance with these goals will provide a measurable determination of success. Habitats are identified using classifications identified in the SWAP, and all projects are evaluated on their ability to provide the benefits outlined in the SWAP. For clarity, the classifications used in the descriptions of the measurable goals are defined below:

*Biodiversity.* The full diversity of habitats and ecosystems, especially as it relates to areas that contain species and habitats of greatest conservation needs. These habitats and species are identified in the SWAP.

*Ecoregions:* California has great ecological and biological diversity, containing offshore islands and coastal lowlands, large alluvial valleys, forested mountain ranges, deserts, and various aquatic habitats. Ecoregions were developed in California (and elsewhere) in an effort to classify areas of general similarity in ecosystems and in the type, quality, and quantity of the environment to include geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, soils, land use, wildlife, and hydrology.

*Macrogroup and Alliance:* The National Vegetation Classification (NVC) is a world-wide classification hierarchy, which was developed specifically to classify vegetation communities. The NVC consists of eight levels. The highest level, Formation, encompasses broad world-wide combinations of growth forms (e.g., trees) adapted to basic latitude, moisture and geography. The eighth and lowest level, Association, is defined by certain specific diagnostic species, maybe as few as one or two, found in very specific locations. The *macrogroup* is in the mid-level (level 5), and is defined by plant communities with a common set of growth forms (e.g., trees or herbaceous cover), many diagnostic species, and usually sharing a broadly similar geographic region and regional climate. Macrogroups number about 50 in California. One example is the Temperate Northwestern Rainforest Macrogroup, which includes several different types of tall conifer forests (e.g., Coast Redwood, Sitka Spruce, Western Hemlock, and Grand Fir) adapted to cool coastal climates from central California to southeast Alaska. The *alliance* is a more specific level of

classification and is the seventh level of the National Vegetation Classification system, defined by a characteristic range of diagnostic species. Using the above example, alliances present in the Temperate Northwestern Rainforest would include Coast Redwood, Sitka Spruce, Western Hemlock, and Grand Fir Alliances, with the Coast Redwood being the most significant for California. All of these alliances share common climate, but are defined more specifically by specific habitat characteristics such as moisture and fire regime, and by a diagnostic group of dominant plant species.

*Refugia*: Areas within macrogroups that contain vegetation or habitats that are not expected to change significantly as a result of exposure to expected changes in climate (changes in heat and/or rainfall).

*Land facets*: Topographic features of a landscape that usually some or all of the following: amount of change in elevation, slope (steepness), aspect (e.g., north, south, east or west facing slopes), soils (especially their ability to accept and hold water), and solar insolation (the amount of sunlight that strikes the site). Areas with high diversity in geophysical features are expected to support high biodiversity both now and into the future.

The LAE/CAPP proposal form identifies all of the specific criteria identified below. The goals as proposed below will allow WCB staff to evaluate success of all of the acquisition programs.

*Goal 1, Biodiversity*: at least 50% of all acquisitions will accomplish one or more of the following:

- Protects three or more habitats identified at the macrogroup level.
- Directly benefits Species of Greatest Conservation Need, as identified in the SWAP, that are known to occur on the property.
- Contains at least one viable rare vegetation habitat type at the alliance level, as identified in the most current Natural Communities List in CDFW's VegCAMP.

*Goal 2, Climate Change Resiliency and Connectivity*: at least 50% of all acquisitions will protect one or more of the following (mapping is currently available for all of the items below except land facets, which is under development):

- Connections between ecological areas with moderate to high natural resource values that are protected in-perpetuity and that total 25,000 acres or more.
- New protected areas of 10,000 acres or more.
- Species identified as vulnerable to climate change.
- Habitats identified as highly vulnerable to climate change.
- Possible climate change refugia.
- Land facets that support biodiversity.

*Goal 3, SWAP*: at least 75% of all acquisitions will protect a priority macrogroup as defined by the SWAP for the ecoregion in which the project is located.

*Goal 4, Working Landscapes*: at least 25% of all acquisitions will protect ecologically important habitats on working landscapes (farms, ranches or working forests).

*Goal 5, Water related projects*: at least 50% of all acquisitions will contain wetlands or riparian habitats, or provide water for fish and wildlife.

*Goal 6, Public Access on land acquisitions:* at least 50% of all acquisitions will provide some level of public access, and 50% of those projects that do provide public access (i.e., 25% of all projects) will benefit disadvantaged communities, which is identified from five-year data of the US Census American Community Survey as communities having less than 80% of the State's median household income. Public access can range from giving regular guided tours on conservation easements, to providing full access for all visitors every day with a variety of activities (hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, etc.).

Every acquisition project must satisfy at least one of the above goals, and some may fall within several categories. For example, a conservation easement on a working forest might provide habitat for five pairs of nesting spotted owls and connect with adjacent forests to protect more than 25,000 acres. This would satisfy three of the goals above. However, WCB staff would be able to track all of our projects by each of the criteria listed above to determine if, overall, we are meeting the separate goals that we hope to achieve. These criteria will allow WCB staff to monitor success over time through visits to assure compliance. If the properties are not degraded over time, the habitat values that WCB wished to acquire should still be viable.

WCB staff is seeking guidance from the Board on the goals and objectives outlined above, and will incorporate their suggestions. The measurable goals will be implemented as soon as the LAE/CAPP proposal form and the process for bringing acquisition proposals to WCB for completion is finalized. That process is expected to be complete in the fall of 2017.

**21. California Streamflow Enhancement Program Informational/Action**

[The proposed FY 2017/18 Proposal Solicitation Notice \(Solicitation\) for the Streamflow Enhancement Program \(pdf\)](#) (Program) will be presented to the Board for discussion and approval. California voters approved Proposition 1, known as the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Act), in November 2014. The Act, which provides funding to address varied challenges facing California’s water resources, authorizes the Legislature to appropriate \$200 million to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) for projects that result in enhanced stream flows.

The Program’s second year (FY 2016/17) had \$56,643,722 available for expenditure. WCB allocated \$19,891,736 to 13 planning projects, 10 implementation projects and one acquisition project. Remaining funds totaled \$36,751,986. This year, funds available total \$78,938,695, of which \$5,000,000 is available for planning and scientific studies. Due to the volume of high-quality proposals received under the competitive planning and scientific studies category during the first two years of the Program, WCB will provide \$5,000,000 again this year for planning and scientific study projects.

Grant funding will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects adhering to the mission of the WCB that address the three goals of the California Water Action Plan: reliability, restoration, and resilience. Funding is directed to projects predicted to result in significant and measurable enhancement to the amount, timing and/or quality of water available for anadromous fish or special status, threatened, endangered, or at risk species and that also provide resilience to climate change.

The WCB Program FY 2017/18 projected timeline and list of deliverables:

Deliverable	Date (2017)
Draft Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation) released for public review	May 15
Revisions of Solicitation based on public comments and input	May 12-May 24
WCB seeks approval of Solicitation to be released on July 1, 2017	May 25
WCB staff available for proposal consultation	Open until June 30
FY 2017/18 Solicitation open period begins	July 1
FY 2017/18 Solicitation period closed	August 31

The content of the Solicitation has not changed significantly; the following changes are noted for FY 2017/18:

- The Planning and Scientific Studies project category has been revised to support research and development that leads to the development of future stream flow enhancement opportunities.
- The Implementation project category has been expanded to include planning, design and CEQA for specified future implementation projects.
- Acquisition projects may combine Acquisition and Planning, or Acquisition and Implementation, if the proposed project has a completed CEQA analysis that

addresses both the Acquisition activities and the Planning or Implementation activities.

- Modifications were made to help define stream flow enhancements and scoring criteria.

Staff recommends that the Board authorize staff to finalize and release the Solicitation substantially as proposed to the public, on or after July 1, 2017.

Individuals wishing to submit written comments regarding the Solicitation can submit them to WCB prior to 5:00 p.m. on May 22, 2017 at [wcbstreamflow@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:wcbstreamflow@wildlife.ca.gov).

**22. Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Island Restoration Projects Funded by WCB  
Informational**

Santa Cruz Island (SCI) and Santa Rosa Island (SRI) are part of the Channel Islands chain. SRI is owned by the National Park Service (NPS), and SCI is owned by both NPS and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Both islands have significant diversity of habitats, topography, and endemic plant and animal species found nowhere else on earth. More specifically, SCI is occupied by a rich native ant fauna, with 33 native species inhabiting the island. These play important roles in the island's natural communities, including pollinating native island plants. Unfortunately, over the decades, a variety of human uses have brought invasive weeds to invade the sensitive endemic habitats, and invasive Argentine ants were brought to the island, probably during transport of building materials, and over time, infested several locations.

In 2015, TNC applied to WCB for funding to solve some of these problems. WCB funds were to be used to conduct rare plant surveys, baseline weed surveys, vegetation maps, and treat invasive weeds. Staff targeted and treated over 30 invasive weed species, and identified and mapped both rare and endemic plant species on the islands. Staff found new populations of Island bedstraw (*Galium buxifolium*), which is both State and Federal listed as endangered.

Argentine ants are perhaps even more disruptive than invasive weeds. Studies from SCI and the mainland have shown that most other species of native ants disappear completely from habitats when these areas are occupied by the Argentine ant. Direct and indirect impacts were found on other insects and on native plants and vertebrates. Argentine ants outcompete and prey on other invertebrates, as well as interfering with pollination and seed dispersal of plants. Studies on the mainland have showed that Argentine ants caused nest failures in gnatcatchers, reduced food sources for coastal horned lizards, and on SCI, reduced pollination of at least one island endemic plant, the Island morning glory.

WCB funds allowed TNC to initiate repeated pesticide treatments of invasive ants using bait distributed by helicopters. Staff continued intensive monitoring of treated sites throughout the project period, and found that ant populations declined by 99% in areas formerly infested by ants. In addition, several of the native ant species had begun to re-colonize the areas vacated by the exotic invaders. Over the next 10 years, TNC staff will work in partnership with researchers from the University of California, San Diego, to evaluate treatment success, eradicate any Argentine ant nests if they exist, and measure restoration of the native communities.