

Wildlife Conservation Board

Report to the Legislature on the Wildlife Protection Act of 1990

Annual Report - Fiscal Year 2002-2003



California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 Programmatic Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2002-2003

INTRODUCTION

In June of 1990, the voters of California passed the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990, commonly referred to as Proposition 117, or the Mountain Lion Initiative. The Act states, "...There is an urgent need to protect the rapidly disappearing wildlife habitat that supports California's unique and varied wildlife resources."

To assure the preservation of unique habitat, the Act created the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF), required an annual transfer of \$30 million into the Fund until the year 2020 and specified how the monies were to be expended for acquiring, restoring and enhancing habitat necessary to protect wildlife and plant populations, especially deer, mountain lions, rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species, wetlands, riparian and aquatic habitat.

Specifically, the Act requires that \$4.5 million be appropriated to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Of this amount, \$1.5 million shall be expended on projects that are located in the Santa Lucia Mountain Range in Monterey County; \$1.0 million shall be expended for acquisitions in, and adjacent to, units of the State park system. The remaining \$2.0 million shall be used for 50 percent matching grants to local agencies for projects meeting requirements of the Act and for the acquisition of wildlife corridors and urban trails, nature interpretative programs and other programs designed to bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas.

The Act also requires that \$4.0 million be appropriated to the California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), \$500,000 to the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) and the balance of the Fund, or \$21.0 million, to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS

To assure critical habitat is acquired, restored and/or enhanced, Section 2786 of the Act specifies that funds are to be expended on (a) the acquisition of habitat, including native oak woodlands for the protection of deer and mountain lions, (b) the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened, or fully protected species, (c) the acquisition of habitat for Significant Natural Areas, (d) the acquisition, enhancement, or restoration of wetlands, (e) the acquisition, enhancement, or restoration of aquatic habitat for spawning and rearing of anadromous salmonids and trout resources, and (f) the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of riparian habitat.

The Act also requires that over a 24-month period, to the extent practicable, expenditures should be made to achieve the following: (1) that one-third of the total expenditures be made for acquisitions of habitat necessary to protect deer and

mountain lions and the remaining two-thirds of the expenditures shall be made for acquisitions of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened, or fully protected species, (2) that \$6.0 million be expended on the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of wetlands and \$6.0 million be expended on the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of aquatic and riparian habitat, and (3) that 50 percent of the expenditures be made in Northern California and 50 percent of the expenditures be made in Southern California.

This report provides a complete listing of projects approved for funding by each of the participating entities during Fiscal Year 2002-03.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

While the expenditures can be summarized into the six major habitat categories, i.e., Section 2786 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f), many expenditures qualify for more than one program element or habitat as defined in the Act. For example, \$1.0 million could be expended for purposes of acquiring 50 acres to protect deer and mountain lions, as defined in Section 2786 (a). That same 50 acres, however, may provide quality habitat for a rare, threatened or fully protected species, as defined in Section 2786 (b).

Stated differently, natural ecosystems are made up of a multitude of plants, animals, birds, reptiles, insects, etc., interacting with the natural elements as a whole system. Consequently, it is to be expected that some habitat protection efforts will contain more than one defined program element. When acquiring or restoring land, a parcel may be classified for a primary habitat value. Since natural areas are rarely monotypic, a second or even third program element may be present and will appropriately be given credit under that program.

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND EXPENDITURES

To better understand the accomplishments that were achieved from the expenditure of the HCF funds, Table 1 summarizes the type and number of acres protected or restored and the dollars expended to protect, restore or enhance these acres. Table 2 summarizes the expenditures made by each of the participating entities and the purpose for which the expenditures were made. Table 3 provides a summary of habitat acres protected and restored since 1990.

Table 1

<i>Type of Habitat Protected 2002-2003</i>								
<i>\$ in 1,000s</i>								
	Deer and Lion Habitat	Threatened and Endangered Species	Significant Natural Areas	Wetland Habitat	Aquatic Habitat	Riparian Habitat	Urban Trails	Habitat Links
Total Allocation	\$5,013	\$7,573	\$6,473	\$4,875	\$6,617	\$6,385	\$642	\$9,127
Acres Protected	20,579	6,802	7,204	13,421	7,378	7,245	806	21,893

Table 2

Habitat Protection by Agency 2002-2003								
<i>\$ in 1,000s</i>								
Agency	Deer and Lion Habitat	Threatened and Endangered Species	Significant Natural Areas	Wetland Habitat	Aquatic Habitat	Riparian Habitat	Urban Trails	Habitat Links
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$3,863	\$6,323	\$6,323	\$1,901	\$5,151	\$5,197	\$0	\$7,977
California State Coastal Conservancy	\$1,150	\$1,250	\$150	\$1,563	\$1,150	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,150
Department of Parks and Recreation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,008	\$96	\$122	\$642	\$0
California Tahoe Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$403	\$220	\$66	\$0	\$0
Total Allocation	\$5,013	\$7,573	\$6,473	\$4,875	\$6,617	\$6,385	\$642	\$9,127
<i>Acres Protected</i>								
Wildlife Conservation Board	20,079	5,204	5,204	10,937	6,875	7,075	0	19,718
California State Coastal Conservancy	500	1,598	2,000	1,623	500	6	0	2,175
Department of Parks and Recreation	0	0	0	860	3	164	806	0
California Tahoe Conservancy	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total Acres	20,579	6,802	7,204	13,421	7,378	7,245	806	21,893

Table 3

<i>Type of Habitat Protected 1990 to 2003</i>								
<i>\$ in 1,000s</i>								
	Deer and Lion Habitat	Threatened and Endangered Species	Significant Natural Areas	Wetland Habitat	Aquatic Habitat	Riparian Habitat	Urban Trails	Habitat Links
Total Allocation	\$68,076	\$123,790	\$51,421	\$63,739	\$39,367	\$61,217	\$82,878	\$62,608
Acres Protected	137,575	123,356	88,116	1,353,860	938,808	105,552	44,280	90,127

To further understand how the funds were expended by each of the participating entities, the following section provides a summary of projects funded in Fiscal Year 2002-03.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Funds Appropriated \$21,000,000
 Funds Allocated \$17,285,935

Acquisition Projects (Fee or Easement)

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total acres</u>
Allensworth ER, Exp. 25	Tulare	\$12,500	10
Black Forest	Lake	\$240,000	247
Bridgeport Valley, CE	Mono	\$2,210,000	6,350
Canebrake ER, Cap Canyon Unit	Kern	\$572,000	285
Canebrake ER, Cap Canyon Unit, Exp 1	Kern	\$795,000	680
Carrizo Plain ER, Exp 4, American Ranch Unit	San Luis Obispo	\$346,000	640
Donner Memorial State Park	Placer	\$2,000	155
East Delta WA	San Joaquin	\$455,000	649
Fitzhugh Creek	Modoc	\$1,332,000	2,080
Heenan Lake Water and Storage Rights, Exp 3	Alpine	\$1,570,000	
Lokern ER, Exp 21	Kern	\$1,500	3
Musty Buck Ridge, Parcel 2	Butte	\$1,920,000	3,868
Noyes Valley WA, Exp 68	Siskiyou	\$10,000	2,360
Pine Hill ER, Exp 4	El Dorado	\$697,500	229
Pine Hill ER, Salmon Falls Unit, Exp 3	El Dorado	\$254,000	157
Sacramento River CA, Exp 6	Glenn	\$405,000	20
Sacramento River CA, Exp 7	Glenn	\$243,000	36
Sheep Ranch WA Disposal	Calaveras	\$8,000	
Sierra Valley Conservation Area	Plumas	\$1,000,000	13,110
Spenceville WA Exp 4	Nevada	\$685,000	494
Coachella Valley ER, Exp 19	Riverside	\$470,000	61
Coachella Valley ER, Exp 20	Riverside	\$575,000	37
Dairy Mart Ponds ER	San Diego	\$3,000	60
Duarte Hills Open Space Preserve	Los Angeles	\$2,000	91
San Jacinto WA, Exp 22	Riverside	\$40,000	5
San Jacinto WA, Exp 23	Riverside	\$782,000	224
San Jacinto WA, Exp 24	Riverside	\$573,000	50
San Jacinto WA, Exp 25	Riverside	\$460,000	38
TOTAL ACQUISITION		\$12,758,500	31,938

Restoration and/or Enhancement Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
HR, Herbert Prairie Preserve, Area C	Tulare	\$127,000	83
RHR, Bear Creek	Colusa	\$300,000	295
RHR, Knoxville WA	Napa	\$120,635	64
RHR, Stanislaus River (Mohler Tract)	San Joaquin	\$125,000	35
RHR, Sulphur Creek	Colusa	\$180,000	75
RHR, Upper Little Lake Ranch	Inyo	\$45,800	200
WHR (Butte Ranch)	Colusa	\$58,000	185
WHR (Lincoln High School)	Placer	\$25,000	57
WHR (Rancho Caleta)	Colusa	\$200,000	427
WHR (San Joaquin Wetland Farms)	Stanislaus	\$196,000	610
WHR (Shasta Valley WA)	Siskiyou	\$110,000	1,400
WHR Willow Creek WA	Lassen	\$277,000	277
WHR, Cosumnes River Preserve	Sacramento	\$136,000	122
WHR, Honey Lake WA	Lassen	\$443,000	3,846
WHR, Los Banos WA (Mud Slough Unit)	Merced	\$110,000	475
WHR, South Grasslands (Britto Land and Investments)	Merced	\$26,000	70
WHR, South Grasslands (Redfern Ranch)	Merced	\$26,000	200
WHR, South Grasslands (Rooney Ranch)	Merced	\$100,000	255
WHR, Volta WA	Merced	\$67,000	2,930
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT		\$2,672,435	11,606

- * CA – Conservation Area
- CE – Conservation Easement
- Exp. – Expansion
- ER – Ecological Reserve
- WA – Wildlife Area
- RHR – Riparian Habitat Restoration
- WHR – Wildlife Habitat Restoration

STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Funds Appropriated: \$4,000,000
 Funds Allocated: \$1,614,000

Acquisition Projects (Fee or Easement)

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Bahia	Marin	\$1,000,000	333
Tijuana River Valley	San Diego	\$50,000	180
Valley View Ranch	Ventura	\$14,000	50
Ventura	Ventura	\$150,000	2,000
TOTAL ACQUISITIONS		\$1,214,000	2,563

Restoration and/or Enhancement Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117\$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Coastal Wetlands Mapping	Statewide	\$49,000	
GreenInfo Network Data Collection	Statewide	\$50,000	
Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Feasibility	Santa Barbara	\$190,000	25
Ormond Beach Edison Risk Assessment	Ventura	\$100,000	265
Ormond Beach Wetland Restoration	Ventura	\$25,000	265
Coastal Wetlands Mapping	Statewide	\$49,000	
GreenInfo Network Data Collection	Statewide	\$50,000	
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT		\$513,000	555

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Funds Appropriated: \$4,500,000
 Funds Allocated: \$2,628,800

Acquisition Projects (Fee or Easement)

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Donner Memorial SP/Schallenberger Ridge Phase II	Placer	\$486,800	1,173
Mill Creek Acquisition	Tulare	\$168,000	9
Point Lobos State Reserve/Point Lobos Ranch	Monterey	\$250,000	1,312
Tunitas Creek Property Acquisition	San Mateo	\$462,500	708
Calabasas/Cold Creek Trail	Los Angeles	\$200,000	80
Hellhole Canyon Acquisition	San Diego	\$100,000	155
Hellhole Canyon Acquisition	San Diego	\$22,000	9
La Sierra Canyon and Wetlands	Los Angeles	\$210,500	60
Riparian Hab Pres Wright Prop.	Los Angeles	\$125,000	12
TOTAL ACQUISITIONS		\$2,024,800	3,518

Restoration and/or Enhancement Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Cesar Chavez Community Park	Monterey	\$22,000	
Joseph D. Grant County Park	Santa Clara	\$65,000	55
Manila Dunes Wetland Habitat	Humboldt	\$50,000	15
Mokelumne River Spawning Habitat	San Joaquin	\$30,000	2
Scottsdale Pond	Marin	\$200,000	17
South Volonte Park Trail	Shasta	\$45,000	1
Tehachapi Mountain Park	Kern	\$20,000	490
Bommer Canyon Riparian Habitat	Orange	\$25,000	2
Hesperia Lake: Wetlands	San Bernardino	\$20,000	5
White Point Nature Preserve	Los Angeles	\$96,000	3
Trail Improvements	San Diego	\$31,000	3
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT		\$604,000	592

CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Funds Appropriated: \$500,000
 Funds Expended: \$688,589

Acquisition Projects (Fee or Easement)

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Ward Creek Wildlife Habitat Acquisition Project	Placer	\$18,000	0
TOTAL ACQUISITION		\$18,000	0

Restoration and/or Enhancement Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>P-117 \$</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>
Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project Design, Development and Implementation Activities	Placer/ El Dorado	\$286,589	
Polaris Creek Meadow Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality Improvement Project	Placer	\$384,000	1
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT		\$670,589	1

CONCLUSIONS

According to the information and data provided to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), the Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 is protecting critical habitat in accordance with the provisions and requirements of the Act.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

With \$17,285,935 allocated from the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF), the WCB funded many diverse projects in Fiscal Year 2002-03. Many of the projects funded by the WCB focused on the restoration or enhancement of critical wetland and riparian habitat with grants made through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program and the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program. Also, existing ecological reserves and wildlife areas were expanded through a variety of means, including land donations or exchanges, conservation easements and fee acquisitions. The WCB protected, restored and enhanced thousands of acres of critical habitat in Fiscal Year 2002-03 for a host of fish, wildlife and plant species. A brief description of some of the major projects and types funded through the HCF are described below.

Department of Fish and Game's Musty Buck Ridge, Parcel 2, in Butte County. The WCB approved \$1,920,000 of HCF funds to be used for the acquisition of 3,868 acres of land located in Northern California, approximately three miles northeast of the City of Chico. The property contains oak woodlands, threatened and endangered species habitat and deer and mountain lion habitat. Other wildlife species found on the property include black bear, coyote and a number of species of raptors. In addition, the springs and wet areas support a diversity of reptiles and amphibians including the California red-legged frog and western pond turtle.

Department of Fish Game's (DFG) San Jacinto Wildlife Area (WLA) in western Riverside County. HCF funds in the amount of \$1,855,000 were used to acquire four additional expansions to the San Jacinto WLA, protecting 317 acres of wetland habitat near Mystic Lake in Southern California. The wildlife area provides habitat and protection for numerous species including over 38 amphibians and reptiles, a number of rare plants, a large range of mammals including the southern mule deer and over 240 different species of birds, including three federally or state listed endangered species: the bald eagle, peregrine falcon and the California brown pelican.

Bridgeport Valley Conservation Easement in Mono County. This project was approved by the WCB in Fiscal Year 2002-03 for the allocation of a \$3.21 million grant to the American Land Conservancy to provide protection for more than 6,350 acres of wildlife habitat along the eastern slope of the Central Sierra Nevada mountain range in Bridgeport Valley. The easement protects significant acres of wetland areas used by a variety of wetland-dependent species. Without protection, the streams and meadows of Bridgeport Valley would eventually be divided into small properties fragmenting the habitat and precluding active management for the benefit of the species. The property hosts a diversity of animal species and provides nesting and foraging by thousands of migrating waterfowl. Special status forest carnivores, including the state threatened wolverine and Sierra Nevada red fox, have been documented on and adjacent to the property.

Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Honey Lake Wildlife Area, Lassen County. This project involved the allocation of a \$443,000 grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) for a cooperative project to restore approximately 3,846 acres of seasonal wetlands and uplands on the Department of Fish and Game's Honey Lake Wildlife Area in Lassen County. Specifically, the project provides for the rehabilitation of nearly 18 miles of water conveyance ditches, restoration of four seasonal wetland units through the construction of swales and nesting islands, levee repair and removal of invasive weeds. The improvements expand wetland and upland areas providing breeding and foraging habitat for numerous waterfowl and special status species, such as the white faced ibis and sandhill crane.

CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

During the 2002-03 Fiscal Year the California Tahoe Conservancy authorized the expenditure of \$688,589 from the Habitat Conservation Fund for development, design, and implementation acquisition, restoration and habitat improvement projects. The Polaris Creek Meadow Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality Improvement Project included a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation for \$384,000 for restoration of meadow and stream habitat and improvement of water quality. The Tahoe Conservancy also encumbered \$286,589 for planning and design activities for several upcoming habitat improvement projects. The habitat improvement sites included highly disturbed areas of riparian, wetland and in-stream habitat located along or near Blackwood Creek, Polaris Creek, Upper Truckee Marsh and Ward Creek. These funds will be used for feasibility analysis, pre-project monitoring, project concept development and preparation of environmental documents for the implementation of various site improvements.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The Fiscal Year 2002-03 Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) habitat purchase program continued phased acquisition efforts at Point Lobos State Reserve in Monterey County and Donner Memorial State Park in Placer County. In addition HCF funds were used for several new purchases. The acquisition at Donner Memorial State Park added another 1,173 acres to the current park site and the Point Lobos State Reserve acquisition added another 1,312 acres to the Point Lobos State Park site. Several new acquisitions were completed by the DPR in Fiscal Year 2002-03. HCF funds in the amount of \$122,000 were used to purchase 164 acres at Hellhole Canyon in San Diego County. In addition to the State Park System projects, the DPR funded 18 local assistance projects for a total of \$1,870,000.

CALIFORNIA STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

The California State Coastal Conservancy allocated a total of \$1,727,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund to fund many varied projects, plans and studies. One of the projects acquired this year is the Bahia Property Acquisition which preserved 625 acres of critical habitat in Marin County. The property is located near the mouth of the Petaluma River on the east side of Novato. The value of the Bahia's spectacular array

of habitats and the potential for restoration is enhanced by Bahia's location near and adjacent to many other important protected habitats. Black John Slough to the north is a well documented habitat for black rail, clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. To the west and south of Bahia are Cemetery Marsh, owned by the Marin County Open Space District, and the adjacent 230-acre Rush Creek Wetland owned by the Department of Fish Game (DFG). Both are valuable managed wetland habitats and important recreational resources. To the east is the Petaluma River with its 2,000-acre tidal salt marsh fringe. The Petaluma Marsh is the largest tidal marsh in California that has never been diked. The acquisition of Bahia completed this rich ecological system and connected the DFG diked wetlands to the north, the 2,000-acre Petaluma Marsh to the east with the Cemetery Marsh and Rush Creek to the west and south.

As previously mentioned, a total of \$22.2 million was expended from the HCF to acquire, restore and/or enhance 64,803 acres of critical habitat. In addition, it appears that urban trails and/or efforts designed to join or link critical habitat areas remain a high priority effort for many agencies receiving monies from the HCF as a greater emphasis continues to be made on providing public access and urban trails designed to bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas. This is especially encouraging, as more citizens of California will have access to and benefit from our natural resources.

Collectively, the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 are protecting, restoring and enhancing critical wildlife habitat and fisheries in California. As the population of California continues to grow, it is reassuring to know that the provisions of this Act are preserving and protecting the rapidly disappearing unique and varied wildlife resources that the citizens of California have grown to cherish.