



Gavin Newsom, Governor  
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD  
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## Notice of Meeting

### WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

March 7, 2019, 10:00 a.m.

Natural Resources Building, First Floor Auditorium  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

#### *Final Agenda*

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\*Proposed Consent Calendar

- \*7. Staff Report – Easement Transfers** **5**  
Report on easement transfers made over the California Department of Fish and Wildlife controlled land pursuant to authority granted by the Wildlife Conservation Board on February 24, 1998.
- \*8. Proposition 68 Program Guidelines – Minor Amendment** **6**  
To consider and approve a minor amendment associated with Section 2.4 of the [Proposition 68 Program Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) related to support for the University of California Natural Reserve System.
- \*9. Luffenholtz Transfer** **7**  
**Humboldt County**  
**\$0.00**  
To consider the transfer of 8± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to the Trinidad Coastal Land Trust to own, operate, and maintain the Luffenholtz Beach property in perpetuity for purposes of public access, public recreation, and habitat preservation, located near Trinidad in Humboldt County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)].
- \*10. Deer Creek Hydrological and Technical Studies** **10**  
**Tehama County**  
**\$170,000.00**  
To consider the allocation for a grant to Trout Unlimited for a cooperative project with the National Fisheries and Wildlife Foundation to conduct technical studies to create a reconnaissance-level groundwater model to inform potential acquisition of the water right held by the Deer Creek Irrigation District, and dedication of the right to instream flow for the benefit of endangered Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which can be used for the development of scientific data, habitat mapping and other research information necessary to determine the priorities for restoration and acquisition statewide. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)].
- \*11. Lower Yuba River-Excelsior, Phase III** **13**  
**Yuba and Nevada Counties**  
**\$0.00**  
To consider the acceptance of 65± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife from the Bear Yuba Land Trust as a no cost acquisition for the protection of blue-oak woodlands, grasslands and riparian habitats, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities as an expansion to the planned Yuba Narrows Unit of the Daugherty Hills Wildlife Area, located northeast of the Town of Smartsville, in Nevada and Yuba counties. 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)].
- \*12. Yolo County HCP/NCCP Development, Phase IV** **16**  
**Yolo County**  
**\$275,000.00**  
To consider the allocation for a grant to the Yolo Habitat Conservancy to complete critical tasks necessary to build a solid foundation for implementation of the recently completed

Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan covering all of Yolo County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for grants that implement or assist in the establishment of NCCPs. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)(SB8)].

**\*13. Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 9 20**

**Mono County**

**\$150,000.00**

To consider the acquisition in fee of 4± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, to maintain a migration corridor for the Round Valley mule deer herd, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located in the community of Swall Meadows, near Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of habitat, including native oak woodlands, to protect deer and mountain lions. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)].

**\*14. Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 10 24**

**Mono County**

**\$0.00**

To consider the acceptance of 59± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife from the Eastern Sierra Land Trust as a no-cost acquisition for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, to maintain a migration corridor for the Round Valley mule deer herd, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located in the community of Swall Meadows, near Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of habitat, including native oak woodlands, to protect deer and mountain lions. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)].

**\*15. Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, 28**

**Clifton-Lamb Property**

**Riverside County**

**\$0.00**

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 for a cooperative project with the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy to acquire 479± acres of low desert land for the protection of core blowsand habitat that supports the listed species of desert tortoise, Coachella Valley fringe toad lizard, Coachella Valley milk-vetch, and other sensitive, sand dependent species within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan area, mainly located within the city limits of Palm Springs in Riverside County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species. Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)].

**\*16. Cactus Wren and Hermes Copper Butterfly Habitat Restoration Project 32**

**San Diego County**

**\$423,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to remove large stands of invasive non-native plants and restore native plant species on two

acres of coastal cactus wren habitat and two acres of Hermes copper butterfly habitat throughout Lakeside Linkage Preserve in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, protection, and expansion of habitat that furthers the implementation of natural community conservation plans adopted pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code). [California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code 80111(b)].

**\*17. Denk Mountain** **37**

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**San Diego County**

**\$74,200.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) and 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 CNLM, to acquire 5± acres of land for the protection of coastal California gnatcatcher and other federally listed species. The project is located near the community of San Marcos in San Diego 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), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)].

**\*18. Van Dam Cornerstone** **41**

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**San Diego County**

**\$0.00**

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 city of Poway, for a cooperative project with the California Natural Resources Agency to acquire in fee 162± acres of land for the protection of the coastal California gnatcatcher and other species within the Poway Subarea HCP/NCCP plan and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located in the city of Poway in San Diego 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)].

**19. Delegation of Authority** **45**

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This proposal is to consider the delegation of authority to the Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to substitute grantees of grants previously authorized by the Board.

**20. Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion 4** **46**

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**Shasta County**

**\$680,000.00**

To consider the acquisition in fee of 32± acres of land as an expansion to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Battle Creek Wildlife Area for the protection of terrestrial and aquatic habitats supporting salmonid species and to enhance habitat linkages and connectivity, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located near Anderson in Shasta 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), Fish and Game Code Section 2786b/c)].

**21. North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements 50**

**Butte County  
\$440,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a cooperative project with California State Parks to improve the parking lot, provide an ADA accessible viewing platform, and install a new ADA accessible toilet at the North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve, approximately eight miles north of the city of Oroville, in Butte County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [Wildlife Restoration Fund].

**22. Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Fishing Access Pier 53**

**Butte County  
\$310,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to construct a new mobility impaired accessible fishing pier in the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, located approximately ten miles southwest of the city of Gridley, in Butte County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [Wildlife Restoration Fund].

**23. Northern California Climate Adaptation Project 56**

**Yolo/Trinity/Tehama/Siskiyou/Shasta/Napa/Mendocino/  
Lake/Humboldt/Glenn/Del Norte/Colusa/Butte County  
\$118,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to EcoAdapt for a cooperative project with the Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service to assess the impacts of climate change on important northwestern California habitats and species and develop long-term, sustainable adaptation options spanning thirteen counties in the region in Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glen, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, and Yolo counties. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for protection and restoration of natural ecosystems to provide climate change adaptation and resilience, assist natural and working lands managers in adapting to and becoming more resilient to climate change, facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions, increase carbon sequestration in natural and working lands, and provide additional social, economic, and environmental benefits, or "co-benefits" (Public Resources Code Section 5845 et seq.). [General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017].

**24. Whiskey Hill Conservation Easement 60**

**Colusa County  
\$759,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to acquire a conservation easement over 2,607± acres of land for protection of critical winter range for elk and other regional California wildlife and protection of grasslands that sustain working landscapes, located west of the city of Williams in Colusa County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows 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 Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(2)].

**25. Desert Springs and Desert Springs Expansion 1 64**

**Kern County**  
**\$1,385,000.00**

To consider the allocation for two grants to The Trust for Public Land to acquire 1,415± acres of land for the protection of threatened and endangered species, preservation of desert springs with year-round surface water and a riparian corridor, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located near Lake Isabella in Kern County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources. The first funding source allows for the acquisition of land and water resources to protect regional water quality, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and assist local public agencies in improving regional water supply reliability. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Section 79565]. The second funding source allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for threatened and endangered species. [Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(3)].

**26. Portal Ridge, and Expansion 1 68**

**Los Angeles County**  
**\$480,000.00**

To consider the allocation for two grants to The Transition Habitat Conservancy to acquire in fee 120± acres of land from two separate owners for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, to maintain a migration corridor for the deer herd, and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located in the hills northwest of Portal Ridge, in Los Angeles County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat, including native oak woodlands, to protect deer and mountain lions. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)].

**27. Western Spadefoot Habitat Restoration and Seasonal Pool Creation 71**

**Orange County**  
**\$757,000.00**

To consider an allocation for a grant to the Natural Communities Coalition for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Orange County Parks, and California State Parks located in Crystal Cove State Park and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, within Orange County, that will construct 16 seasonal pools and restore 15± acres of adjacent upland coastal sage and cactus scrub habitat that will provide breeding and foraging habitat for the western spadefoot toad. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, protection, and expansion of habitat that furthers the implementation of natural community conservation plans adopted pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code) [California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code 80111(b)].

**28. Western Riverside MSHCP (Chappell) 75**

**Riverside County**  
**\$1,077,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (WRCRCA) and 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 WRCRCA, to acquire 58± acres of land for the protection of essential habitat within the target acquisition area in the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan, located near the city of Murrieta 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), Fish and Game Code Section 2786b/c].

**29. Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Wetland Units T10 and S22 79**

**Imperial County**

**\$950,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and Imperial County to improve water use efficiency by developing new infrastructure to improve wetland management capabilities on CDFW's Imperial Valley Wildlife Area, located six miles north of Niland in Imperial County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands outside the Central Valley. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley].

**30. Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program 83**

Board will be asked to approve these guidelines

**31. Strategic Plan Update 83**

Informational item regarding the update of WCB's Strategic Plan, as required by Proposition 68.

**32. Resolutions 83**

**33. Discuss and Act on Board Administrative Items 84**

- New Business
- Next WCB Meeting – April 4, 2019 Stream Flow Enhancement

**Adjourn**

**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 and Requests for American Sign Language Interpreters should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. Requests for Real-Time Captioners should be submitted at least four weeks prior to the event. These timeframes are to help ensure that the requested accommodation is met. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the EEO Officer immediately.

# WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

March 7, 2019  
10:00 a.m.

Natural Resources Building  
First Floor Auditorium  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

## 1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members

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

Alina Bokde, Public Member

Keely Bosler, Member  
Director, Department of Finance

Diane Colborn, Public Member

Mary Creasman, Public Member

Fran Pavley, Public Member

Eric Sklar, Member  
President Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee  
Senator Nancy Skinner

*(vacant)*

*(vacant)*

Assemblymember Laura Friedman  
*Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi –Alternate*

Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia  
*Assemblymember Miguel Santiago –Alternate*

Assemblymember Monique Limon  
*Assemblymember Marc Levine -Alternate*

Executive Director  
John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, March 7, 2019

**2. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda**

An opportunity for the general public to share comments or concerns on topics that are not included in this agenda. The Board may not discuss or take action on any matter raised during this item, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting. (Sections 11125, 11125.7(a), Government Code)

**3. Funding Status**

Informational

The following funding status depicts total Capital Outlay and Local Assistance appropriations by fund source and fund number:

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND (0447)	<b>\$750,000.00</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(750,000.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$0.00</b>
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	<b>\$80,812,921.62</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(3,526,200.00)
Total Project Development:	(40,524,735.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$36,761,986.62</b>
SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 12) (0005)	<b>\$3,893,880.94</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(485,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,306,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$1,102,880.94</b>
CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	<b>\$8,545,850.77</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(784,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(5,396,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$2,365,850.77</b>
WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	<b>\$26,988,779.41</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(906,980.00)
Total Project Development:	(18,010,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$8,071,799.41</b>
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	<b>\$32,063,090.75</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(460,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(7,756,756.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$23,846,334.75</b>
WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1-6083)	<b>\$93,866,681.38</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$93,866,681.38</b>
THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68-6088)	<b>\$71,000,000.00</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(\$1,180,000.00)
Total Project Development:	<b>(\$7,818,505.00)</b>
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$62,001,495.00</b>

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GENERAL FUND (0001)	<b>\$13,475,000.00</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	(10,000,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$3,475,000.00</b>
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	<b>\$20,000,000.00</b>
March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(118,000.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$19,882,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL – ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$351,396,204.87</b>
Grand Total - March 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	(8,210,180.00)
Grand Total -Project Development	(83,993,491.00)
	<b>259,192,533.87</b>
RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000	
Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000	
Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004 (through 6/30/08)	\$48,598,734.00
Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective 1/1/10)	\$8,662,500.00

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**4. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 5 - 18)**

**\*5. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2018**

**\*6. 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.

<b>RECOVERIES BY FUND</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$67,956.64
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$17,555.66
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	\$0.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$398,372.65
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$37,857.16
<b>Total Recoveries for All Funds</b>	<b>\$521,742.11</b>

<b>Habitat Conservation Fund</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Allensworth Ecological Reserve (Bridges) Exp 63	\$9,750.00	\$6,525.00	\$3,225.00
Allensworth Ecological Reserve (Heredia) Exp 65	\$4,000.00	\$775.00	\$3,225.00
Dos Rios Riparian Restoration	\$1,392,000.00	\$1,391,991.17	\$8.83
Morongo Basin, Exp. 1 (Trummel)	\$96,250.00	\$93,426.00	\$2,824.00
Robin's Nest	\$1,610,000.00	\$1,604,278.00	\$5,722.00
Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge - Jensen Unit Riparian Restoration	\$410,000.00	\$362,477.19	\$47,522.81
San Vicente Highlands (Briles)	\$135,000.00	\$129,571.00	\$5,429.00
Triangle Ranch	\$3,400,000.00	\$3,400,000.00	\$0.00

<b>Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund</b>			<b>\$67,956.64</b>
<b>California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
El Dorado Ranch Phase III	\$2,510,000.00	\$2,502,760.00	\$7,240.00
Laursen Outback Preserve	\$615,000.00	\$604,692.00	\$10,308.00
San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan Update and EIR	\$350,000.00	\$349,992.34	\$7.66
<b>Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>			<b>\$17,555.66</b>

<b>Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Tijuana River Valley Mesa Trails	\$891,000.00	\$891,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Poppi/Halstead)	\$10,000.00	\$2,484.00	\$7,516.00
Hunter Ranch	\$3,030,000.00	\$3,009,161.00	\$20,839.00
Rainbow Ridge	\$40,000.00	\$15,120.00	\$24,880.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, San Joaquin Hatchery Public Access and Trail, Augmentation	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, San Joaquin Hatchery Public Access and Trail, Augmentation II	\$850,000.00	\$505,989.06	\$344,010.94
Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Islands Habitat Enhancement	\$841,000.00	\$839,999.69	\$1,000.31
Ventura River Oak Woodland Restoration	\$200,000.00	\$199,873.60	\$126.40
<b>Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>			<b>\$398,372.65</b>

<b>Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Navarro River Watershed – Plan for Streamflow Optimization and Enhancement	\$375,284.00	\$337,426.84	\$37,857.16
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>			<b>\$37,857.16</b>

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**\*7. Staff Report – Easement Transfers**

At the February 24, 1998, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB or Board) meeting, WCB authorized the Executive Director to transfer less-than-fee interests (easements, right of ways, etc.) in California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or WCB-controlled land, where the value of the interest is less than \$50,000.00. This action was taken to improve service to the public and reduce the cost of processing these transfers.

The Board placed two conditions on its delegation of authority. First, the grant of less-than-fee interest must be made at the request or with the recommendation of CDFW to assure adequate consideration of impacts on habitat and programs. Second, any grant made under this authority must be reported to the Board as an informational item.

Pursuant to the above described process, the following easement transfers have been completed by staff. All consideration has been deposited and verified with WCB’s Fiscal Officer.

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Transfer Type</b>	<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Consideration</b>
Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery, Overhead Powerline Easement	Utility Easement Recorded: 4/16/18	PacifCorp	1± acre	At CDFW request \$0
Napa Sanitation District Pipeline Easement	Utility Easement Recorded: 12/30/15	Napa Sanitation District	2± acre	\$1,000
Turlock Irrigation District Surface Water Supply System Easement	Utility Easement Recorded:5/21/18	Turlock Irrigation District	1± acre	\$4,307
Mojave Fish Hatchery Gas Line	Utility Easement Recorded:7/27/18	SW Gas	1± acre	At CDFW request \$0
Plaisted Creek	Utility Easement Recorded: 3/29/18	SDG&E	1± acre	\$6,000
Bayview Heights Drainage/Runoff Easement	Drainage Easement Recorded:10/29/18	City of Newport	1± acre	\$2,500
Otay Water District Easement Adjustment	Access Easement Recorded: 8/14/18	Otay Water District	1± acre	\$3,900
Levee Easement Rights for Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency	Levee Easement Recorded: 9/6/18	Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency	34± acres	\$19,600
PG&E Easement (Yolo WA)	Utility Easement Recorded: 9/2/16	PG&E	4± acres	At CDFW request \$0
Sutter Bypass – Holmes Access Easement	Access Easement Recorded: 2/2/16	Holmes	1± acre	\$200
Wagner Street Vacation and Grant of Easement	Access Easement Recorded:12/10/14	Hunniecut	1± acre	At CDFW request \$0

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**\*8. Proposition 68 Program Guidelines – Minor Amendment**

To consider and approve a minor amendment associated with Section 2.4 of the [Proposition 68 Program Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) related to support for the University of California Natural Reserve System.

At the request of the University of California Natural Reserve System (UCNRS) Executive Director, an edit is being suggested in the Proposition 68 guidelines to clarify how this program will be implemented. The UCNRS University Wide Ad Hoc Advisory Subcommittee has been eliminated so its function will be performed by the UCNRS Executive Director. The UCNRS Executive Director will work under direction of the broader University Wide Advisory Committee to set priorities for project proposals to be submitted to WCB for funding consideration. This change creates a single point of contact for prospective projects and should streamline UCNRS proposal selection while ensuring that consistently developed proposals are submitted to WCB for funding consideration.

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**\*9. Luffenholtz Transfer  
Humboldt County  
\$0.00**

This proposal is to consider the transfer of 8± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to the Trinidad Coastal Land Trust (TCLT) to own, operate, and maintain the Luffenholtz Beach property in perpetuity for purposes of public access, public recreation, and habitat preservation.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is 8± acres and is located about 1.7 miles southeast of the town of Trinidad, and approximately one half mile southeast of the community of Westhaven in Humboldt County (County). Access to the Property is off Scenic Drive, a paved County road just west of State Route 101.

The Property is on the western side of the northern portion of the Coast Ranges, characterized by northwest to southeast-trending mountain ranges and valleys. This portion of the Coast Ranges are bounded by the Klamath Mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west and north.

To the north of the Property is a private residential property just north of Luffenholtz Creek. To the east is Scenic Drive, to the south is property owned by TCLT, and the Pacific Ocean is to the west. The surrounding vicinity is predominantly similar coastal bluffs with single-family residences on the eastern side of Scenic Drive.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is a single irregular shaped parcel that is operated as a park on a coastal bluff with a paved parking area, inactive restroom, inactive water tank, and trails that overlook the Pacific Ocean to the west. All improvements are dilapidated and past their useful life. The topography of the Property and vicinity is characterized by gently sloped marine terraces separated by steep slopes. Luffenholtz Creek, in the northern portion of the Property, is within a steep ravine that empties into the Pacific Ocean.

The Property was originally acquired by the State of California in a transaction between residents of Humboldt County and the California Department of Public Works. The Property was then held by CalTrans until 1963, when jurisdiction was transferred to CDFW to provide surf and shore fishing access, as the access was popular with surf and night smelt net anglers, as well as rod and reel angling for surf perch, greenling, ling cod, Cabazon, and rockfish. The Property contains the mouth of Luffenholtz Creek where it empties into the Pacific Ocean, and a small reach of stream containing coastal cutthroat trout, coastal three-spined stickleback, sculpin, and lamprey.

When CDFW took over control of the Property, WCB provided funds to build a parking lot and a restroom facility, which was maintained by Humboldt County, at the County's cost, under a twenty-year management agreement. After the agreement expired in 1983, the Property went mostly unmaintained as County budget cuts made it impossible to continue to fund maintenance costs. In 1988, WCB awarded the County funding to upgrade the public access facilities on the Property. The operating agreement expired in 2013 and CDFW assumed complete control of the Property. It is difficult for CDFW to maintain the Property due to its remote location. After exploring available options, a willing management partner and potential transferee was identified in TCLT. TCLT is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered with the State of California and the IRS since 1979. Its mission statement indicates TCLT is "dedicated to protecting for the public benefit the natural beauty and character of Humboldt County from Little River to Big Lagoon." It holds

properties and easements and provides stewardship of these holdings in the public trust. TCLT currently holds title to 9 properties and 11 easements in the greater Trinidad area. TCLT has been partnering with CDFW to help maintain the Property as TCLT owns one adjacent property and several in the immediate vicinity. TCLT currently helps steward and maintain the Property through a short-term pro bono cooperative agreement with CDFW. A longer-term agreement would need to reflect the true cost of managing the site, which CDFW cannot afford. TCLT has the capability and financial ability to ensure the Property is maintained and open to the public.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed transfer of this Property is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. Under Fish and Game Code section 1348(c)(2), WCB may authorize the transfer of real property or rights in real property held under the jurisdiction of CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which prepared a Land Conversion Evaluation (LCE) report to provide justification for the transfer. The LCE must be approved by subdivisions within CDFW, including the land acquisition coordinator in the Regional Office, as well as the Lands Program, Regional Manager, and Deputy Director for the Wildlife and Fisheries Division. The LCE is then submitted to the Director for final approval and submitted to the WCB for consideration and final approval. CDFW approved the Luffenholtz Creek Fishing Access LCE on July 09, 2018 and recommends the proposal for approval.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TCLT currently helps to steward and maintain the Property through a cooperative agreement with CDFW. Following the transfer, TCLT will own and manage the Property as an addition to existing TCLT lands. The Property will continue to be operated in perpetuity for free public access. The Land Trust owns the north Luffenholtz beach parcel and the Huda Point parcel to the south. If at any point in the future TCLT fails to manage the Property for free public access, public recreation, and habitat preservation, the State will have the ability to retake title to the Property.

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

Transaction due diligence costs will be paid from the below referenced funding source. The transaction costs and the purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)].

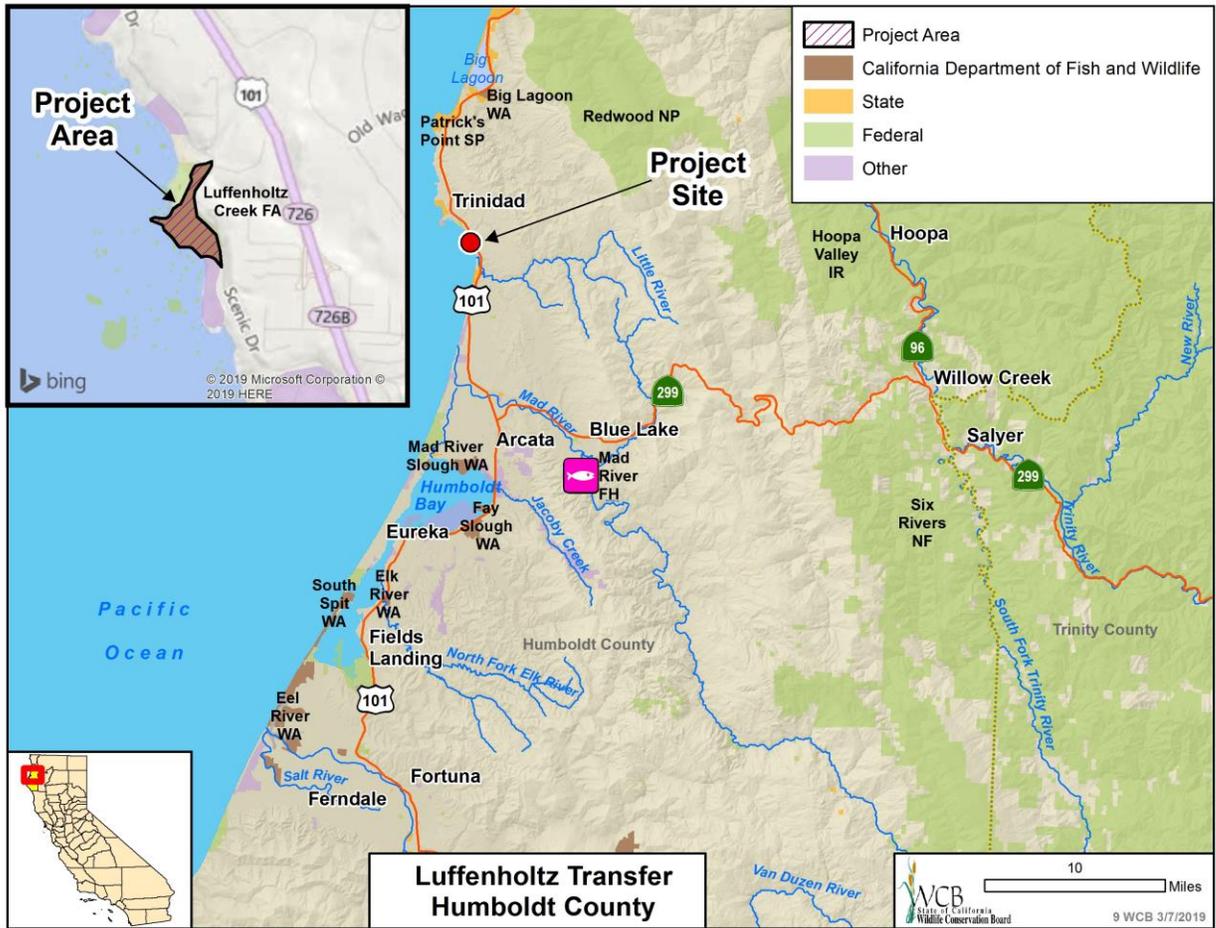
#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) 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 approval.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this no-cost transfer of State-owned land to TCLT as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to

accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**\*10. Deer Creek Hydrological and Technical Studies  
Tehama County  
\$170,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to Trout Unlimited (TU) for a cooperative project with the National Fisheries and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to conduct technical studies, create a reconnaissance-level groundwater model to inform potential acquisition of the water right held by the Deer Creek Irrigation District (DCID), and to inform dedication of the right to instream flow for the benefit of endangered Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon.

**LOCATION**

The study location includes the lower 11 miles of Deer Creek, from the diversion operated by the DCID, downstream to the confluence with the Sacramento River. The study area includes thousands of acres of land serviced by two irrigation districts in this reach of Deer Creek as well as the underlying aquifer, which provides a source of additional irrigation water. These lands are privately owned. They contain primarily nut and fruit orchards and irrigated pasture. Deer Creek is an important tributary for Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon. Year-round, cold-water habitat for spring and fall-run Chinook and steelhead exists upstream of the project area, yet low flows and high temperatures in this lower reach pose a barrier to migration.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Currently in the Deer Creek watershed, there is conflict between the needs of endangered fish and agriculture. The 11-mile reach below the DCID diversion point is impacted by low flows and high temperatures, and thus acts as a barrier to salmonids migrating to and from upstream habitat. TU and DCID leadership have been working in partnership since 2014 to develop engineering alternatives that would increase efficiency and dedicate conserved water to instream flow. This led to interest in facilitating a state purchase and instream dedication of DCID's entire surface water right. Many landowners in DCID's service area are already using groundwater as their primary source of water for irrigation and domestic uses. If the water right is sold, the remaining landowners in the area would switch over to pumping groundwater. However, existing groundwater studies do not provide enough confidence that the aquifer would be able to support the water needs of the entire community. This technical study is designed to address these uncertainties by studying the underlying hydrology and analyzing the potential effects of the sale on existing water users. If the underlying aquifer can support the human and economic needs in the area, negotiations regarding the water transaction can move forward, potentially improving instream flow for salmonids.

The objectives of this technical study are to produce a reconnaissance assessment of groundwater availability, as well as a model to analyze the range of possible impacts that a water right transaction would have on irrigators under three possible scenarios. First, local information will be compiled based on surface and groundwater data as well as previously conducted studies. Four existing, public domain hydrology models will be evaluated for their suitability to this project. A decision will be made to either apply one of the existing models, or to develop a new localized model. Analysis will then move forward using the selected model to analyze possible impacts under three scenarios: Scenario 1 (no change in land use and water demands relative to historical conditions), Scenario 2 (retirement of all land that currently does not have groundwater wells), and Scenario 3 (actual expected condition, which will be based on engagement with landowners and DCID leadership). Outreach to local water users will be ongoing as more information is collected, and public meetings will be held to discuss the combination of actions most likely to occur, which will inform development of Scenario 3. The goal of project outreach will be to reach a solution that meets the needs of fisheries, provides for the long-term security of agricultural water

supplies, and protects existing water users. The methodologies, analyses, and results of the technical analysis will be compiled into a Project Reconnaissance Assessment Report with supporting documentation.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for 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.*

Deer Creek historically provided ample flows to provide for passage of all life stages of spring-run Chinook and other anadromous species. This project will enhance habitat connectivity and corridors for threatened and endangered salmonids and may contribute to the goals of the California Central Valley Salmon & Steelhead Recovery Plan (2014).

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

The Deer Creek hydrograph is characterized by relatively stable baseflow in the summer and fall, higher winter flow in response to storm events, and spring high flows in response to storms and snowmelt. Floodplain connectivity exists throughout the project reach, but has been limited in many places by flood control levees.

A primary purpose of this planning project is to investigate the underlying groundwater hydrology to confirm whether it is adequate to provide an alternative source of water to support the long-term goal of acquiring and dedicating surface water rights on lower Deer Creek. The existing CDFW Deer Creek Technical Report establishes that sufficient water is potentially available from the DCID right to meet streamflow targets in most years under most flow conditions.

Investigating the availability of water to meet long-term project goals of providing fish passage is the main purpose of this planning project.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

Project Task	NFWF	TU	WCB	Total Cost
Project management	-	-	\$18,776	\$18,776
Project administration	\$15,766	\$23,556	\$2,983	\$42,305
Technical study & water use analysis	\$99,221	-	\$140,741	\$239,962
Outreach	-	-	\$7,500	\$7,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$114,987</b>	<b>\$23,556</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$308,542</b>

WCB funding will cover project management, engineering, outreach, and administrative costs.

### FUNDING SOURCE

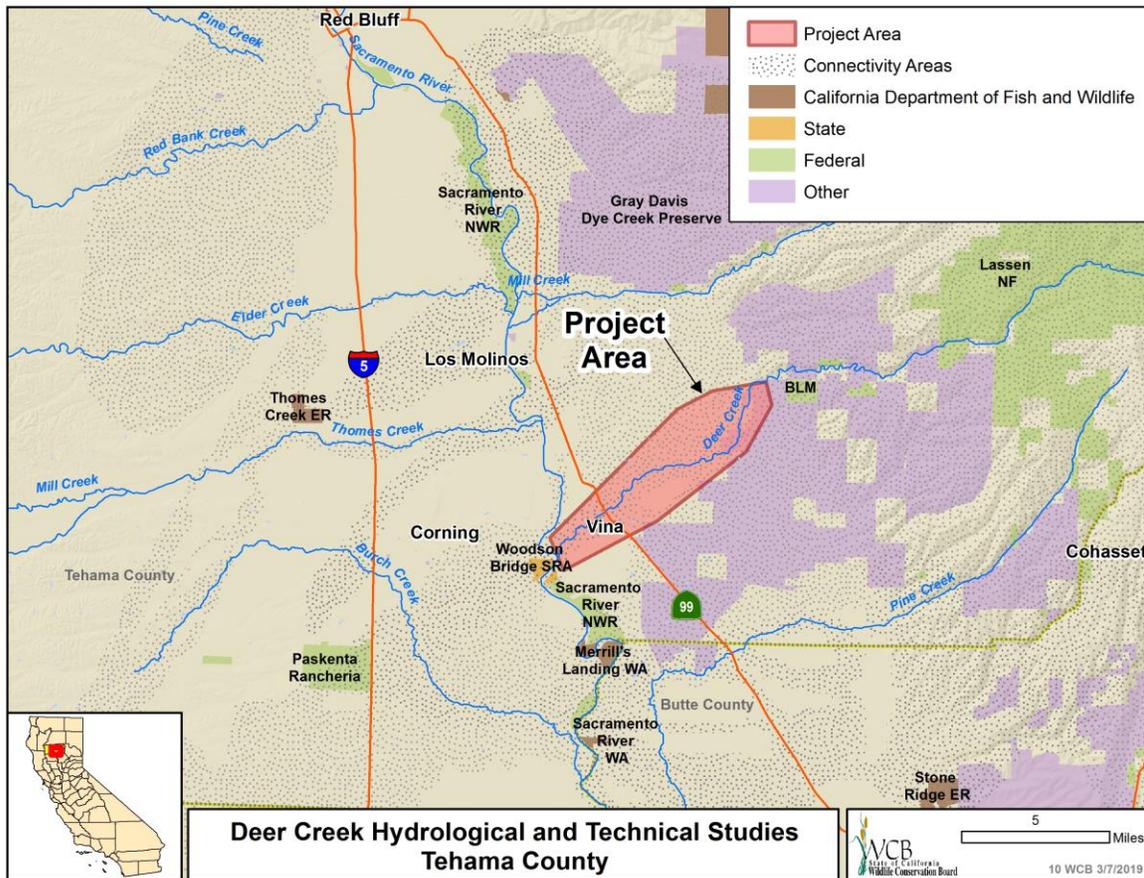
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which can be used for the development of scientific data, habitat mapping and other research information necessary to determine the priorities for restoration and acquisition statewide. [Safe Drinking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

### CEQA REVIEW

The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines as a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions. (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262, Planning and Feasibility Studies). 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 \$170,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.



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**\*11. Lower Yuba River-Excelsior, Phase III  
Yuba and Nevada Counties  
\$0.00**

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of 65± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) from the Bear Yuba Land Trust (BYLT) as a no-cost acquisition for the protection of blue-oak woodlands, grasslands and riparian habitats, and to provide future wildlife-oriented public use opportunities as an expansion to the planned Yuba Narrows Unit of the Daugherty Hills Wildlife Area.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located at the western edge of the Nevada County line and the eastern edge of the Yuba County line, just north of State Route 20 and west of Mooney Flat Road. The site is situated northeast of the small rural community of Smartsville and is bordered by Penn Valley, Grass Valley, and Nevada City to the east and Marysville and Yuba City to the west. The northern edge of the Property lies adjacent to the southern extent of CDFW's Lower Yuba River, Excelsior, Phases I (108 ± acres) and II (527± acres), approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in November of 2010 and August of 2012 respectively. When combined with the previous acquisitions, the proposed acquisition will create superior access into CDFW properties; thereby enhancing and benefiting public recreational opportunities and access to the Yuba River for angling, hiking, and other recreational and scenic activities.

The proposed acquisition is located within the CDFW Lower Yuba River Watershed Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) and is situated in a region of foothills located between CDFW and other protected areas located to the south and north along the same stretch of foothills. The acquisition will help provide habitat and recreational linkages between the CDFW Daugherty Wildlife Area (DHWA) located to the north and the CDFW Spenceville Wildlife Area located to the south.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The irregularly shaped Property is unimproved. The terrain is primarily covered with grassland and oak woodlands on a level to sloping terrain. There are several small pond areas including a large scenic pond. The Property provides wintering habitat for the Mooretown deer herd and contains suitable habitat for a number of endangered species including the western pond turtle, valley Elderberry longhorn beetle, western burrowing owl, and peregrine falcon. Other resident wildlife species include the black bear, wild turkey, gray squirrel, California quail, bald and golden eagles, and a variety of associated riparian and wetland species.

Acquisition of the Property will provide improved access into the previously acquired 635± acres from Mooney Flat Road, and further enhance public recreational opportunities and access to the Yuba River for angling, hiking, and other recreational and scenic activities. Acquisition of the Property will also preclude potential development of lands within the Yuba River watershed, helping to protect and maintain water quality and reduce detrimental run-off in this important fishery, as well as help reduce rapid downstream flows within the Yuba River floodplain.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed acquisition 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 Code Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real

property or rights in real property, and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties.

Under the Program, WCB acquires 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)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/ CAPP is submitted to CDFW's Director for final approval and submission to WCB for its consideration and recommendation to fund.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

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 adapt to any climate change impacts.

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

CDFW has recommended the acquisition of the Property as part of the Lower Yuba River Watershed CAPP.

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

The Property will be available to the public for hiking, horseback riding, bird watching, and wildlife viewing.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the acquisition, CDFW will own and manage the Property as part of the planned Yuba Narrows Unit of the DHWA. The Property will serve as the access point for the DHWA.

#### TERMS

CDFW is acquiring the Property as a no-cost acquisition from the BYLT. The Project will require WCB Staff to review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

Transaction due diligence costs will be paid from the below referenced funding source. The transaction costs and the purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b), which allows for the acquisition of corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat

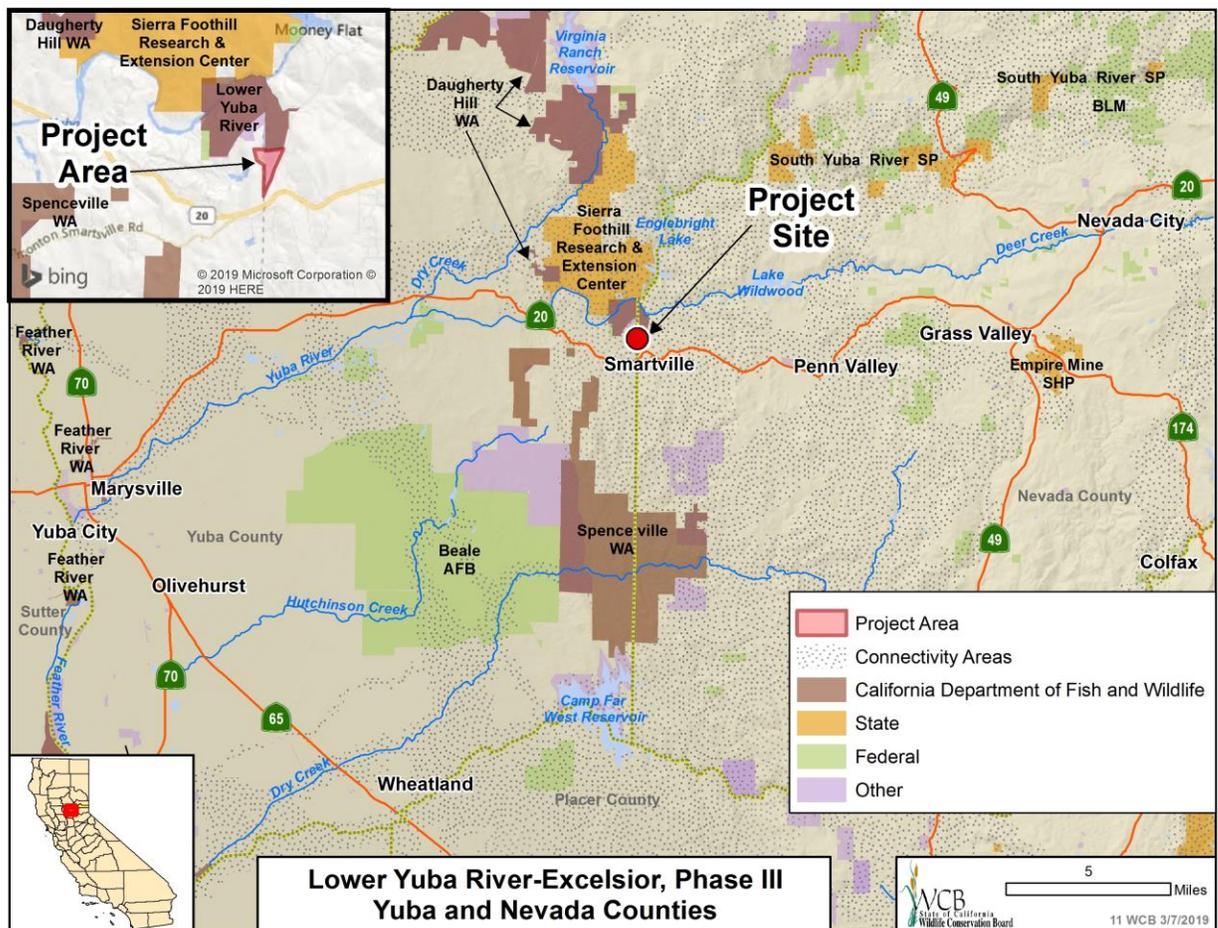
fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas.

### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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



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**\*12. Yolo County HCP/NCCP Development, Phase IV**

**Yolo County  
\$275,000.00**

To consider the allocation for a grant to Yolo Habitat Conservancy (YHC) to initiate and complete critical tasks necessary to build a solid foundation for implementation of the recently completed Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) covering the entire County of Yolo.

**LOCATION**

The Yolo HCP/NCCP encompasses all areas within the boundaries of Yolo County that are eligible for regulatory coverage under the HCP/NCCP totaling approximately 653,549 acres. The plan area also includes a 1,174-acre expanded area for riparian conservation in Solano County on the south side of Putah Creek. The Plan Area is subdivided into 22 geographically-based planning units to facilitate development and execution of the analysis of potential effects associated with implementation of the covered activities and the conservation strategy.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The HCP/NCCP program was developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to provide a unified effort by the USFWS, CDFW, and numerous private and public partners to take a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An HCP/NCCP identifies and provides for the regional or area-wide protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The primary objective of the HCP/NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem level while accommodating compatible land use. The program seeks to anticipate and prevent the controversies and gridlock caused by species listings by focusing on the long-term stability of wildlife and plant communities and including key interests in the process.

The YHC has prepared the Yolo Natural Heritage Program (NHP), comprised of the countywide HCP/NCCP and a local conservation strategy. The Yolo HCP/NCCP is a countywide habitat conservation plan proposing to cover 12 endangered and threatened species and 15 natural communities. The Yolo HCP/NCCP will provide for the conservation of these species in Yolo County, as well as request 50-year incidental take authorization issued under state and federal endangered species laws by CDFW and USFWS. Separately, YHC is also developing the Yolo Local Conservation Plan to help conserve species and natural communities not covered by the Yolo HCP/NCCP. Together, these two plans will establish a framework to protect, enhance, and restore natural resources across Yolo County while allowing for continued rural and urban development in the region.

In 2012, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved a grant to YHC for completion of a first draft of the HCP/NCCP covering the entire County of Yolo. The initial project funded the completion of GIS mapping layers and the administrative draft HCP/NCCP, as well as circulation to CDFW and USFWS. In 2014, WCB approved a grant to assist with the implementation of phase II, which funded the completion of a second draft of the HCP/NCCP and developed the administrative draft EIR/EIS. In 2015 WCB approved a grant assisting with the implementation of phase III, which completed the HCP/NCCP and developed the final EIR/EIS. The YHC has completed the Yolo HCP/NCCP through a mix of State, local and federal funding.

This proposed project will initiate and complete the critical tasks necessary to build a solid foundation for implementation of the finalized Yolo HCP/NCCP.

The primary tasks proposed include 1) grant administration; 2) data management and tracking; 3) member agency and partner organization outreach; and 4) the development of guidelines, procedures, and institutional structures that will help facilitate successful Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system creation.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

The proposed project is consistent with the priorities outlined in the WCB Strategic Plan, pursuant to Goal B.1: WCB will invest in projects that help provide resilience in the face of climate change, enhance water resources for fish and wildlife and enhance habitats on working lands through the following strategies:

- Establish reserves for the conservation of covered species within the Yolo HCP/NCCP geographic area and linkages to adjacent habitat inside and outside Yolo County.
- Incorporate a range of environmental gradients and high habitat diversity into the reserve system to compensate for shifting species distributions in response to changing circumstances (e.g., in response to climate change).
- Protect and maintain habitat areas that are large enough to support sustainable populations of covered species.
- Support wildlife friendly activities on working landscapes through protection of agricultural lands that support at-risk species such as Swainson's hawks and tri-colored blackbirds.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Yolo HCP/NCCP is a comprehensive regional plan to provide for the conservation of 12 sensitive species and the natural communities and agricultural land on which they depend, as well as a streamlined permitting process to address the effects of a range of future anticipated activities on these 12 species within a 654,723-acre area that encompasses all of Yolo County and a small (~1,174 acre). The YHC is implementing the Yolo HCP/NCCP and will conserve 32,000 acres over 50 years to provide for the conservation of the 12 covered species, including Swainson's hawk, Western burrowing owl, and giant garter snake. The proposed project will initiate and complete the critical tasks necessary to build a solid foundation for implementation of the finalized Yolo HCP/NCCP.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project, as proposed, is as follows:

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Proposed WCB</b>	<b>Proposed Member Agency Match*</b>	<b>Total</b>
Task 1: Grant administration	12,000	0	12,000
Task 2: Data management and tracking	163,000	34,000	197,000
Task 3: Member agency and partner organization coordination and education	31,000	23,000	54,000
Task 4: Reserve system resource development	69,000	11,500	80,500
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$275,000</b>	<b>\$68,500</b>	<b>\$343,500</b>
*The member agencies include Yolo County, City of Davis, City of Woodland, City of West Sacramento, and City of Winters.			

The YHC proposes the WCB grant and matching funds to initiate and complete critical tasks necessary to build a solid foundation for implementation of the recently finalized Yolo HCP/NCCP.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

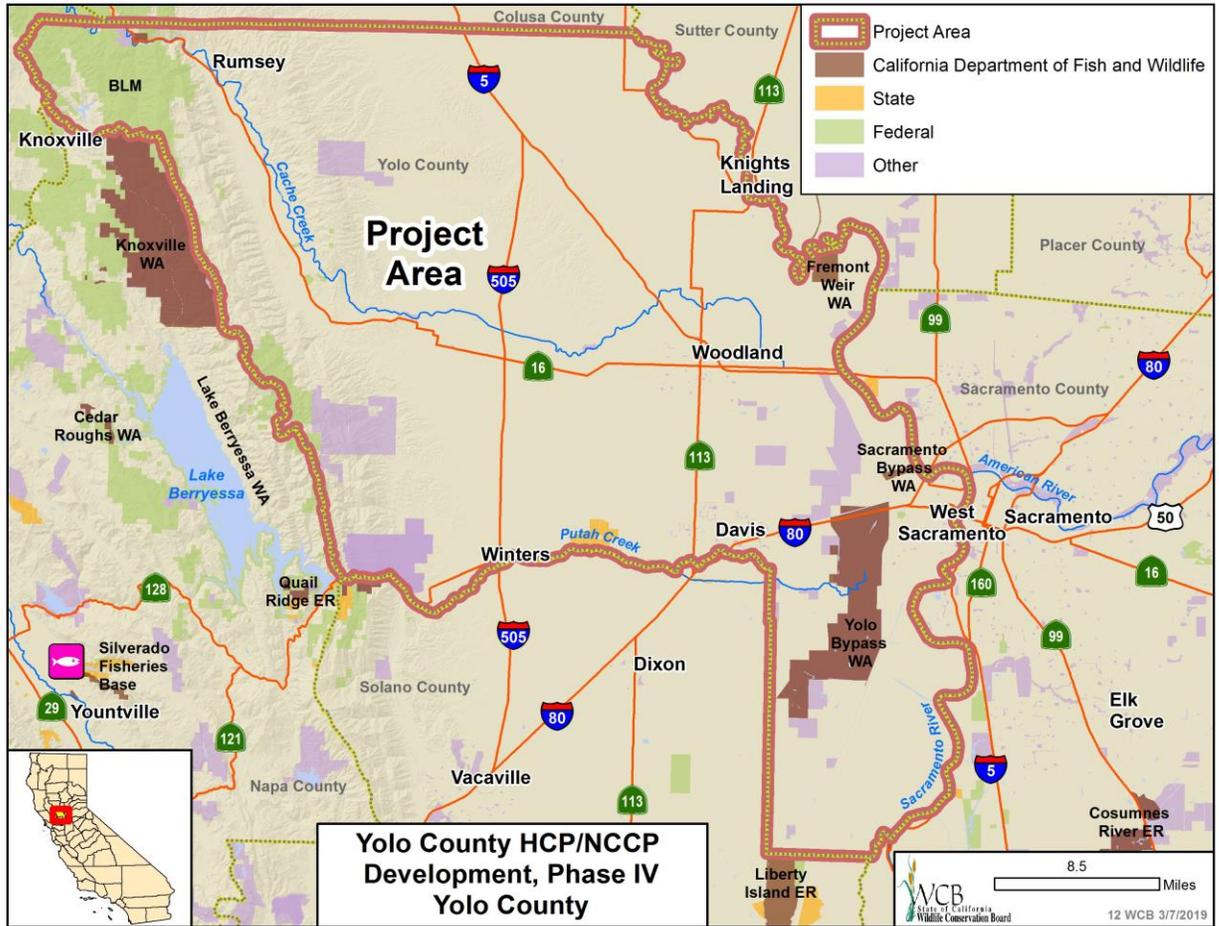
The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)(SB8), which allows grants that implement or assist in the establishment of natural community conservation plans for areas in and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION**

CDFW has reviewed this project and recommends it for funding by WCB. The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262), as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. 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 \$275,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c); 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.



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**\*13. Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 9**  
**Mono County**  
**\$150,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the acquisition in fee of 4± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, to maintain a migration corridor for the Round Valley mule deer herd, and to provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located in the community of Swall Meadows, near the southern border of Mono County. Swall Meadows is west of State Route 395 and is approximately 20 miles north of the city of Bishop and 25 miles south of the town of Mammoth Lakes. More specifically, the Property is located just south of the southern terminus of Willow Road.

The eastern, southern, and western boundaries of the Property border several hundred acres of CDFW property, while a privately owned 7± acre vacant lot and a privately owned 8± acre lot with a single-family residence are located on the Property's northern boundary.

The community of Swall Meadows is comprised primarily of one to two-acre single-family residential lots. Larger parcels in the area are primarily encumbered by conservation easements held by the Eastern Sierra Land Trust. The outlying areas are close to federal public lands administered by Bureau of Land Management or the United States Forest Service. Both federal agencies recognize the importance of maintaining the viability of the Round Valley deer herd migration corridor in their management plans.

The Property is in CDFW's Wheeler Ridge Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The primary purpose of the Wheeler Ridge CAPP area is to acquire property to preserve, maintain, and enhance critical Round Valley mule deer winter range holding areas and migration habitat. The secondary purposes of the Wheeler Ridge CAPP are to maintain and enhance opportunities for deer hunting and wildlife viewing and preserve habitat for the numerous other species that utilize this region. The Property is part of a known migration and holding area for mule deer of the Round Valley herd. The Wheeler Ridge area once supported over 6,000 deer. Currently, mule deer numbers reflect a significant decrease, down to approximately 2,000 animals.

The General Plans for both Inyo and Mono counties urge the preservation of wildlife migration corridors. Inyo County designated Round Valley as an "Environmental Resource Area" due to the diversity of plant and wildlife species, wetlands, and riparian areas in the valley.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is an irregularly shaped parcel and is vacant and unimproved. Access to the site is from a private dirt road beginning from Rimrock Drive. The land use designation of the Property is ER2, which has the legally permissible potential for a single home site.

The predominant vegetation on the Property is sagebrush-bitterbrush scrub. The migration corridor running near and through the Property serves as a temporary holding area important to deer during the spring and fall migrations. Having these open spaces allows the herd the necessary flexibility to survive annual variability in weather. With a very small winter range available to the herd, the lower elevations of the holding area and migration corridor become even more critical. Furthermore, the threat of development within this narrow migration corridor is considered a significant threat to the long-term stability of the herd.

The project will protect and preserve not only the mule deer herd of the Round Valley, but will also provide essential habitat to resident wildlife. Additional wildlife species potentially present on the Property and benefited by the acquisition include federally endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep, and other wildlife species such as Sierra Nevada red fox, mountain lion, long-tailed weasel, and black bear. Studies completed by CDFW have also documented the existence of 137 bird species, 16 bat species, neo-tropical migrants and riparian birds such as the yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat, raptors such as the bald and golden eagles, and a considerable number of reptiles and amphibians present in the area.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to WCB's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code 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 or subgrant federal grant funds to facilitate 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 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 for the migration and movement of wildlife species and provide for habitat connectivity between habitat areas with varying elevations.

*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 parcel for protection in CDFW's Wheeler Ridge CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the acquisition, CDFW will own and manage the Property as an addition to existing CDFW property in Swall Meadows. Currently CDFW owns 213± acres of undesignated lands located in Swall Meadows and within the boundaries of the Wheeler Ridge CAPP. Costs associated with managing the Property will be minimal as the main purpose of the acquisition is to retain the site in its natural state for continued deer use. Site visits will be required from time to time to monitor the Property. These site visits will be included with other surrounding parcels in State ownership and management. The Property has the potential for wildlife viewing, day hiking and other wildlife-oriented recreation.

**TERMS**

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$150,000. 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 its approved appraised fair market value of \$150,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition 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.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The Proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board		150,000.00
Total Purchase Price		150,000.00
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>		<i>\$150,000.00</i>

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

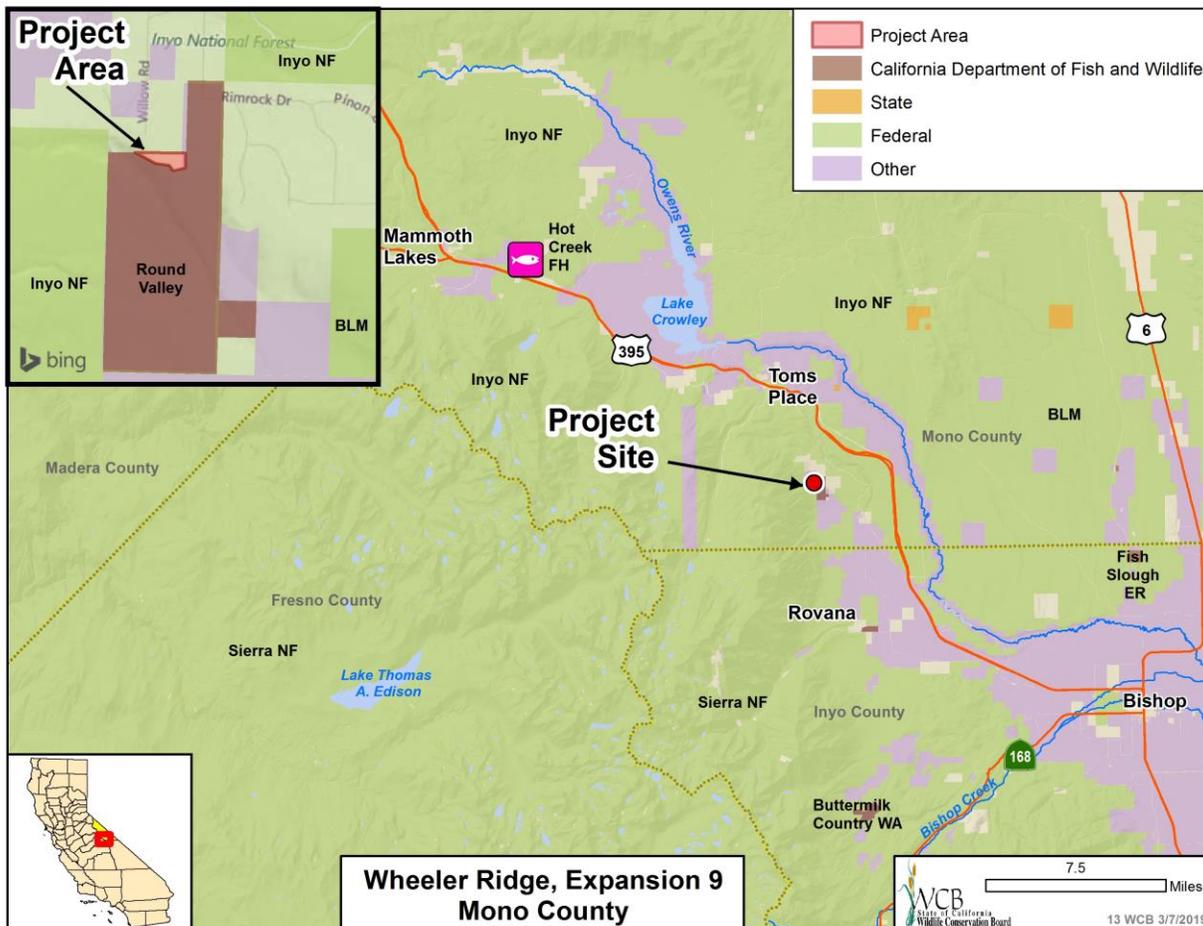
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)].

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$150,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a), for the acquisition; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**\*14. Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 10**  
**Mono County**  
**\$0.00**

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of 59± acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) from the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) as a no-cost acquisition. The proposed acquisition would be for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat to maintain a migration corridor for the Round Valley mule deer herd and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located near the community of Swall Meadows, near the southern border of Mono County. Swall Meadows is west of State Route 395 and is approximately 20 miles north of the city of Bishop and 25 miles south of the town of Mammoth Lakes. More specifically, the Property is located just south of the southern terminus of Sierra Wave Drive.

CDFW owns property adjacent to the western border of the Property. Along the northern boundary of the Property are several privately-owned lots designated for single-family residences. Federal land owned by the Bureau of Land Management is on the eastern boundary of the Property, while the southern boundary borders land owned by the city of Los Angeles.

The community of Swall Meadows is comprised primarily of one to two-acre single-family residential lots. Larger parcels in the area are primarily encumbered by conservation easements held by ESLT. The outlying areas are close to federal public lands administered by Bureau of Land Management or the United States Forest Service. Both federal agencies recognize the importance of maintaining the viability of the Round Valley deer herd migration corridor in their management plans.

The Property is in CDFW's Wheeler Ridge Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The primary purpose of the Wheeler Ridge CAPP area is to acquire property to preserve, maintain, and enhance critical Round Valley mule deer winter range holding areas and migration habitat. The secondary purposes of the Wheeler Ridge CAPP are to maintain and enhance opportunities for deer hunting and wildlife viewing and preserve habitat for the numerous other species that utilize this region. The Property is part of a known migration and holding area for mule deer of the Round Valley herd. The Wheeler Ridge area once supported over 6,000 deer. Currently, mule deer numbers reflect a significant decrease, down to approximately 2,000 animals.

The General Plans for both Inyo and Mono counties urge the preservation of wildlife migration corridors. Inyo County designated Round Valley as an "Environmental Resource Area" due to the diversity of plant and wildlife species, wetlands, and riparian areas in the valley.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is an irregularly shaped parcel and is vacant and unimproved. Access to the site is from a private dirt road beginning from the southern terminus of Ridgeview Drive. It is zoned for rural residential use; however, the land is currently owned by ESLT with the intent of preserving the habitat. ESLT acquired the Property in 2011 for \$720,000. ESLT's acquisition of the Property was fully funded by a grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

The predominant vegetation on the Property is sagebrush-bitterbrush scrub. The migration corridor running near and through the Property serves as a temporary holding area important to deer during the spring and fall migrations. Having these open spaces allows the herd the necessary flexibility to survive annual variability in weather. With a very small winter range available to the herd, the lower elevations of the holding area and migration corridor become even more critical. Furthermore, the threat of development within this narrow migration corridor is considered a significant threat to the long-term stability of the herd.

The Property will protect and preserve not only the mule deer herd of the Round Valley, but will also provide essential habitat to resident wildlife. Additional wildlife species potentially present on the Property and benefited by the acquisition include federally endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep, and other wildlife species such as Sierra Nevada red fox, mountain lion, long-tailed weasel, and black bear. Studies completed by CDFW have also documented the existence of 137 bird species, 16 bat species, neo-tropical migrants and riparian birds such as the yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat, raptors such as the bald and golden eagles, and a considerable number of reptiles and amphibians present in the area.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under 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 Code 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 or subgrant federal grant funds to facilitate 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 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 for the migration and movement of wildlife species and provide for habitat connectivity between habitat areas with varying elevations.

*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 parcel for protection in CDFW's Wheeler Ridge CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the acquisition, CDFW will own and manage the Property as an addition to existing CDFW property in Swall Meadows and the Wheeler Ridge area. Currently CDFW owns 213± acres of undesignated lands located in Swall Meadows and within the boundaries of the

Wheeler Ridge CAPP. Costs associated with managing the Property will be minimal as the main purpose of the acquisition is to retain the site in its natural state for continued deer use. Site visits will be required from time to time to monitor the Property. These site visits will be included with other surrounding parcels in State ownership and management. The Property has the potential for wildlife viewing, day hiking and other wildlife-oriented recreation.

#### TERMS

CDFW is acquiring the Property as a no-cost acquisition from ESLT. The terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, acquisition documents, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to submitting them into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

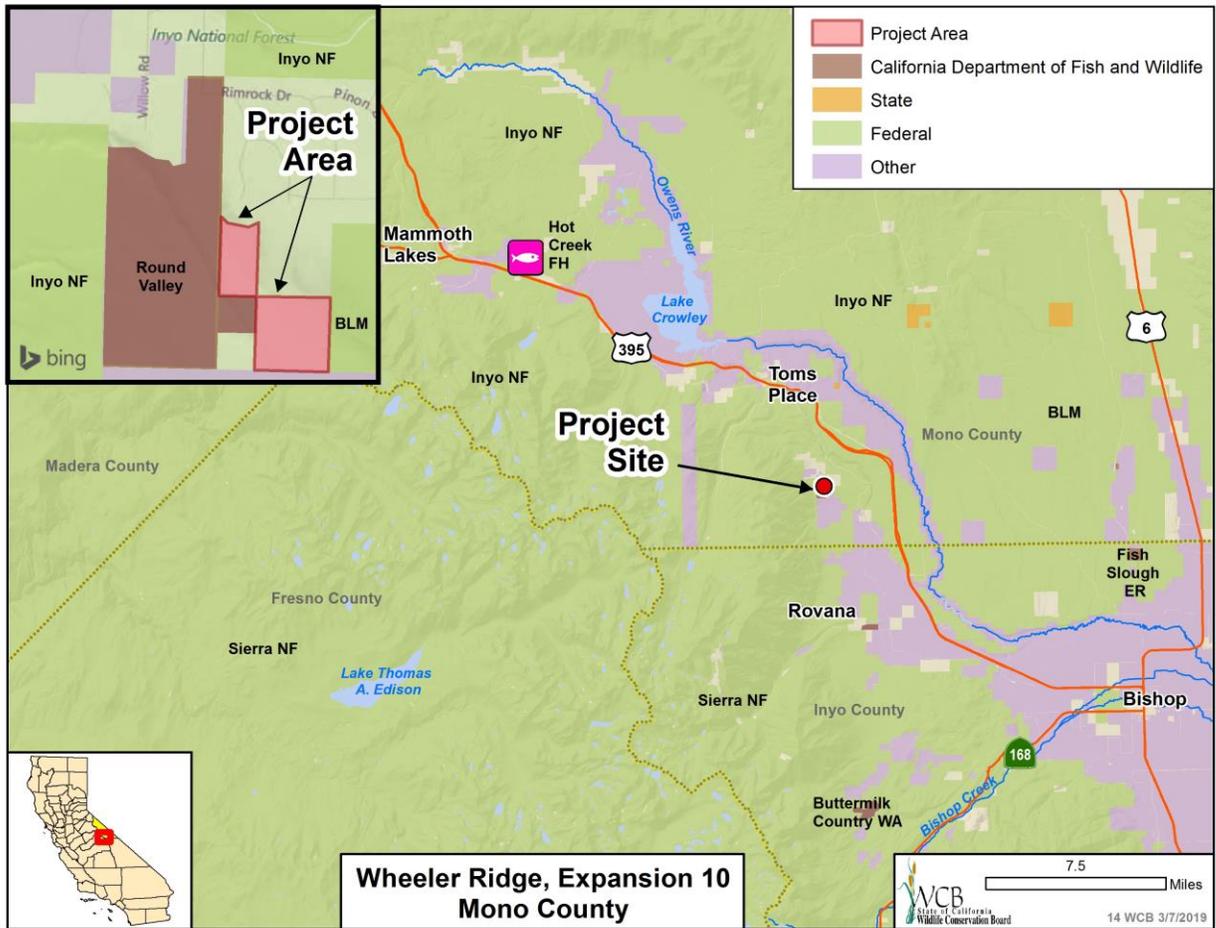
Transaction due diligence costs will be paid from the below referenced funding source. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and 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. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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



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**\*15. Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan,  
Clifton-Lamb Property  
Riverside County  
\$0.00**

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC), for a cooperative project with the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC) to acquire 479± acres of low desert land for the protection of core blowsand habitat that supports the listed species of desert tortoise, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, Coachella Valley milk-vetch, and other sensitive sand-dependent species within the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP/NCCP) area.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located on the western edge of the city of Palm Springs, 1 mile south of State Route 111, 1.5 miles south of Interstate 10 and 10 miles northwest of downtown Palm Springs. Access to the Property is from Snow Creek Road, an asphalt paved road that extends from State Route 111. The immediate outlying area of the Property is mostly undeveloped conserved land, except for a residential subdivision located approximately a half mile south, along with the presence of wind farms and largescale wind turbines operating to the north and west of the Property.

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. The greater Los Angeles area is approximately 100 miles to the west with Interstate 10 providing convenient Valley access for residents and commuters. The Valley's urban and residential development has been growing rapidly. With a population of nearly 600,000 people, the Valley is part of the 13<sup>th</sup> largest metropolitan area in the United States, the Inland Empire.

The Property is identified for protection within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains and the Snow Creek/Windy Point conservation areas, both identified within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County. The purpose of the CVMSHCP/NCCP is to provide a regional vision for balanced growth to meet the requirements of federal and state endangered species laws, while promoting enhanced opportunities for recreation, tourism, and job growth. The CVMSHCP/NCCP aims to conserve 240,000 acres of open space to support the 500,000 acres of pre-existing conservation land for the protection of 27 plant and animal species. With the support of other resources partners, the State and the federal government have currently helped conserve approximately 92,000 acres within the CVMSHCP/NCCP area.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property consists of four undeveloped irregular shaped parcels with mostly level to steeply sloping topography, supporting blowsand habitat areas found specifically within the Valley. The Property is characterized by natural desert terrain with an alluvial fan that descends from the higher elevations of the San Jacinto Mountains to south of the Property, eventually spreading across the western portion of the Property. Other habitat found on the Property includes Sonoran creosote bush scrub, Sonoran mixed woody and succulent scrub, Sonoran cottonwood-willow riparian forest, desert dry wash woodland, semi-desert chaparral, interior live oak chaparral, and chamise chaparral. Historically these habitat areas have been eliminated or degraded by the direct and indirect effects of urban and

residential growth that has occurred throughout the Valley, including ongoing building and related infrastructure development, off-road vehicle use, and invasive species. The introduction of structures and non-native plant species within the Valley restrict what were once free-moving sand deposits, thus preventing replenishment of the blowsand habitats.

The Property is designated with multiple zoning categories which include rural residential, open space, and environmentally sensitive area. Each of these zoning categories allows development, but with different requirements and regulations. This acquisition would permanently protect the Property from development and provide core habitat, linkages, and fluvial and Aeolian sand transport corridors important for the threatened and endangered species of Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, desert tortoise, and Coachella Valley milk-vetch. The Property also provides habitat for other sensitive sand-dependent species including the flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley round tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Coachella Valley sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and burrowing owl.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

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

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

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

**TERMS**

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$2,755,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match of \$964,305.10 that is proposed to be provided by the CVMC. The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant of USFWS funds to the CVCC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

USFWS subgrant funds		\$1,790,694.90
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy		\$964,305.10
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>		<b>\$2,755,000.00</b>

**FUNDING SOURCE**

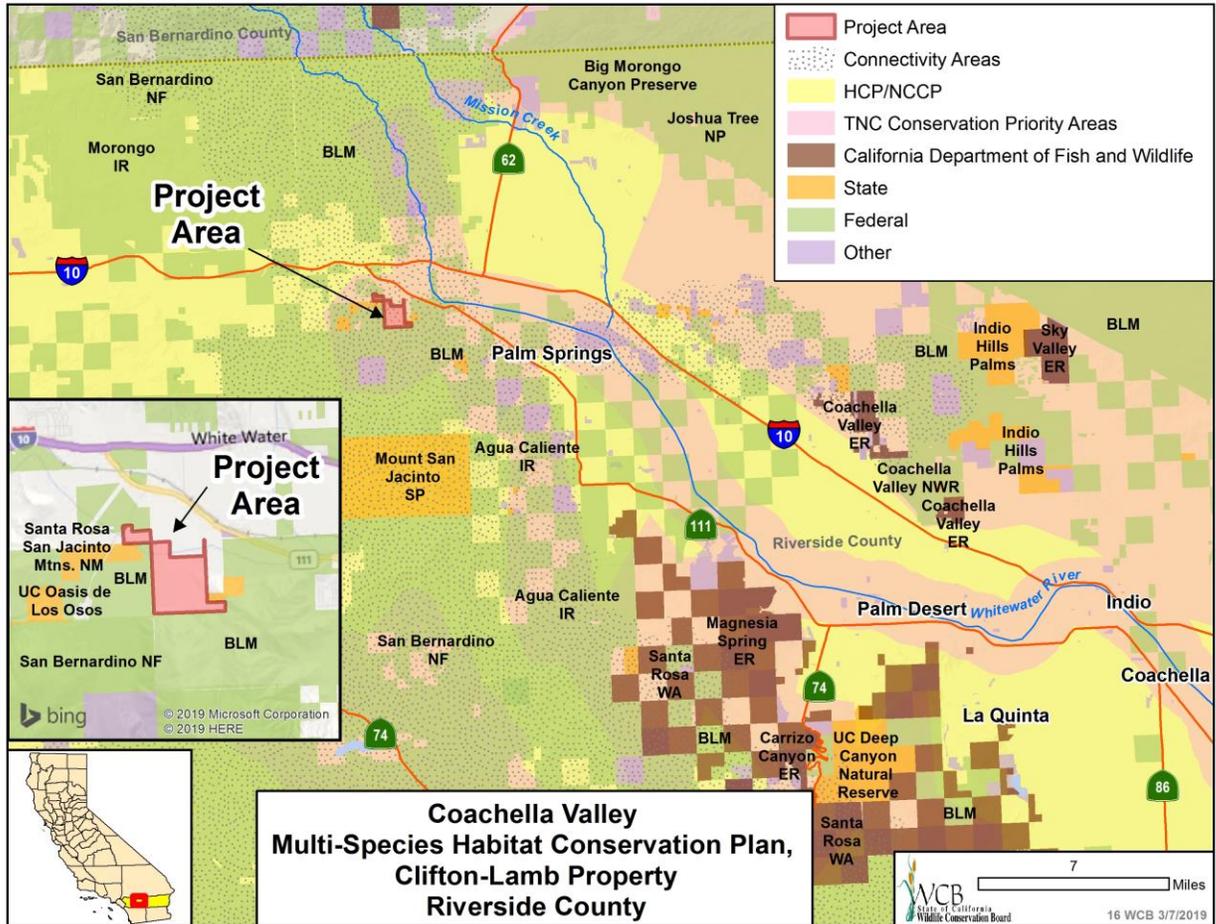
Transaction due diligence costs will be paid from the below referenced funding source. The transaction costs and the purposes of the project are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117, Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grant funds from USFWS in the amount of \$1,790,694.90 and approve a subgrant of the federal funds to CVCC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**\*16. Cactus Wren and Hermes Copper Butterfly Habitat Restoration Project  
San Diego County  
\$423,000.00**

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to remove large stands of invasive nonnative plants and restore native plant species on two acres of coastal cactus wren habitat and two acres of Hermes copper butterfly habitat throughout the Lakeside Linkage Preserve in San Diego County.

**LOCATION**

The project area is within the boundaries of the Lakeside Linkage Preserve (Preserve) which consists of approximately 134 acres located in the hills just north of the city of El Cajon and west of Lake Jennings Reservoir, in southwestern San Diego County, California. The Preserve is comprised of four non-contiguous properties and functions as a corridor linkage between the Crestridge Ecological Reserve and conserved lands around El Capitan Reservoir.

This portion of San Diego County has lost much of its original habitat due to agricultural land conversion in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, urbanization in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and most recently due to wildfires. The natural setting within the project area is characterized by steep coastal foothills with ridgelines separated by numerous small canyons, ravines, and drainages. A 2007 survey documented five vegetation communities and 221 species within the Preserve. The survey detected 94 plant species, 62 bird species, 26 mammal species, 10 reptiles, and 29 invertebrate species. This list includes 20 sensitive species, six of which are listed as San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) covered species.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Coastal cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis*; CACW) began to significantly decline in San Diego County in the early 1980s due to habitat loss associated with agriculture and urban development. By 2007, the CACW was concentrated in only four core regions in San Diego County and totaled approximately 265 pairs. Surveys in 2012 documented 245 pairs in the County. A major threat to CACW over the last 25 years in San Diego County has been an altered fire regime, which has caused direct mortality of birds and destroyed significant patches of cactus scrub habitat. Cactus scrub is slow growing and can take many years to recover to suitability for nesting CACW. Over the last several years, wildfires have damaged CACW habitat within all of the four core areas mentioned. In addition, invasive non-native plants are colonizing recovering cactus patches and creating quick-igniting fuels that also compete with the recovering native plant species. Under current climate change predication models of a drier and hotter climate, more frequent and intense fires will likely continue. Other threats and stressors have also been identified for the species, including habitat fragmentation, predation, drought, and low genetic fitness. These threats and stressors coupled with habitat loss have led to the continued decline of CACW populations throughout southern California.

Hermes copper (*Lycaena hermes*) is also threatened by recent urbanization and wildfires throughout its range in the United States, which only consists of the western portion of San Diego County. This small butterfly species inhabits coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral in areas that contain both spiny redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*) and California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Recent studies by local experts have determined that the current range of Hermes copper in San Diego County has been reduced compared to its historic range, primarily due to habitat loss (urbanization) in the western portion of its range and wildfires in the eastern portion. Today most of the current known Hermes copper

populations are in a small portion of San Diego County, representing about nine percent of the county's total area. Currently, the continued existence of Hermes copper is threatened by wildfire, a restricted geographical range, and population isolation.

The proposed project will benefit CACW, Hermes copper, and other coastal sage scrub dependent sensitive species. The project goal is to ensure CACW and Hermes copper persistence within conserved lands of San Diego County by enhancing unoccupied habitat that is within close proximity to occupied areas within the Preserve that have potential to support these species and to enhance a regionally significant corridor.

The objective of the proposed project is the restoration and enhancement of 2 acres of CACW habitat and 2 acres of Hermes copper habitat. The following tasks will be implemented to achieve this objective:

- Initiate a three-year program for the treatment of large stands of invasive non-native plants identified throughout the Preserve to improve the on-site coastal sage scrub habitat to benefit all sensitive species identified on the Preserve that occur in this vegetation community, including orange-throated whiptail (*Cnemidophorus hyperythrus beldingi*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), and southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*).
- Installation of 500 prickly pear cactus and/or cholla in the central property of the Preserve to expand existing nesting and foraging habitat for CACW.
- Installation of 500 spiny redberry plants in the western property of the Preserve to augment the existing spiny redberry plant population to expand the potential habitat for Hermes copper butterflies.

Once these tasks have been implemented, follow-up invasive non-native plant treatments will occur twice a year over a 2-year period. Within the cactus revegetation areas, follow-up invasive non-native plant control will occur over a 1-year period (Year 2). The revegetation areas will also be watered monthly unless the site has received rain. Within the spiny redberry and buckwheat revegetation areas, follow-up invasive non-native plant control will occur over a 1-year period (Year 2). The revegetation areas will also be watered twice a month unless the site has received rain.

The proposed project aligns with the goals of the MSCP County Subarea Plan which implements the MSCP within the unincorporated areas under the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego. Specifically, the management directives and implementation measures of the Lakeside Linkage Preserve Resource Management Plan regarding habitat restoration proposed on the Preserve and in regard to invasive non-native plant treatment. The proposed project will assist with implementation of the County Subarea Plan policy for habitat linkages by minimizing habitat fragmentation; providing habitat for plants and animals in transit; maintaining genetic and demographic interchange between populations; facilitating daily, annual, and seasonal movements, permitting dispersal to breeding and foraging areas; and facilitating 'rescue' of small peripheral populations from extinction.

The proposed project also aligns with the goals of the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP) Management Strategic Plan (MSP) for CACW and Hermes copper. The SDMMP, has identified CACW as a species with a high risk of extirpation from conserved lands in western San Diego County including those conserved by the MSCP. SDMMP has stated that the primary management action to benefit CACW is to increase and enhance suitable habitat at locations with CACW and to improve connectivity between occupied habitats.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for coastal scrub and threatened and endangered species habitats.

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

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

The project will provide resilience in the face of climate change by creating refugia for sensitive species and enhancing a corridor that allows for connectivity between protected lands in San Diego County.

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

The project will be administered by the San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and will include managing the work performed by on-call consultant staff, administration of tasks, and project oversight. DPR staff will include Land Use/Environmental Planners that are involved in resource management. The County possesses adequate staff to manage the grant funds and can act comprehensively to manage the project site beyond the 3-year grant period.

The project site is located within the Preserve. Continued maintenance and monitoring within the project site will occur as a part of the ongoing management at the Preserve. The County of San Diego General Fund monies will be utilized to fund the ongoing management and maintenance efforts on the Preserve. DPR will manage the project site in a manner consistent with existing obligations under the MSCP, which is a regional Natural Communities Conservation Plan addressing the location and manner of development and habitat and species conservation over several government jurisdictions in southwestern San Diego County.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, DPR 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**

<b>Task</b>	<b>WCB</b>	<b>DPR</b>	<b>Total</b>
Implementation	\$194,386		\$194,386
Maintenance	\$120,937		\$120,937
Monitoring	\$25,794		\$25,794
Reporting	\$30,090		\$30,090
Administrative	\$51,793	\$42,330	\$94,123
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$423,000</b>	<b>\$42,330</b>	<b>\$465,330</b>

Project costs will be for the implementation of a non-native invasive plant removal process, revegetation with native plant species, monitoring and reporting activities during the project's active life, and for project administration.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b), which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, protection, and expansion of habitat that furthers the implementation of natural community conservation plans adopted pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code).

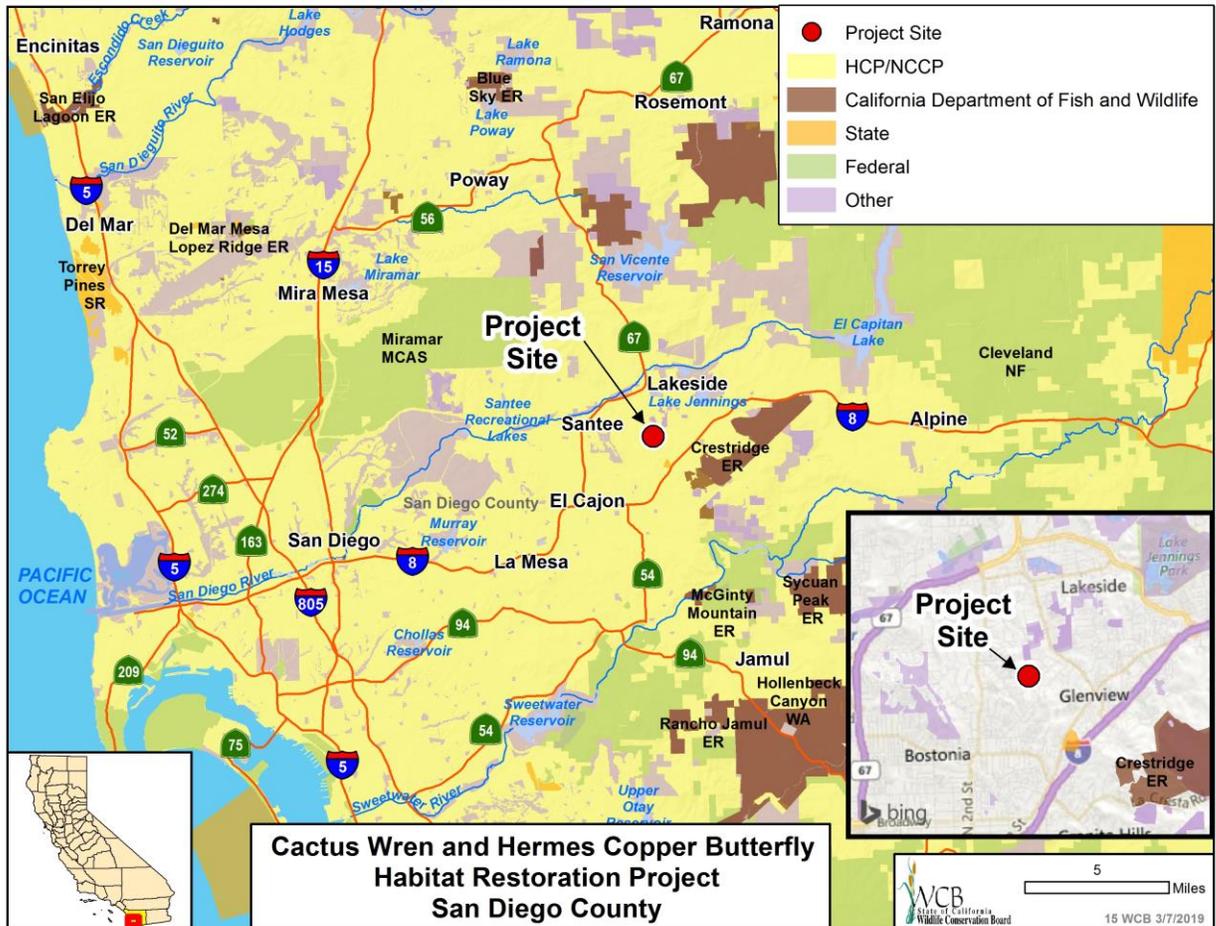
#### CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW

The proposed project was reviewed and approved by the CDFW's Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan Local Assistance Grant Program.

As lead agency, the County of San Diego prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Multiple Species Conservation Program San Diego County Subarea Plan which covers this project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the EIR and has prepared proposed written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$423,000.00 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.



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**\*17. Denk Mountain  
San Diego County  
\$74,200.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) and 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 CNLM, to acquire 5± acres of land for the protection of coastal California gnatcatcher and other federally-listed species.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is 5± acres and is located at the southern border of the city of San Marcos near the community of San Elijo Hills. San Marcos is south of State Route 78, approximately 15 miles east of the city of Carlsbad. More specifically, the Property is located about one mile southeast of the intersection of Melrose Drive and San Elijo Road.

The surrounding parcels to the north, west, and south consist of vacant land owned by CNLM as part of the Rancho La Coasta 1,650 ± acre preserve that serves as a regional corridor connecting Batiquitos Lagoon and Lake Hodges. Three separate 5± acre vacant, privately-owned parcels to the east buffer the Property from the preserve and publicly-owned open space. The community of San Marcos is comprised primarily of single family residential lots.

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

The Property is also included in the city of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Plan (HMP). Acquisition of the Property will help advance the HMP by securing key wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat. The city of Carlsbad HMP subarea plan was permitted in November 2004 and provides coverage for 54 species, including 19 federally listed as endangered or threatened and 35 unlisted species. The HMP commits to preserve an area of approximately 4,441 acres.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is an irregularly shaped parcel that is vacant and unimproved. Access to the Property is from a private dirt road off of San Elijo Road. The Property features steep and rugged mountainside terrain with gently rolling hilltop areas at the south side. The predominant vegetation on the Property is southern mixed chaparral intermixed with Diegan coastal sage scrub.

The Property is zoned RR, Rural Residential, by San Diego County, and the minimum allowed parcel size by zone is four acres. The General Plan designation is SR-10, Semi-Rural Lands, with a minimum allowed parcel size of ten acres.

The Property is situated among Carlsbad's existing mitigation sites and Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan coastal California gnatcatcher core area. The proposed acquisition and the adjacent protected lands provide core and linkage habitat for species such as coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and Del Mar manzanita, among other species. The wide swath of coastal sage scrub in this area is the highest quality habitat remaining in

north San Diego County for the coastal California gnatcatcher and numerous other sensitive sage scrub-dependent species. Maintaining this area and the coastal California gnatcatchers that breed here as a core population center is critical to the long-term viability of the population in San Diego County.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

#### STRATEGIC PLAN 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 contains habitat and wildlife corridors for threatened and endangered species. In addition to the coastal California gnatcatcher, the Property supports habitat for the following six federally listed species: southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, Del Mar manzanita, San Diego ambrosia and Encinitas baccharis. By protecting the wildlife corridors and reducing development in the area, the species will have the potential to adapt to any impacts of climate change.

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

The Property is within the HMP area and will help meet the goals of the HMP. The project has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding.

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

The Property is within the CDFW Escondido Creek Conceptual Area Protection Plan. The USFWS grant proposed for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CNLM currently manages 1,650 acres of conservation lands which surround the Property. CNLM will manage and monitor this property consistent with its management of its other properties, and pursuant to the Rancho La Costa Habitat Conservation Area 2016-2020 Management Plan. This resource management plan is updated approximately every five years. The management objectives include habitat assessments, plant and animal monitoring, habitat maintenance (such as nonnative invasive species control), erosion

control, and public services (such as patrolling, site protection, signing and outreach). There will be no public access to the Property.

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$212,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and the USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for fair market value. The USFWS grant funds require a non-federal match that will be provided by the WCB grant and the Authority. WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms WCB can require the 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	\$74,200.00
USFWS subgrant funds	\$137,800.00
Total Purchase Price	\$212,000.00
Total WCB Allocation	\$74,200.00

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

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

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) 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 WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$74,200.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), for the grant; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$137,800.00 and 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.



**\*18. Van Dam Cornerstone  
San Diego County  
\$0.00**

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 city of Poway (City) to acquire in fee 162± acres of land for the protection of the coastal California gnatcatcher, and other species, and to provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is 162± acres and is located at the southwest border of the city of Poway near the community of Sabre Springs. The Property is east of Interstate 15, approximately ten miles east of the city of Del Mar.

The Property is set between the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) 150-acre Meadowbrook Ecological Reserve to the east and the city's 141-acre Van Dam Peak property to the west. Several small 5± acre, privately owned vacant lots border the northern and southern boundaries of the Property and buffer it from surrounding subdivisions. The city of Poway is a rural residential community that incorporated in 1980. The city is surrounded by affluent suburban communities including Sabre Springs.

The Property is included in the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program, which includes the city of Poway Subarea Plan, a joint Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). Acquisition of the Property will protect a robust east-west regional wildlife corridor, allowing for large-scale species migration and dispersal between core biological areas, buffering ecosystems against further development, traffic, and other human influences, and allowing for genetic exchange among populations.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property consists of four vacant unimproved parcels. Property topography varies from moderately sloping to steep and mountainous terrain and rock outcroppings. Access to the Property will be provided by four non-exclusive easements for vehicular and pedestrian access over adjoining private parcels.

All but ten acres of the Property are subject to common zoning and land use designations of Rural Residential with minimum allowed parcel sizes of four to 40 acres. The permitted land use for the mentioned ten-acre segment of land provides for a minimum lot size of one to four acres. Acquisition of these parcels will prevent development, conserve coastal sage scrub habitat which could be lost to development, help control unauthorized public access and subsequent potential site erosion and preserve regional connectivity for a wide variety of wildlife species.

The Property has been identified as a high priority acquisition in both the city of Poway's Habitat Conservation Plan and the county's Multi-Species Conservation Plan. The 162± acre acquisition will create an open-space bridge between two other significant green spaces, creating 450 acres of contiguous open space. It will avoid further fragmentation of high-priority coastal sage scrub habitat and protect an important wildlife corridor. It provides habitat for an estimated 85 animal and plant species in the region, including 26 federally-listed species, primary of which is the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher. Acquisition will also make it possible to both manage public access as the Property contains the majority of the trail system leading to Van Dam Peak, a local hiking destination. The city will maintain trails and prevent site erosion. The Property will be owned and managed as a part of the city's significant open space system.

## WCB PROGRAM

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

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The city of Poway will be responsible for maintaining the property in conjunction with the adjacent city-owned Van Dam Peak. The City Department of Public Works has a staff of 15 that currently manages the city's park and open space system (18 parks and 2,800 acres). Once the property is acquired by the city, management will be expanded to the entire property. Funds for ongoing management will come from the city's General Fund.

## TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,625,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and the USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for fair market value. The USFWS grant funds require a non-federal match that

will be provided by the California Natural Resources Agency EEM Program and the City of Poway in-lieu habitat conservation fund. WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms WCB can require the 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	\$0.00
USFWS subgrant funds	\$1,000,000.00
CA Natural Resources Agency EEM Program	\$500,000.00
City of Poway	\$125,000.00
Total Purchase Price	\$1,625,000.00
Total WCB Allocation	\$0.00

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

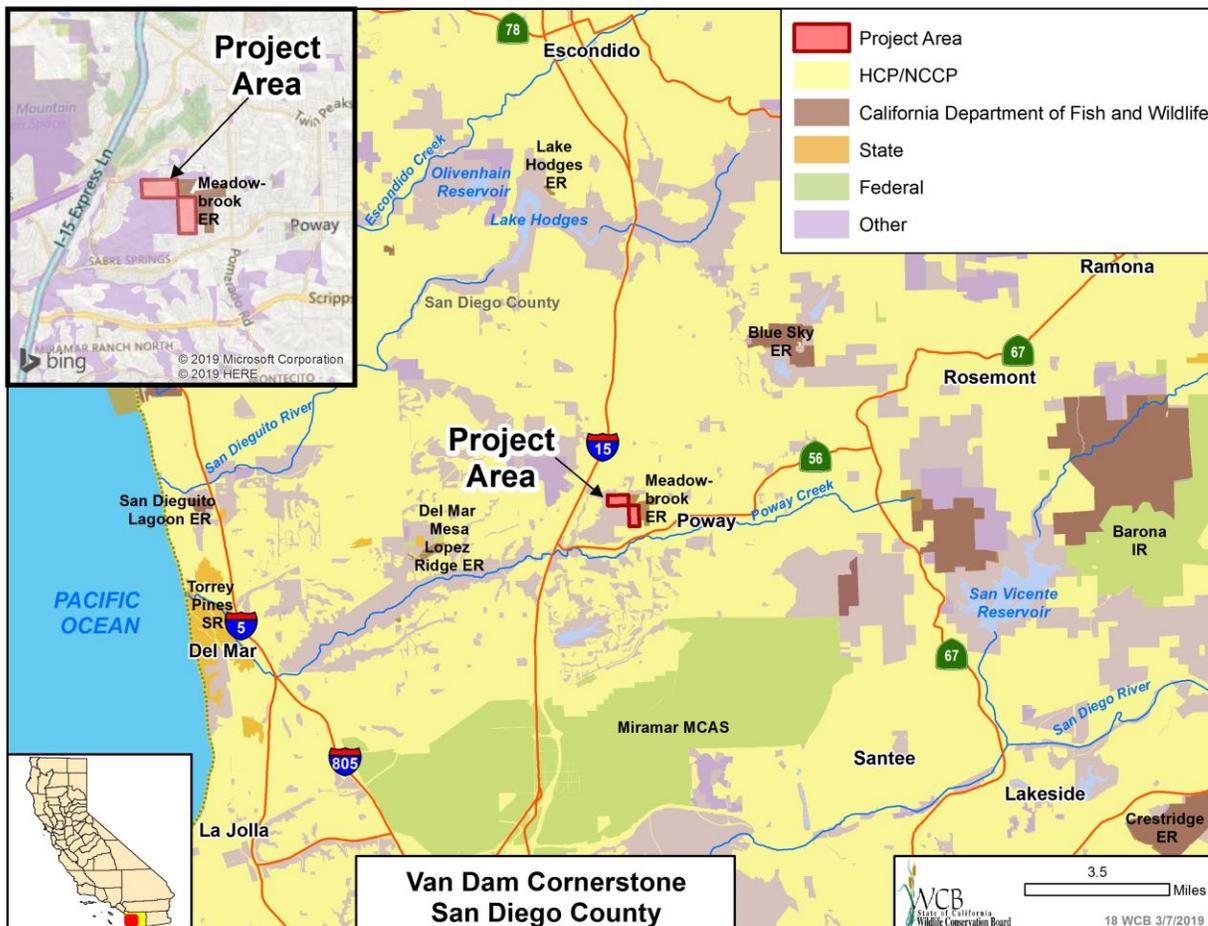
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)].

#### 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 the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) 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. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 and the subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**19. Delegation of Authority**

This proposal is to consider the delegation of authority to the Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to substitute grantees of grants previously authorized by the Board.

Occasionally, WCB needs to substitute grantees of grants previously authorized by the Board to accomplish the original purpose of the authorization. Currently, WCB staff must take such requests for grantee substitution to the Board individually, delaying implementation of grants which the Board has already approved. Such substitutions do not involve significant policy decisions that would require the consideration of the Board during publicly held meetings and do not change the scope or cost of the project for which the grant was authorized. Accordingly, WCB is requesting the delegation of authority to allow the Executive Director to authorize substitute grantees, on previously authorized projects, which will facilitate implementation of authorized projects in a timely manner when a substitute grantee is necessary.

Staff recommends that the Board delegate authority to the Executive Director with respect to grants previously authorized by the Board to substitute grantees as necessary to accomplish the purposes of the authorization, consistent with applicable law and the policies of WCB, provided that in the case of competitive grant programs such substitution would not have lowered the score of the original grant application. Substitution of grantees under the recommended delegation of authority will be reported to the Board as an informational item at the following WCB Board meeting.

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**20. Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion 4  
Shasta County  
\$680,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the acquisition in fee of 32± acres of land as an expansion to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Battle Creek Wildlife Area (BCWA) for the protection of terrestrial and aquatic habitats supporting salmonid species and to enhance habitat linkages and connectivity.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The Carr property (Property) is located approximately ten miles southeast of the city of Anderson on Coleman Fish Hatchery Road and borders the existing BCWA on the south side. Generally, the Property is located at the north end of the Sacramento River valley a few miles from the confluence of Battle Creek and the Sacramento River on the north side of Battle Creek. Other than the CDFW-owned wildlife area, most of the bordering lands are privately owned ranchette- style housing with similar acreages and similar rangeland use.

Battle Creek contains three distinct runs of Chinook salmon (spring, fall, and winter) and steelhead trout. The wild salmon and steelhead populations in Battle Creek, like most populations statewide, have been falling for many years. Fish naturally spawn in Battle Creek and recent water flow regimes have helped fish survival, but more needs to be done to protect water in Battle Creek. In addition to the wild fish stocks found in Battle Creek, the economically important Coleman Fish Hatchery is located on Battle Creek and provides many of the catchable fall-run Chinook salmon to the Sacramento River. Rangelands and oak woodlands dominate the area surrounding the Property. Small wetlands and riparian habitat types are also common. Land development in the form of rural ranchette-style housing is fracturing many of the oak woodland habitats in this area.

The Property is within the boundaries of the Battle Creek Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP contains lands surrounding the BCWA, including the riparian zone along Battle Creek important to many salmonid species.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property consists of three assessor parcel numbers and is "L" shaped. Elevations on the Property range from 395 to 510 feet. The Property is gently sloping to nearly flat; grasslands, riparian, and wetland habitats are present on site. The Property also includes a number of canyons and drainages with small streams, oak woodland, and grassland habitat. The lands and associated water make up the conservation values found on the Property. Protection of this Property will help protect a wildlife corridor connecting oak woodlands at higher elevations to riparian habitats located at lower elevations near the banks of Battle Creek.

In addition to the 32± acres, CDFW will protect and put to full beneficial use a pre-1914 appropriative water right claim from Battle Creek. The claimed water right is 300 miner's inches and delivered via the Carr-Gover-Gilmore Ditch. This water is shared between CDFW (63%), the Property owner (28%) and the Livingstons (9%). If CDFW is successful in its purchase of the Property, CDFW will control 91% of the total water in the ditch, thereby facilitating ditch maintenance and allowing CDFW to dedicate more water to Battle Creek instream flows for struggling salmon and steelhead populations. In addition to the water rights, CDFW would also be acquiring a ranch house, a guesthouse and two barns located on the Property.

Several special status plant and animal species can be found on or near the Property, including Tehama chaparral, slender orcutt grass, Central Valley steelhead, winter-run

Chinook salmon, nugget pebble snail, American badger, and bald eagles. Other more common animals that call the area home include fall-run Chinook, black-tailed deer, osprey, river otter, raccoon, skunk, bobcat, ringtail, brush rabbit, black-tailed hare, various waterfowl species, and birds of prey.

Once part of the greater BCWA, the Property will provide public access opportunities to locals and visitors along Battle Creek. BCWA is popular with hikers and birdwatchers. Future public access activities could include turkey and dove hunting.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition 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.), 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 sub-grant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties.

Under the Program, WCB acquires lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is submitted to CDFW's Director for final approval and submission to WCB for its consideration and 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 upland and riparian habitats that shade the stream and cool water. Additionally, less water will be removed from Battle Creek for use on the Property thereby keeping more cool and clean water instream.

*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 directly adjacent to the greater BCWA and was deemed an important priority by Region 1, which currently manages the wildlife area. The Property is also located in the Battle Creek CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will manage and monitor the Property. The management objectives will be the same as the rest of the BCWA and will include maintaining the Property as oak woodland/riparian habitat, conducting wildlife surveys, and coordinating population surveys.

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$680,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department

of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$680,000.00. 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. Once approved by the Board, the transaction will be exempt from DGS transaction review.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$680,000.00
Total Purchase Price	\$680,000.00
Total WCB allocation	\$680,000.00

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

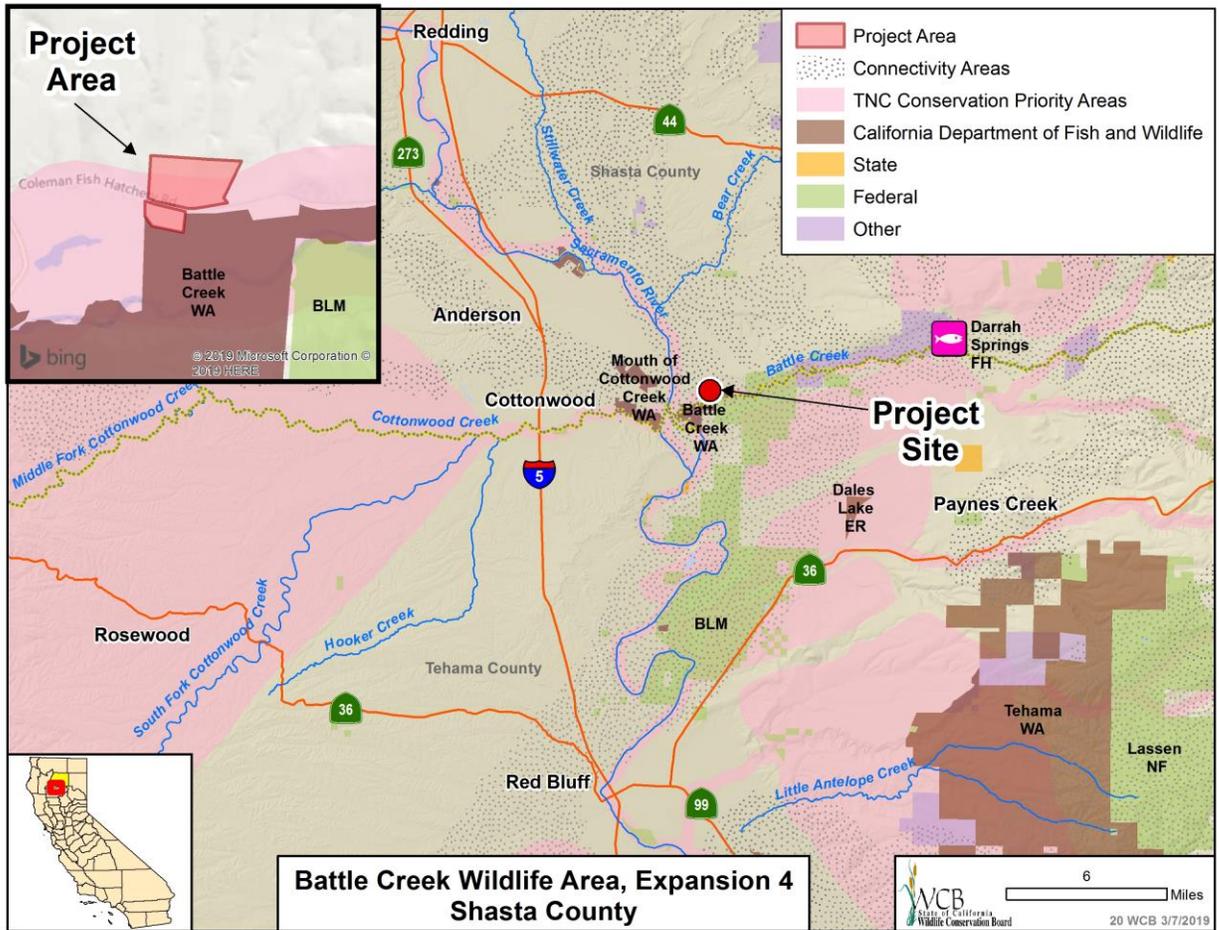
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786b/c, which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species.

#### 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 the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) 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 WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$680,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**21. North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements  
Butte County  
\$440,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to improve the parking lot, provide an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible viewing platform, and install a new ADA accessible toilet at the North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve (NTMER), approximately eight miles north of the city of Oroville, in Butte County.

**LOCATION**

NTMER is one and a half hours from Sacramento, just north of Oroville near Highway 70. CDFW acquired 3,273 acres in 1993 to preserve the Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pools habitat. In 1997, an additional 42-acre acquisition allowed CDFW to provide direct public access from a gravel parking lot on Cherokee Road. The Fish and Game Commission designated the North Table Mountain site as an Ecological Reserve in 2003.

NTMER is known for its basalt mesa with spring flowers, waterfalls, lava outcroppings, and vernal pools. In addition to the vernal pools, NTMER's shallow, rocky soils are home to a large number of highly diverse native plants. Both valley floor and higher elevation plants coexist within NTMER. This unique and beautiful location attracts nearly 32,000 visitors yearly for wildflower observation, water fall viewing, hiking, and hunting.

Wildlife flowers, waterfalls, and hiking trails make the NTMER a beautiful day-trip destination. The NTMER's shallow, rocky soils are home to a large number of highly diverse native plants. Both valley floor species such as white-flowered navarretia, and species that are usually limited to higher elevation rocky soils, such as spreading navarretia, coexist within NTMER. Range management, including cattle, controls invasive non-native species which might compete with native wild flower displays.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Thousands of visitors come to NTMER throughout the year, with peak use in the spring during wildflower viewing season. Frequently, the small parking lot overflows and people park on the narrow road outside the NTMER. Additionally, the facility does not have a restroom. To improve public access, this project will improve existing facilities and add new amenities.

The project will build an observation deck, expand the existing parking lot, build a ADA compliant restroom, replace two pedestrian gate entrances, add bike racks and picnic tables, and construct a short mobility-impaired access trail to the observation deck. The current parking lot is gravel and in disrepair. The expansion will add approximately 20 parking spaces, regrade the existing lot, and add new aggregate base. In addition, crews will install an asphalt apron at the parking lot entrance. The parking lot will also include two parking spaces for busses. A four-vault ADA compliant restroom will be installed with associated ADA parking stalls.

Improvements to the NTMER will benefit hikers, hunters, local community, and the mobility impaired. People with mobility or visual impairments cannot currently navigate the NTMER. These improvements will allow people with mobility and visual impairments to experience the NTMER. Local senior residence centers, students with disabilities at California State University Chico, California State University Sacramento, and the Chico Disability Action Center have all expressed interest in visiting the NTMER once the accessibility improvements are complete.

In addition, the NTMER is within a low-income community outside of Oroville and will benefit disadvantaged and underserved communities. Communities on the outskirts of Oroville are considered severely disadvantaged communities as listed by the US Census. The greater Oroville community is home to ethnic groups who are typically underrepresented at CDFW natural areas in the Sacramento Valley. In serving the greater Oroville community, NTMER increases natural resource conservation awareness by providing wildlife-themed recreational opportunities. The orientation platform and short trail, will provide everyone with an opportunity experience the grandeur of the mesa in bloom.

NTMER’s neighbors will benefit from an expanded parking lot and fewer visitors parking on the street. Improvements to NTMER may also increase local eco-tourism, increasing support for the local communities though expenditures for gas, food, and shopping. Finally, construction will avoid the peak visitation season: February through May.

**WCB PROGRAM**

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

**STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

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

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

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

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

CDFW has a long-term management plan for the NTMER. CDFW will be responsible for conducting visitor surveys and maintaining data on visitor attendance. CDFW will monitor native species. CDFW will routinely maintain interpretive panels, trails, parking lot and the observation deck, and staff will ensure restrooms are pumped out annually. CDFW will coordinate site visits with WCB every and provide a final report.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Project Task</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>WCB</b>	<b>CDFW</b>
Project Planning	\$ 13,800		\$ 13,800
Preconstruction Work	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	
Construction/Amenities	\$ 472,795	\$ 299,000	\$173,795
Restroom	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	
Contingency	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$627,595</b>	<b>\$440,000</b>	<b>\$187,595</b>

Project costs include parking lot improvements, a short ADA-compliant trail and observation deck, benches, bike racks, and picnic tables.

### FUNDING SOURCE

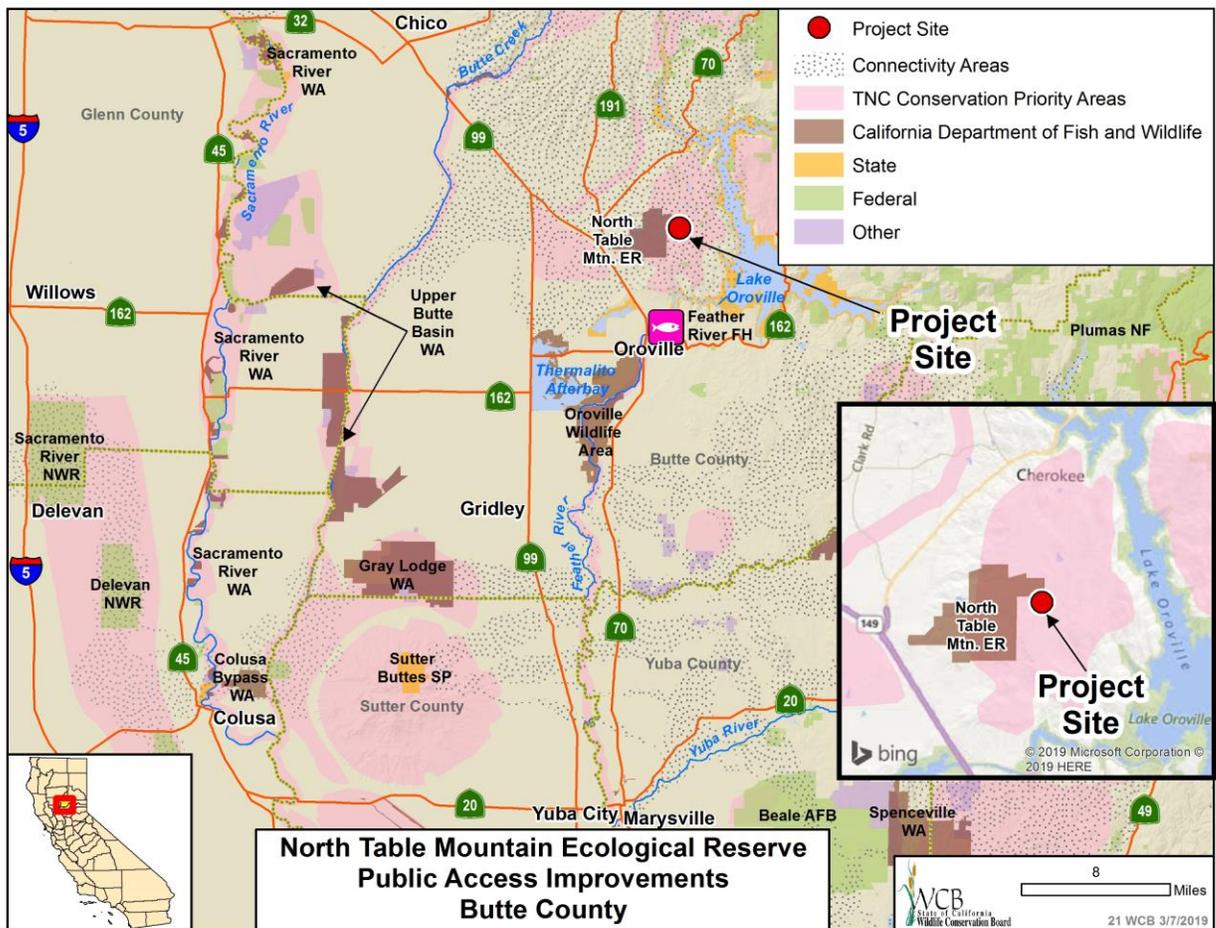
The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Restoration Fund which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife compatible recreational activities, and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

### CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

As lead agency, CDFW prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and an addendum to the MND for this project, pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the MND and the addendum and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to WCB approval, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed the project and recommends it for funding by WCB.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$440,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife 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.



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**22. Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Fishing Access Pier  
Butte County  
\$310,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to construct a new mobility-impaired accessible fishing pier at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (GLWA), located approximately ten miles southwest of the city of Gridley, in Butte County.

**LOCATION**

GLWA is approximately 60 miles north of Sacramento, near Gridley. GLWA boasts spectacular views of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, the coastal mountains, and Sutter Buttes.

Millions of birds flock to GLWA, providing outstanding wildlife viewing, outdoor education, nature trails, fishing, and hunting opportunities. GLWA is a year-round destination. Observation platforms, trails, and a three-mile auto tour are available for spectacular wildlife viewing. More than 300 species of resident and migratory birds and mammals are found in the nearly 9,100 acres of grassy fields, wooded riparian areas, and ponds. Anglers enjoy ponds and canals that support bass, sunfish, perch, catfish, and carp. Nature programs and trail walks are available to school groups. Annually, nearly 86,000 visitors also enjoy GLWA wildlife viewing opportunities.

The Fish and Game Commission designated GLWA as a Wildlife Area in 1953. Although most of the property was commercially farmed, there is evidence that portions of the parcel are still undisturbed native marsh. GLWA is managed as a seasonally flooded wetland for migratory birds. In addition to the wetlands, GLWA also has 600 acres of riparian woodland with cottonwoods, willow, blackberry, and wild grapes.

GLWA is located in a disadvantaged community with a median household income of \$41,487. Within eight miles of GLWA are Biggs, Gridley, and Live Oak (populations totaling 17,076) which are also considered disadvantaged communities. The greater surrounding area including Yuba City (population 73,822), will also benefit from GLWA recreational and educational opportunities for school groups, families, and residents of these communities.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The fishing pier project will bring additional accessible opportunities to visitors. In September 2018, CDFW constructed a new wildlife viewing platform, resurfaced the mobility-impaired nature trail, and resurfaced and striped a parking lot (Companion site). The viewing platform overlooks seasonal wetlands with views to the coastal mountains and the sierras. A mobility impaired accessible nature trail leads to this viewing platform.

The current project will construct a 580-square-foot mobility-impaired accessible fishing platform and a new asphalt walkway to the fishing platform. This platform is adjacent to the main parking area that has informational signage and portable restrooms. One side of this parking area has expansive views of seasonal wetlands with the Sutter Buttes in the background. This is also the starting point for the self-guided auto tour. The fishing pier faces north and has views of seasonal wetlands and the nature trail. The pond is currently filled with dense non-native vegetation that will be removed from the pond to improve fish habitat. The proposed project will provide a safe, accessible platform providing fishing access to everyone.

### WCB PROGRAM

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

### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

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

### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW has a long-term management and monitoring plan for GLWA. CDFW will monitor design and construction. In addition, it will conduct regular needed maintenance and scheduled annual maintenance. CDFW will provide a final report once construction is completed. Site visits will be coordinated every three years with the WCB.

### PROJECT FUNDING

<b>Project Task</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>WCB</b>	<b>CDFW</b>
Fishing pier	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000	
Pier materials	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	
Companion site	\$ 283,000		\$ 283,000
Contingency	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 593,000</b>	<b>\$ 310,000</b>	<b>\$ 283,000</b>

Project costs include a 580-square foot aluminum fishing platform and an asphalt walkway. CDFW contributions include the viewing platform, parking area improvements, and maintenance.

### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Restoration Fund which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife compatible recreational activities, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

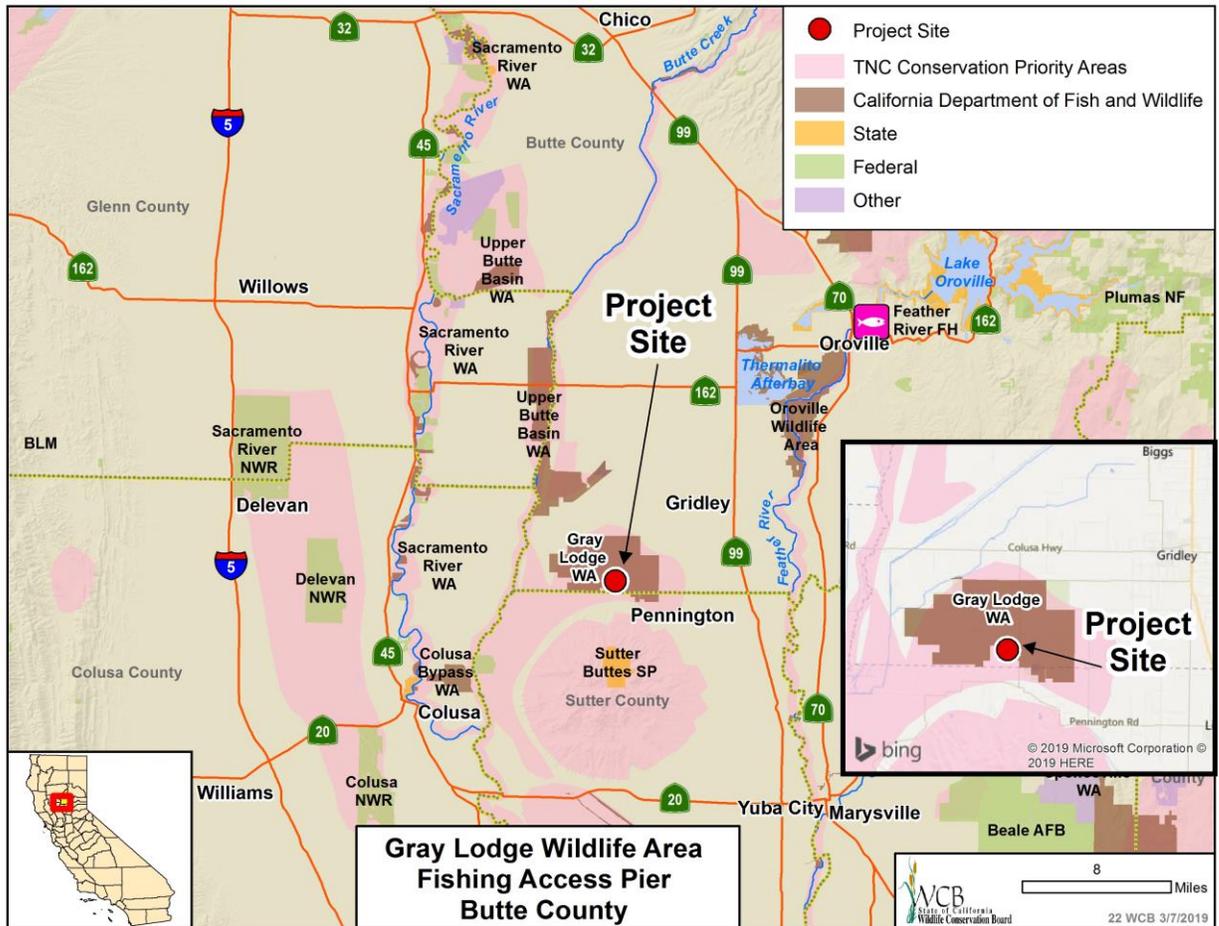
### CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

This proposal has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under State CEQA guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15303, new construction or conversion of small structures, and Section 15304, minor alteration to land. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$310,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife 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.



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**23. Northern California Climate Adaptation Project  
Yolo/Trinity/Tehama/Siskiyou/Shasta/Napa/Mendocino/  
Lake/Humboldt/Glenn/Del Norte/Colusa/Butte County  
\$118,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to EcoAdapt for a cooperative project with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS) to assess the impacts of climate change on important northwestern California habitats and species and develop long-term, sustainable adaptation options.

**LOCATION**

The proposed project spans thirteen counties (Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glen, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, and Yolo) and covers significant terrestrial and aquatic habitats across northwestern California. Major land uses include open space, public lands, agriculture, and low- and medium-density residential.

Substantial areas of the region contain 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan conservation targets (e.g., Pacific Northwest conifer forests, freshwater marsh, California foothill and valley forests and woodlands, California grassland) within the North Coast, Klamath, Central Valley, Sierra Nevada, and Marine provinces. The region harbors high biodiversity including a rich variety of native species and many rare and/or endemic species.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Climate change presents a variety of risks (e.g., drought, insect and disease outbreaks, and altered wildfire regimes) to the ecosystems within this region, as well as the human communities that depend on them. Potential climate change impacts on the region include but are not limited to significant tree injury and mortality, reduced recruitment, and shifts in forest structure and species composition. Climate vulnerability of terrestrial species has been evaluated as high throughout a significant portion of the region, including the North Coast, Klamath Mountains, and Southern Cascades, although the region also includes substantial areas of terrestrial climate change resilience and connectivity. Decision makers are faced with the challenge of implementing strategies to prepare for, respond to, and/or recover from these impacts.

This project proposes to assess the impacts of climate change on important northwestern California habitats and species and develop long-term, sustainable adaptation options that can be integrated into local and regional conservation and management planning processes. Objectives include:

- Convene a science-management partnership involving multiple agencies and organizations to evaluate the impacts of climate change on northwestern California natural resources and develop potential adaptation options;
- Increase understanding of the climate-related vulnerabilities of natural resources, including identifying areas of greatest risk and resilience to climate change;
- Facilitate the creation of adaptation actions that reduce vulnerabilities and develop a portfolio of “best bet” options to increase overall resilience of focal natural resources to climate change;
- Support the integration and implementation of adaptation into conservation and management plans and projects; and
- Create a climate-engaged public that can make informed decisions to sustain natural resources.

This project enables climate adaptation and resilience for wildlife by: (1) identifying climate risks to wildlife and habitats; (2) using existing and emerging spatial data (climate and non-climate) to identify areas of greatest risk and resilience to climate change; (3) developing adaptation options to minimize or mitigate identified risks and increase resilience of wildlife and habitats; (4) developing vulnerability and adaptation tools, supporting resources, and implementation guidance that land managers and conservation practitioners can use to improve long-term management and resilience of habitats and wildlife; and (5) working with stakeholders to integrate adaptation and resilience into local and regional conservation and management plans and projects (e.g., USFS and BLM land/resource management plan revisions).

This project continues work that began in 2016 under a partnership between the USFS, BLM, and EcoAdapt to initiate a vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning project for resources of management, cultural, and/or socioeconomic importance in northwestern California. This project also addresses goals and objectives for the following statewide plans:

- *2015 California State Wildlife Action Plan*: this project supports conservation goals in the North Coast and Klamath, Central Valley, and Marine provinces. Ecoregions within these provinces include 263A (Northern California Coast, M261B Northern California Coast Ranges), M261A (Klamath Mountains), Northern California Interior Coast Ranges), 262A (Great Valley).
- *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*: the project identifies climate-resilient lands to protect from conversion to more intensified uses and enhances the resilience of and potential for carbon sequestration on lands through climate-smart management and restoration practices.
- *Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update*: the project addresses adaptation strategies in this plan in the areas of biodiversity (B-1), habitat connectivity and climate refugia (B-2), and forest conservation (F-4).
- *California Water Action Plan 2016 Update*: The project focuses on supporting Action 4 (Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems).

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program and meets the program's goal of, for planning projects, identifying processes that lead to the successful implementation of future climate adaptation and resilience projects.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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.*

This project will accomplish Goal B.1 by assessing the impacts of climate change on important northwestern California habitats and species and developing long-term, sustainable adaptation options that can be integrated into local and regional conservation and management planning processes.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Because this is a planning/technical assistance project, there is no specific long-term management plan. However, as part of this project (Activity 7. Prioritize adaptation actions

for implementation), local and regional stakeholders will build out an adaptive management table for each priority adaptation action. The table will include desired outcome, monitoring parameter or metric, management triggers, and potential management response.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Task #	Project Task	Total Cost	WCB Request	Non-WCB Funds*
1	Development of Climate Adaptation Strategies and Actions	\$284,644	\$0	\$284,644
2	Vulnerability & Climate Analogue Maps	\$63,860	\$28,078	\$35,782
3	Adaptation Evaluation	\$0	\$33,175	\$0
4	Adaptation Implementation	\$0	\$41,709	\$0
5	Outreach and Dissemination	\$17,496	\$15,038	\$2,458
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$366,000</b>	<b>\$118,000</b>	<b>\$322,884</b>

\*This category includes funding from a combination of USDA Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management resources.

Project costs will be for convening a stakeholder working group; identifying regionally important habitats and species; assessing vulnerability of habitats and species to climate change; developing adaptation strategies and actions; generating vulnerability and climate analogue maps; evaluating adaptation strategies and actions; prioritizing adaptation actions and developing implementation plans; finalizing products and conducting outreach and disseminating results.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

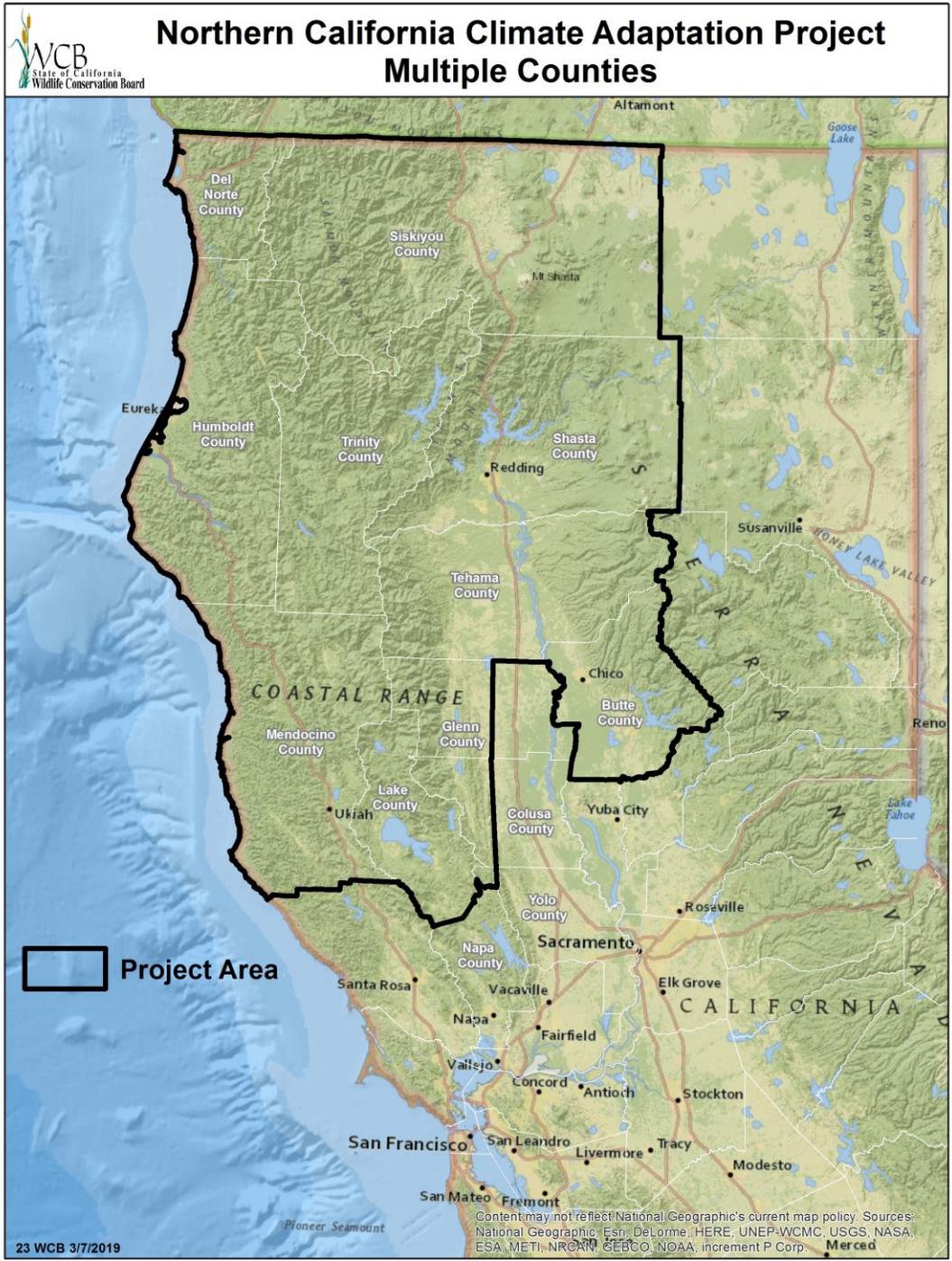
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for protection and restoration of natural ecosystems to provide climate change adaptation and resilience, assist natural and working lands managers in adapting to and becoming more resilient to climate change, facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in natural and working lands, and provide additional social, economic, and environmental benefits, or "co-benefits" (Public Resources Code Section 5845 et seq.). [General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017]

**CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/RECOMMENDATION**

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies). Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff Recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$118,000.00 from the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Fund under the General Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017; 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.



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**24. Whiskey Hill Conservation Easement**

**Colusa County**

**\$759,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) for the acquisition of a conservation easement (Easement) over 2,607± acres of land in Colusa County for protection of critical winter range for Tule elk, and other regional California wildlife, and protection of grasslands that sustain working landscapes.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is located approximately 15 miles west of the city of Williams, and south and east of State Route 20. The Property lies within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Blue Ridge–Berryessa Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) which establishes criteria to prioritize parcels based on their conservation values to increase or enhance habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity. To the southwest of the Property are protected lands owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and CDFW's Indian Valley Wildlife Area. Near or adjacent to the Property are four Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funded Conservation Easements: the Cache Creek Conservation Area, the Bear Valley Conservation Area, the Keegan Ranch Conservation Easement, and the Epperson Place Ranch Conservation Easement. A BLM held Conservation Easement borders the property to the east. Together these conservation areas total over 20,000± acres.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is irregular in shape and stretches roughly 4.7 miles in a north-south direction and one mile in an east-west direction. The western portion of the Property bordering State Route 20 is relatively flat land used for seasonal domestic livestock grazing. The Property is a significant portion of the headwaters of the Salt Creek system. Salt Creek connects to the Colusa trough system, eventually flowing to the Sacramento River. The eastern portion of the Property consists of moderate to steep foothills, with an elevation variance of approximately 500 feet to over 2,100 feet, allowing for species migration.

The Property is a working cattle ranch with several habitats including grasslands, blue oak woodlands, ponds and riparian areas. These habitats support a number of important animal species including Tule elk, deer, golden eagle and mountain lion. Species of special concern occurring on the Property include the burrowing owl, western pond turtle, and foothill yellow-legged frog. Additionally, the Property's habitat supports the state endangered bald eagle. The Property's wildflower resources are enjoyed by the public traveling State Route 20 and contain several special status plant species including Colander's horkelia, Jepson's milk-vetch, pink creamsacs, and the state threatened adobe lily.

Cattle are grazed primarily during the winter months roughly from November to May with a carrying capacity of 250 pair in a normal year. The land owner also leases a portion of the property to allow for private deer and pig hunting.

**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 WCB to acquire real property, or rights in real property, on behalf of CDFW and grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property, or rights in real property. 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 the 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.

#### 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 is a high priority within the approved Blue Ridge –Berryessa CAPP and includes several habitats with varying elevation and terrain including grasslands, blue oak woodlands, ponds and riparian areas, supporting a number of special status species. This varying elevation allows species to adapt to climate change. In addition, the Property is near BLM land and four existing WCB-funded conservation easements and will therefore expand the scope of conserved habitat, migration corridors, and connectivity in the area.

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

The Property is a high priority within the approved Blue Ridge –Berryessa CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

When establishing a conservation easement, RMEF works closely with the landowner to address the protection of the property's natural habitat and agricultural resources. The purposes of the proposed Easement are to ensure that natural resources, agricultural, and wildlife habitat are conserved in balance and harmony with each other. The grant agreement requires RMEF to monitor the Property at least once a year to ensure the Easement terms are being honored, as well as to prepare and submit a written monitoring report documenting the visit and noting any significant changes to the resources or any compliance issues. If necessary, corrective action must be recommended and noted in the report.

#### TERMS

The Easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$759,000. 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 the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the RMEF provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, WCB can seek specific performance of the grant agreement or require RMEF 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 RMEF.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$759,000.00
Total purchase price	\$759,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$759,000.00</b>

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is WCB's California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a) that 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.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 13525, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$759,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(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.



**25. Desert Springs and Desert Springs Expansion 1  
Kern County  
\$1,385,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for two grants to The Trust for Public Land (TPL) to acquire 1,415± acres of land for the protection of threatened and endangered species, for the preservation of desert springs with year-round surface water and a riparian corridor, and to provide future wildlife-oriented public use opportunities.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is comprised of 14 parcels divided into eight different clusters located near Lake Isabella, in Kern County. The general area of the Property is bounded by Lake Isabella and State Routes 178 and 14 to the north, State Route 58 to the west and south, and State Route 14 to the east. The Sequoia National Forest is located to the west and Red Rock Canyon State Park is located to the east.

Located in the Mojave Desert region, the Property is primarily surrounded by vacant land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Other Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) projects in the area include acquisitions of the Scodie Canyon Unit for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Canebrake Ecological Reserve and the Old Dutch Cleanser Mine as an addition to the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Red Rock Canyon State Park.

The Property is in CDFW's Canebrake Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The primary purpose of the Canebrake CAPP is to protect riparian and wetland habitat, threatened and endangered species habitat, adjoining buffer areas and wildlife corridors to create a viable and sustainable protection landscape in central Kern County. Public uses, education, and interpretation are secondary, but important, purposes as well. The Property is included in the Canebrake CAPP due to its significant desert springs habitat and the rare species it supports.

The Property also lies within BLM's Jawbone-Butterbrecht Area of Critical Environmental Concern and the springs on the Property are mostly within a National Audubon Society designated Important Bird Area within the Pacific Migratory Bird Flyway. It is believed that the springs are critical to the survival of thousands of migratory birds that use them during the fall and spring migrations.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Although TPL is acquiring the Property from one property owner, TPL is involving two successor grantees to manage different parcels of the Property, resulting in two WCB projects. The first project is identified as Desert Springs, while the second project is identified as Desert Springs Expansion 1.

The Desert Springs project is a grant to TPL that includes the California Desert Land Conservancy, also known as the Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT), as the successor grantee. The project covers 13 of the Property's 14 parcels, totaling 1,162± acres.

The Desert Springs Expansion 1 project is a grant to TPL that includes the Kern River Valley Heritage Foundation (KRVHF) as the successor grantee. The project covers one of the Property's 14 parcels, totaling 253± acres.

The Property's 14 parcels are all vacant land and vary in size from 2± acres to 253± acres. The land use designations of the Property are A-1 MH, a limited agriculture zone with a minimum of 2.5 acres that allows for a mobile home; and RF, a recreation-forestry district

with a minimum of 5 acres that allows for the conservation and use of natural resources, compatible recreational uses, energy development uses, and residences.

The Property contains desert springs with year-round surface water and a stream corridor, including portions of the upper Kelso Creek Watershed. The springs and corridor provide essential habitat for neotropical birds and special status species including southwestern willow flycatcher, desert tortoise, and Mohave ground squirrel.

The Property includes approximately 20 plant communities. Differences in the communities result from differences in relative composition, absolute cover, and forage production. Eight of these communities are considered forest or woodlands, including conifer forests, chaparral pinyon pine, oak woodland, pinyon-big sage, and Joshua tree; another eight are creosote-bush scrub; three communities are composed of more salt tolerant plants, including several shadscale associations; and the last plant community consists of bursage, winterfat, and hopsage.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grants for these projects are being considered under 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 Code 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 or subgrant federal grant funds to facilitate 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 Director 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.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 very high priority for protection in CDFW's Canebrake CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

For the Desert Springs project, the 13 parcels that are granted to MDLT will be owned, operated, and maintained by MDLT. MDLT has protected thousands of acres throughout the Mojave Desert, including the ongoing management of nearly 16,000 acres. MDLT will incorporate the management and protection of the parcels with its properties in the Bright Star Wilderness and Sage Canyon areas, two MDLT focus areas near the Property.

For the Desert Springs Expansion 1 project, the parcel that is granted to KRVHF will be owned, operated and maintained by KRVHF. KRVHF protects, manages, and preserves land in the Kern River Valley area. KRVHF will incorporate the parcel into its existing management plan. Intermediate grazing and public access will be permitted on the parcel.

**TERMS**

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,762,000. 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 \$1,485,000. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grants to TPL, with MDLT and KRVHF as the respective successor grantees, provide that WCB staff 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, 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**

The Proposed funding breakdown for the Desert Springs project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	1,085,000
Audubon	82,000
Total Purchase Price	1,167,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$1,085,000</i>

The Proposed funding breakdown for the Desert Springs Expansion 1 project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	300,000
Audubon	18,000
Total Purchase Price	318,000
<i>Total WCB Allocation</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>

**WCB FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of these projects are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources. The first funding source, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50, Water Code Section 79565), allows for the acquisition of land and water resources to protect regional water quality, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and assist local public agencies in improving regional water supply reliability. The second funding source, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12, Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(3)), allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for threatened and endangered species.

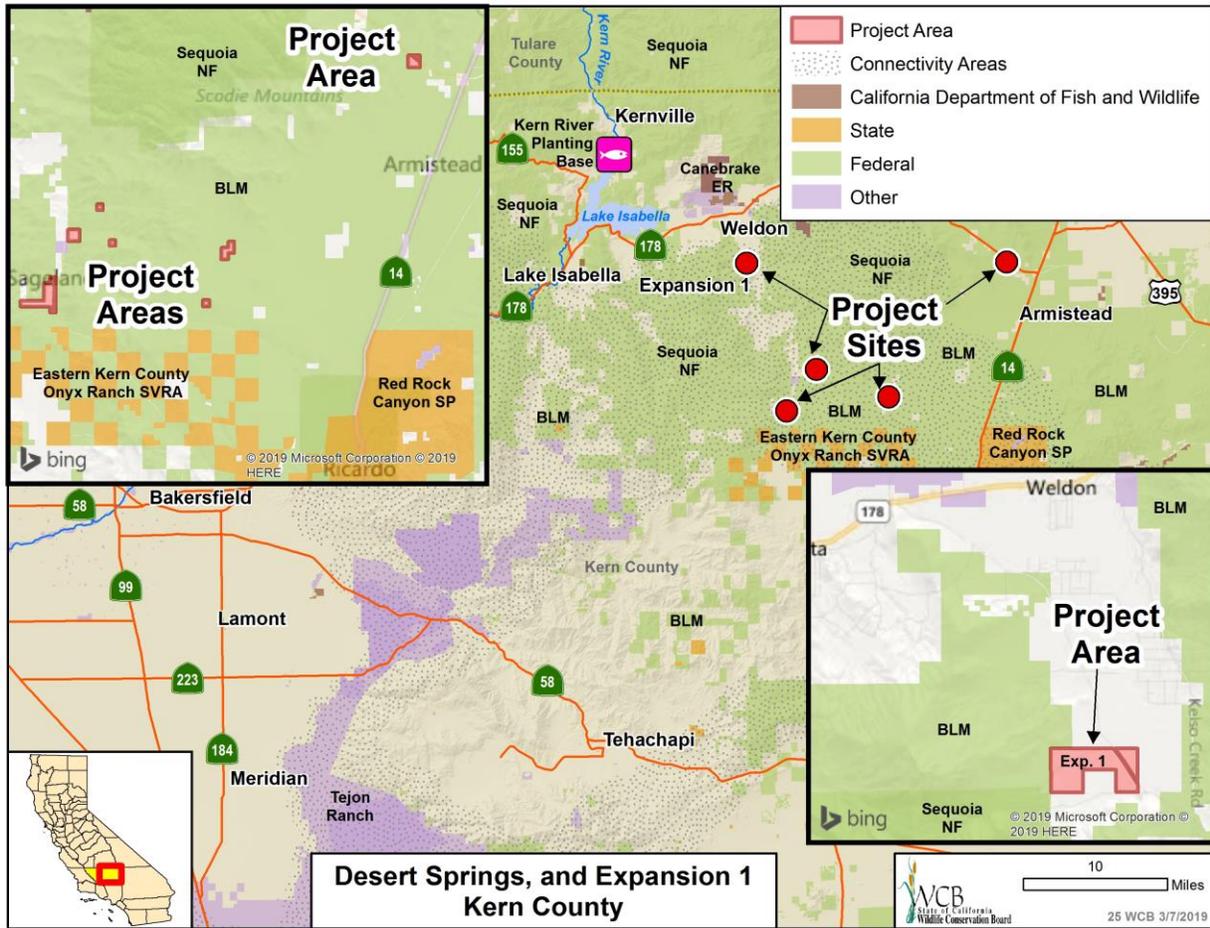
**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that WCB approve these projects as proposed; allocate \$900,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50) and \$485,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund of 2006 (Proposition 12), for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate

agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**26. Portal Ridge, and Expansion 1**  
**Los Angeles County**  
**\$480,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Transition Habitat Conservancy (THC) to acquire fee title to two separate properties totaling 120± acres of land to conserve and protect transitional plant communities and wildlife habitat for the benefit of deer, mountain lion, and other wildlife species.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The properties (Properties), known as Fischer/Ramey (80± acres) and Ford (40± acres) are located on Portal Ridge, approximately five miles north of the community of Lake Hughes and 15 miles west of Lancaster, and north of Pine Canyon Road, in Los Angeles County. Surrounding land uses are primarily rural/suburban home sites. Portal Ridge provides a habitat link between the Angeles National Forest, the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve, and the Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland State Park. The Portal Ridge Wildlife Preserve (PRWP) encompasses a substantial portion of the Portal Ridge-Liebre Mountain Significant Ecological Area. The Properties range in elevation from 3,100 to 3,800 feet and contain a unique blend of vegetative communities that only occur at the transition zone between the Mojave Desert and San Gabriel Mountain ecoregions. The general terrain in the area is high desert, with large washes and arroyos separated by small undulating hills and ridges that give way to steeper terrain as Portal Ridge extends up into the San Gabriel Mountains. Pinyon pines, junipers, and Joshua trees dominate the landscape and provide important habitat to many desert wildlife species.

The Properties fall within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Portal Ridge Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The main objectives of this CAPP are to conserve and enhance biodiversity and protect threatened vegetative communities along with other rare and important plants and animals.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Properties are each a single rectangular parcel, located in a A-25 zoning designation. The A-25 zoning has a 25-acre minimum parcel size designation in the Portal Ridge area and allows a single-family dwelling and accessory structures. The Properties are unimproved.

The Properties are covered with natural vegetation consisting of desert shrubs, pinyon pines, junipers, and Joshua trees. There are also a series of alternating ridges and canyons running north to south on the Properties, and the ridge tops afford good views of the surrounding area. The site provides important habitat for several species such as mountain lion, deer, bobcat, Cooper's hawk, golden eagles, and loggerhead shrike, as well as special status species such as burrowing owl, tricolored blackbird, Coast Horned Lizard, Swainson's hawk, and yellow warbler.

**WCB PROGRAM**

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, et seq.), 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 the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife

and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/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 WCB with a recommendation to fund.

#### 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.*

Acquisition of the Properties will preserve corridors for the migration and movement of wildlife species and provide for habitat connectivity between habitat areas with varying elevations.

*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 Properties are identified as parcels for protection in CDFW's Portal Ridge CAPP.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Properties will be owned and managed by THC. THC staff and volunteers will provide stewardship and monitoring. Funding for management operations is derived from various sources that include foundations, corporations, State and federal grants, memberships and bequests for the management of Portal Ridge. THC will consider the potential for future public uses such as self-guided nature trails, hiking, horseback riding, nature viewing, and outdoor educational programs for local schools.

#### TERMS

The Properties have been appraised as having a combined fair market value of \$480,000.00 and are broken out as follows: Fischer/Ramey \$320,000 (80± acres) and Ford \$160,000 (40± acres). The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant between WCB and THC provide that staff of WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, 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 Properties 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 this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board (Fischer/Ramey)	\$320,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board (Ford)	\$160,000.00
Total purchase price	\$480,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$480,000.00</b>

### FUNDING SOURCE

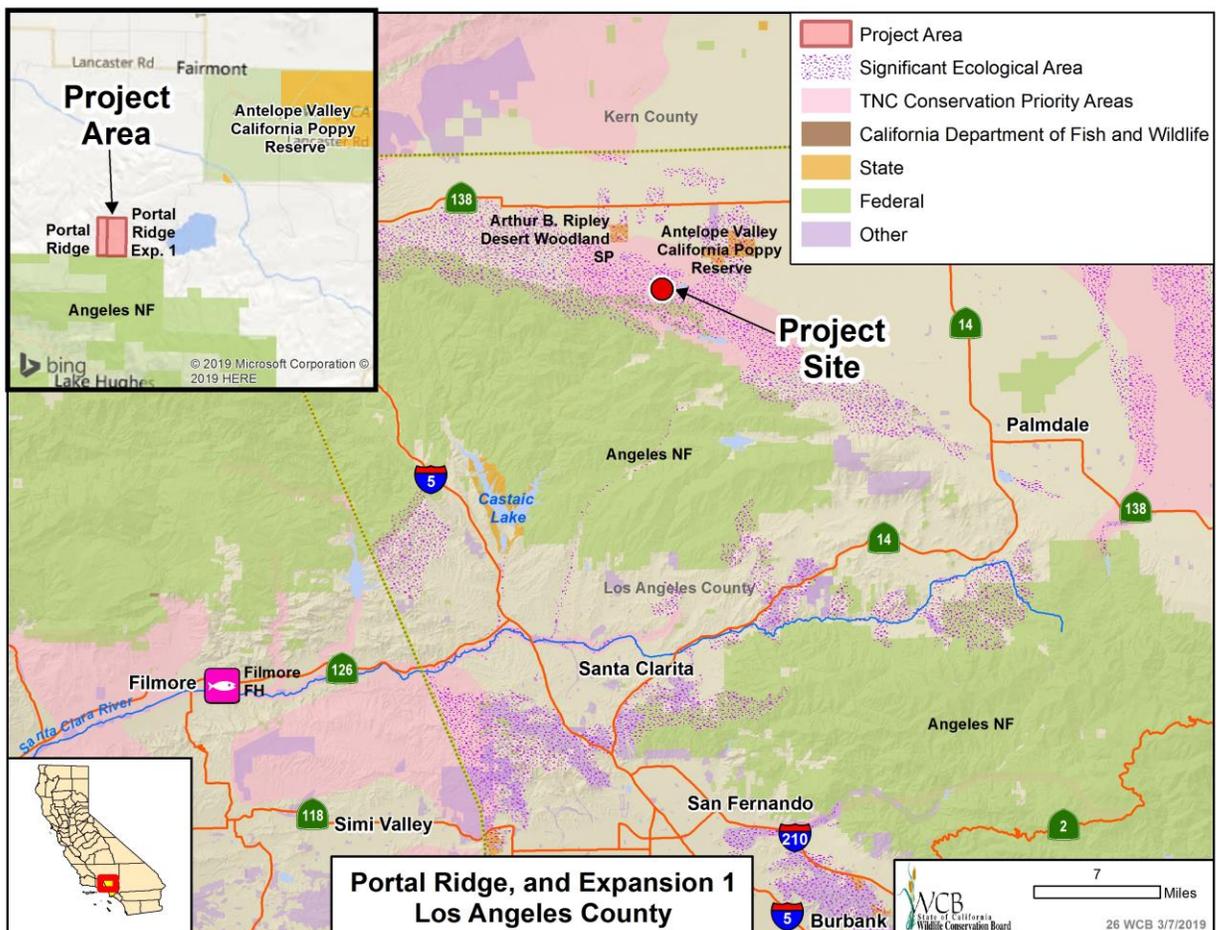
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect deer and mountain lions.

### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$480,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**27. Western Spadefoot Habitat Restoration and Seasonal Pool Creation**

**Orange County**

**\$757,000.00**

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to the Natural Communities Coalition for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), County of Orange Department of Parks, and California State Parks, located in Crystal Cove State Park and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, within Orange County, that will construct 16 seasonal pools and restore 15± acres of adjacent upland coastal sage and cactus scrub habitat that will provide breeding and foraging habitat for the western spadefoot toad.

**LOCATION**

The project occurs on lands enrolled in the County of Orange Central and Coastal Subregion Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). The project area will be on five sites within the County of Orange, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, and three within Crystal Cove State Park. Restoration sites were selected after reviewing aerial imagery, initial ground surveys, and results of habitat suitability modeling for the western spadefoot toad.

Located in the San Joaquin Hills, the project is embedded within the South Coast Wilderness, which is approximately 18,000 acres of protected open space. Although large in size, the wilderness area is isolated, reinforcing the importance of investing in pool construction and enhancement of the existing populations of western spadefoot to maximize the effective breeding size of the local population.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The western spadefoot toad is extirpated across much of its historic range in southern California due to loss of breeding habitat from urban and agricultural development, increased frequency of severe droughts, and changing fire regimes. It is currently recognized by CDFW as a Priority 1 (highest priority) Species of Special Concern and is being reviewed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is also recognized by the County of Orange Central & Coastal Subregion NCCP/HCP, which lists it as an "Identified Species," mandating active management of the species as if it were covered under the federal and California ESAs.

In support of the recovery of the western spadefoot and other "Identified" and "Target Species", such as the cactus wren, the proposed project will result in increased breeding and foraging opportunities through the construction of 16 new breeding pools and the restoration of 15± acres of adjacent upland coastal sage and cactus scrub habitat.

Successful western spadefoot breeding in the San Joaquin Hills has occurred along ridge tops in road ruts, modest cattle ponds (relicts from historic ranching operations), and a handful of natural seasonal pools. With reduced precipitation falling during winter months, the few, small pools are challenged to maintain hydroperiods of long enough duration to allow the toads to successfully breed, limiting new recruitment into the population, and further compromising the overall number of adult western spadefoot toads present along the coast.

Construction of seasonal pools will extend the capacity of select locations in the San Joaquin Hills (utilized by western spadefoot for breeding) to capture and hold a greater volume of water for longer durations following natural rainfall events each winter. As larval development requires ephemeral pools to persist long enough to complete development, increasing the water holding capacity of individual pools allows for longer periods of larval

development resulting in larger juveniles with greater fat reserves at metamorphosis, equating to higher fitness levels and survivorship as adults.

Large seasonal pools do not currently exist within the San Joaquin Hills, and regular breeding opportunities for spadefoot toads are sparse. Larger pools (at 2,500 sq. ft. or more) are to be designed to provide breeding habitat for spadefoot toads in years with normal to modest rainfall. Construction of 3 to 4 very large pools (with dimensions of 75' by 35' or greater) will increase sustainable breeding rates and stabilize the population over time. Smaller constructed pools would be positioned to complement the larger pools and help facilitate dispersal among ponds during big rain events, reinforcing the natural cycle of toad populations increasing in wet years.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for coastal scrub and threatened and endangered species habitats.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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

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

- The Project will provide resilience in the face of climate change by creating refugia for sensitive species

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

- Improve habitat for threatened or endangered species by creating vernal pool and coastal sage scrub habitats

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Long-term management of restored habitat, including created vernal pools and upland cactus scrub, will be consistent with management activities described in the General Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan for Crystal Cove State Park (Orange Coast District) and the Resource Management Plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (Orange County Parks). Furthermore, consistent with the County of Orange Central & Coastal Subregion NCCP/HCP, of which both California State Parks and the County of Orange are signatories the lands to be restored by this project are enrolled in the habitat reserve created by the NCCP/HCP and are dedicated to conservation in perpetuity.

As part of the greater habitat reserve, landowners are obligated to manage the lands consistent with the NCCP/HCP. One of the four pillars of the adaptive management plan governing management activities within the habitat reserve directs landowners and managers to support habitat restoration and enhancement activities, which includes the active management of invasive plants.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the Natural Communities Coalition 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**

<b>Task</b>	<b>WCB</b>	<b>NCC</b>	<b>Total</b>
Project coordination, design and planning	\$77,800	\$91,737	\$169,537
Restoration and Pool Construction	\$562,950		\$562,950
Monitoring and maintenance	\$116,250	\$133,410	\$249,660
Equipment		\$3,440	\$3,440
Administration		\$45,000	\$45,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$757,000</b>	<b>\$273,587</b>	<b>\$1,030,587</b>

Project costs will be for design and construction of seasonal pools, restoration of upland habitat, monitoring and reporting activities during the project’s active life, and for project administration.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code Section 80111(b) which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, protection, and expansion of habitat that furthers the implementation of natural community conservation plans adopted pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code).

**CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW**

As lead agency, the County of Orange prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the County of Orange Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan which covers this project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the EIR and has prepared proposed written findings documenting WCB’s compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

The proposed project was reviewed, approved, and recommended for funding by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan Local Assistance Grant Program.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$757,000.00 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resource Code Section 80111(b); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned



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**28. Western Riverside MSHCP (Chappell)**

**Riverside County**

**\$1,077,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority) and the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Authority, to acquire in fee 58± acres of land for the protection of essential habitat in lands within the target acquisition area in the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan.

**LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES**

The property (Property) is 58± acres and is located in the northern portion of the city of Murrieta near the community of Alderwood. Interstate 215 is to the east and the city of Temecula is approximately 3.5 miles to the south. The Property is east of Whitewood Road and north of Triple C Ranch Road. The surrounding area to the north and the south consist of recently built single family subdivisions, to the west is Whitewood Road, and to the east is a 25± acre tract of vacant land.

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

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

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Property is a rectangular parcel with a residential building and several out-buildings. The buildings will be vacant upon acquisition of the property. Access to the property is from a private dirt road off of Triple C Ranch Road. The terrain is gently sloping to moderately sloping land with numerous large rock outcroppings. A small creek bed and seasonal creek runs generally in an east-west direction through the southern half of the Property.

The General Plan land use designation for the subject property is "ORP" (Office and Research Park) and the zoning designation for the subject property is also "ORP" (Office Research Park).

According to the Authority's biological studies, the vegetation on the Property includes coastal sage scrub, grassland and riparian scrub, woodland, and forest habitat. Other

species known to occur in the area include the federally endangered coastal California gnatcatcher, quino checkerspot butterfly, and bobcat. Land acquisitions within the Western Core/Linkage area also support the USFWS's recovery goals for the quino checkerspot butterfly. According to the USFWS, conservation of these properties will secure an elevational gradient within conserved quino checkerspot butterfly habitat. This habitat area links the lower elevation occurrence complex of the butterfly with the populations that exists in the Southwestern Riverside County Multiple Species Reserve, the upper elevation in the Anza area, and the San Bernardino National Forest further east of the Property. Furthermore, acquisition will also provide landscape connectivity by eliminating the threat of fragmentation caused by development for all resident wildlife species.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under 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 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. The project has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

#### 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.*

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

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

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

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

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

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$5,380,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and the USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for fair market value. The USFWS grant funds require a non-federal match that will be provided by the WCB grant and the Authority. WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms, WCB can require the 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 (non-federal match)	\$1,077,000.00
WCB- subgrant of federal funds	\$2,000,000.00
Western Riverside County RCA	\$2,303,000.00
Total Purchase Price	\$5,380,000.00
Total WCB Allocation	\$1,077,000.00

#### WCB FUNDING SOURCE

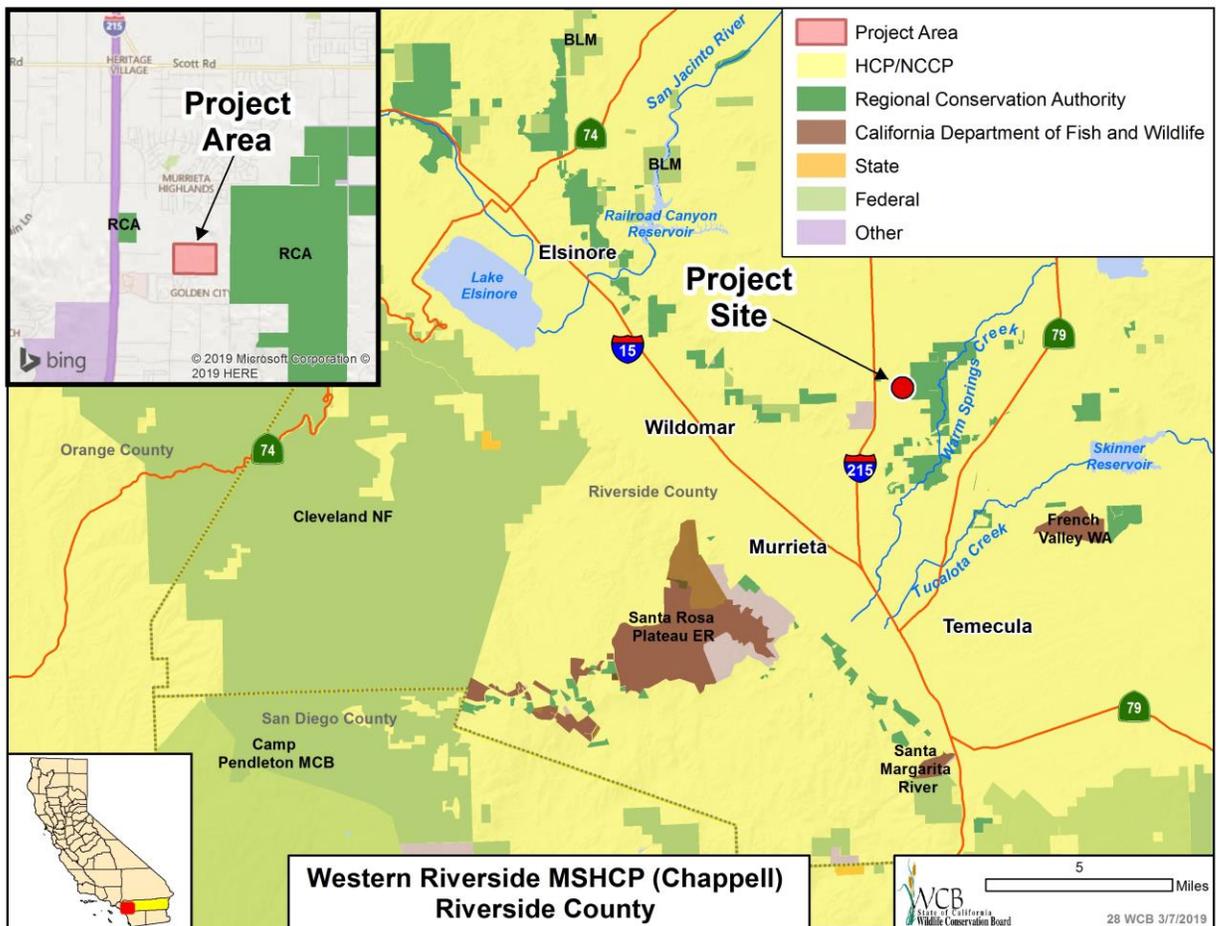
The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Section 2786(b/c)]

### 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 the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) 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. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,077,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Section 2786(b/c) for the grant; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$2,000,000 and 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.



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**29. Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Wetland Units T10 and S22  
Imperial County  
\$950,000.00**

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with Imperial County and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to improve water use efficiency by developing new infrastructure to improve wetland management capabilities on the CDFW's Imperial Valley Wildlife Area (IWA), located six miles north of Niland in Imperial County.

**LOCATION**

Millions of years ago, the area surrounding the Salton Sea was part of the Gulf of California. Over time, sediment deposited by the Colorado River cut off the area from the Gulf, and a large freshwater lake was formed. Over hundreds of thousands of years, changing climate and realignment of rivers resulted in the lake level receding and reverting into desert. The last time the lake saw a large influx of fresh water was in 1905, when the Colorado River was accidentally diverted into the basin during construction of the All-American Canal, and the Salton Sea as we know it was formed.

The IWA is located on the southeastern shoreline of the Salton Sea, north of the city of Niland. The IWA was established in 1954 to provide 6,000+ acres of safe haven for migrating birds that visit the region every winter. Over the years, many seasonal and permanent wetland units were developed to provide habitat for wildlife, as well as a place for public recreational activities to take place.

Over the last ten years, 12 state-funded projects, totaling more than \$2.18M, have restored/enhanced 1,349± acres of habitat on the IWA. Additionally, a total of \$1.3M in Federal North American Wetlands Conservation Act funds have restored an additional 2,400± acres of wetland habitat on the IWA. These projects have centered on designing larger wetland units with more efficient water delivery systems, resulting in significant improvement to habitat quality, increases in bird use, and additional public recreational opportunities.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project will establish two new mainline pipelines that will supply surface water directly into the T10 and S22 wetland units and green feed complex area. These new pipelines will eliminate the historic water delivery ditches within the T10 and S22 Units. The installation of valves at strategic locations along the pipelines will allow for precise and flexible application of water supplies by CDFW staff to each unit as needed. New water control structures will also be installed. These improvements will improve management capabilities and increase water use efficiency within the wetland units.

Topographic surveys and design work will be completed which will guide the leveling and re-grading of each seasonal wetland unit. Each unit will have interior levees removed, and internal swales constructed, effectively combining multiple managed sections into larger managed units. This will reduce the number of water control structures that need to be operated and maintained. Migratory bird habitat such as islands and loafing bars will also be constructed.

**WCB PROGRAM**

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

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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, 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.

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

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, CWA does not assure that the project improvements are managed according to the Management Plan, the Grant Agreement requires that CWA refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Imperial County
Task 1 – Project Management	\$132,000	\$125,000	\$7,000
Task 2 – Leveling Green Field Units	\$40,000	\$40,000	
Task 3 – New Pipelines/Installation	\$323,000	\$255,000	\$68,000
Task 4 – Earthwork	\$380,000	\$380,000	
Task 5 – Water Control Structures	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Task 6 – Road Base Rock	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Task 7 – Debris/Salt Cedar Removal	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Contingencies	\$50,000	\$50,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,025,000</b>	<b>\$950,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>

Project costs will be for construction, debris clean up and disposal, and project management (survey, engineering, design and construction management). Construction costs are associated with earthwork, acquisition and installation of water control structures, acquisition and installation of new water delivery pipelines, and the acquisition and installation of road base rock on roads and parking lot.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

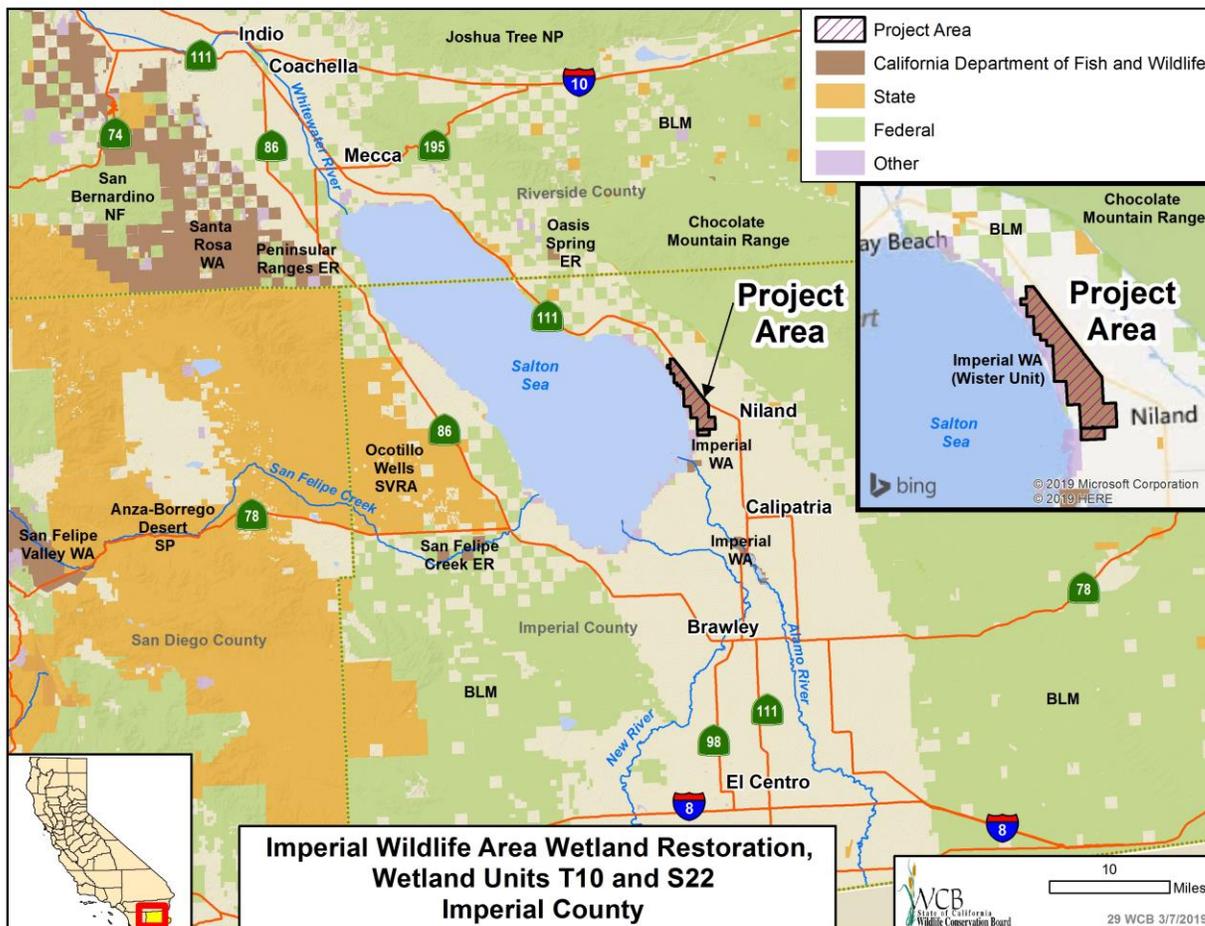
The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which provides funding for the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

**CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION (IF NEEDED)**

The project is proposed as exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15304 Class 4, as a minor alteration in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish productions facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production. Subject to approval by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. CDFW has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by WCB.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$950,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley; authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



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**30. Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program**

Staff requests the approval of the WCB [Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Rescue Program Guidelines](#). In developing these Guidelines, WCB staff coordinated with CDFW and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) staff to solicit input. CDFW and CDFA provided comments on the Guidelines. The Guidelines have been modified and improved as a result of this input.

The Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program (Program) was created by Assembly Bill 2421 and signed into law in 2018 becoming effective immediately (Fish and Game Code, §1374 et seq.). The Program was created to help recover and sustain populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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**31. Strategic Plan Update**

Informational item regarding the update of WCB's Strategic Plan, as required by Proposition 68.

Development of the Strategic Plan Update is underway. An initial outline and timeline were presented to a subcommittee of the Board in January. Topics to be highlighted in the update include biodiversity and climate change, public access, conservation goals, objectives and priorities, and monitoring and program evaluation. An interagency agreement is currently under development for a facilitator to assist with two public meetings, one to be held in Northern California and one to be held in Southern California in the next few months. A survey is also being developed to gather input from the larger stakeholder community. A draft of the update is expected in May with a final version presented to the Board at the August Board meeting.

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**32. Resolutions**

**WHEREAS**, Senator Jean Fuller, in her capacity as California State Senator, served for nearly eight years as a member of the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee of the Wildlife Conservation Board; and

**WHEREAS**, Senator Fuller's personal devotion to protecting and preserving California's natural resources and working lands, coupled with her sound judgment and experience with California's wildlife resources, has greatly assisted the Board on numerous occasions in carrying out its duties and responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Board to gratefully acknowledge Senator Fuller's contributions to the work of the Board through her personal support, advice and leadership, as well as that of her great staff; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that we, the Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Joint Legislative Advisory Committee, and the Board staff convey to Senator Fuller our sincere appreciation for her noteworthy contributions to the Board, and express our best wishes to her; and, be it further

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

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**33. Discuss and Act on Board Administrative Items**

- New Business
- Next WCB Meeting – April 4, 2019 Stream Flow Enhancement

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**Adjourn**