



**Gavin Newsom, Governor**  
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, California 94244-2090  
[www.wcb.ca.gov](http://www.wcb.ca.gov)  
(916) 445-8448  
Fax (916) 323-0280

# Final Meeting Agenda

## WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

February 25, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

The public and Board members will participate in the meeting via Zoom. Public comment will be accepted per the agenda.

A recording will be posted after the meeting.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

[Join the webinar](#)

Passcode: 296965

If you can only join via telephone, contact [Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov) for a phone number. You will not be able to see the PowerPoint.

\*If you anticipate commenting during the Public Comment period or on a particular agenda item and would like to register your name ahead of time, please complete this [Speaker Card \(Word\)](#) and email to [Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov) prior to the day of the meeting.

## Final Meeting Agenda Summary

Final Meeting Agenda.....	i
<b>Final Meeting Agenda Summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
1. Roll Call .....	1
2. Discussion and Selection of new Board Chairman and Vice Chairman .....	2
3. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda .....	2
4. Funding Status – Informational .....	2
5. Executive Director’s Report .....	3
<b>Consent Items.....</b>	<b>3</b>
6. Recovery of Funds.....	4
7. Mapping Important Plant Areas of California .....	6
8. Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Augmentation.....	9
9. Elk River Estuary Restoration, Feasibility and Conceptual Design .....	13
10. Stone Lagoon Wildlife Connectivity Planning.....	16
11. Poplar Valley Meadow Restoration Planning .....	19
12. Thompson Meadow Restoration .....	22
13. Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands, Phase 2.....	25
14. Sierra Foothill Forest Climate Resilience Planning .....	29
15. Truckee River Wildlife Area, Canyon Unit Expansion 1 .....	32
16. Lower American River Natural Resources Management Plan, Augmentation.....	35
17. Leek Springs Meadow Assessment and Restoration Planning.....	39
18. Golden Gate Monarch Butterfly Habitat Enhancement .....	42
19. Burcham and Wheeler Flats Wildlife Area, Expansion 2.....	46
20. Mariposa Creek Parkway Riparian Restoration .....	49
21. San Pedro Creek at Adobe Bridge Fish Passage Planning .....	52
22. Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas Public Access .....	55
23. Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy, Augmentation.....	58
24. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve Amphitheater, Phase II.....	61
25. Protecting Central Coast Habitat for Listed Plant Species .....	64
26. Puma Canyon, Expansion 8 .....	67
27. Puma Canyon, Expansion 9 .....	70
28. North Campus Open Space, Public Access Project .....	73
29. Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup.....	76
30. East Otay Regional Trails Planning, CEQA .....	79

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 25, 2021

31. County of San Diego MSCP (2019) Donelson .....	82
<b>Proposed Items .....</b>	<b>85</b>
32. Mad River Estuary Public Access Enhancement .....	85
33. Ladybug Forest Health and Fuels Reduction.....	88
34. Truckee Springs.....	92
35. Laguna Wildlife Area, Expansion 9 .....	96
36. King Fire Forest Restoration .....	99
37. Yosemite Area Forest Restoration, Phase 2.....	103
38. Butano Creek Channel Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement .....	106
39. Highway 17 Crossings Planning and Design .....	110
40. SR-152 at Pacheco Creek Wildlife Connectivity and Corridor Enhancement.....	113
41. San Joaquin River Parkway, Circle V (Vinnard) Public Access Plan .....	117
42. San Joaquin River Parkway, Lanes Property.....	120
43. Western Riverside MSHCP (2019) Woods Canyon.....	123
44. Blue Diamond Acquisition .....	126
45. Ventura River Parkway .....	129

Attachment A – Map of May 2020 Projects

Attachment B – WCB Acronyms

Attachment C – WCB Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITES**

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.

## 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  
Peter S. Silva, Member  
President Fish and Game Commission

### Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Andreas Borgeas  
Senator Nancy Skinner  
Senator Henry Stern  
Assemblymember Laura Friedman  
Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi – Alternate  
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia  
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago – Alternate  
Assemblymember *Vacant*  
Assemblymember Marc Levine – Alternate

### Executive Director

John P. Donnelly



**2. Discussion and Selection of new Board Chairman and Vice Chairman**

**3. 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)

**4. Funding Status – Informational**

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

<b>WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND (0447)</b>	<b>\$1,000,000.00</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$1,000,000.00</b>

<b>HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)</b>	<b>\$62,541,061.40</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(5,920,200.00)
Total Project Development:	(19,912,230.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$36,708,631.40</b>

<b>SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 12) (0005)</b>	<b>\$545,364.00</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$545,364.00</b>

<b>CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)</b>	<b>\$9,088,032.52</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,515,340.66)
Total Project Development:	(5,617,370.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$1,955,321.86</b>

<b>WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)</b>	<b>\$17,980,741.83</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(215,840.00)
Total Project Development:	(14,023,955.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$3,740,946.83</b>

<b>SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)</b>	<b>\$16,285,218.26</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(3,204,659.00)
Total Project Development:	(10,127,289.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$4,725,370.26</b>
<b>WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)</b>	<b>\$61,261,723.65</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$61,261,723.65</b>
<b>THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)</b>	<b>\$140,587,077.00</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(17,572,597.00)
Total Project Development:	(50,077,584.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$72,936,896.00</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND (0001)</b>	<b>\$10,000,000.00</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(5,000,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(1,085,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$3,915,000.00</b>
<b>GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)</b>	<b>\$8,436,525.00</b>
February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(871,400.00)
Total Project Development:	(6,914,600.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$650,525.00</b>
<b>TOTAL – ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$327,725,743.66</b>
Grand Total - February 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(34,300,036.66)
Grand Total - Project Development:	107,758,028.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$185,667,679.00</b>
<b>RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000</b>	
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

## 5. Executive Director's Report

### Consent Items

Items 6-31 are part of the Consent Calendar

## 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.

*Table 1 - Recoveries by Fund*

<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$50,520.00
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	\$1,775.00
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$62,048.07
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$18,694.66
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$11,320.00
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$13,152.00
<b>Total Recoveries for All Funds</b>	<b>\$157,509.73</b>

*Table 2 - Habitat Conservation Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Robin's Nest II	\$645,000.00	\$637,072.00	\$7,928.00
Hunewill Ranch Conservation Easement	\$1,245,000.00	\$1,238,158.00	\$6,842.00
Mendenhall Ranch Conservation Easement	\$71,250.00	\$68,814.00	\$2,436.00
Nicholson Ranch	\$760,000.00	\$760,000.00	\$0.00
Rancho Caleta	\$618,000.00	\$614,660.00	\$3,340.00
Morongo Basin, Exp. 7 (Bloom)	\$99,250.00	\$93,690.00	\$5,560.00
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, Oswit Property	\$10,000.00	\$5,624.00	\$4,376.00
Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion 1 (Mello)	\$910,000.00	\$904,262.00	\$5,738.00
Morongo Basin, Expansion 8 (IMP)	\$673,000.00	\$671,732.00	\$1,268.00
Otay Mesa Vernal Pool (San Ysidro)	\$44,500.00	\$36,732.00	\$7,768.00
Telegraph Ridge Conservation Easement	\$508,000.00	\$502,736.00	\$5,264.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund</b>			<b>\$50,520.00</b>

*Table 3 - The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Bouvier Ranch	\$640,000.00	\$638,225.00	\$1,775.00
<b>Total Recoveries to The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund</b>			<b>\$1,775.00</b>

*Table 4 - California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, Habitat Restoration	\$58,000.00	\$30,803.93	\$27,196.07
Samoa Dunes and Wetlands	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$0.00
Grizzly Creek and Grizzly Creek, Expansion 1 TOJ	\$18,300,000.00	\$18,265,148.00	\$34,852.00
<b>Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>			<b>\$62,048.07</b>

*Table 5 - Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
San Joaquin River Parkway, Spano River Ranch, Habitat Enhancement	\$550,000.00	\$550,000.00	\$0.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, Owl Hollow Improvements	\$860,340.00	\$859,429.35	\$910.66
Cal Fire Arrowhead Ridge Conservation Easement	\$25,000.00	\$18,632.50	\$6,367.50
Crocker Meadows Wildlife Area, Expansion 3	\$399,000.00	\$387,583.50	\$11,416.50
Tilton Ranch	\$625,970.00	\$625,970.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>			<b>\$18,694.66</b>

*Table 6 - Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Santa Rita Ranch Flow Enhancement, Acquisition	\$3,920,000.00	\$3,908,680.00	\$11,320.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>			<b>\$11,320.00</b>

*Table 7 - The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Denk Mountain, Expansion 1	\$85,250.00	\$79,280.00	\$5,970.00
Tilton Ranch	\$3,411,030.00	\$3,411,030.00	\$0.00
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, Oswit Property	\$1,225,000.00	\$1,225,000.00	\$0.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Welsh	\$171,000.00	\$168,548.00	\$2,452.00
Moody Ridge (Gerjuoy)	\$205,000.00	\$200,270.00	\$4,730.00
<b>Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018</b>			<b>\$13,152.00</b>

## 7. Mapping Important Plant Areas of California

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve this project as proposed; allocate \$272,000 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Government Code Section 16428.8, 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 (CDFW) to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Mapping Important Plant Areas of California
Project Type:	Technical Assistance
Applicant/Grantee:	California Native Plant Society
Amount Recommended:	\$272,000
County:	All
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resilience
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.4
Disadvantaged Community:	N/A, Statewide project

### LOCATION

The Mapping Important Plant Areas of California project (Project) covers all of California, including the California Floristic Province and adjacent desert areas.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

California contains 1 of 35 global biodiversity hotspots with more than 6,500 plant taxa, of which more than 2,000 are found nowhere else. This region's native flora forms the foundation of terrestrial ecosystems upon which an array of wildlife depends. This huge diversity of species is imperiled from habitat loss due to land use conversion and a changing climate. Climate change will compound the level of impacts to plant and animal species from urbanization and development of natural landscapes. Therefore, it is critical to identify those areas most important for the conservation of California's plants and wildlife before they are lost.

In 2018, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) conducted an informal survey of potential end users to understand data needs for the conservation planning. Two main concerns were consistently identified: a lack of a central resource for botanical data covering a full representation of biodiversity, and a regional-scale conservation priority map for all of California. Currently available datasets are diffuse and there is abundant, often inaccessible data that is not logged into centralized databases.

The Project will provide an in-depth data and an analysis tool to guide decisions that will impact adaptation and resilience to climate change for California's wild flora and fauna in the near and long term. The means to produce this tool is through CNPS' Important Plant Areas (IPA) project, an effort already underway to develop a comprehensive biodiversity map and planning tool that joins stakeholder engagement to large-scale data analysis. The IPA project will develop a

transparent and scientifically driven IPA-based decision-support tool to improve long-term management of ecosystems and increase climate change adaptation and resilience across the state. The goal is to ensure that climate change-related conservation investments, projects, policy, and planning have the greatest impact. The IPA project will also augment existing tools that managers and conservationists already use.

Example uses of this tool include but are not limited to the following: transparent guidance for funding conservation projects; seeking lands for effective and strategic advanced mitigation investments; and informing planning efforts to avoid unnecessary impacts to sensitive biological resources.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Once developed, the IPA tool will be evaluated and updated with new data every three years to track the impacts of threats such as development and climate change. Updates will consist of the following evaluations relative to IPAs: 1) acres of land protected; 2) number of species represented; 3) number of special status/rare/locally rare species represented; 4) number of vegetation alliances represented; 5) number of rare/locally rare alliances and natural communities represented; 6) connectivity between IPAs; and 7) trends in IPA threat rank.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$25,960	\$14,100	\$11,860
Process and Review Data	\$147,896	\$90,800	\$57,096
Model Iteration	\$112,434	\$72,200	\$40,234
Threat/Opportunity Analysis	\$95,342	\$55,300	\$40,042
Stakeholder/Expert Input	\$25,960	\$14,100	\$11,860
Public Interface Development and Rollout	\$52,550	\$25,500	\$27,050
Total	\$460,142	\$272,000	\$188,142

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Staff time to carry out and oversee Project activities, conduct meetings, and complete transactions needed to implement the Project.
- Process and Review Data: Gather and analyze data including running input data through regional models.
- Model Iteration: Compile and process newly contributed data and comments on model structure into a series of iterative model runs.
- Threat/Opportunity Analysis: Threats and opportunities will be circulated among regional conservation stakeholders and experts, and the assessment will be updated based on feedback received.

- Stakeholder/Expert Input: Schedule and promote data gathering workshops.
- Public Interface Development and Rollout: The final products will be integrated into an interactive public-facing platform.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.

## 8. Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Augmentation

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$300,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Augmentation
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Sustainable Conservation
Amount Recommended:	\$300,000
Funding Partners:	State Coastal Conservancy
County:	Statewide
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2 Objectives: SI 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	N/A, Statewide project

### LOCATION

The Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Augmentation (Project) is a statewide planning project that will create programmatic permit approvals for aquatic and riparian restoration projects and would cover the most commonly proposed habitat restoration projects in California, including multi-benefit projects of statewide significance that prioritize restoration. These permits do not specify project sites, but rather describe a suite of detailed restoration project types that may be permitted under the program.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In May 2019, WCB approved a \$200,000 grant to Sustainable Conservation (SC) for the statewide planning project to create programmatic permit approvals. SC's programmatic permits will serve as advance approvals to cover a wide variety of the most common and high priority restoration projects in California. This will accelerate project implementation and further benefit conservation and recovery of protected species.

The proposed augmentation will cover additional costs due to several unanticipated project changes and delays in completion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion (BO), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) water quality permit, and CEQA document. The BO has been delayed due to additional review and input by expert stakeholders, including restoration project managers and CDFW. These reviews will ultimately create permits with protection measures that can be applied to a wider variety of projects.



The SWRCB permit and CEQA document are delayed due to the SWRCB's decision to pursue a more involved Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document than the originally anticipated Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The resulting EIR will have greater utility for restoration project managers, as it will allow projects to use some, or all, of the existing analysis in the EIR for their individual project implementation. In addition, work will continue on outreach activities for the permits under development and will be expanded to include training and technical assistance once the permits and CEQA document are complete.

The primary objectives of the Project are to submit a biological assessment to USFWS so that it can issue a BO, complete the SWRCB permit and CEQA document, collect information from restoration practitioners to inform permits, and conduct outreach, training, and technical assistance so that restoration project proponents and agency staff are ready to use the permits when they are issued.

Deliverables for the Project include:

- Final USFWS Biological Opinion
- Final SWRCB Permit
- Final SWRCB CEQA Document for Water Quality Permit
- Presentations, newsletters, trainings, technical assistance to various organizations on programmatic permitting and permits under development
- Outreach materials distributed to Sustainable Conservation's Accelerating Restoration email database
- Technical website with permitting resource

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	Original* WCB Grant	Original* Non-WCB Funds	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds Augmentation
Project Management	\$97,569	\$11,795	\$15,000	\$20,169	\$50,605
USFWS Biological Assessment	\$157,775	\$48,078	\$44,507	\$35,190	\$30,000
SWRCB Water Quality Permit	\$100,283	\$30,327	\$39,583	\$30,373	---
CEQA Document for SWRCB Permit	\$273,750	\$69,770	\$77,226	\$41,755	\$85,000
Outreach	\$332,246	\$31,335	\$15,000	\$159,471	\$126,439
Administrative Costs	\$38,377	\$8,695	\$8,684	\$13,042	\$7,956
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

\*Includes approved budget shift from July 21, 2020.

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project coordination and oversight, submission of progress reports and invoices.
- USFWS Biological Assessment: Preparation of a biological assessment.
- SWRCB Water Quality Permit: Preparation of a SWRCB water quality permit.
- CEQA Document for SWRCB Permit: Preparation of a CEQA document.
- Outreach: Presentations, newsletters, trainings, and email distributions to various organizations; creation of a new website.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 9. Elk River Estuary Restoration, Feasibility and Conceptual Design

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$309,400 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Government Code Section 16428.8, 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 CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Elk River Estuary Restoration, Feasibility and Conceptual Design
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	California Trout, Inc.
Amount Recommended:	\$309,400
Funding Partners:	California Coastal Conservancy
County:	Humboldt
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	B.1 Objectives: SI 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Elk River Estuary Restoration, Feasibility and Conceptual Design project (Project) is located in the estuarine reach of the Elk River, a tributary to Humboldt Bay. This area encompasses the lowermost 4.7 river miles of the Elk River, which can generally be characterized as the stream-estuary ecotone or tidally influenced reach. The upper portion of this reach is characterized as tidally influenced freshwater, and the lower reach as saline/brackish. The planning area is approximately 480 acres, which includes the 99-acre Elk River Wildlife Area (ERWA), owned and managed by CDFW. The remainder of the planning area is owned by seven private landowners who have been actively engaged to jointly develop the preliminary concepts proposed on each property. The planning area on the easterly side of US 101 is in unincorporated Humboldt County, whereas the planning area on the Humboldt Bay side of US 101 is within the city of Eureka.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The ERWA exemplifies degraded conditions in the planning area. The CDFW property historically provided complex estuarine habitat with backwater channels for summer rearing and winter refugia. This habitat was lost when the area was diked and drained for agricultural use, cutting off access to backwater channels and pools. Remnant channels are still present, but tidal flows are controlled by tide gates. Fish can only access the area during floods and may have difficulty returning to the main channel after water levels subside. Large wood is lacking because it was historically removed from the channel due to flooding concerns. The out of bank flows pool in agricultural fields for extended periods of time due to poor drainage infrastructure such as ditches, tide gates, and culverts with an associated impact on wetland and habitat quality and land value.



The habitat that remains is impaired by sediment aggradation and drainage infrastructure and other features (including two railroad grades) which disconnect the floodplain, leading to fish stranding and migration impairment into and out of sloughs and off-channel areas. Habitat is further simplified by the previous removal of streamside riparian habitat. Alteration of the natural morphology and function of the Elk River estuary has significantly diminished the tidal prism and altered the natural hydrology, resulting in significant changes to sedimentation, deposition, and currents.

In response, through 2019 and early-2020, landowners throughout the watershed engaged to develop preliminary concepts to reduce flooding and restore beneficial uses in the planning area. These landowner-supported conceptual actions include levee modifications to restore tidal activity on the ERWA, restoring and reconnecting sloughs to drainage channels, modification of drainage infrastructure (tide gates, culverts), riparian and wetland vegetation enhancement, topographic modifications to consolidate and direct flood flows across the floodplain (such as lowering the old railroad grade), enhancing eelgrass beds, and rehabilitating estuarine channels through sediment removal and the installation of wood habitat structures.

The Project proposes to conduct conceptual planning and develop preliminary designs (approximately 10% design level). The intent is to determine the set of actions to be advanced to the next planning phase. To inform the analysis, the workplan includes baseline studies for aquatic and botanical habitat, groundwater, salinity, infrastructure, wetlands/uplands, and cultural resources requiring extensive field data collection and analysis to inform subsequent design and environmental review phases. The Project will also assess resiliency and adaptation approaches to protect and enhance prime agricultural lands consistent with habitat restoration, State Coastal Policies, and Local Coastal Program requirements.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

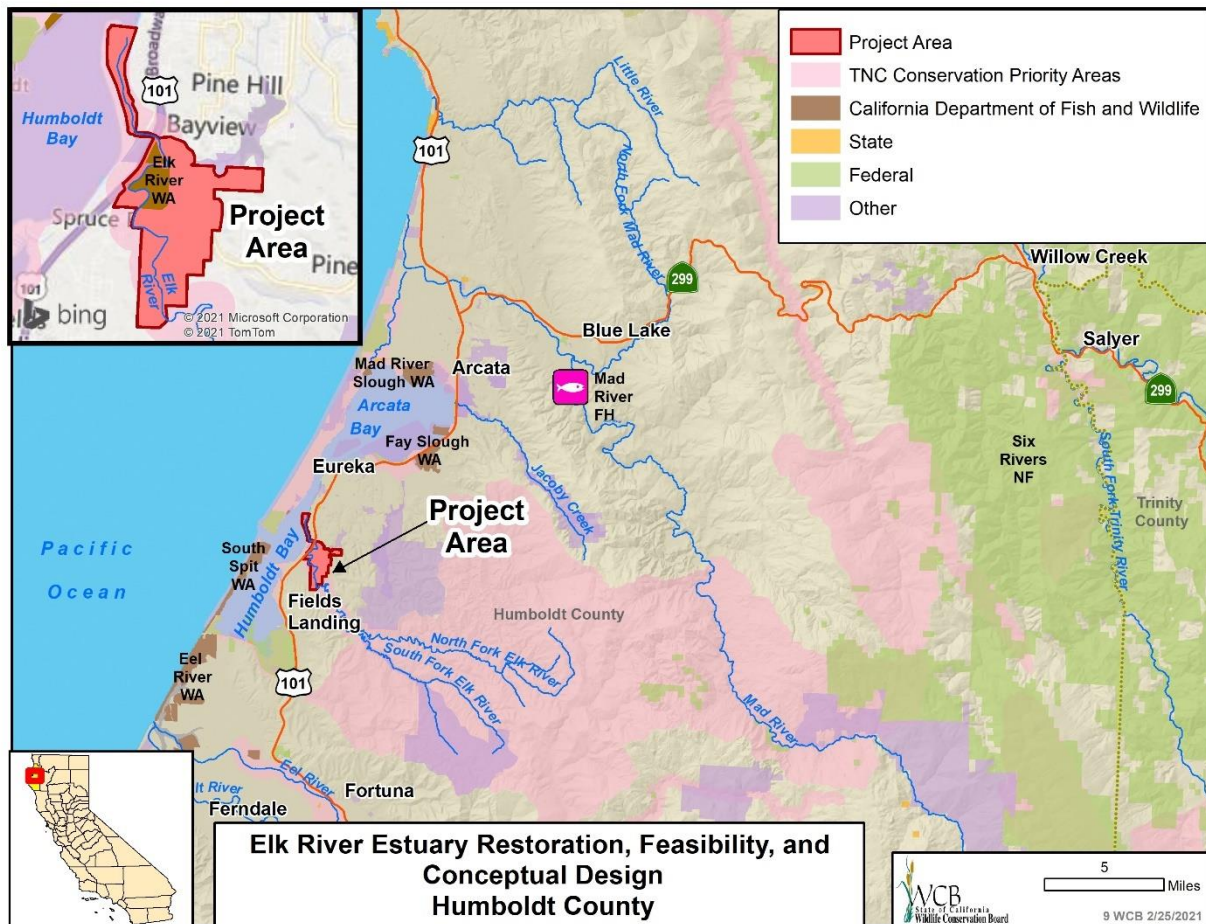
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Meetings	\$92,275	\$29,375	\$62,900
Baseline Conditions Report	\$274,400	\$160,000	\$114,400
Regulatory Compliance Planning	\$58,800	---	\$58,800
10% Engineering Design	\$260,132	\$90,132	\$170,000
Indirect Costs	\$51,893	\$9,893	\$42,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$787,500</b>	<b>\$309,400</b>	<b>\$478,100</b>

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Overall coordination and administration of Project tasks including management of subcontractor agreements.
- Meetings: Conduct Project team meetings, maintain landowner communications and establish a planning advisory committee to assist the development of the Project plan.
- Baseline Conditions Report: Inventory of water management infrastructure and utilities, water level and water quality monitoring, upland determination mapping and preliminary jurisdictional determination.
- 10% Engineering Design: Using the information developed under the previous tasks, the concept designs will be developed at a 10% engineering design level for the Project.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.



## 10. Stone Lagoon Wildlife Connectivity Planning

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$230,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Stone Lagoon Wildlife Connectivity Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	California Department of Transportation
Amount Recommended:	\$230,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Department of Transportation
County:	Humboldt
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

U.S. Highway 101 (highway) in northern Humboldt County has long been recognized as an impediment to the daily and migratory movement of wildlife. The highway bisects important corridors for a variety of terrestrial species that inhabit adjacent coastal forest, prairie, lagoon, and marsh habitats. Much of the land immediately adjacent to the highway is protected by Humboldt Lagoons State Park, the Redwood National and State Park system, or under habitat conservation plans associated with private timber management; however, wildlife and vehicle collisions occur frequently.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Roosevelt elk and black-tailed deer are known to be particularly vulnerable to vehicular collision within a 1-mile segment of the highway between post miles 114 and 115, approximately 0.25-miles south of Stone Lagoon. This area receives a high volume of traffic and tourism, particularly during the summer months, with park visitors frequently stopping along the narrow roadway shoulders or traveled roadway to view elk, often causing traffic congestion and unsafe conditions for wildlife, motorists, and pedestrians alike.

This area is identified by CDFW as a Wildlife Movement Barrier with high priority for remediation. It is also recognized as an important corridor for Roosevelt elk, recently ranked as the highest priority in Caltrans District 1 for addressing deer roadkill in a large mammal-vehicle collision study conducted by Western Transportation Institute. There is also strong local support to address connectivity at this location from staff in regional field offices of CDFW, National Park Service

(NPS), California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and USFWS, as well as the adjacent landowners of Elk Country RV Resort and Campground.

CDFW began collaring elk in coastal Humboldt and Del Norte counties in 2017. Since then, they have deployed collars on an annual basis documenting 2,214 crossings of the highway by individual elk. The greatest concentration of elk crossings has been recorded by animals close to the Elk Country RV Resort and Campground known as the “Little Red School House Herd”. This herd occupies habitat south of Stone Lagoon near the proposed study location.

Caltrans will study this location to determine the best site for a future wildlife crossing and associated infrastructure to reduce the frequency of wildlife-vehicle collision and improve permeability of the highway for crossing wildlife. Design alternatives will include associated fencing, and the development of a public wildlife viewing and parking area to improve safety, alleviate traffic congestion, and foster tourism that could benefit local disadvantaged communities. Stone Lagoon Wildlife Connectivity Planning project (Project) will assess site conditions, identify feasible design alternatives and permitting needs, complete preliminary environmental review, and conduct stakeholder and partner coordination.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Wildlife Connectivity Planning Study	\$215,000	\$205,000	\$10,000
Camera Trap Study and Photogrammetry	\$35,000	\$25,000	\$10,000
Total	\$250,000	\$230,000	\$20,000

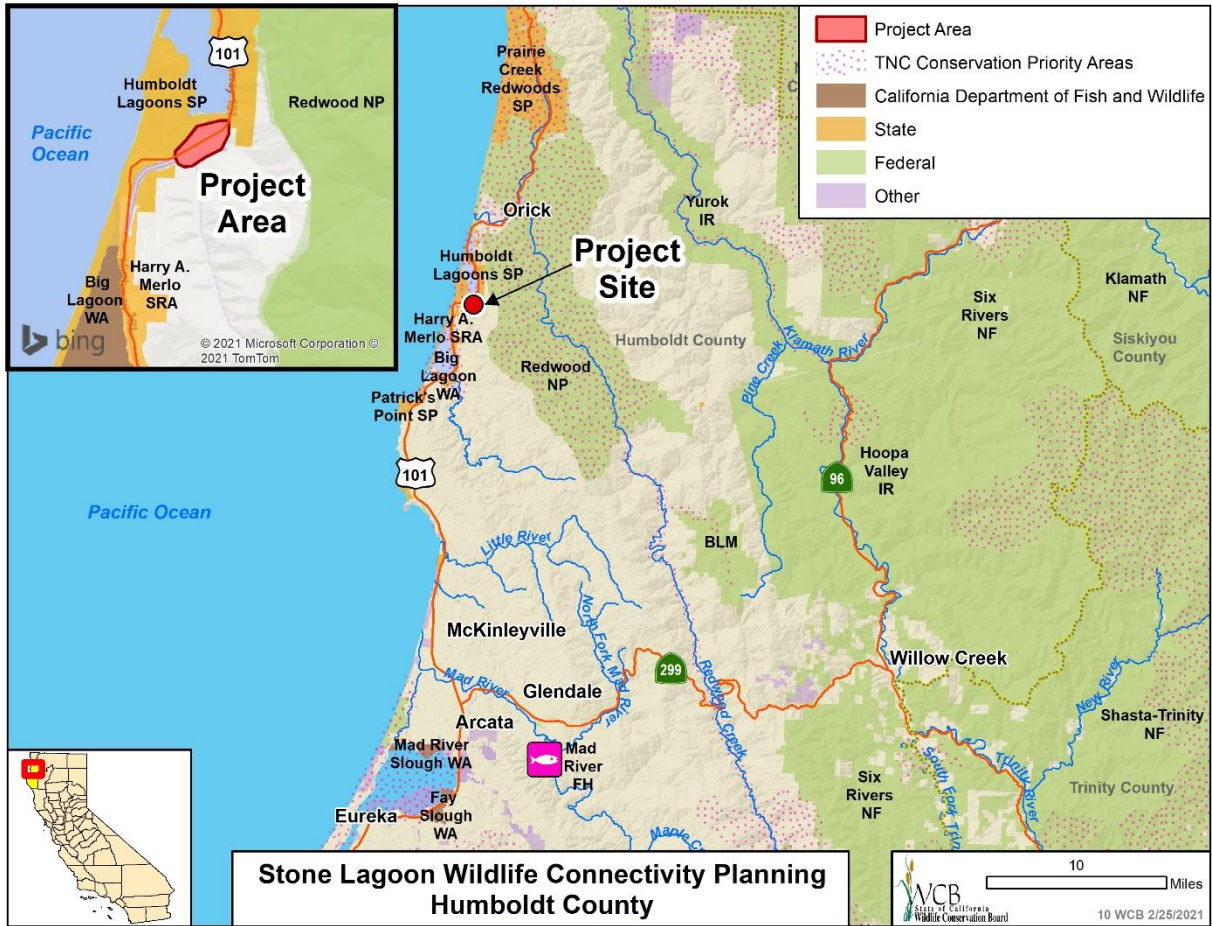
Project costs include:

- Wildlife Connectivity Planning Study: Includes site assessment and scoping study, identification of design alternatives and permits, conduct preliminary environmental review.
- Camera Trap Study and Photogrammetry: Gathering of wildlife movement data and development of a monitoring plan.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.





## 11. Poplar Valley Meadow Restoration Planning

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$110,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Poplar Valley Meadow Restoration Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Plumas Corporation
Amount Recommended:	\$110,000
Funding Partners:	Plumas Corporation, Sierra Pacific Industries, U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	Soper Company
County:	Plumas
Program:	California Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Poplar Valley Meadow Restoration Planning project (Project) area consists of 80 acres of montane meadow within the 150-acre Poplar Valley located in the Middle Fork Feather River watershed, approximately 7 miles northwest of Blairsden in Plumas County.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Existing conditions in the valley underscore the need for restoration: because the valley was formed at the confluence of three tributaries, the head-cutting is multi-pronged, with numerous finger gullies moving into the three arms of the floodplain. The active degradation of wetland soils near the confluence of the tributaries dramatically illustrates the link between hydrologic function and carbon sequestration. The normally rich humus that would be annually replenished and held in place with roots, now appears burnt to the naked eye. On-going rill erosion is apparent between dying remnant clumps of wetland vegetation as seasonal overland flow cascades over raw banks down into the gully. Conifers and upland vegetation have colonized the primary gully edges and continue to spread out as the finger gullies dry out more of the once-wet floodplain.

The Project will complete all the steps necessary to produce a shovel-ready restoration project. Planning steps include: the completion of valley-wide topographic surveys, project design report and plans, design review by an engineer, resource surveys and reports for botany, wildlife, and cultural resources,

environmental compliance documentation (MND anticipated), permit applications, and pre-project baseline effectiveness monitoring data collection and summary.

The shovel ready project resulting from the Project will improve water quality and temperature through restored and improved meadow hydrology and prevent further wet meadow habitat degradation.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

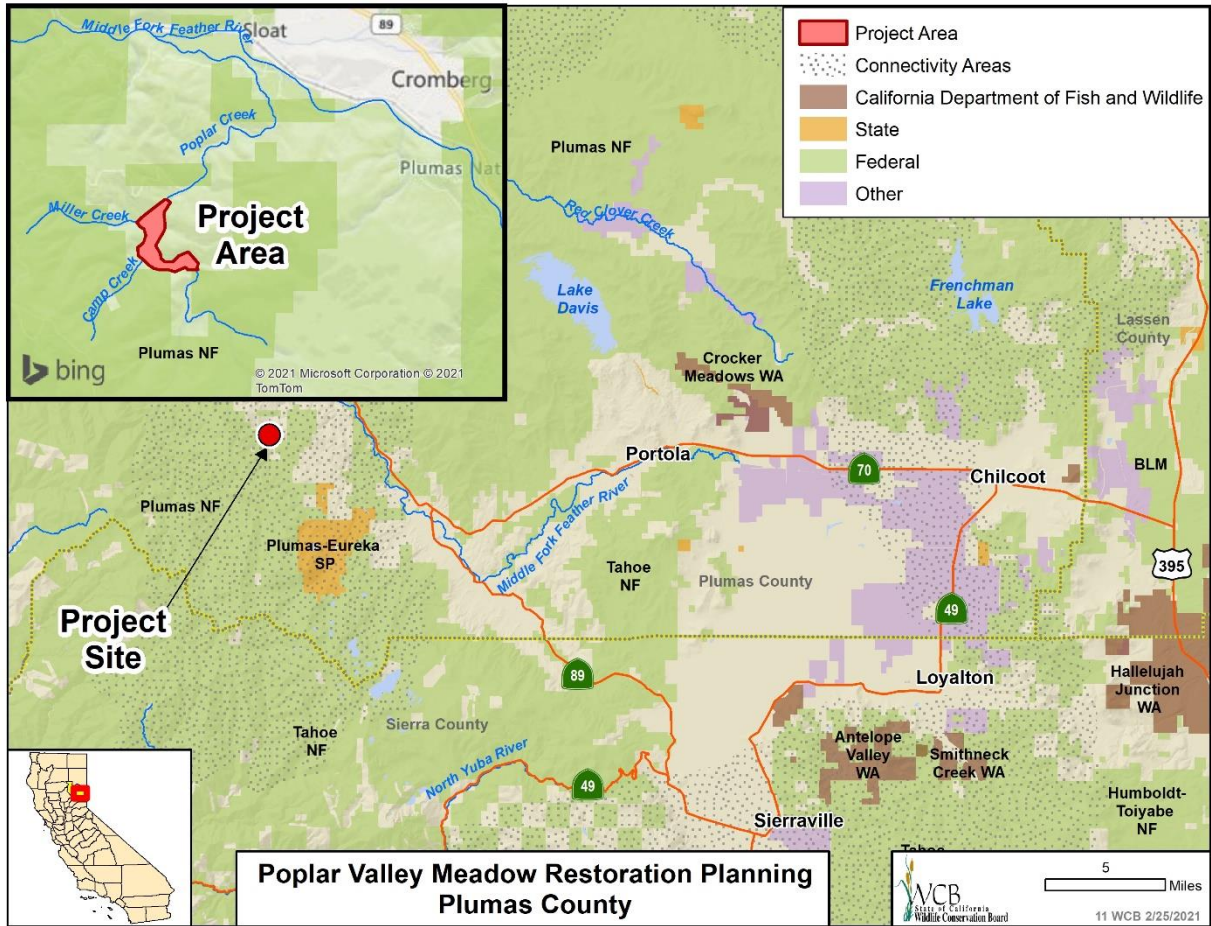
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Monitoring	\$14,579	\$13,065	\$1,514
Surveying and Wetland Delineation	\$36,667	\$30,407	\$6,260
Project Design and Engineer Review	\$46,103	\$35,466	\$10,637
CEQA and Permits	\$17,541	\$17,541	---
Project Management	\$14,868	\$13,521	\$1,347
Total	\$129,758	\$110,000	\$19,758

Project costs include:

- Monitoring: Installation, purchase and monitoring of wells, flow gage, cameras, and automated temperature sensors.
- Surveying and Wetland Delineation: Staff time associated with collection of data, archeology, botany, and wildlife subcontract evaluation and field work.
- Project Design and Engineer Review: Field design of fill locations and evaluations, fill material and restored flow paths.
- CEQA and Permits: Permitting application preparation and submittal.
- Project Management: Data collection, reporting, and invoicing.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to authorization by WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 12. Thompson Meadow Restoration

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$504,002 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Thompson Meadow Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Plumas Corporation
Amount Recommended:	\$504,002
Funding Partners:	Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Department of Water Resources, Plumas Corporation, U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	Plumas National Forest
County:	Plumas
Program:	Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

Thompson Meadow is a montane meadow in the Sierra Nevada situated in the Red Clover sub-watershed, which is part of the larger East Branch North Fork Feather River watershed (EBNFFR). Thompson Meadow is located within Plumas National Forest, approximately seven miles north of Lake Davis.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Thompson Creek is the main channel passing through Thompson Meadow and the creek is currently incised to a depth of 4 to 10 feet. As a result, the stream channel is functionally disconnected from its historic floodplain. Flood flows are confined within the incised channel and lead to vertical, eroded stream banks. Erosion during large floods has washed away riparian vegetation that stabilize stream banks and channel structure. Under these conditions, only extreme flood events overflow onto the meadow; much of the soil and bank-building sediment is carried downstream rather than deposited in the floodplain. As a result, meadow conditions are drier and upland plants like sagebrush now dominate where wet meadow vegetation once existed.

Thompson Meadow offers a unique opportunity to evaluate meadow restoration effects in the context of climate change. A study by Pacific Gas & Electric in 2010 found an average annual decrease in flow on the EBNFFR of 23 percent (179,000-acre feet) for the period of 1976-2009 when compared with the period of 1950-1975. Climate change and decreased snowpack were cited as causes for this



decrease in stream flow. Past studies in this system offer extensive, watershed-wide datasets that can help us better understand the effects of restoring hydrologic and ecological functions of mountain meadows.

The Thompson Meadow Restoration project (Project) aims to utilize a combination of partial fill, complete fill, raised rock riffles, and a grade control structure to restore floodplain function, raise water table elevation, and reestablish meadow vegetation in Thompson Meadow. The Project will also help prevent further degradation of the stream and meadow system along Thompson Creek in order to improve flow conditions, meadow productivity, vegetative cover, and water quality by preventing further bank erosion and providing stable stream channel structure. The Project area contributes to a network of over 3,600 acres of restored mountain meadow habitat that has been collaboratively accomplished in the upper Feather River Watershed since 1995. Building on lessons learned from implementing and monitoring 30+ meadow restoration projects in the watershed, the Project is unique because it will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the hydrologic and environmental effects of the restoration to better quantify benefits to water quality and quantity.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Plumas National Forest has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. In addition, a site-specific Long-Term Management Plan will be developed as part of the proposed Project. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Plumas Corporation does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$17,332	\$17,332	---
Restoration	\$638,546	\$454,666	\$183,880
Monitoring	\$201,773	\$1,773	\$200,000
Indirect Costs	\$34,100	\$30,231	\$3,869
Total	\$891,751	\$504,002	\$387,749

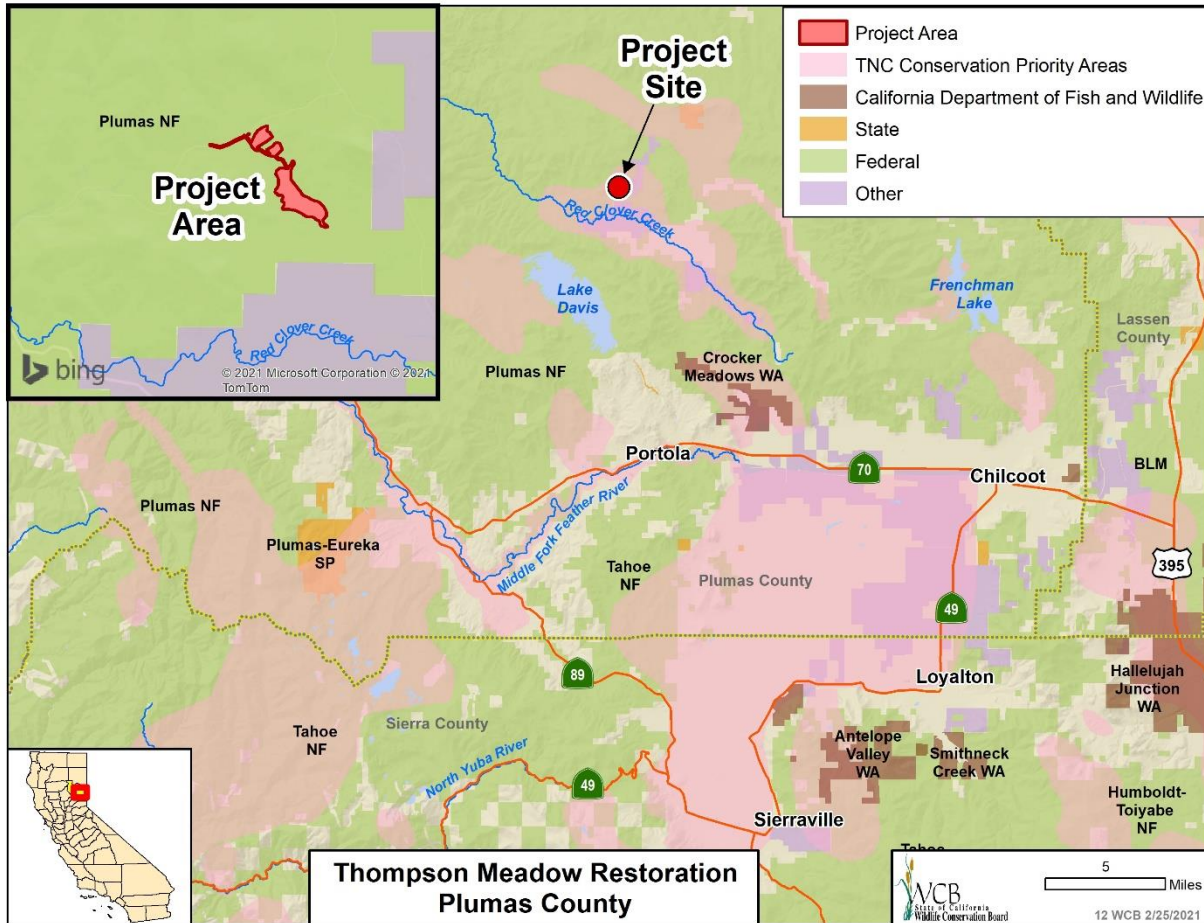
Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications and outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration Activities: Project implementation per implementation plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Monitoring: Pre- and post-Project monitoring per monitoring plan (e.g., photo points and vegetation).

- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The California Department of Water Resources, as lead agency, prepared a MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 13. Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands, Phase 2

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$170,000 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Government Code Section 16428.8, 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 CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands, Phase 2
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Audubon California
Amount Recommended:	\$170,000
Funding Partners:	Point Blue Conservation Science
County:	Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Merced, San Joaquin, Sutter, Tulare
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, A.2, B.1      Objectives: SI 2.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The Central Valley encompasses an area of over 13 million acres, located between the coast ranges on the west and the Sierra Nevada mountains on the east and averages about 55 miles in width. It extends from Red Bluff in the north approximately 400 miles south to Bakersfield. The Central Valley housed an estimated four million acres of wetlands in the 1850s yet only five percent remain today. The remaining wetlands provide exceptional terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity, connectivity, and habitat for listed and/or climate vulnerable species as identified by statewide climate change adaptation and wildlife action plans.

The Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands, Phase 2 project (Project) will focus on wetlands throughout the Central Valley and particularly for the target wetlands in the Colusa, Butte, Sutter, Kern County, Tule, Delta-Mendota, and Merced subbasins.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With only five percent of the Central Valley's historic wetlands remaining after extensive conversion to urban and agricultural uses, protection of these habitats from the risks of climate change and groundwater reductions is a critical task for conservation organizations and agencies. California's remaining wetlands provide essential refugia for wildlife, including millions of birds that migrate through the Pacific Flyway, as well as listed species such as the tricolored blackbird and giant garter snake.

Priority groundwater basins throughout the Central Valley lack water demand and recharge data for wetlands, putting these groundwater dependent ecosystems at



risk and undermining the utility of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP). By filling a significant data gap on current wetland water needs and future needs under climate change scenarios, public and private wetlands managers will be better able to establish and protect the water needs of wildlife into the future, including during Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) implementation.

In May 2019, WCB approved grant funding for the Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands project, Phase 1 of the Project to begin developing water budgets for wetlands in the Central Valley while working with wetland managers and groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) to ensure that wetlands are protected in the implementation of SGMA. Water budgets were developed for the Kern National Wildlife Refuge, Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Refuge, Gray Lodge Wildlife Area and one private wetland complex within Kern County. These water budgets will be used to model future wetland water needs under climate change scenarios to build climate adaptation for Central Valley wetlands into GSPs.

This Project will develop water budgets for additional wetlands in the Central Valley and work with wetland managers and groundwater sustainability agencies to ensure that wetlands are protected in the implementation of SGMA. Through water budget modeling and a climate change analysis of water budgets for wetlands, this Project will provide technical assistance to CDFW, USFWS, private wetland managers, and GSAs, to build resiliency in Central Valley wetlands and protect them as refugia for numerous species threatened by climate change.

This Project will build climate resiliency for wetland dependent wildlife through the following Project objectives:

1. **Model wetland water budgets** - Develop detailed water budgets for the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge and one Sacramento Valley CDFW Presley Program wetland (privately owned land).
2. **Wetland manager climate scenario training** - Conduct workshops and trainings to facilitate the use of the wetland water budget model as a climate change planning tool for wetland managers. Currently, Audubon California coordinates with wetland managers to model water budgets at target wetland complexes, based on water management information. Under an existing project funded through the WCB Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program, these water budgets are being updated with climate change analyses. This task will enable the expansion of outreach to wetland managers to ensure that the updated models can be used as a climate change scenario planning tool. Wetland managers will be trained on how to use the tool to evaluate water management decisions under future climate scenarios.
3. **Develop updated Central Valley wetland boundary and type** - Develop an updated Central Valley wetland boundary map that includes wetland type information by incorporating the most recent 10 years of wetland restoration.

Coordinate with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to distribute this updated wetland spatial dataset to GSAs across the Central Valley for use in their 2022 GSPs or 2025 plan updates for critically overdrafted basins.

4. **Groundwater Sustainability Plan review and technical assistance** - In coordination with wetland managers, conduct a technical review of draft and final GSPs under the 2022 GSP timeline. Provide feedback to GSAs and DWR to ensure that managed wetlands are identified as beneficial users of groundwater and represented as a required water sector in basin-wide water budgets.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Wetland Water Budgets	\$52,559	\$52,559	-
Climate Scenario Training	\$54,383	\$54,383	-
Updated Central Valley Wetland Boundary	\$89,000	\$10,000	\$79,000
GSA technical Assistance	\$82,058	\$53,058	\$29,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$278,000</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$108,000</b>

Project costs include:

- Wetland Water Budgets: Development of water budget models at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge and one additional privately-owned wetland.
- Climate Scenario Training: Train wetland managers to utilize the wetland water budget model for climate scenario planning.
- Updated Central Valley Wetland Boundary: Develop an updated Central Valley wetland boundary and classify wetland types.
- GSA Technical Assistance: Provide technical assistance to GSAs to integrate managed wetlands into GSPs.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.



## 14. Sierra Foothill Forest Climate Resilience Planning

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$219,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Sierra Foothill Forest Climate Resilience Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Sierra Streams Institute
Amount Recommended:	\$219,000
Funding Partners:	Sierra Streams Institute, U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	Private Landowners
County:	Nevada
Program:	California Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Sierra Foothill Forest Climate Resilience Planning project (Project) will develop shovel ready Forest Management Plans (FMPs) for 625 acres of private lands in the Sierra Nevada wildland urban interface (WUI). The Project area consists of four large private parcels and a group of properties within a FireWise community immediately adjacent to public lands (State Parks, Bureau of Land Management) in the WUI boundary near the South Yuba River and Nevada City in the northern Sierra foothills in Nevada County. The Project area rests within moderate, high, and very high fire severity risk zones as identified by CAL FIRE.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project will improve climate adaptation and resilience, control invasive species, advance regional conservation investment strategies, improve forest health, reduce wildfire danger, and mitigate the effects of wildfires on water quality and supply.

The Project will complete the necessary cultural and biological surveys and technical documents for CEQA compliance. The FMPs will provide a model for (1) direct reduction of fuels on target private lands that incorporates best current knowledge on drought resilience and forest structure; (2) post-fire habitat restoration, invasive plant management, and native revegetation in fuel treatment areas; and (3) promoting and preserving wildlife habitat attributes. Additionally, the Project includes the development of community outreach strategies such as guided field trips to view forest plots and discuss treatment options, and the creation of a Climate-Smart Forest Management Toolkit (Toolkit). The Toolkit will be a resource



made available to land managers providing technical assistance, permitting information, and strategies for ensuring regional co-benefits of reduced wildfire, increased climate resilience, and increased wildlife habitat integrity.

The goal of the Project is to take necessary steps toward implementation of a novel forest management approach that incorporates both fuel reduction and forest ecological integrity and habitat complexity. By bringing this approach to private landowners and equipping them with the tools necessary to ensure lasting project impacts, the Project offers a long-term solution to regional forest management beyond the boundaries of public lands.

Implementation projects developed from the proposed planning efforts will benefit ponderosa pine forest, Douglas fir forest, mixed conifer, black oak woodland, interior live oak woodland, foothill pine woodland, and whiteleaf manzanita chaparral ecosystems; 80 birds, 40 mammals, 10 reptiles, 20 amphibians, and 30 fish special status species; and more than 400 endemic species.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

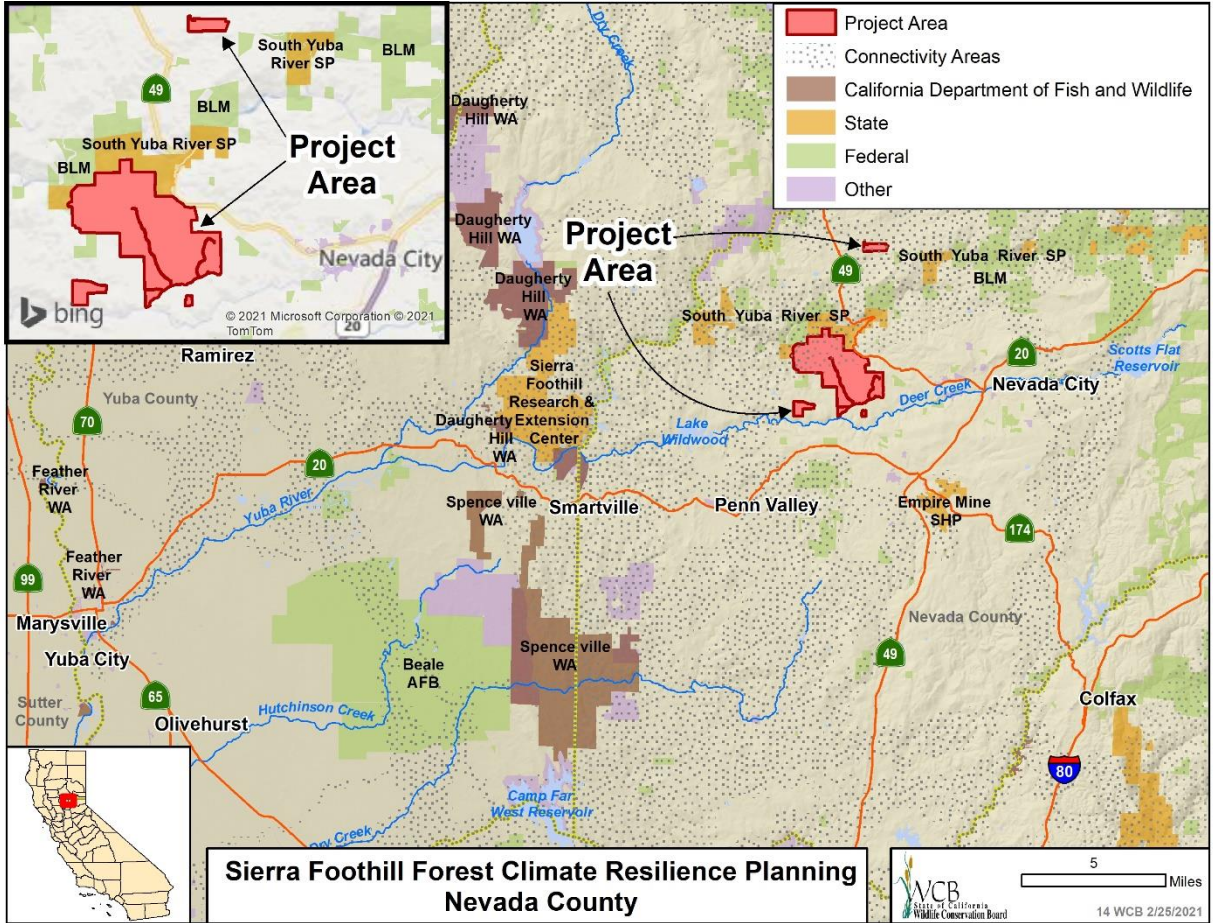
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Community Outreach	\$32,245	\$32,245	---
Baseline Monitoring	\$225,801	\$96,520	\$129,281
Implementation Plans	\$39,700	\$39,700	---
Community Toolkit Development	\$25,287	\$25,287	---
CEQA Permitting	\$25,248	\$25,248	---
Total	\$348,281	\$219,000	\$129,281

Project costs include:

- Community Outreach: Consists of stakeholder meetings and community walkthroughs.
- Baseline Monitoring: Monitoring and reporting plan development, wildlife surveys, pre-implementation data collection, and mapping.
- Implementation Plans: Consultations and Forest Management Plan writing and signoff.
- Community Toolkit Development: Toolkit development.
- CEQA Permitting: Identification of potential exemption and establishment of lead agency.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to authorization by WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 15. Truckee River Wildlife Area, Canyon Unit Expansion 1

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$135,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Truckee River Wildlife Area, Canyon Unit Expansion 1
Project Type:	CDFW Fee (120± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$135,000
County:	Nevada
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2, A.4, C.1      Objectives: SI, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located approximately 1-mile northwest of Floriston and 800 feet west of Interstate-80 in Nevada County. The town of Truckee is located 9.5 miles to the southwest of the Property. The surrounding area includes Boca Ridge to the north, Prosser Creek Reservoir, Boca Reservoir and Stampede Reservoir to the northwest, west, and southwest.

The Truckee River Wildlife Area (TRWA) was designated as a wildlife area by the Fish and Game Commission in 1996. TRWA includes five units that total approximately 5,300± acres. The Property is in the approved Sierra Valley-Truckee CAPP and will be an addition to the Canyon Unit.

The topography throughout the area is varied, ranging from relatively level areas in the intervening valleys and meadows to steeply sloping terrain. Elevations range from 5,400 feet near the Truckee River to 7,200 feet at the peak of Boca Ridge.

Much of the area is heavily forested with lodgepole pine, Jeffery pine, western white pine, quaking aspens, red and white fir, and mountain hemlock. Portions of the unforested areas are covered with manzanita or other scrub growth or, in the meadow areas and valleys, with natural grasses. There are also areas of exposed granite bedrock or volcanic overlay due to glaciation.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is rectangular shaped and ranges in elevation from 5,600 feet to 6,400 feet. The Property involves moderate to steep sloping topography from east to west. The Property is zoned FR-160 which is intended to provide production and management of forest resources and is compatible with recreational and low density residential.

The Property is considered critical winter/summer/migratory range for the Verdi sub-unit of the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd. The Property contains montane chaparral and mixed-conifer forest habitat that support game species including California quail, mourning dove and black bear. Special status species which may frequent the Property include porcupine, mountain lion, bald eagle, mountain beaver and American badger.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will be the owner in fee simple and will add this Property to the adjacent TRWA. CDFW regional staff anticipates that nominal management costs would be associated with the Property. Given the Property's proximity to TRWA, additional management funds for staffing would not be required. Public access to the TRWA is currently provided for low-impact recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, and bicycle use.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

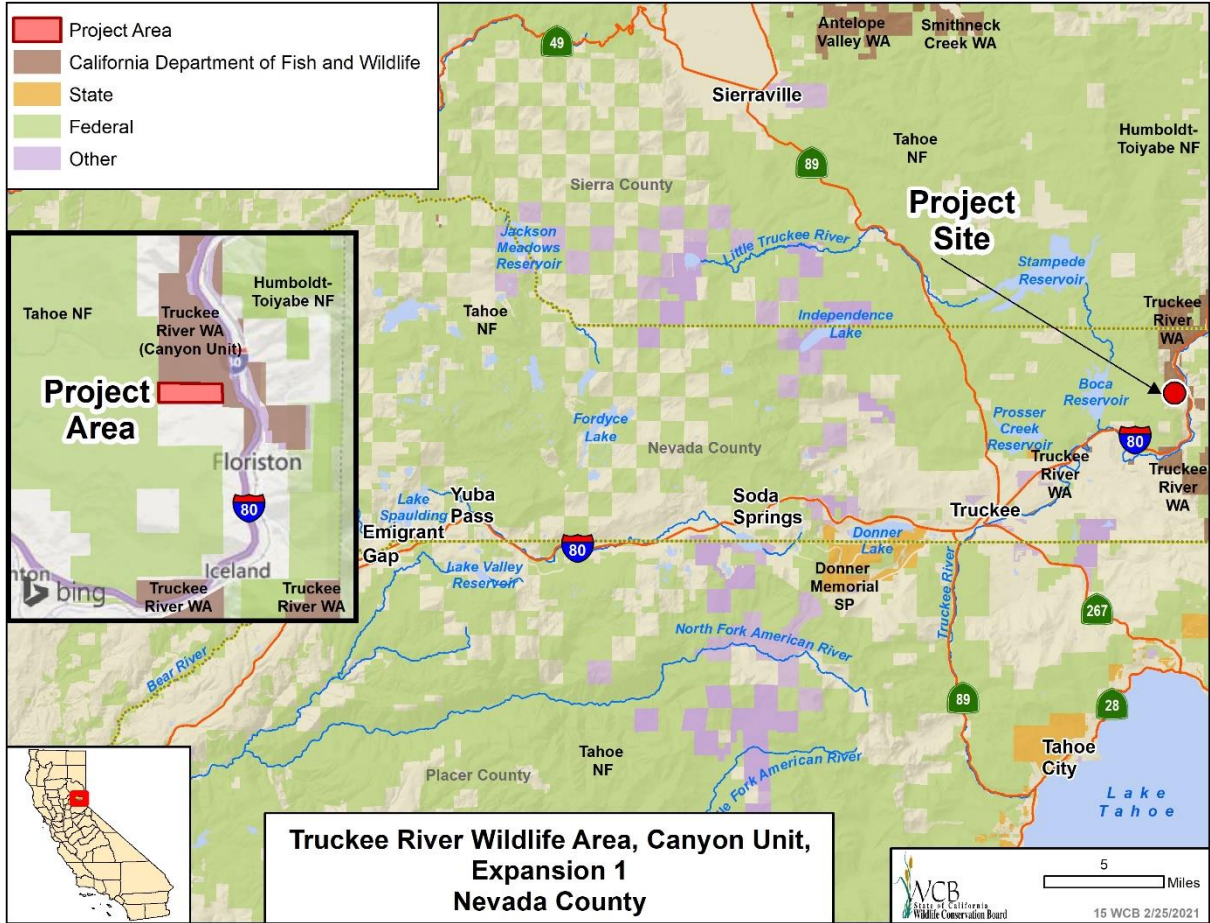
The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$135,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$135,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$135,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.





## 16. Lower American River Natural Resources Management Plan, Augmentation

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$118,380 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Lower American River Natural Resources Management Plan, Augmentation
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	County of Sacramento
Amount Recommended:	\$118,380
Funding Partners:	Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
Landowner(s):	County of Sacramento
County:	Sacramento
Program:	Lower American River Conservancy Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2, B.1, C.1      Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The American River Parkway (Parkway) is an open space greenbelt that extends approximately 29 miles from Folsom Dam at the northeast to the American River's confluence with the Sacramento River at the southwest. It lies immediately next to and within the city of Sacramento, city of Rancho Cordova, and the unincorporated area of Sacramento County. The lower Parkway is defined as the area from Hazel Avenue downstream to its confluence with the Sacramento River, and encompasses 5,000 acres on both sides of the river. It includes a complex modified landscape shaped by hydraulic and dredge gold mining in the 1800s, and by dam and levee construction in the 1900s. Having a drainage area of 120 square miles, the lower American River (LAR) is characterized by managed river flow, associated riparian vegetation, side channels, and ponds.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Lower American River Natural Resources Management Plan, Augmentation (Project) increases grant funds for the LAR Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) to fund enhanced resources assessment and mapping, additional public outreach meetings and reporting, and additional project management to support expansion of stakeholder involvement, extension of project schedule, and for coordination of meetings with the project team and a joint-agency task force.

In collaboration with the joint-agency task force, the Grantee will continue to identify and map areas in the Parkway for specific management actions, identify

projects that meet the NRMP goals and objectives, assess resource value changes based on proposed projects, and develop a decision-making flowchart to consider future projects/actions within the regulatory constraints of the Parkway. This work will largely consist of preparing maps for use by task force members, importing mapping data into GIS, and integrating data into the existing database for the 19 area plans that comprise the Parkway.

Maps will be updated as needed to illustrate proposed management actions and projects that are deemed suitable by Regional Parks in managing the natural resources of the Parkway and meeting the goals and objectives of the NRMP. The maps are a critical component of the NRMP as they will identify areas available for potential mitigation and restoration projects, existing proposed projects in the Parkway, and previously completed mitigation and restoration projects.

Several additional public meetings will be facilitated in 2021 with meeting summaries prepared for each additional meeting. A separate community outreach report will also be developed and made part of the Public Draft NRMP and updated as needed for the Final Draft NRMP. The community outreach report will consolidate all meeting summaries and community input received throughout the planning process and will highlight relevant comments about managing the Parkway's natural resources and how they are being addressed in the NRMP. At least 4 public meetings will be held during the 60-day public comment period for the Public Draft NRMP.

The Project was recommended by the Lower American River Conservancy Program Advisory Committee, whose role is to evaluate and recommend projects to be considered by WCB. The Project was recommended for submittal to WCB by the Advisory Committee on February 11, 2021.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	Original WCB Grant*	Original Non-WCB Funds	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$131,008	\$10,473	\$96,955	\$23,580	---
Data Management/GIS	\$43,912	\$26,439	\$17,473	---	---
Public Outreach	\$52,656	\$4,954	\$14,862	\$32,840	---
NRMP	\$808,490	\$408,134	\$175,876	\$61,960	\$162,520
CEQA	\$78,274	\$50,000	\$28,274	---	---
Total	\$1,114,340	\$500,000	\$333,440	\$118,380	\$162,520

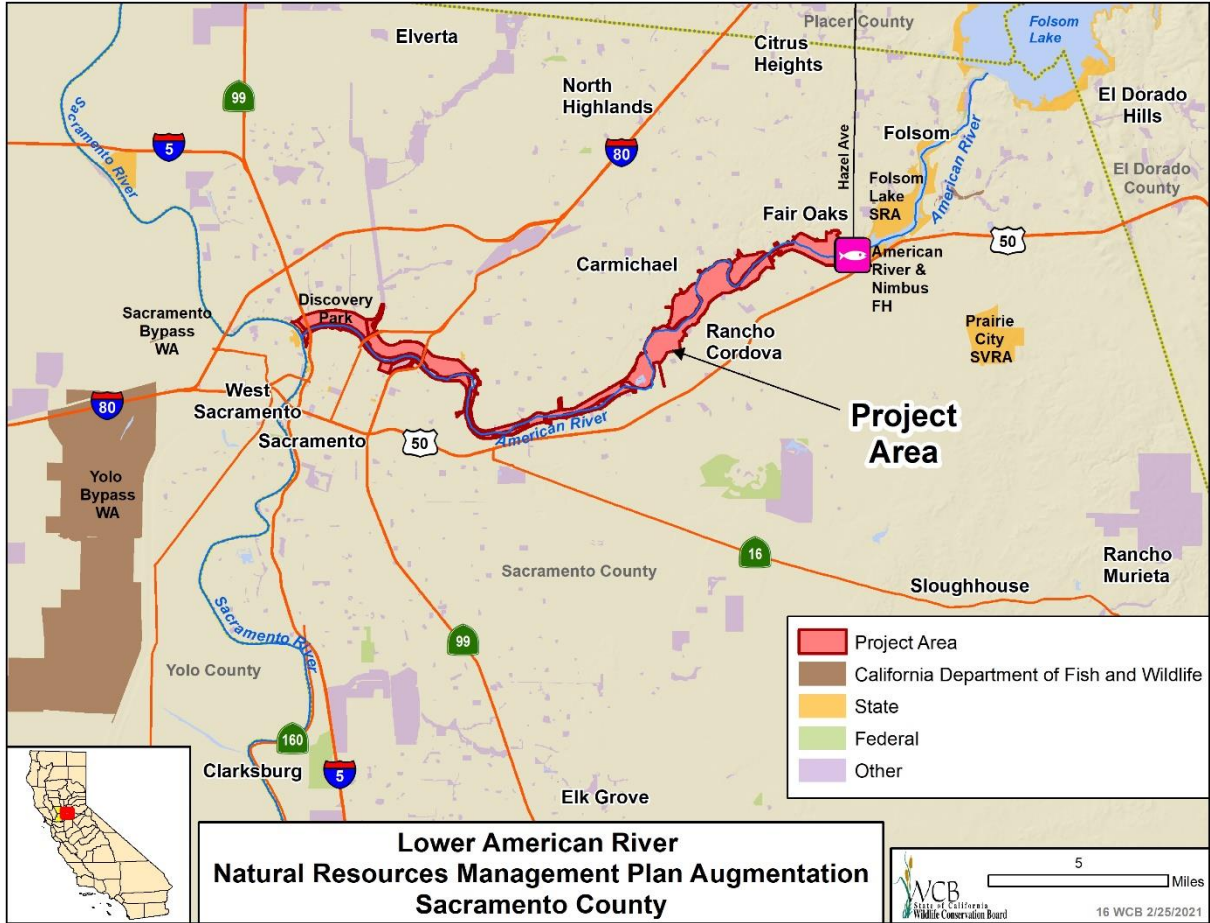
\*Reflects budget shift approved in October 2020.

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Administer grant, manage contracts with sub-contractors, prepare invoices and progress reports, and project coordination, scheduling, and oversight.
- Data Management and GIS: Develop data management system in concert with project's GIS, with 12-month support in implementing County's monitoring program.
- Public Outreach: Organize and facilitate several public outreach meetings to inform stakeholders of the NRMP process and to receive viable public feedback on management of the Parkway's natural resources and the NRMP.
- Natural Resources Management Plan: Collect new and existing data to describe existing conditions within the Parkway and formalize goals and objectives for each major natural resource. Develop individual projects to accomplish goals and objectives and evaluate changes to resource values. Prepare Admin Draft, Public Draft, and Proposed Final NRMP. Public Draft will be released for 60-day public comment period.
- Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR): Organize and facilitate agency scoping for use in developing the Admin Draft SEIR. Prepare Admin Draft, Public Draft, and Proposed Final SEIR. Public Draft will be released for 45-day public comment period during which a public hearing will be organized and facilitated.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 17. Leek Springs Meadow Assessment and Restoration Planning

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$125,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Leek Springs Meadow Assessment and Restoration Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	American River Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$125,000
Funding Partners:	American River Conservancy, Point Blue Conservation Science, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
County:	EI Dorado
Program:	California Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 1.6
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

Leek Springs Valley is a 160-acre montane meadow that was acquired in 2001 by the American River Conservancy (ARC) with funding from WCB and transferred to CDFW for management as an ecological reserve in EI Dorado County.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Leek Springs Valley is the largest montane wet meadow system in the Upper Cosumnes River basin. Although montane meadow systems cover only 486 acres (0.17 percent) of the 278,679 acres in the upper basin, they contribute significantly to the ecological health of the entire watershed. Most of the meadows in the basin are less than 10 acres in size; however, one exception is the large meadow in Leek Springs Valley. Leek Springs Valley montane wet meadow represents 20 percent of the meadow habitat in the entire basin.

The Leek Springs Meadow Assessment and Restoration Planning project (Project) will assess restoration/management needs by documenting baseline conditions, develop a comprehensive restoration and monitoring plan, and complete permitting and environmental compliance. Completion of this planning effort will bring other funding opportunities to the forefront, allowing Project partners to apply for much-needed restoration implementation funding.

Conservation Science Partners developed a decision support tool which indicates that Leek Springs Valley is likely to experience high exposure to climate change



and has exhibited moderate sensitivity to past drought periods. The current degraded state of the meadow makes it even more vulnerable to future projected climate change, which means that restoration actions are essential to reduce its sensitivity to the effects of changing climatic conditions. ARC will partner with Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) to ensure that the meadow restoration incorporates climate-smart principles, resulting in a meadow with increased adaptive capacity and resilience. ARC will use a framework developed by Point Blue and used previously on over 10 other restoration projects that integrates climate change considerations into restoration planning and design. The approach combines a traditional climate change vulnerability assessment with Point Blue’s climate-smart restoration principles to describe potential climate vulnerabilities and specific restoration and management actions that can help address and reduce identified vulnerabilities.

The framework identifies several climate vulnerabilities likely to affect meadows and meadow-dependent species and recommends restoration actions to reduce vulnerabilities. Leek Springs Meadow and its target species (e.g., willow flycatcher) are vulnerable to changes in temperature, precipitation, and snowpack. These projections include more precipitation falling as rain than snow, loss of snowpack from increasing temperatures, changes in the timing and amount of precipitation, and an increase in droughts and floods. These changes will likely result in an altered meadow streamflow regime, including changes in the annual streamflow volume, earlier peak discharge, longer periods of low flow duration, and extreme high flow events. This has implications for species that depend on perennially saturated meadow conditions and cold water.

Overall, the Project will contribute to the preservation and restoration of the Cosumnes River watershed, identify and prioritize restoration and management actions at Leek Springs Meadow, develop a comprehensive understanding of Sierra Nevada meadow dynamics and their relationships to the lower watershed, and create new, collaborative partnerships across the Cosumnes River watershed. Post restoration site conditions at Leek Springs Meadow will provide tangible benefits in a myriad of categories, notably for wildlife habitat, water quality/quantity, nutrient cycling, and carbon storage.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

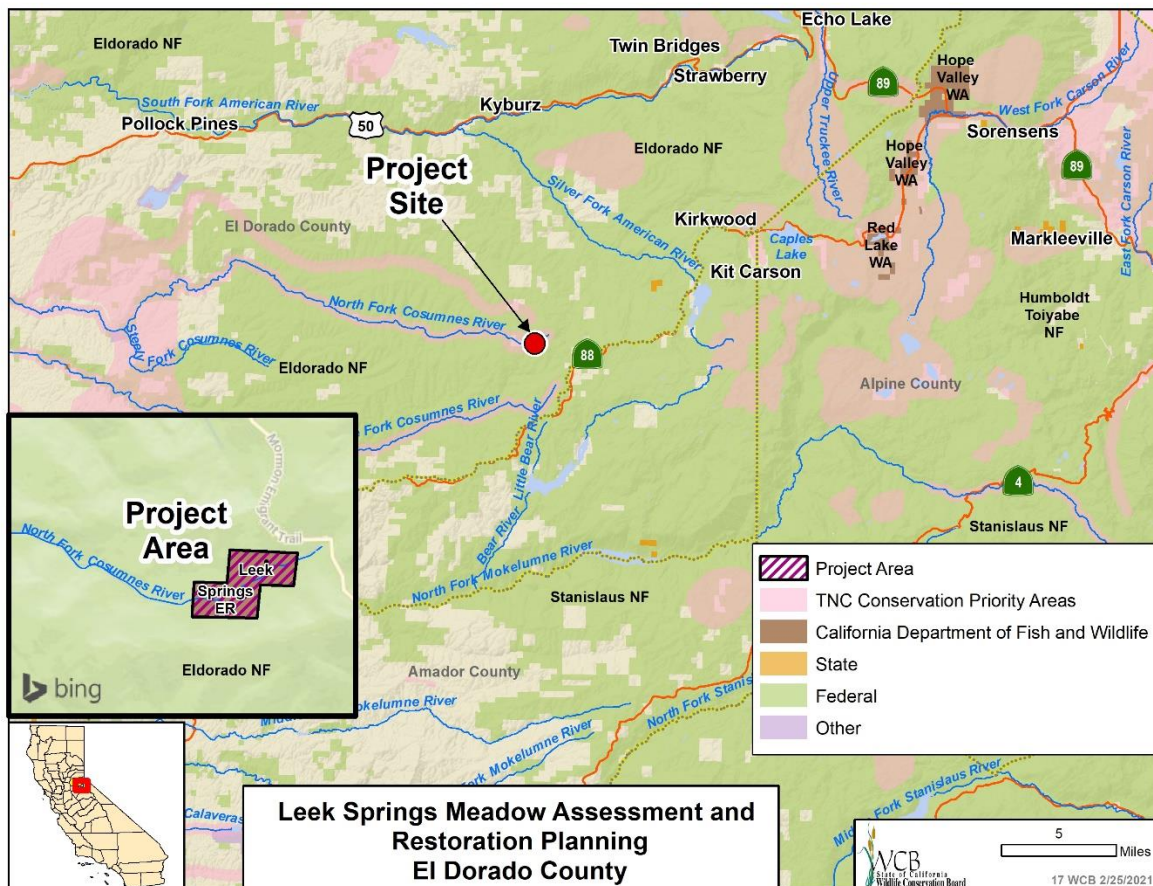
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$43,833	\$38,833	\$2,600
Operating Expenses and Permitting	\$17,000	\$17,000	---
Monitoring, Design Plans and Environmental Compliance	\$86,192	\$60,792	\$57,800
Indirect Costs	\$8,375	\$8,375	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$155,400</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$60,400</b>

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Managing and reporting on Project progress, acquiring permits, and staff time associated with Project.
- Operating Expenses and Permitting: Data collection and monitoring supplies, environmental permits, collection and identification of Benthic Macro Invertebrates, and travel expenses associated with the Project.
- Monitoring, Design Plans and Environmental Compliance: Subcontractor work on monitoring, restoration design plan, environmental compliance, and Climate-Smart Restoration Workshop.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to authorization by WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





## 18. Golden Gate Monarch Butterfly Habitat Enhancement

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$400,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d); and Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Golden Gate Monarch Butterfly Habitat Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$400,000
Funding Partners:	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Marin County Parks, National Park Service
Landowner(s):	Marin County Parks, National Park Service
County:	Marin
Program:	Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program
Funding:	Proposition 50 and Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.5 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Golden Gate Monarch Butterfly Habitat Enhancement project (Project) will improve monarch overwintering habitat at three to six historically occupied sites within the Marin County units of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore. The sites under consideration are in or near Fort Baker (Sausalito), Muir Beach, Stinson Beach, Bolinas, and the Point Blue Palomarin Field Station. The Project will also increase milkweed and nectar plant availability at three or more sites managed by Marin County Parks. Locations under consideration are within the Ring Mountain (Tiburon), Mt Burdell (Novato), and Gary Giacomini (Woodacre) Preserves in Marin County.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The western monarch population has declined about 99 percent since the late 1980s, when the population was estimated at 4.5 million. The last two winters, overwintering populations of western monarchs have declined 86 percent from the previous years, with fewer than 30,000 counted at overwintering sites. This winter less than 2,000 monarchs are overwintering in California. This is a significant decline from the previous years.

In Marin County there has also been a significant decrease from the all-time total high count of 38,708 individuals in 2015 to less than 200 monarchs this winter.

Bringing the western wintering population of monarchs back from near extinction will require coordinated, extraordinary efforts. The overwintering and perhaps early spring period have been identified as the most limiting part of the monarch lifecycle.

The Project will improve overwintering habitat for monarchs on lands managed by the National Park Service by completing the following:

- Complete assessments of existing stand conditions at three to six historically occupied sites.
- Complete site management plans for at least two of the assessed sites.
- Begin management plan implementation. This could include removal or trimming of hazard trees, understory brush and invasive species removal, planting nectar plants, and planting native trees that will eventually join or replace the existing canopy trees.

The Project will improve breeding habitat on lands managed by Marin County Parks by doing the following:

- Complete assessments of existing or historic populations of narrow leaf milkweed to prioritize locations to target for future augmentation plantings.
- Complete site management plans for at least two of the assessed sites.
- Complete genetic viability analysis to identify suitable seed sources for wild population augmentation plantings.
- Begin management plan implementation. Anticipated actions include management of invasive species and planting narrow leaf milkweed and planting nectar plants in or near breeding habitat.

Finally, public education will also be a part of the Project, with K-8 classroom components and teen/adult opportunities to contribute to both habitat plantings and long-term monitoring.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

As part of the Project, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy will develop management plans specific to each site. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Overwintering Habitat	\$450,000	\$187,000	\$263,000
Breeding Habitat	\$165,000	\$111,000	\$54,000

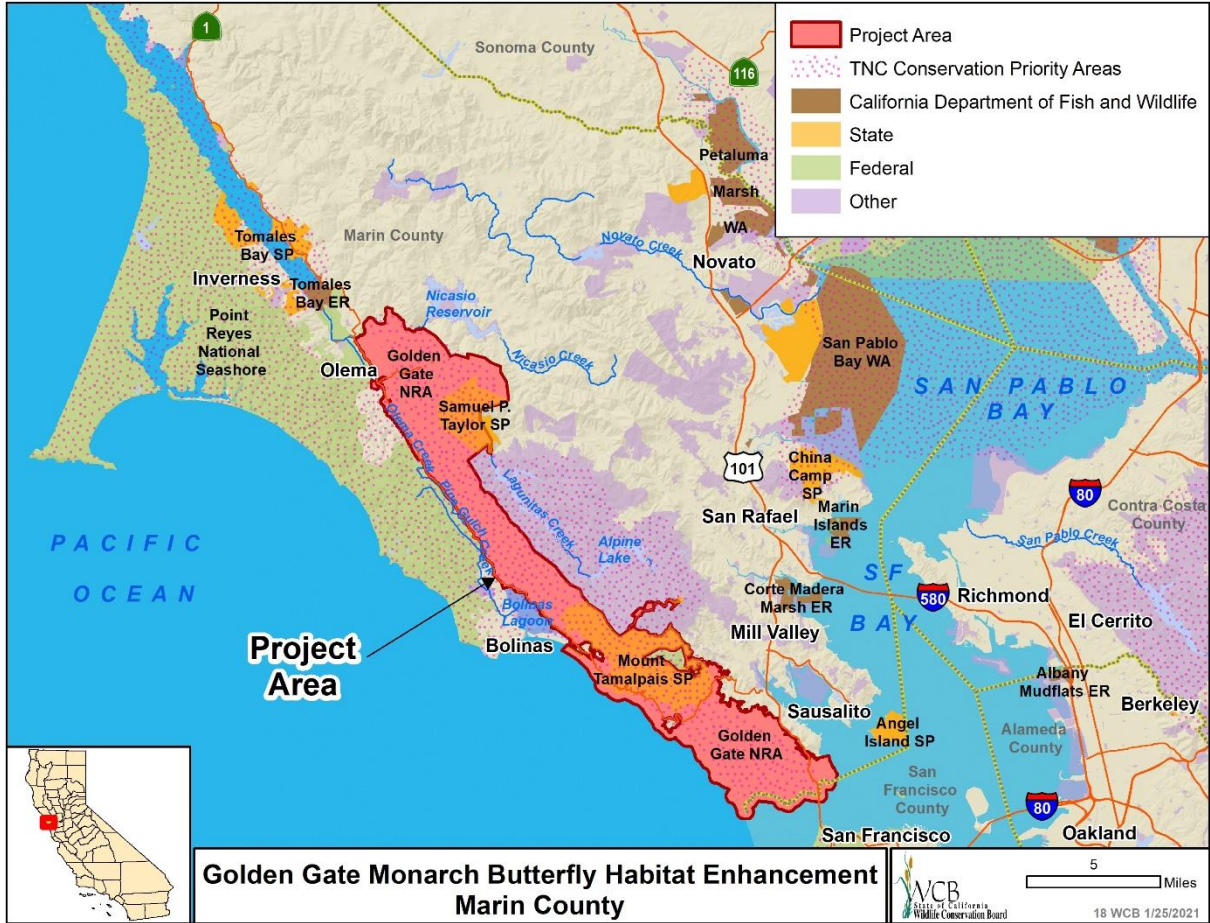
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Monitoring and Assessment	\$49,995	\$31,995	\$18,000
Education and Public Outreach	\$78,000	\$45,000	\$33,000
Indirect Costs	\$25,005	\$25,005	---
Total	\$768,000	\$400,000	\$368,000

Project costs include:

- Overwintering Habitat: Habitat improvement and management plans will be developed and then implemented for high-priority historic overwintering habitat on lands managed by National Park Service.
- Breeding Habitat: Habitat improvement and management plans will be developed and implemented for historic or potentially suitable breeding sites on lands owned by Marin County Parks.
- Monitoring and Assessment: Long-term, systematic monitoring will be conducted for both the overwintering and breeding sites selected for improvement in the first phases of the Project.
- Education and Public Outreach: Three programs will offer hands-on opportunities to collect data or improve habitat through planting.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15307, Class 7, Protection of Natural Resources: vegetation manipulation to increase habitat productivity for wildlife. Vegetation manipulation will be limited to pruning of hazard trees and thinning of understory brush and to the control of invasive species and the planting or seeding of both host and nectar plants. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 19. Burcham and Wheeler Flats Wildlife Area, Expansion 2

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$300,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Burcham and Wheeler Flats Wildlife Area, Expansion 2
Project Type:	CDFW Fee (160± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$300,000
County:	Mono County
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.4, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.4, 3.1, 3.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located approximately 15 miles northwest of Bridgeport, near the intersection of U.S. 395 and State Route 108, commonly referred to as Sonora Junction. This area falls within the lower western slopes of the Sweetwater Mountain range that straddles the Nevada and California border. To the west is the main stem of the Walker River. The Property lies within an approved CDFW Burcham and Wheeler Flats CAPP. The CAPP identifies several priority properties near the Burcham and Wheeler Flats Wildlife Area (BFWFA) for protection and conservation of habitat important to the greater sage-grouse, a California Species of Special Concern. The primary habitat is Sierra mountain sagebrush and scrub, which also support deer herds that range and forage in the Sweetwater Mountains and the Walker River watershed.

Other protected lands near the Property include the 1,160± acre original Burcham Flat and Wheeler Flats acquisition approved by WCB in 2007 as well as the 75± acre Expansion 1 acquisition approved by WCB in 2013. Both of those properties are managed by CDFW. BFWFA is surrounded by Toiyabe National Forest land as well as some private inholdings. Other CDFW protected lands near the Property include the West Walker River, Pickel Meadow, and Slinkard-Little Antelope wildlife areas.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is an undeveloped, rectangular shaped tract of land and consists of rolling terrain with an elevation ranging from 7,461 feet above mean sea level near the northwestern border to 7,170 feet at the southern border. The Property is zoned Resource Management with its highest and best use being rural residential and long-term hold for land use intensification with recreational use consistent with

market forces. Burcham Flat Road and Hot Creek transect the Property in the southern section.

The Property is covered with native vegetation consisting of high Sierra sagebrush and scrub rangeland areas, with wet meadow inclusions that provide essential year-round habitat for a small population of greater sage-grouse. This population of greater sage-grouse has declined dramatically over the last 20 years due to habitat problems associated with overgrazing, fire suppression, and pinyon juniper encroachment on sagebrush rangelands. The Property also provides important migration, holdover, summer range, and fawning habitat for the Walker River, Sweetwater Mountains, and Mono Lake mule deer herds. Other species likely to benefit from the protection of the Property include the Sierra Nevada red fox, bank swallow, willow flycatcher, western white-tailed hare, American badger, black bear, mountain lion, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, northern goshawk, bald eagle, blue grouse, and mountain quail.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will be the owner in fee simple and will add this Property to the BWFWA. CDFW regional staff anticipates that nominal management costs will be associated with signage for the Property. Given the Property's location adjacent to the BWFWA, additional management funds for staffing will not be required. Public access to the BWFWA is currently provided for low-impact recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, seasonal equestrian, and bicycle use.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

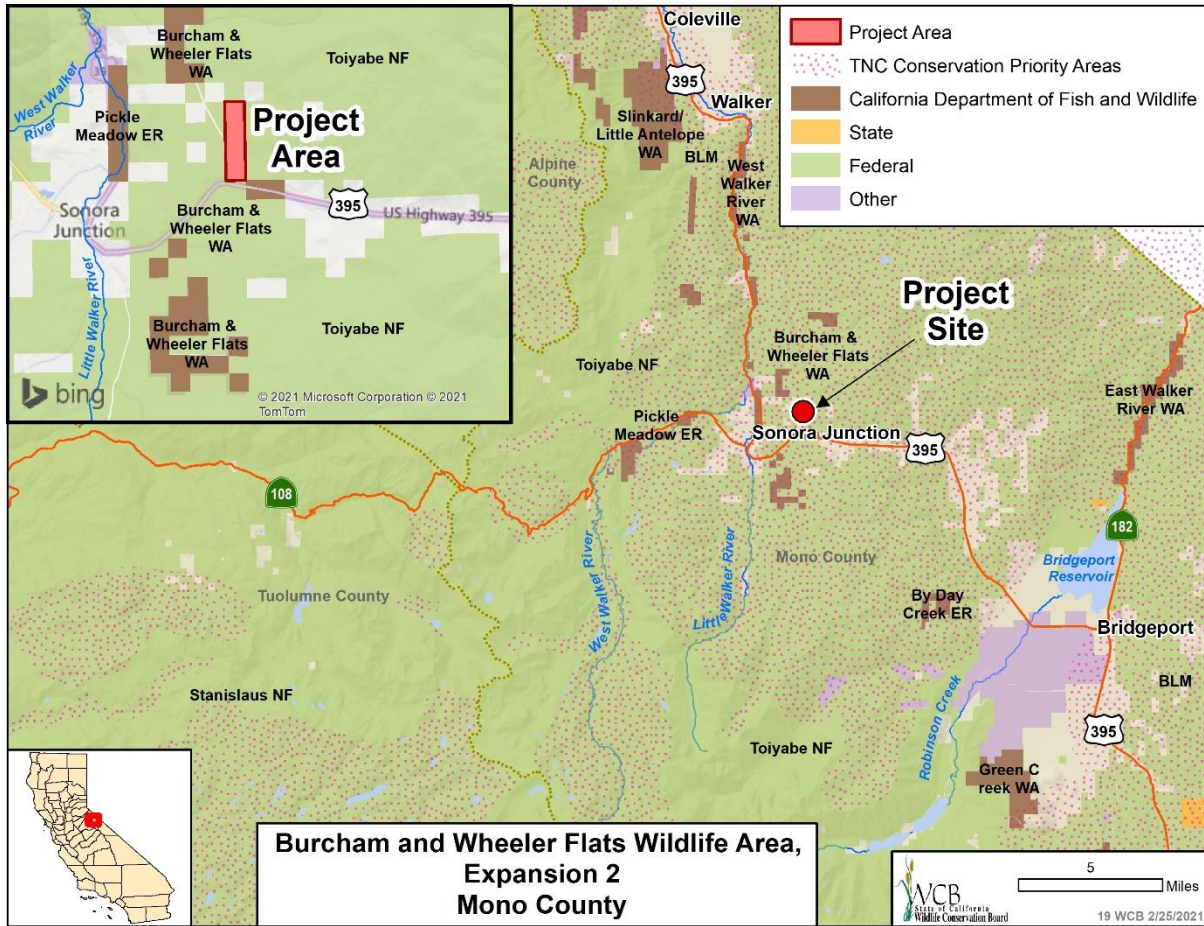
The DGS approved fair market value is \$300,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$300,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$300,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.







## 20. Mariposa Creek Parkway Riparian Restoration

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$415,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Mariposa Creek Parkway Riparian Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	County of Mariposa
Amount Recommended:	\$415,000
Funding Partners:	County of Mariposa, Resource Conservation District of Mariposa County, Sierra Foothill Conservancy
Landowner(s):	County of Mariposa
County:	Mariposa
Program:	California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	B.1 Objectives: SI 2.1, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Mariposa Creek Parkway (Parkway) is located in the town of Mariposa and encompasses over 8000 linear feet of creek corridor in the Sierra foothills. The Parkway is surrounded by federally managed public lands that are part of the Merced River Recreation Management Area, Sierra and Stanislaus National Forests, and Yosemite National Park. The Mariposa Creek Parkway Riparian Restoration project (Project) site is less than one mile from the Long Ranch Conservation Area whose conservation easement was partially funded by WCB.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The town of Mariposa is the most urbanized community within Mariposa County and is the gateway to Yosemite National Park. Historically, the Project area was managed by the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation through traditional practices to maximize habitat for significant plant and animal species. In the nineteenth century, the Project area and Mariposa Creek played some role in resource extraction activities associated with the Gold Rush, though no mines were located on the site. Due largely to seasonal flooding, the site was largely abandoned in the twentieth century, and has been characterized by open space land uses since then. The Project area is within a 50-foot setback established throughout the Mariposa Creek corridor to establish an open space area for flood control, recreation, pedestrian circulation, and environmental enhancements and education.

The goals of this habitat restoration Project are to restore approximately eight acres of native riparian habitat along the Parkway and to connect the community with the restored landscape through natural history interpretive signage. Habitat restoration activities, including removal of dense patches of nonnative invasive plants, will help restore channel morphology by allowing water to flow more freely through the creek corridor with lower water velocities thus minimizing channelization, scour, and bank erosion leading to improved aquatic and terrestrial habitat for western pond turtle and other special status species. Habitat restoration will use an integrated environmental restoration strategy, blending traditional ecological knowledge with scientific expertise to control tree-of-heaven and Himalayan blackberry and revegetate the creek corridor with native riparian and culturally significant native plants.

The Project will result in approximately 4.5 acres of restored riverine habitat along 3,000 linear feet of creek, and an additional 3.5 acres of restored riparian woodland habitat, primarily on the north side of Mariposa Creek. Interpretive materials will be developed that emphasize how fire influenced Southern Sierra Miwuk cultural identity as well as the relationship between Miwuk cultural practices and healthy native landscapes. Interpretive panels will be presented in English and Southern Sierra Miwok languages.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The County of Mariposa has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Parkway's restored habitat. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, County of Mariposa does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$12,000	---	\$12,000
Planning and Permitting	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$5,000
Monitoring	\$42,500	\$40,000	\$2,500
Habitat Restoration	\$367,500	\$302,500	\$65,000
Interpretive Signage	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Contingency	\$7,500	\$7,500	---
Total	\$529,500	\$415,000	\$114,500

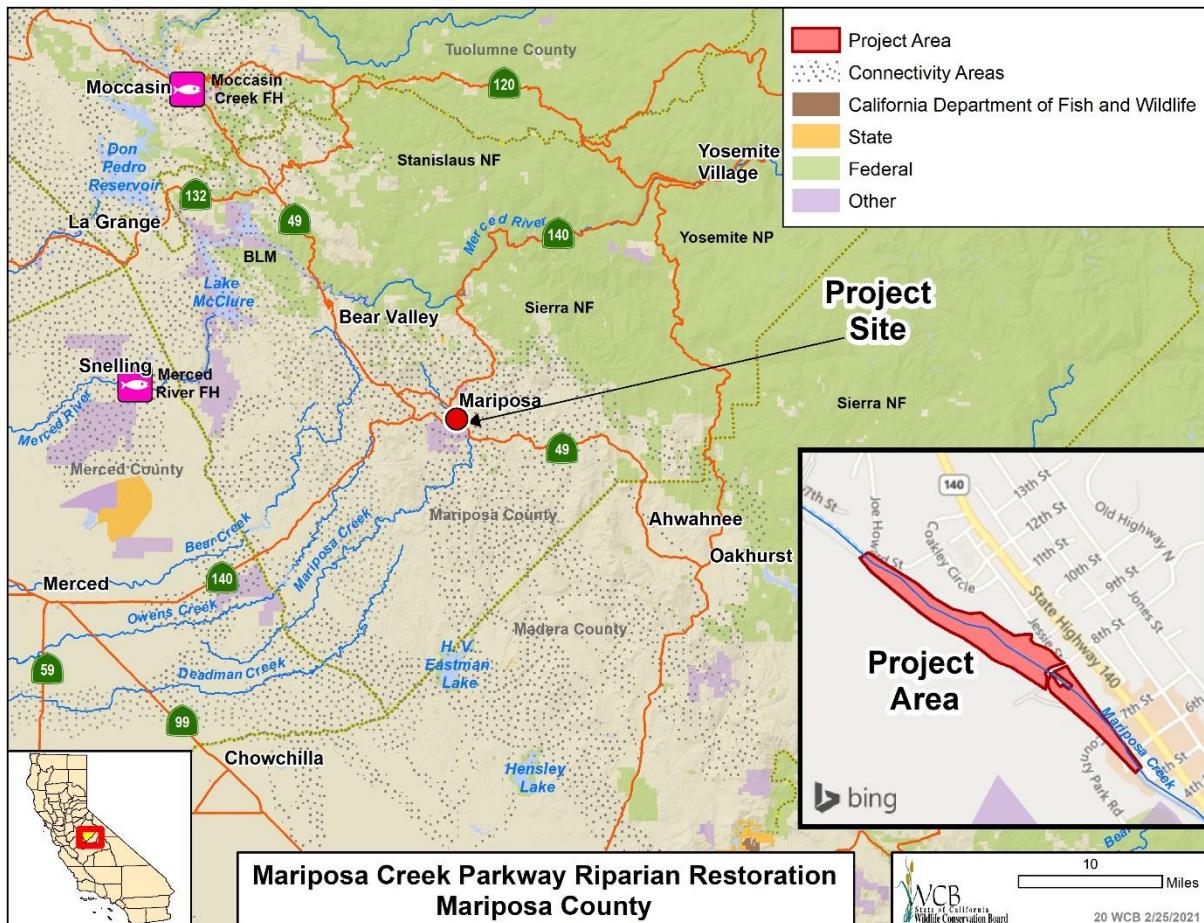
WCB funding costs include:

- Planning and Permitting: Develop Habitat Restoration and Management Plan, complete community engagement notices, and acquire all necessary permits and agreements.

- Monitoring: Collect baseline and post-restoration biological data to monitor success of habitat restoration, noxious weed control, and wildlife usage of restored habitat.
- Habitat Restoration: Control tree-of-heaven and Himalayan blackberry and restore eight acres of riparian habitat types.
- Interpretive Signage: Design and fabricate interpretive signage that connect the community with the restored landscape and cultural practices.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, require WCB staff approval prior to use.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Existing Facilities, as minor alterations to public facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use and Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, consisting of minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 21. San Pedro Creek at Adobe Bridge Fish Passage Planning

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$171,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	San Pedro Creek at Adobe Bridge Fish Passage Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	San Mateo County Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$171,000
Funding Partners:	City of Pacifica, Natural Resource Conservation Service, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District, Unknown
County:	San Mateo
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2 Objectives: SI 1.2, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

San Pedro Creek is an urban, coastal, perennial stream located in Pacifica, approximately 15 miles south of San Francisco. The creek drains an area of approximately eight square miles into the ocean via a freshwater lagoon at Pacifica State Beach. San Pedro Creek provides critical habitat for federally threatened steelhead trout and is the only stream to support steelhead populations along a 30-mile reach of coast between the Golden Gate Bridge and Half Moon Bay.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The San Pedro Creek at Adobe Bridge Fish Passage Planning (Project) will produce designs and permit applications to replace the Adobe Bridge fish passage barrier on San Pedro Creek in Pacifica. The Project will enhance a 1,500-foot reach of the mainstem of San Pedro Creek and permanently remove a top priority barrier on the 2019 CDFW Fish Passage Priorities List. When implemented, it will remove the furthest downstream barrier on San Pedro Creek and improve access to over five miles of instream habitat for federally threatened steelhead trout.

The barrier is an undersized 8' x 8' x 51' concrete box culvert that presents a velocity and jump barrier to most fish at low flows and a velocity barrier at high flows, which greatly reduces access to the upper watershed's spawning and rearing habitat. In addition to limiting fish passage, the culvert is degrading the downstream streambed and limiting sediment transport processes.

Through the design process, the project team will identify areas where riparian and instream habitat enhancement features can be installed, as well as areas where bank failure can be arrested through setting back banks, creating frequently inundated in-set floodplains, and installing bioengineered stabilization measures. The removal of this barrier, in conjunction with bank stabilization and riparian revegetation, can restore overall stream function, reduce flood flows and their detrimental impacts on both the local natural and build environment, and recharge the groundwater basin.

Remediation of the Adobe Bridge barrier will permanently alter transportation infrastructure to allow for fish passage over the full range of required flows. Fish migration to the upper watershed's quality spawning and rearing habitat will have lasting benefits to steelhead trout and is expected to be a significant contribution to species recovery. The project will also reduce flood impacts in the lower watershed, which will be especially important as weather patterns are expected to change and become more severe in the coming decades due to climate change.

Adjacent landowners will be involved in the design and planning process and community members will be engaged as volunteers where appropriate to support monitoring and maintenance. A long-term management plan and maintenance and final monitoring plan will be developed with project partner's input.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$62,349	\$36,332	\$26,017
Outreach	\$10,876	\$5,242	\$5,634
Designs	\$120,933	\$115,933	\$5,000
Permitting	\$13,493	\$13,493	---
Total	\$207,651	\$171,000	\$36,651

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Includes coordination of all project activities and administration.
- Outreach: Includes stakeholder engagement and landowner outreach.
- Designs: Include design development from concept to 100% designs.
- Permitting: Includes final drafts of all regulatory permitting and environmental compliance documents.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





## 22. Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas Public Access

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$120,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas Public Access
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	California Waterfowl Association
Amount Recommended:	\$120,000
Funding Partners:	None
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
County:	Merced
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.1 Objectives: SI 3.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Los Banos Wildlife Area (LBWA) and North Grasslands Wildlife Area (NGWA) are approximately 5 miles from the town of Los Banos and are located within an economically disadvantaged community. The LBWA provides wintering waterfowl habitat on 6,200 acres of lakes, sloughs, and managed marshes. The NGWA encompasses 7,400 acres of wetlands and is home to several sensitive species such as Swainson's hawks and sandhill cranes.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Both the LBWA and NGWA are part of the Grasslands Ecological Area which is the largest contiguous wetland west of the Mississippi River. They currently provide excellent opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife recreation, and education. The facilities currently used to enable these experiences, however, are in need of repair for safety and better efficiency.

The hunter access parking lot at LBWA is dilapidated. It has large potholes that collect water and have resulted in severe undulations that prevent proper water drainage. The parking lot is used by hunters and in the off season as a staging area for public access users. The current condition of the parking lot limits use and capacity by staff and visitors.

LBWA's Van Atta Trail is in poor condition and it is not Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible. The trail's current condition limits use by visitors, school groups, and people with mobility impairments.



The NGWA recently installed new education panels and an auto loop for visitors to view wildlife. Travelers on Highway 152 may not be aware of the autoloop and the wildlife viewing opportunities. Without this Project's sign, fewer people will know of this unique area and its wildlife viewing opportunities.

LBWA's public kiosk and educational panels are extremely weathered and becoming difficult to read. This has resulted in a diminished educational experience for visitors and students who visit the wildlife area each year.

The Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas Public Access project (Project) will address these issues and improve recreational opportunities by funding the following improvements:

- The LBWA hunter access parking lot will be paved.
- The Van Atta Trail will be resurfaced and a shade-providing pergola will be installed to improve comfort and access for people with limited mobility.
- A new sign at the Gadwall Unit in NGWA will announce the public auto route to travelers on Highway 152.
- The informational kiosk at LBWA will be rebuilt and new educational panels installed. This kiosk will also contain a drop box for public use cards allowing wildlife area staff to track usage.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including the management of LBWA and NGWA. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, the grantee does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB
Project Management	\$6,682	\$6,682
Design and Engineering	\$4,500	\$4,500
Kiosk and Signage	\$45,000	\$45,000
Parking lot and trail	\$47,000	\$47,000
Pergola	\$7,140	\$7,140
Indirect Costs	\$9,678	\$9,678
Total	\$120,000	\$120,000

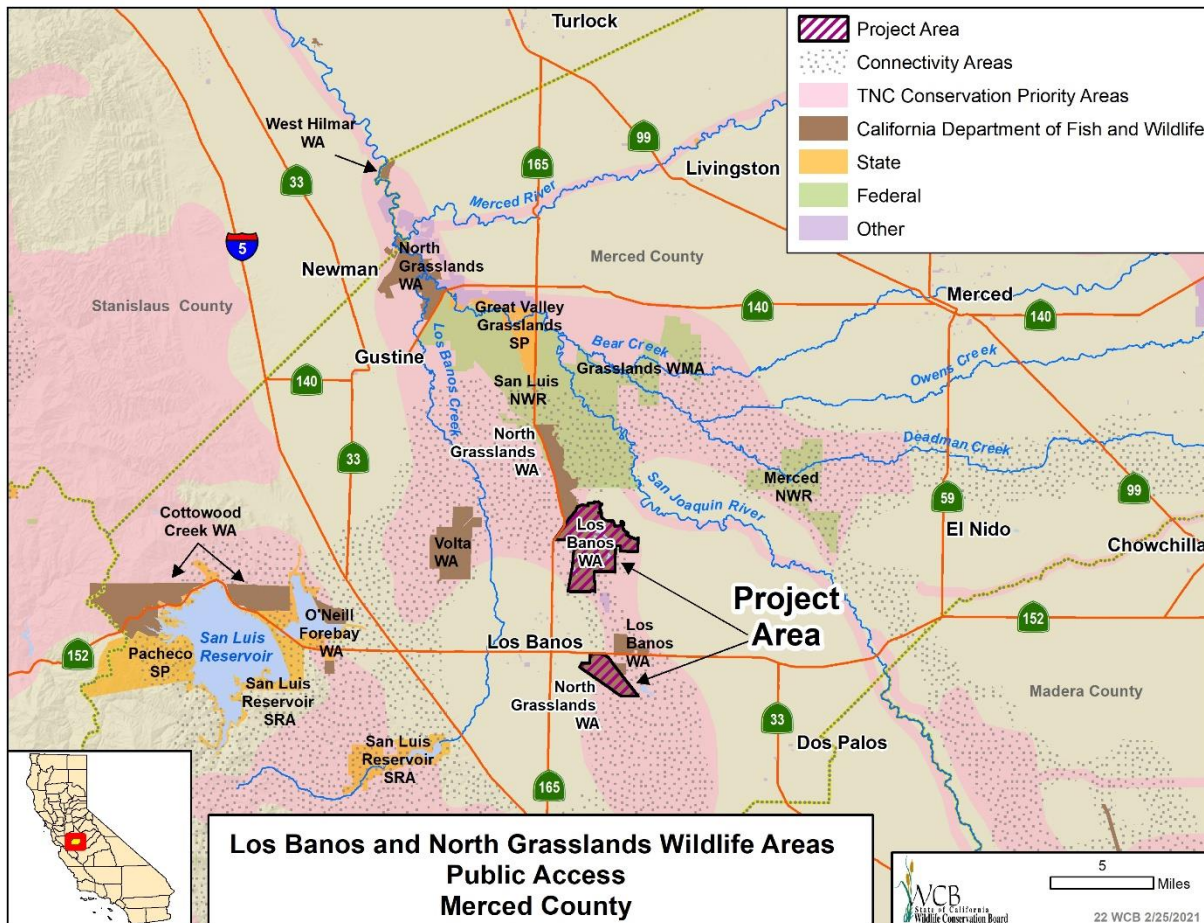
Project costs include:

- Project Management: Manage and oversee grant requirements, Project team, and construction.
- Design and Engineering: Complete designs and engineering for the Project.

- Kiosk and Signage: Rebuild the informational kiosk, add educational panels, and install highway sign.
- Parking Lot and Trail: Pave and stripe the parking area and gravel the Van Atta trail.
- Pergola: Purchase materials, build, and install pergola.
- Indirect Costs: General costs such as office space rental, utilities, and phones.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines with the following sections. §15301, Class 1 Existing Facilities: The trail and parking lot updates are exempt because they consist of the repair of existing structures. §15302, Class 2 Replacement of Reconstruction: The educational kiosk is exempt because it consists of replacement or reconstruction of an existing structure. §15303, Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures: Construction of the pergola is exempt because it consists of construction of a small structure. §15311, Class 11 Accessory Structures: The sign consists of construction of a minor structure accessory. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### **23. Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy, Augmentation**

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$124,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy, Augmentation
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Amount Recommended:	\$124,000
Funding Partners:	Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
County:	Santa Cruz
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	B.1 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

#### **LOCATION**

The Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (SCCRCIS) will encompass all of Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz County is located on the Central Coast of California between the Monterey Peninsula to the south and the San Francisco Bay area to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the west, with approximately 30 miles of beaches, and the Santa Cruz Mountains approximately 10 miles from the coast.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

In May 2019, WCB approved funding for the development of the SCCRCIS. The SCCRCIS project team is in the process of developing a regional conservation investment strategy to guide voluntary conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions for a suite of species and natural communities. The SCCRCIS will include specific information about conservation actions necessary to adequately reduce stressors and pressures on those species, including identifying conservation priorities within the region, where appropriate. The SCCRCIS will identify areas of conservation priority for implementation of conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions by public agencies, conservation organizations, or private entities.

Transportation improvements are planned to occur in urban and rural areas throughout Santa Cruz County. These infrastructure improvements can be

associated with potential impacts to natural resources and require mitigation. Transportation projects may occur in the rural north coast coastal area, the Santa Cruz Mountains, and south county wetlands, which are areas critical to biodiversity, and protected and cultivated lands.

The proposed augmentation increases grant funds for the development of the SCCRCIS to fund work associated with analysis of natural communities, in addition to the required focal species analysis.

In response to stakeholder input and discussions with CDFW, the SCCRCIS project team will include analysis of natural communities, in addition to the required focal species analysis in the SCCRCIS. The results of both the natural communities and focal species analysis will inform the conservation elements and strategies. Including analysis of natural communities provides an opportunity to expand the SCCRCIS conservation strategies to address the ecological process and sustainability, in addition to conservation strategies specific to focal species.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the original project and proposed augmentation are as follows:

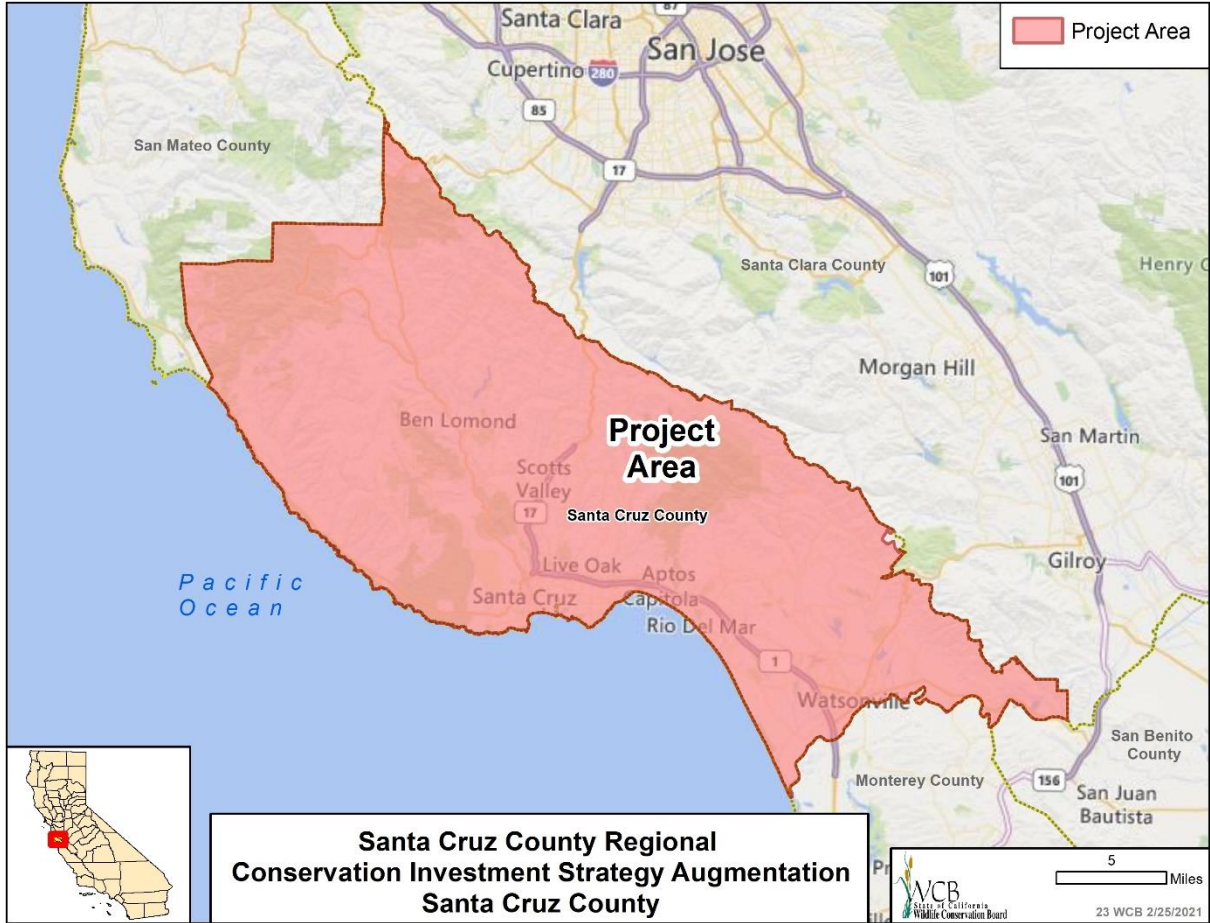
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds
Project Coordination	\$266,147	\$71,000	\$98,147	\$97,000
RCIS Development	\$305,000	\$291,000	---	\$14,000
Draft and Final RCIS Preparation	\$140,853	\$100,000	\$25,853	\$15,000
Fiscal Management	\$8,000	\$8,000	---	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$720,000</b>	<b>\$470,000</b>	<b>\$124,000</b>	<b>\$126,000</b>

Project costs include:

- Project Coordination: Project Coordination on Memorandum of Understanding, Solicitation, and monthly meeting coordination’s and Public Outreach.
- RCIS Development: RCIS draft outline, develop draft RCIS existing conditions report, develop draft RCIS conservation strategy, and complete RCIS implementation strategy.
- Draft and Final RCIS Preparation: Draft and finalize RCIS for Board of Directors approval and prepare presentation materials.
- Fiscal Management: Invoice packages and quarterly reports.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to authorization by WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





## 24. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve Amphitheater, Phase II

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$200,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve Amphitheater, Phase II
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Elkhorn Slough Foundation
Amount Recommended:	\$200,000
Funding Partners:	Elkhorn Slough Foundation
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
County:	Monterey
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.1 Objectives: 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve (Reserve), one of 28 National Estuarine Research Reserves nationwide, is located approximately 8 miles south of the city of Watsonville and includes 1,700 acres of oak woodlands, tidal creeks, and freshwater marshes. The Reserve is owned by CDFW and managed in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Oak Grove Amphitheater, located adjacent to the visitor center at the Reserve, has fallen into disrepair after many years of use for public talks, school and youth groups, and special events. In February 2018, WCB approved a grant for \$268,000 to begin work on the aged amphitheater and walkways. Due to cost increases in materials and labor, the inclusion of a shade structure and ADA upgrades to the walkways were not possible with the awarded funds. Maintaining safe and accessible facilities as well as visitor access to the Reserve are a high priority. This Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve Amphitheater, Phase II project (Project) will build upon the original grant to install a shade structure, an ADA compliant walkway, lighting, and bilingual interpretive signage.

The addition of a shade structure to the amphitheater will provide added comfort and expanded use in all weather, as the lack of shade or weather protection eliminates use on overly hot or rainy days. The amphitheater is used by CDFW staff and volunteers to provide environmental education lessons. An improved covered sitting area would support the delivery and enrich the educational



experiences at the site for more than 8,000 K-College students. Additionally, public talks, such as the Reserve Lecture series, and group visits from environmental education partners will utilize the site, benefitting more than 26 youth groups (1,000 children).

While useable by most of the Reserve’s visitors, the amphitheater does not offer equitable access to all its visitors. The new permeable base material will allow ADA access, expanding use to visitors with all levels of mobility. Additionally, inclusion of bilingual wayfinding signage will further expand access opportunities.

The Reserve sits on the boundary between Santa Cruz and Monterey counties – home to some of the state’s lowest income and most underserved populations. Families in these communities often have limited resources for travel and admission to nature centers, aquariums, and museums on the Central Coast. The educational programs at the Reserve fill this void through grant-funded field trips and an afterschool program, making it an important resource to the rural families that are scattered throughout the area.

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

The Elkhorn Slough Foundation has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Elkhorn Slough Foundation does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Construction	\$170,000	\$170,000	---
Signage	\$12,218	\$12,218	---
Landscaping	\$8,995	---	\$8,995
Project Management	\$45,822	\$14,449	\$31,373
Indirect	\$6,500	\$3,333	\$3,167
Total	\$243,535	\$200,000	\$43,535

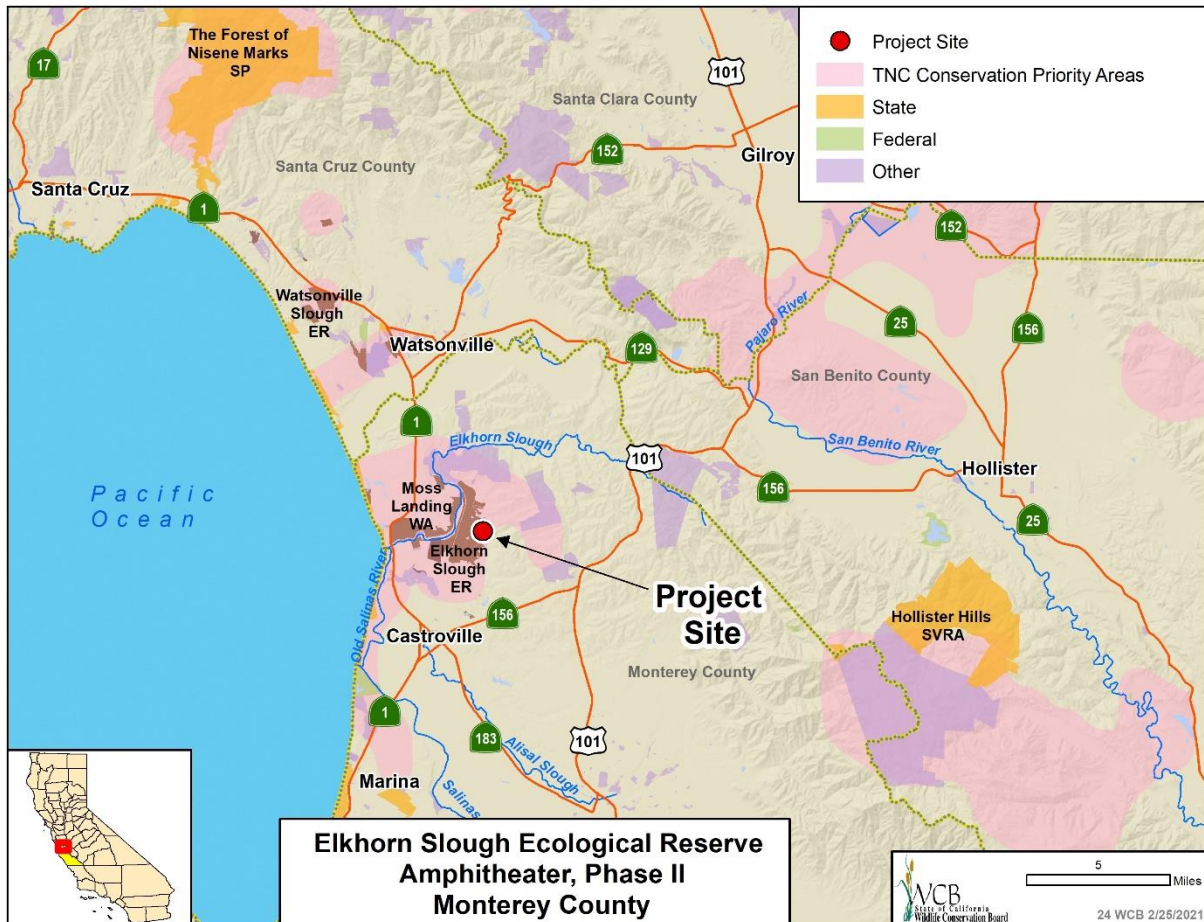
Project costs include:

- Construction: Preparation of a bid package, engineering and installation of beams and shade cloth for the shade structure, installation of benches.
- Signage: Design, fabrication, and installation of bilingual interpretive signage.
- Landscaping: Design of landscape plan, installation of native plants.
- Project Management: Project coordination, management of sub-contracts, preparation of progress reports and invoices.

- Indirect: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15303, Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures and Section 15301 (d), Restoration or Rehabilitation of Deteriorated or Damaged Structures, Facilities or Mechanical Equipment, as the Project involves limited numbers of new, small structures and minor modifications to the exterior of structures. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 25. Protecting Central Coast Habitat for Listed Plant Species

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$120,000 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Government Code Section 16428.8, 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 CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Protecting Central Coast Habitat for Listed Plant Species
Project Type:	Technical Assistance
Applicant/Grantee:	California Invasive Plant Council
Amount Recommended:	\$120,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Botanic Garden
County:	Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, A.2 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	N/A, Multi-county project

### LOCATION

The Protecting Central Coast Habitat for Listed Plant Species project (Project) study area covers the California central coast along Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Development, land disturbance, and invasive species have severely reduced the habitat that supports California's biodiversity. Climate change, by altering previously suitable habitat, is magnifying these environmental threats. To help address these issues, the Project will complete an invasive plant risk assessment of sensitive habitats and federally listed and candidate species within California's central coast. The assessment will consider future conditions and use that information to provide climate-smart conservation planning assistance.

The Project will collect available data and provide region-scale risk assessments on the California central coast, while supporting invasive plant management actions at site-specific scales. These plant risk assessments will include sensitive habitats on protected lands, climate vulnerability metrics, and facilitating climate-smart invasive plant management actions that align with prioritization results and land manager capacity. Climate-smart planning will incorporate current and future site-specific threats to sensitive plants and habitats. Funding will also be used to support CEQA permitting if engaged land managers emerge with capacity for implementation.

This Project capitalizes on several robust existing regional invasive plant management plans which focus on early detection/rapid response (EDRR) as a prevention/biosecurity tool. EDRR species are invasive plants that are at present regionally uncommon but threaten to expand substantially in the future, and potentially impact sensitive resources if not controlled. The Project also builds on a currently funded Section 6 grant with CDFW, USFWS and California Botanic Garden partners that involves cataloging and ranking the risk that invasive plants pose to 50 listed native plant species in the region.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Data Collection/Risk Assessment	\$211,764	\$20,000	191,764
Data Compilation	\$20,000	\$20,000	---
Prioritize Invasive Plant Management	\$60,000	\$60,000	---
Plan Implementation/CEQA	\$20,000	\$20,000	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$311,764</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$191,764</b>

Project costs include:

- Data Collection/Risk Assessment: Collect and compile data on invasive plant impacts and listed plant species locations, and complete risk assessments of invasive plants.
- Data Compilation: Compile a database of vulnerable habitats and compile existing invasive plant threats to them within the Project area.
- Prioritize Invasive Plant Management: Analyze sensitive habitat and plant locations. Outline invasive plant management approaches.
- Plan Implementation/CEQA: Incorporate climate-smart invasive plant management plans with at least two regional land management entities.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.





## 26. Puma Canyon, Expansion 8

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$95,500 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the grant to Transition Habitat Conservancy (THC); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Puma Canyon, Expansion 8
Project Type:	Fee Title (14± acres)
Grantee:	Transition Habitat Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$95,500
County:	San Bernardino County
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.4, C.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.4, 3.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantage community

### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located within Puma Canyon, approximately one mile south of the community of Pinon Hills, south of State Route 138. Surrounding land uses are primarily rural/suburban home sites. Puma Canyon provides a habitat link between the southern slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains (that lie within the San Bernardino National Forest), stretching north and connecting with the southwest region of the Mojave Desert. The canyon ranges in elevation from 4,470 to 5,658 feet and contains 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 Puma Canyon extends up into the San Gabriel Mountains. Pinyon pines, juniper and Joshua tree dominate the landscape and provide important habitat to many desert wildlife species.

The Property falls within CDFW's Puma Canyon CAPP. The main objectives of this CAPP are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect threatened vegetative communities along with other rare and important plants and animals.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of a single rectangular parcel, located in a Rural Living (RL) designation. The RL zoning has a 2.5-acre minimum parcel size designation in the Pinon Hills area and allows a single-family dwelling and accessory structures.

The Property is covered with natural vegetation consisting of desert shrubs, pinyon pines, junipers, and Joshua trees. A series of alternating ridges and canyons run north to south, and the ridge tops afford good views of Victor Valley to the north and east. The Property provides important Joshua tree woodland habitat for



several species such as mountain lion, deer, bobcat, Cooper’s hawk, golden eagles, and loggerhead shrikes, as well as special status species such as the arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, coastal horned lizard, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. The Property has native milkweed and provides breeding habitat for the monarch butterflies and food for the monarch caterpillars that only eat milkweed. Over the last eight years, WCB approved projects to protect nearly 285± acres of land that is now part of the Puma Canyon Ecological Reserve.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

THC will manage and monitor the Property to ensure the grant terms are being honored. THC will implement ecological restoration and enhancement projects to maximize the wildlife habitat value of the Property and conduct appropriate weed abatement and fuel reduction work as a balanced approach to protect the Property. The primary management objectives will be to protect and enhance existing natural communities, water resources, and the multiple species of plants and animals these habitats support. THC will also 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 and scouts. THC has a monarch waystation in the reserve and does an annual monarch butterfly event releasing hundreds of butterflies and educating people about the monarch life cycle.

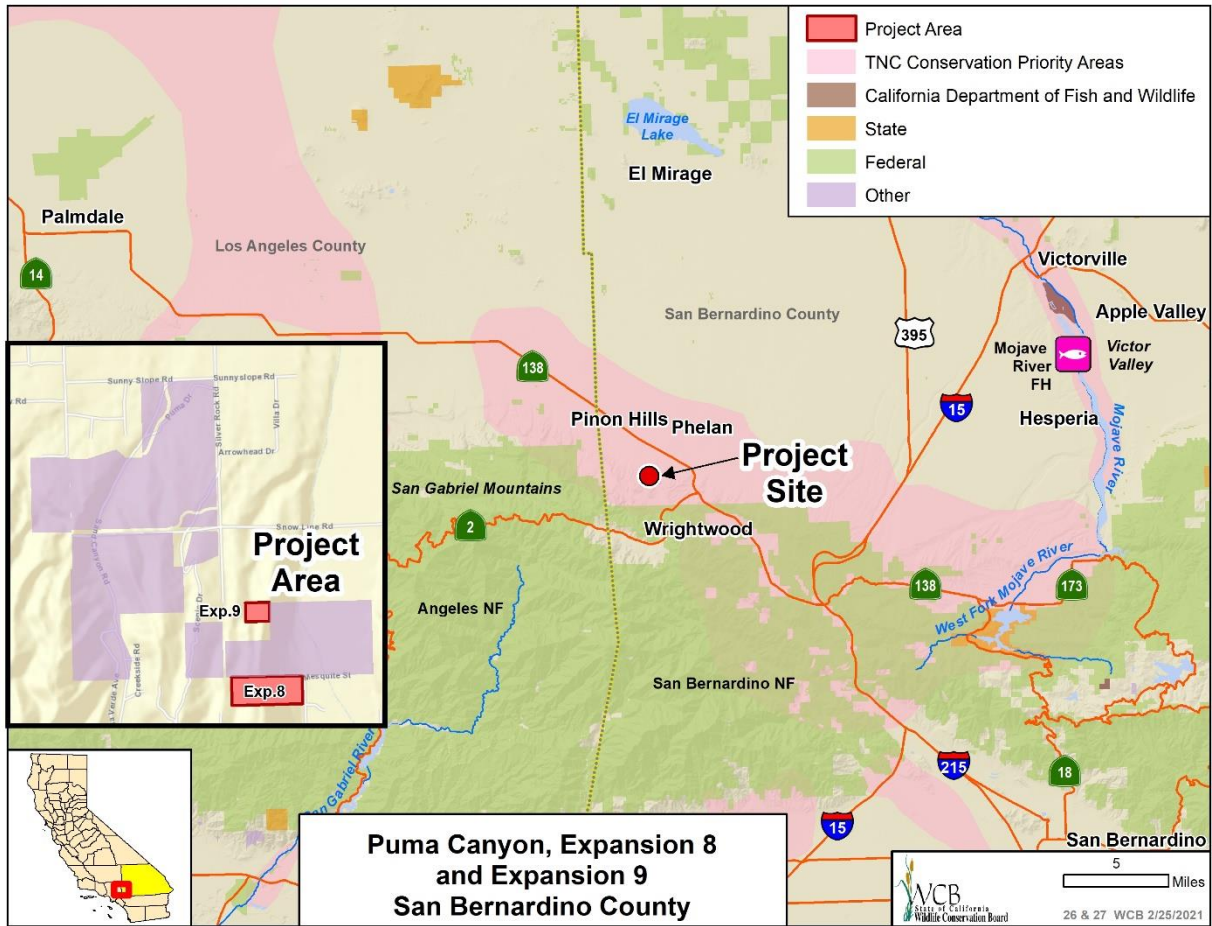
#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$95,500.00. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$95,500
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$95,500

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 27. Puma Canyon, Expansion 9

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$24,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the acquisition; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Puma Canyon, Expansion 9
Project Type:	Fee Title (3± acres)
Grantee:	Transition Habitat Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$24,000
County:	San Bernardino County
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.4, C.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located within Puma Canyon, approximately one mile south of the community of Pinon Hills, south of State Route 138. Surrounding land uses are primarily rural/suburban home sites. Puma Canyon provides a habitat link between the southern slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains (that lie within the San Bernardino National Forest), stretching north and connecting with the southwest region of the Mojave Desert. The canyon ranges in elevation from 4,470 to 5,658 feet and contains 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 Puma Canyon extends up into the San Gabriel Mountains. Pinyon pines, juniper and Joshua tree dominate the landscape and provide important habitat to many desert wildlife species.

The Property falls within CDFW's Puma Canyon CAPP. The main objectives of this CAPP are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect threatened vegetative communities along with other rare and important plants and animals.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of a single rectangular parcel, located in a RL designation. The RL zoning has a 2.5-acre minimum parcel size designation in the Pinon Hills area and allows a single-family dwelling and accessory structures.

The Property is covered with natural vegetation consisting of desert shrubs, pinyon pines, junipers, and Joshua trees. A series of alternating ridges and canyons run north to south, and the ridge tops afford good views of Victor Valley to the north and east. The Property provides important habitat for several species such as mountain lion, deer, bobcat, Cooper's hawk, golden eagles, and loggerhead

shrikes, as well as special status species such as the arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, coastal horned lizard, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. The property has native milkweed and provides breeding habitat for the monarch butterflies and food for the monarch caterpillars that only eat milkweed. Over the last eight years, WCB approved projects to protect nearly 285± acres of land that is now part of the Puma Canyon Ecological Reserve

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

THC will manage and monitor the Property to ensure the grant terms are being honored. THC will implement ecological restoration and enhancement projects to maximize the wildlife habitat value of the Property and conduct appropriate weed abatement and fuel reduction work as a balanced approach to protect the Property. The primary management objectives will be to protect and enhance existing natural communities, water resources, and the multiple species of plants and animals these habitats support. THC will also 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 and scouts. THC has a monarch waystation in the reserve and does an annual monarch butterfly event releasing hundreds of butterflies and educating people about the monarch life cycle.

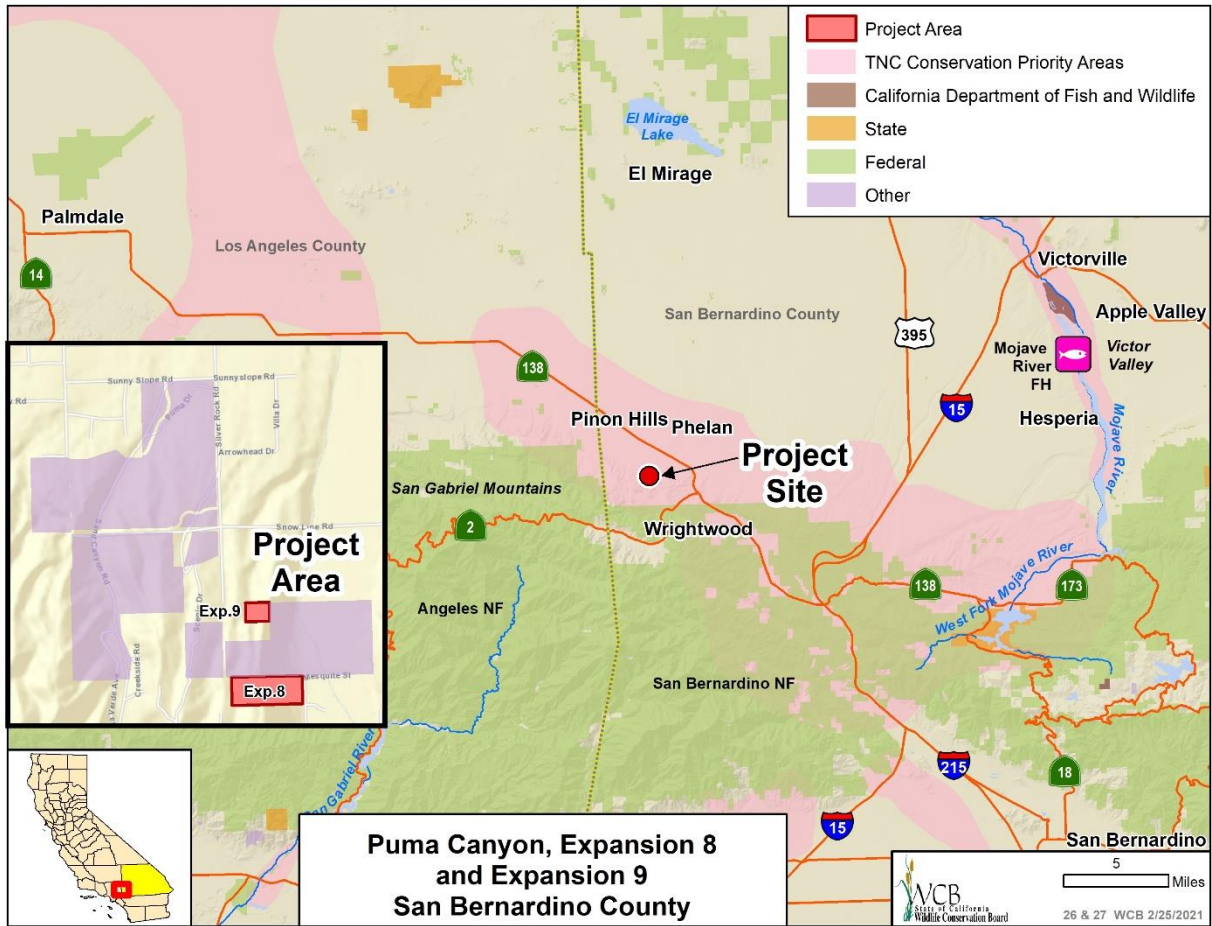
#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$24,000.00. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$24,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$24,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 28. North Campus Open Space, Public Access Project

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$291,018 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	North Campus Open Space, Public Access
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Regents of the University of California, Santa Barbara
Amount Recommended:	\$291,018
Funding Partners:	Private Donors
Landowner(s):	Regents of the University of California, Santa Barbara
County:	Santa Barbara
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.4 Objectives: SI 3.1, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The North Campus Open Space (NCOS) site is in the city of Goleta, just north of Isla Vista, and three miles from the city of Santa Barbara. The site is comprised of Upper Devereux Slough and its adjacent tidal wetlands and upland habitat. The NCOS is owned by the Regents of the University of California, Santa Barbara and is part of a 100-acre project that is restoring more than 40 acres of a historic estuary and 60 acres of associated coastal habitat, within a larger (652-acre) permanently protected coastal open space.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The NCOS is the location of an ambitious project, partially funded by WCB, to convert a former golf course back into the habitat that historically characterized the site. This project, which is nearing completion, included contouring subtidal slough channels, creating mudflats, and installing native salt marsh and coastal sage scrub plant communities

To help encourage use of this new recreation resource, this North Campus Open Space, Public Access Project (Project) will fund several public access components:

- The parking lot will be renovated to include ADA compliant parking, bike path, and an automatic gate.
- Two overlooks will be constructed of decomposed granite (DG) and installed with benches.



- DG trails will be installed from the sidewalk to the trailhead, visitor plaza, and to an entry point for the wetlands.
- A post and cable fence will line the sidewalk, overlook, and trail to protect sensitive areas.
- The Project will install a storage facility for an all-terrain wheelchair that will be available by appointment.
- A bioswale will be constructed to assist with drainage from the parking lot.

This Project will improve access to this unique ecological area and enable more people, including those with limited mobility, to visit and enjoy the site. Improvements to the outdoor classroom (non-WCB funds) will provide a dedicated space for student groups to have meaningful experiences in nature. The outdoor classroom will be ADA accessible and provide different learning areas within the space. The grantee anticipates more than 700 K-12 students and nearly 2,000 UCSB students to use the site annually. The site is also located within a severely disadvantaged community and provides wildlife engagement and educational opportunities for populations that have been historically underserved with these amenities.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Regents of the University of California, Santa Barbara, has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Regents of the University of California, Santa Barbara, does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$ 16,395	\$9,348	\$7,047
Construction	\$307,000	\$275,000	\$32,000
Interpretive Signs	\$ 20,000	---	\$20,000
Wheelchair Storage	\$ 4,000	\$4,000	---
Planting, Labor, and Supplies	\$60,000	---	\$60,000
Indirect Costs	\$4,005	\$2,670	\$1,335
Total	\$411,400	\$291,018	\$120,382

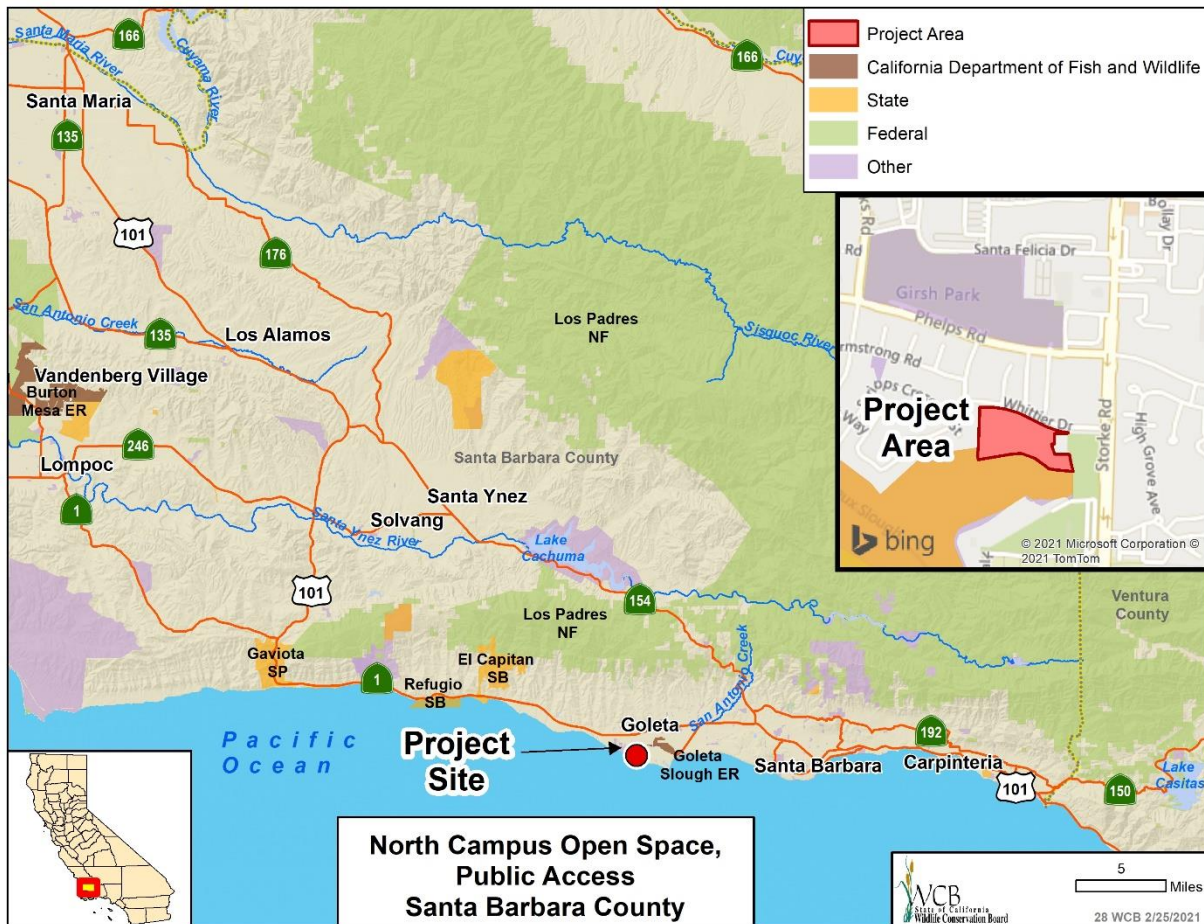
Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project and grant management.
- Construction: Construction management by the UCSB Design and Construction Division (required by UCSB) and construction of the public access elements.

- Interpretive Signs: Design, fabrication, and installation of bilingual signage. Non-WCB funding will be used for this task.
- Wheelchair Storage: A storage facility for an all-terrain wheelchair.
- Planting, Labor, and Supplies: Plantings for the outdoor classroom. Non-WCB funding will be used for this task.
- Indirect Costs: General costs such as office space rental, utilities, and phones.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The University of California, Santa Barbara, as lead agency, prepared a MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB’s compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 29. Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$42,000 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) for the grant to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (WRCRCA); approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$78,000 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to WRCRCA; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup
Project Type:	Fee Title (7± acres)
Grantee:	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Amount Recommended:	\$42,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
County:	Riverside
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, A.3, B.1      Objectives: SI 1.2,1.3, 2.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Property (Property) is 7± acres and is located on the west terminus of Summer Rain Court, north of De Luz Road, in the community of Santa Rosa, in unincorporated western Riverside County. The Property has no physical road access. Legal access is provided by Summer Rain Court, currently a paper street extending north from De Luz Road. The Property is located 4 miles southwest from the intersection of Interstate 15 and Interstate 215 in the city of Murrieta.

The Property is positioned at the southern base of the Santa Ana Mountains, directly adjacent to the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. Surrounding public and quasi-public conserved lands in the vicinity are gradually connecting and expanding into the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. WCB has helped conserve 4,128± acres in the area since 1991, the most recent WCB project in the area, Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Welsh, was approved by the Board in August 2020.

The Property is within the Santa Margarita watershed, which drains water into the Santa Margarita River and ultimately into the Santa Margarita Lagoon at the Pacific Ocean. The general terrain of the vicinity and the Property is rural mountains with steep sloping hills supporting coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation communities. The surrounding area is characterized by scattered rural low-density residential development as well as other ranching, and agricultural land uses

surrounded by open space vacant land. The subject area is in proximity to essential residential services and possesses the necessary elements to experience continued residential growth.

The Property is located within the Western Riverside County Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP), a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in western Riverside County.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is a single, undeveloped, irregularly shaped parcel of land. Topography of the Property ranges from 1,420 feet at the south corner of the parcel rising to 1,730 feet at the northwest corner of the parcel, a change of 310 feet over 7± acres. The terrain is rolling to rough to very steep. The Property is zoned R-A-5, Residential Agricultural – 5-acre minimum parcel size.

A right-of-way parcel to the north buffers the Property from the surrounding protected lands. Most other adjacent parcels are vacant open space land, one to the south is improved with a single-family residence.

Within the WRC MSHCP, the Property is located within the Southwest Area Plan in Subunit 6: Santa Rosa Plateau. Subunit 6 targets 1,285-2,915± acres of additional reserve lands. The Property contributes to Proposed Constrained Linkage 12. This Linkage will serve as one component of a larger movement corridor for mountain lions traveling between the Santa Ana Mountains and Palomar Mountains. This linkage will also support California rufous-crowned sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Bell's sage sparrow, and bobcat, with these species and others (e.g., mule deer, coyote) known to occur on or in the area of the Property.

The Property consists of coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation communities. Plant species present on the Property include, but are not limited to, laurel sumac, California sagebrush, yellow bush-penstemon, coast live oak, and native grasses. MSHCP covered special-status plant species that are likely to occur on the property include, graceful tarplant, sticky-leaved dudleya, Engelmann oak, prostrate spiny flower, and long-spine spiny flower.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The WRCRCA 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, WRCRCA 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 WRCRCA's operating funds.



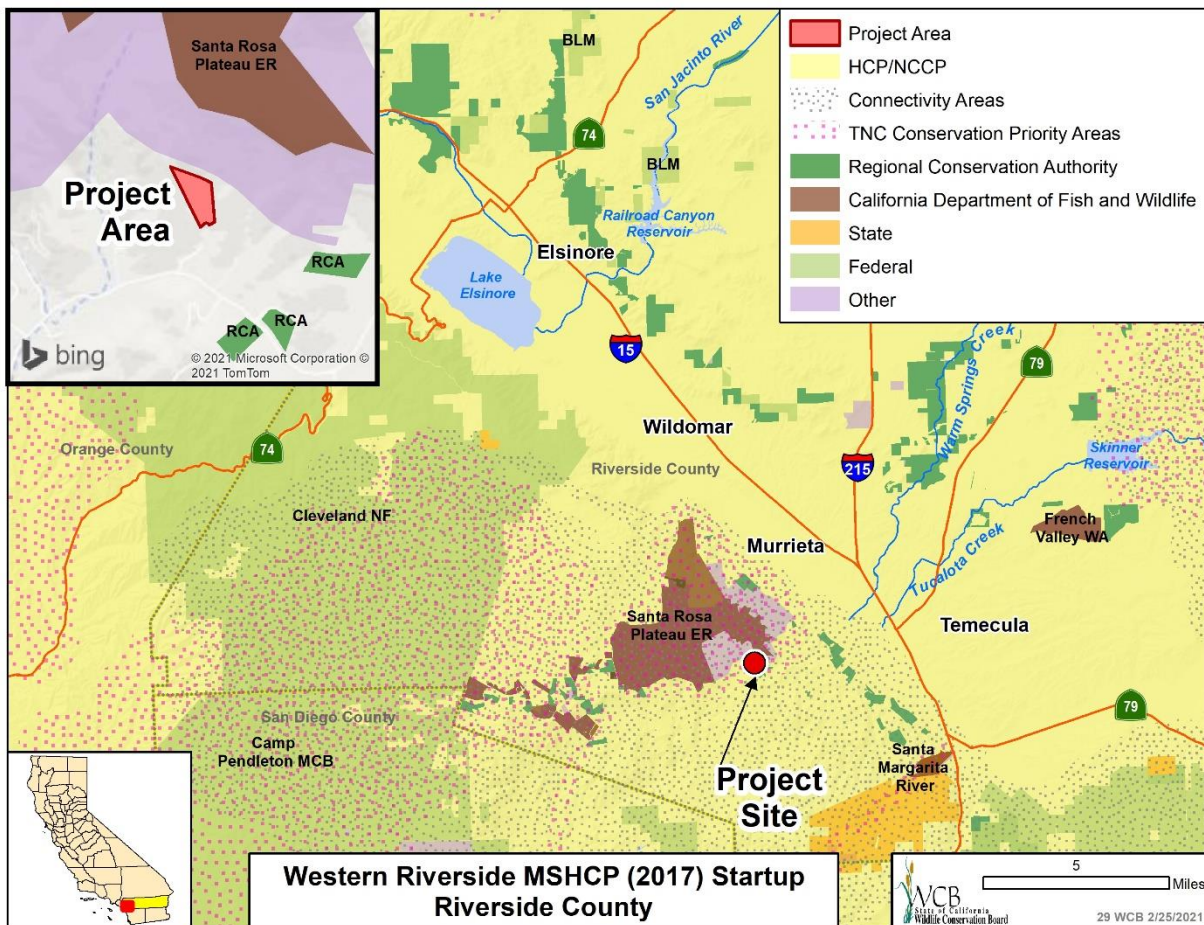
**PROJECT FUNDING**

The DGS approved fair market value is \$120,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$42,000
USFWS subgrant funds	\$78,000
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 30. East Otay Regional Trails Planning, CEQA

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$450,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	East Otay Regional Trails Planning, CEQA
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	County of San Diego
Amount Recommended:	\$450,000
Funding Partners:	City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego, County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation
Landowner(s):	County of San Diego, City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego, Otay Water District, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection
County:	San Diego
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.1 Objectives: 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

This East Otay Regional Trails Planning, CEQA project (Project) spans a 72,000-acre area in southern San Diego County and is within easy access range for citizens of the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. This includes the lower Otay Reservoir and 14 conserved areas such as the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, Bureau of Land Management wilderness, and Rolling Hills Ranch Preserve.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Project includes undeveloped rolling hills, valleys and mountains within San Diego County and the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. The highest point is Otay Mountain at 3,570 feet. Three reservoirs are in the Project area, Upper and Lower Otay, and Sweetwater Reservoir. The study area is dominated by coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and non-native grasslands. Within a short distance of highly urbanized area, this Project will provide planning for wildlife recreation opportunities such as: wildlife viewing, bird watching, hiking, and biking. Existing informal trails do not fully utilize the wildlife recreation opportunities available.

The area surrounding Otay Lakes has several areas with unofficial trails. These trails are not planned, not connected to the other regional trails, and not optimized



for public access to the wildlife viewing, fishing, or hunting available in the area. Adequate parking is not available near these informal trails and sensitive habitat areas are not protected.

This Project will develop an EIR to analyze potential cumulative impacts of a multijurisdictional trail project based on the East Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study. The study covers 72,523 acres. It identifies 13 new trail alignments which would provide 21 miles of trail providing new public access for hiking, biking, equestrians, and wheelchair accessible pathways. The Project will also provide the planning necessary for the creation of 11 new parking/entrance areas.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

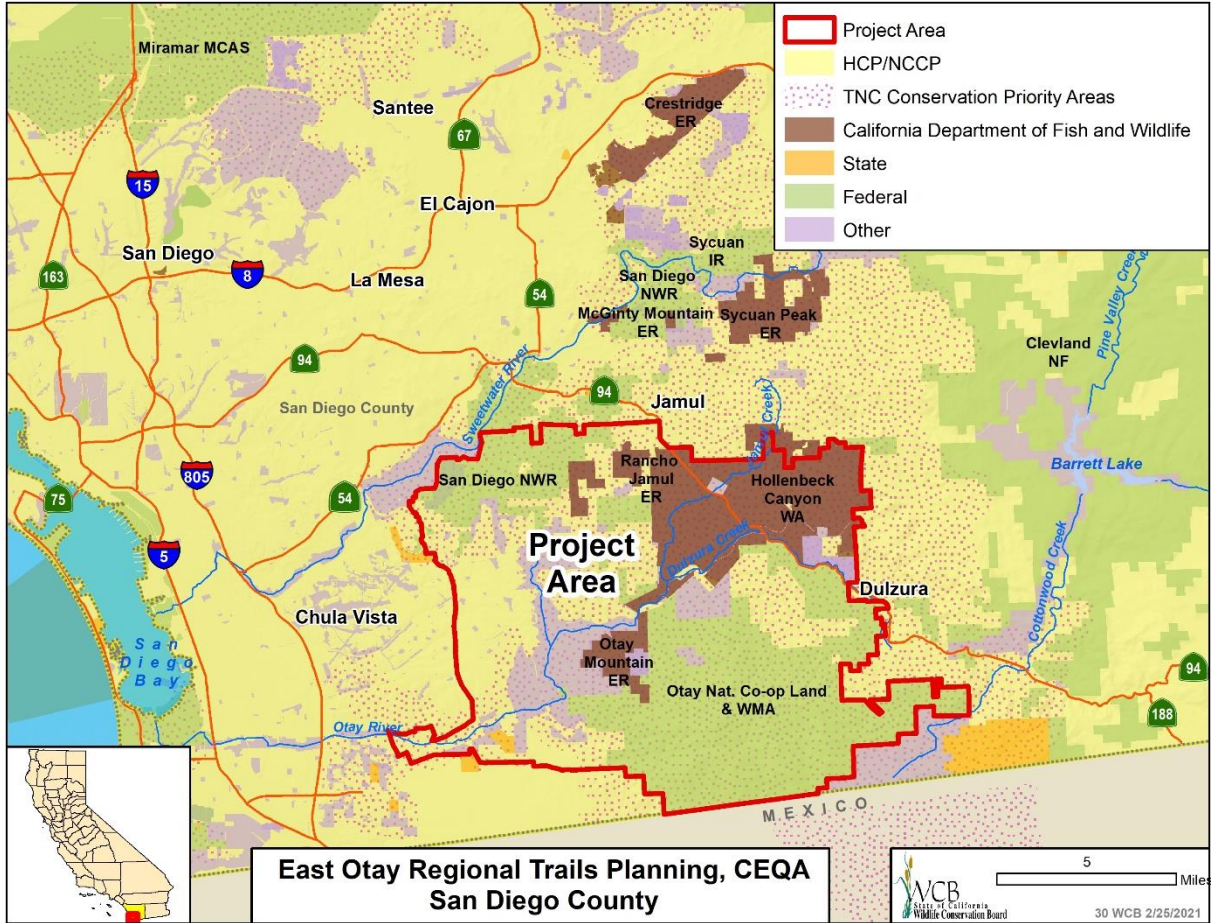
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Program EIR and Trail Planning	\$292,000	\$217,000	\$75,000
Transportation Impact Analysis	\$62,000	\$37,000	\$25,000
Project-Level Technical Reports	\$36,000	\$11,000	\$25,000
Project-Level Analysis	\$245,000	\$185,000	\$60,000
Long-Term Management Plan	\$15,000	---	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$650,000</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

Project costs include:

- Program EIR and Trail Planning: Prepare a completed EIR for 13 proposed trails and 11 proposed parking and restroom areas.
- Transportation Impact Analysis: Conduct a Transportation Impact Analysis for the entire trail network.
- Project-Level Technical Reports: Conduct project-level technical reports for the priority trails proposed in the EIR.
- Project-Level Analysis: Analyze priority trails in the EIR. This will include resources reviews, wildlife surveys, and pedestrian surveys.
- Long-Term Management Plan: Coordinate with landowners to create a long-term management plan.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 31. County of San Diego MSCP (2019) Donelson

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$97,900 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) for the grant to the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy (SDRVC); approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$352,100 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to SDRVC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	County of San Diego MSCP (2019) Donelson
Project Type:	Fee Title (14± acres)
Grantee:	San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$97,900
Funding Partners:	San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
County:	San Diego
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, A.3, B.1      Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The property (Property) is 14± acres and is located south of Mt. Israel Road near the community of Del Dios near the city of Escondido in San Diego County. Lake Hodges is a half mile to the east, the city of Encinitas and the Pacific Ocean are ten miles west. Access to the Property is provided by a paved deeded easement from Mt. Israel Road.

The Property is within the Lake Hodges area of the San Dieguito River Watershed which drains into San Dieguito Lagoon in Solana Beach and into the Pacific Ocean. The Property is situated in the highlands around Lake Hodges with sweeping vistas and steep ravines. Lake Hodges is a lake and reservoir built on the San Dieguito River. The area immediately surrounding the Property is comprised primarily of vacant undeveloped properties and low-density residential development to the north.

The Property will support expanding core linkages to various reserves including the Del Dios Highlands Preserve and the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve both to the north and the Sage Hill Preserve to the west. WCB has contributed to the acquisition of over 1,500± acres in the immediate vicinity since 2003, including the 103± acre County of San Diego MSCP (2019) White property, directly adjacent to the Property in November 2020.

The Property is within the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (San Diego MSCP) a joint Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). The San Diego MSCP covers 85 species, including 26 federally listed species and 59 unlisted species. Fifteen of the covered species are listed as threatened or endangered by CDFW.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of three parcels and is irregular in shape. A substantial interior road has been rough graded and traverses the central portion of the Property. Topography ranges from rolling to steep slopes and vistas with elevations ranging from 688 to 1,181 feet. The Property is zoned rural residential with allowed density of one unit per four acres of land.

The Property is covered almost entirely by dense southern mixed chaparral and diegan coastal sage scrub habitat. The Property has a steep south facing exposure; at upper elevations of the Property, views of the Coast to Crest Trail at Del Dios Gorge can be enjoyed.

Species expected to benefit from the protection of the Property include the coastal California gnatcatcher, Encinitas baccharis, and other sensitive species including southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, orange-throated whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, mountain lion, southern mule deer, and San Diego barrel cactus.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed and owned by SDRVC which will provide resource stewardship and monitoring. The Property has the potential for future docent led, wildlife-oriented, public use such as birding and hiking.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$503,000. The landowner has agreed to a bargain sale of \$500,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

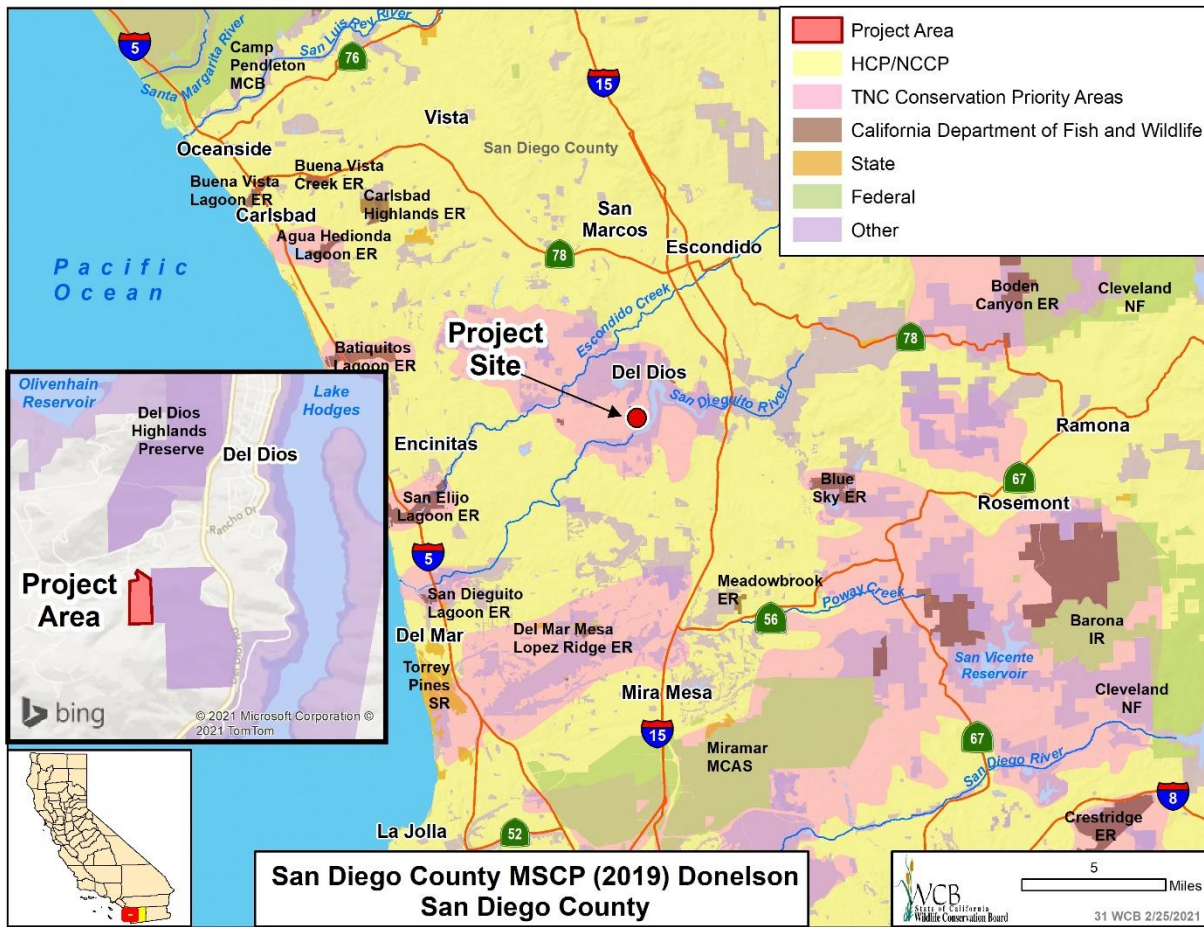
Partners	Amount
WCB	\$97,900
USFWS subgrant funds	\$352,100
SDRVC	\$50,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$500,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## Proposed Items

### 32. Mad River Estuary Public Access Enhancement

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$367,745 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Mad River Estuary Public Access Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	California Trout, Inc.
Amount Recommended:	\$367,745
Funding Partners:	NOAA
Landowner(s):	McKinleyville Community Services District
County:	Humboldt
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.1 Objectives: SI 3.1, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The Mad River Estuary Public Access Enhancement project (Project) site is a bluff, located three miles from the mouth of the Mad River, that overlooks the river and coastal areas. The property is within the unincorporated area of McKinleyville in Humboldt County, and owned by the McKinleyville Community Services District.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is on the eastern side of the Mad River inside a meandering bend. Near the river, vegetation is dominated by willow and other riparian species. Upland areas are composed of disturbed grasslands with pasture grasses, shrubs, and small trees. The site is also part of a larger restoration project that will result in improved off-channel rearing habitat for salmonids and provide public access.

The bluff along the river provides ample opportunities to showcase grasslands, estuarine habitats, and coastal views. Unfortunately, many pedestrians, parents with strollers, walker and wheelchair users, and cyclists who use the existing School Road Trail must stop and turn around where the pavement ends and never make it to the inspiring coastal view. Paddle craft users also face dense vegetation, uneven footing, and large riprap boulders that complicate water access. This lack of paved trails and easy river access has caused nature enthusiasts and anglers to struggle for access to this rich coastal estuary.

The Project will fund the design and construction of public access improvements that will transform the existing overgrown bluff and uneven dirt-surfaced trails.



When completed, these improvements will improve access opportunities for individuals with limited mobility. Improvements include an ADA compliant path (700 feet), a new coastal overlook with 4 interpretive signs and an interpretive brochure-based tour, 3 resting sites with benches, and 600 feet of a gravel wildland interface trail that allows for river access at a lightly developed boat launch feature. When completed, the ADA overlook trail will provide access for walkers, hikers, bird watchers, and touring cyclists. The Project also includes development of a long-term management plan.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

California Trout, Inc. has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Mad River Estuary Public Access project property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, California Trout, Inc. 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.

In addition, the Project will develop a site-specific, long-term management plan as a deliverable.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$ 29,696	\$13,257	\$ 16,439
Engineering and Design	\$ 85,120	\$ 56,600	\$ 28,520
Interpretive Signage and Long-term Management Plan	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	---
Construction	\$627,444	\$287,236	\$ 340,208
Indirect Costs	\$2,652	\$2,652	---
Total	\$752,912	\$367,745	\$385,167

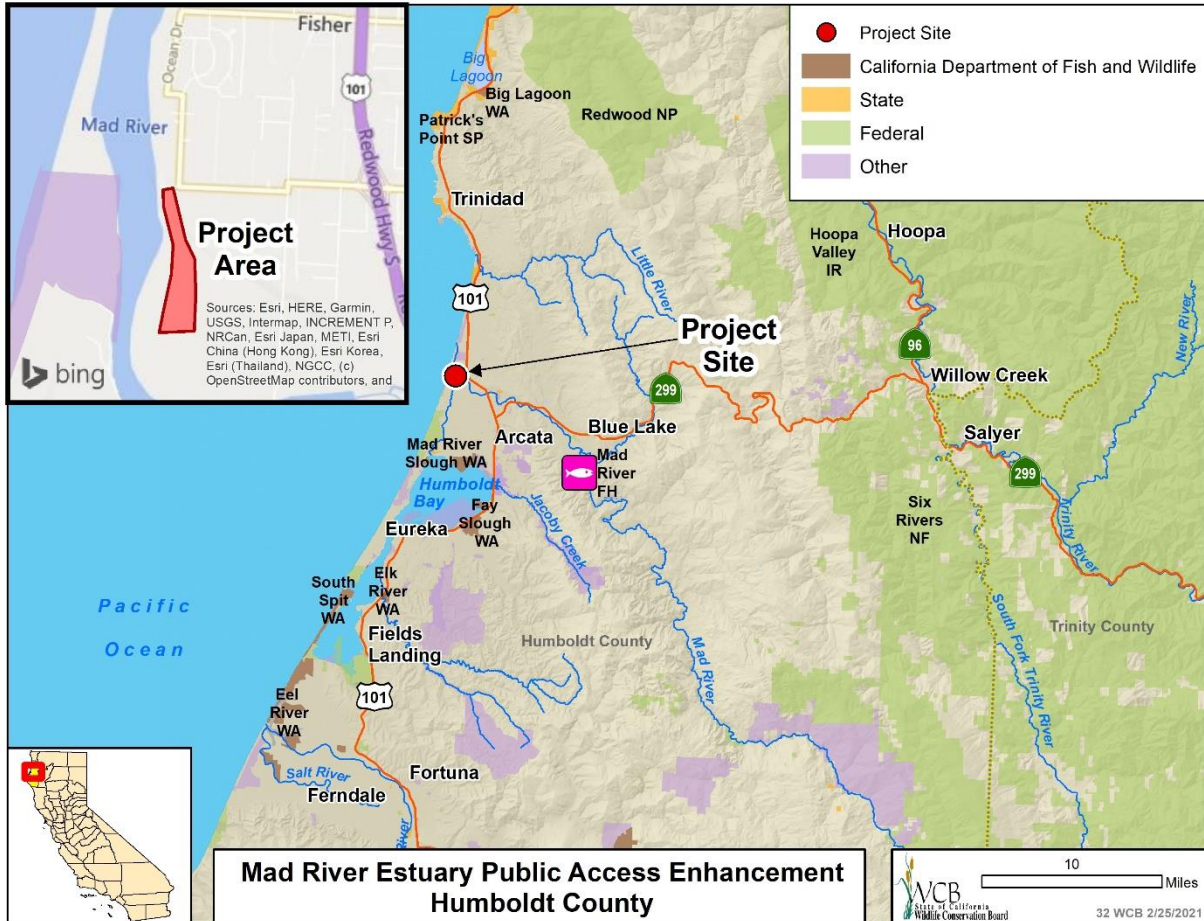
Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project and grant management.
- Engineering and Design: Final designs, construction documents, and bid package.
- Interpretive Signage and Long-term Management Plan: Design, fabrication, installation of signs, and the development of a long-term management plan.
- Construction: Construction, construction planning, monitoring, and reporting.
- Indirect Costs: General costs such as office space rental, utilities, and phones.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The McKinleyville Community Services District, as lead agency, prepared a MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with

CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 33. Ladybug Forest Health and Fuels Reduction

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$753,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ladybug Forest Health and Fuels Reduction
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	National Forest Foundation
Amount Recommended:	\$753,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	U.S. Forest Service
County:	Sierra
Program:	California Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1 Objectives: SI 1.6, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The 2,500-acre Ladybug Forest Health and Fuels Reduction project (Project) area lies immediately adjacent to the eastern flank of the Stampede Reservoir, extending beyond the reservoir to the north and south. Treatment units surround the entirety of the Hoke Valley riparian zone, which includes a lush composition of grasses, willows, aspen, and meadow systems. Built under the authority of the Washoe Project Act (1970), the Stampede Reservoir is particularly integral to this region because it significantly contributes to water flow regulation specifically intended to enhance fishery habitat for the Endangered Cui-ui fish species. With the reintroduction of the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) in Pyramid Lake, the Stampede Reservoir also provides benefit to the LCT fishery habitat and overall health of the Pyramid Lake fishery. In addition to LCT, other CDFW Species of Greatest Conservation Need including bald eagles and western bumblebees are found in the Project area.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hazardous fuels reduction within this ecologically important area is needed immediately. Historic logging practices of removing large diameter, old growth trees during the 1800s have significantly altered the forest structure from its known pre-European settlement conditions. In the 1960s, the high severity Donner Ridge fire swept through the area and removed large areas of forest. This burn scar was then replanted with densely stocked pine plantations. The Project area contains over 500 acres of these densely planted plantations, all of which have gone unmanaged since their initial planting nearly 60 years ago. Additional land within the Project area and outside of the Donner Ridge burn scar have had no natural

fire due to fire suppression activities and no other silviculture or fuel reduction treatments. Around Hoke Valley, fire suppression has led to rapid conifer encroachment in the sensitive riparian zone and disruption of hydrological function. These past influences have resulted in a forest system that is now highly vulnerable to high severity wildfire. Exacerbated by recent climate-driven drought conditions, the forest ecosystem, hydrological functioning, critical infrastructure, and important wildlife habitats in the area are at an elevated risk of degradation and potential loss from unwanted wildfire. In addition, old and unmaintained U.S. Forest Service (USFS) logging roads are increasing sediment transport and negatively impacting surrounding water quality.

The Project will deliver forest thinning, biomass mastication, and prescribed fire treatments of 2,500 acres to reduce wildfire danger, including reducing fuel loads for approximately 100 acres of mountain meadow and 65 acres of aspen. Thinning treatments within the Project area are designed to favor more fire-resilient conifer species on south facing slopes, provide opportunities for regeneration of more drought-resistant species. Once thinning treatments are completed, the USFS will reintroduce fire, by initiating prescribed fires during optimum conditions, providing additional forest health benefits to the Project area. Cost share will support 9.5 miles of road reconstruction/decommission within the Project area.

The proposed treatments are also strategic for future water resources and will improve water supply and water quality through reconstructing degraded roads, thinning, and specifically removing conifers that have encroached around the Hoke Valley riparian area which feeds directly into Stampede Reservoir. The reservoir is designed to provide flood control, and its infrastructure can help reduce the impacts of predicted bigger floods on both downstream fish species and communities. By conducting treatments around the reservoir, the reservoir will continue to provide diverse benefits even under the pressure of a changing climate.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Tahoe National Forest has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, American Forests does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Personnel Services	\$150,805	\$150,805	---
Fuels Reduction	\$1,993,077	\$566,200	\$1,426,877
Travel	\$5,000	\$5,000	---

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Indirect Costs	\$30,995	\$30,995	---
Total	\$2,179,877	\$753,000	\$1,426,877

Project costs include:

- Personnel Services: Preparation and submission of all grant-related documents, coordination with Grantee and Project partners/contractors/agencies, including contracting, reporting, and invoicing.
- Fuels Reduction: Remove and reduce the structural continuity of non-commercial and commercial hazardous fuels within the Project site. Reconstruct/decommission selected roads within Project site (not funded with WCB funds).
- Travel: Travel costs to and from Project area.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1), as the Project involves prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition, the Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 153301, Existing Facilities, as it involves maintenance and/or minor alteration of existing facilities or topographical features including maintenance of wildlife habitat to protect fish and wildlife resources, and Section 15304, Minor Alternations to Land, as it involves minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to authorization by WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





### 34. Truckee Springs

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,000,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d) for the grant to Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) for a cooperative project with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Truckee Springs
Project Type:	Fee Title (25± acres)
Grantee:	Truckee Donner Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$2,000,000
Funding Partners:	California Natural Resources Agency, Private Donations
County:	Nevada
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2, A.4, C.1, E.1 Objectives: SI 2.1, 3.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located in the downtown district of the town of Truckee. More specifically, the Property is located at the western terminus of South River Street with addresses of 10140, 10150 and 10155 South River Street. The neighborhood is defined by generally older single-family residences flanking both sides of South River Street.

The Property is bounded by the Truckee River to the northwest, developed residential properties to the northeast and the east, undeveloped sloping terrain to the southeast, and CDFW's 41± acre West River Unit of the TRWA to the southwest. Mixed use residential, commercial, and light industrial properties are located along the top of the bank of the Truckee River.

The Property, in combination with adjacent protected open spaces, preserves roughly one mile of riparian habitat along the Truckee River. A year-round spring flows across the Property, providing a corridor of riparian habitat linking the forest with the river. The Property, combined with TRWA, forms a contiguous open space from the Truckee canyon to the town of Truckee which allows animals to move freely between the river, the floodplain, the adjacent upland forests, and the Tahoe National Forest.

Acquisition of the Property fits into two of TDLT's conservation plans: To protect and provide access to the Truckee River between Truckee and the Nevada state line, and to provide open spaces and public access points adjacent to Truckee's neighborhoods. WCB has supported the protection of numerous landscapes in the

greater Truckee/Middle Truckee River Basin, including Webber and Independence lakes, the Truckee River Canyon, Frog Lake, and Carpenter Valley.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of three contiguous parcels that total approximately 25± acres of undeveloped land. The Property is an irregular, elongated east-west orientation infill with its northern perimeter providing approximately 2,000 feet of frontage along the south side of the Truckee River and the south perimeter located in or near steep uphill terrain.

The majority of the Property has gently rolling terrain with upsloping terrain at the southernly boundary and slightly down sloping terrain along the Truckee River. Dense sagebrush and other forms of natural vegetation cover most of the Property. Tree cover overall is sparse with dense conifer groves along portions of the southern and eastern boundary. A large aspen grove and a grove of mature cottonwood trees surround the spring, and alder thickets line the river. Several large bears are seen roaming the Property regularly, as are deer, coyote, and numerous other mammals common to the area. Raptors, including red-tailed hawks and bald eagles frequent the area and waterfowl nest and use the riparian areas. Rainbow, brown, and Lahontan cutthroat trout can be found in the adjacent Truckee River.

The Property was used for thousands of years by the Washoe people. A lumber mill operated on the Property between 1868 and 1909 when the mill burned down and was never rebuilt. Following the lumber operation, the Property was part of the winter carnival, housing Truckee's famed Ice Palace, and used as a car camp and outing center.

The Property has multiple zoning designations. The Highest and Best Use of the Property is for residential development on approximately 4.2± acres which is significantly enhanced by virtue of its proximity to 8± acres of riverfront and 8± acres of private open space.

In 2015 Truckee adopted the updated Truckee Trails and Bikeways Master Plan. The plan identifies the Truckee River Legacy Trail as a high priority. The trail forms the backbone of Truckee's alternative transportation system. When completed, the trail will connect the Donner State Memorial Park with the Glenshire neighborhood located about five miles east of the Property. The Truckee River Legacy Trail is a part of the Tahoe Pyramid Trail, which follows the Truckee River from Lake Tahoe to its terminus at Pyramid Lake. In addition, the Truckee River Legacy Trail is an important component of the partially built system of trails that will link Truckee with the North Shore of Lake Tahoe and Olympic Valley. The Property is slated to support the trail extension which will cross the Property and connect with the Wildlife Area to the west.

An important part of the public access plan for the Property is the construction of a new pedestrian bridge across the Truckee River from West River Street. This

bridge will provide access from downtown Truckee. TDLT and the town of Truckee are partnering to construct the bridge. Funding has been secured for the construction of the bridge.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TDLT will own and manage the Property. In the future, TDLT plans to improve the existing trail system by adding new soft-surface trails, a dedicated trailhead, and both directional and interpretive signage. Addition of the improvements will begin soon after the Property is acquired. The Property will be open to the public with vehicular access at the trailhead.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

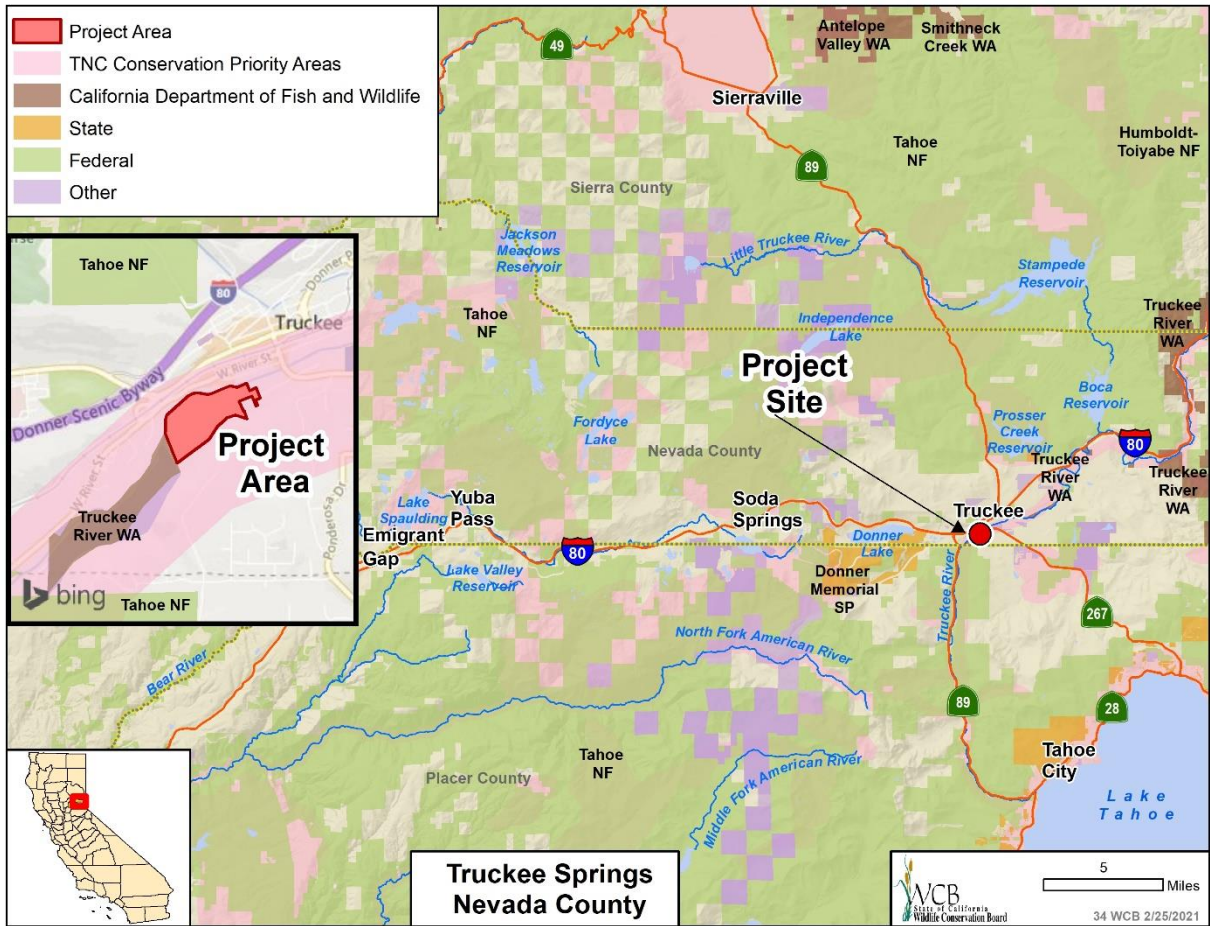
The DGS approved fair market value is \$6,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$2,000,000
CNRA	\$1,000,000
Private Donations	\$3,000,000
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

# Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 25, 2021





### 35. Laguna Wildlife Area, Expansion 9

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,300,000 from California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Laguna Wildlife Area, Expansion 9
Project Type:	Fee Title (47± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$1,300,000
County:	Sonoma
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 40
Strategic Plan Goals:	A2; A4; B1; C1 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.4, 3.3, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

This proposal is to consider the acquisition by CDFW of 47± acres of land, known as Ambrosini Ranch (Property), located seven miles west of Santa Rosa, and just one mile north of the city limits of Sebastopol, in rural western Sonoma County. Highway 116 is less than 1 mile west of the Property and provides frontage road access via Occidental Road which runs along its southern boundary.

The Property is in an area known as Laguna and is entirely situated within the Laguna De Santa Rosa floodplain. The Laguna area is rural in nature and has become one of the more desirable residential areas in Sonoma County, due to its small town feel and proximity to the larger city of Santa Rosa. Land parcels within the area range from a few acres to several hundred acres in size and are primarily dedicated to rural residential or agricultural use.

The Property's western and southern boundaries abut private lands dedicated to agriculture while the eastern and northern boundaries abut a portion of the Laguna De Santa Rosa, a seasonal tributary and wetlands complex that is a component of the CDFW Laguna Wildlife Area (LWA), established by the Fish and Game Commission in 1993. CDFW with the support of WCB, initiated the foundation of the LWA with the first acquisition in 1980 of a 75± acre parcel to protect seasonal vernal pools, valley oaks, and endangered species. To date, WCB has authorized the acquisition of 539± acres for the LWA, helping to create the second largest freshwater wetland complex in Northern California that offers public recreation in the form of wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting. The wetland habitats of the LWA contain or support migratory waterfowl and a number of rare or endangered species. These include, among others, the western yellow-billed cuckoo, peregrine falcon, bald eagle, California freshwater shrimp, and California tiger salamander. State-listed rare, threatened, or endangered plant species include white sedge,

Burke's goldfields, Sebastopol meadowfoam, and many-flowered navarretia. The Property is identified as a high priority for protection in the CDFW Laguna De Santa Rosa CAPP. The CAPP identifies properties for acquisition that contain core wetland habitats of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, seasonal upland floodway, and the bottom wetlands of the Laguna de Santa Rosa channel.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of three legal APNs that include a rectangular main tract of 46± acres and a 1± acre detached parcel just northwest of the main tract. The topography of the Property is relatively level to gently sloping with habitat characterized by annual grasslands, seasonal wetlands, and riparian vegetation. Historically, the Property has been used for grazing, agriculture, and recreation. For the past 15 years, an 8± acre southern portion of the Property has been leased for the production of organic blueberries which conforms to the current zoning of agriculture and rural residential use. The Property also includes a developed agricultural water system, including a well producing between 30 and 50 gallons per minute and an irrigation system for the developed blueberry operation. The blueberry operation will be removed and cleaned up before the transfer of the Property to CDFW.

The habitats of the Laguna area have been severely impacted by historic and ongoing livestock grazing, agriculture, irrigation (groundwater and wastewater), and development. This proposed acquisition supports the expansion of the LWA, creating more public recreational opportunities and permanently protecting core wetlands and riparian habitat for rare and endangered animal and plant species. Also, CDFW does not currently have access to the LWA through lands that it controls. This acquisition can provide CDFW with direct vehicle and equipment access to the interior of the LWA, promoting efficient management and restoration of the habitat and would also allow CDFW to establish a regulated access point for the public which it currently lacks.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will become part of the LWA and managed according to the existing management plan established by CDFW region staff. CDFW will actively monitor the Property and will identify areas of habitat that may require restoration. CDFW will also plan to establish a regulated public access point on the Property to support the existing recreational opportunities consisting of wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting.

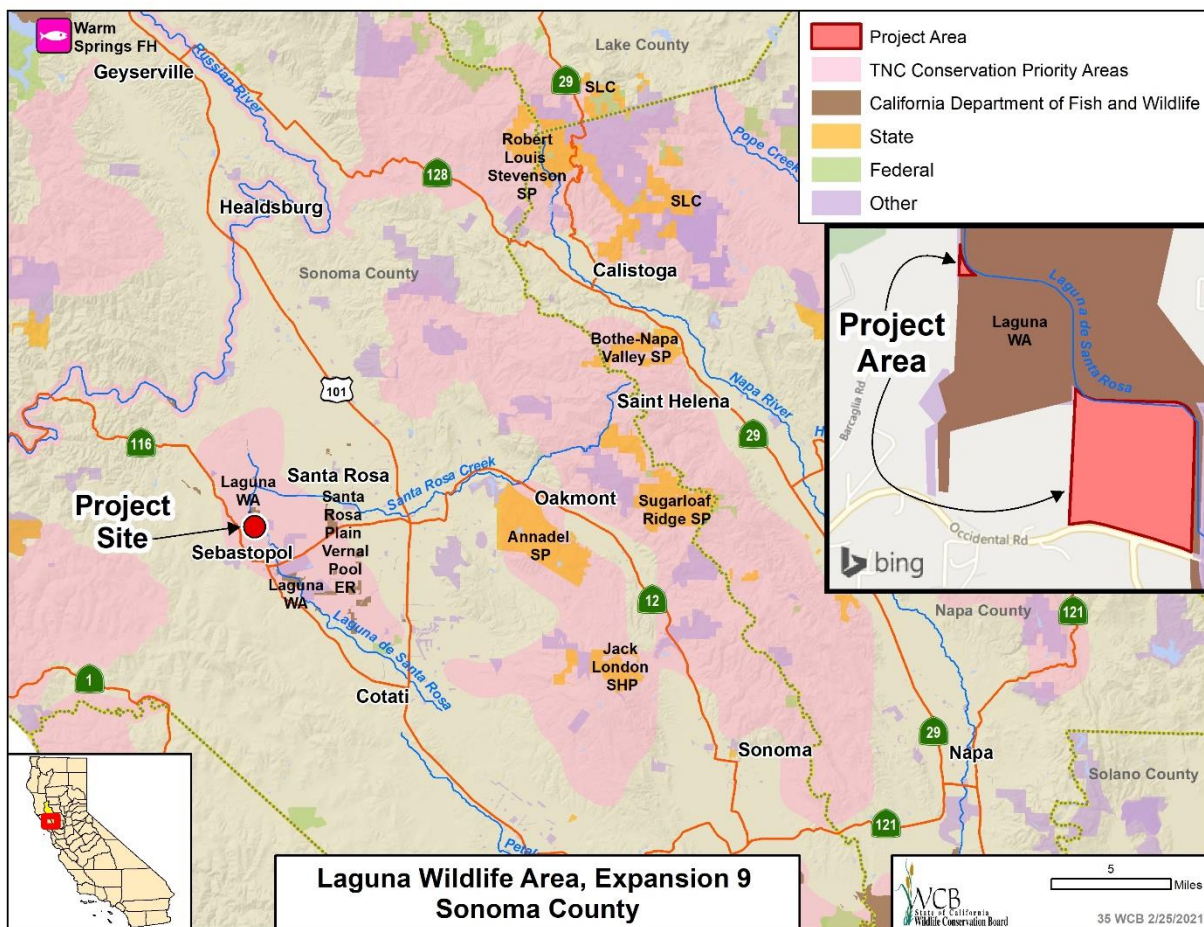
#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,300,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,300,000
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$1,300,000</b>

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.



### 36. King Fire Forest Restoration

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$756,648 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	King Fire Forest Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	American Forests
Amount Recommended:	\$756,648
Funding Partners:	American Forests, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	U.S. Forest Service
County:	El Dorado, Placer
Program:	Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

Eldorado National Forest (ENF) is located on the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada, encompassing over 596,724 acres that includes a large portion of the American River and Calaveras watersheds. This land supports an array of habitats including lower and upper mixed-conifer forests ecosystems, alpine zones, and wetland environments. The King Fire Forest Restoration project (Project) is situated in the Middle Fork American River Watershed located in Eldorado National Forest, approximately six miles west of the town of Foresthill.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In September 2014, the King Fire ignited near the community of Pollock Pines and burned portions of the Rubicon and American Rivers watersheds, leaving behind a 97,717-acre burn scar, of which 63,536 acres were within the ENF.

This high-intensity fire greatly impacted the Rubicon Canyon, where up-canyon winds propelled the fire deeper into the forest. This devastation was catalyzed by severe drought conditions, dense forest stands, and steep terrain. After the flames, the environmental consequences negatively impacted soil health, wildlife habitat, water quality and forest cover; permanently compromising ecological functionality as a whole.

Approximately 50 percent, or 48,526 acres, of the fire burned at high severity, with 31,261 of those acres on National Forest lands. These areas experienced tree mortality rates of over 90 percent, permanently altering the landscape. Vast tree mortality coupled with high soil burn severity destroyed all potential soil seed stock

and left behind an ecosystem incapable of natural forest regeneration. Meanwhile, a rapid shrub response has disrupted conifer regeneration by outcompeting all planted seedlings. Shrubs are able to outgrow and exclude shade-intolerant conifers such as ponderosa and sugar pines.

In addition, a historic riparian wetland meadow located upstream from the King Fire burn area—referred to as Francis Cow Camp—serves as a wildlife habitat haven amidst the fire-ravaged watershed. Historical accounts note that this area was once a functioning meadow ecosystem, described as a meadow land producing sedge, timothy, clover, and bunch grasses. Since then, the area has experienced intensive grazing, logging and unauthorized off-highway vehicle use. ENF acquired Francis Cow Camp in 2012 and it is currently characterized as a dense thicket of lodgepole pine encroaching Rocky Basin Creek, a perennial stream. The dense lodgepole thicket presents a fuel loading hazard for the adjacent uplands and also suppresses aspen regeneration.

The proposed Project will enhance forest health, meadow function, and reduce hazardous fuels through selective thinning and climate-smart reforestation activities on 46 acres of montane meadow habitat (Francis Cow Camp) and 2,000 acres of mixed conifer forest habitat that burned in the King Fire.

The following benefits will be the result of this Project:

- Restore native tree cover on this landscape while also improving wildlife corridors.
- Support long-term fire-resilient recovery and provide immediate benefits through meadow restoration and aspen stand enhancement.
- Benefit ecological function of the American River watershed by decreasing erosion and sedimentation.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

ENF has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, American Forests does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$103,037	\$89,332	\$13,705
Restoration	\$2,082,340	\$647,540	\$1,434,800
Indirect Costs	\$19,776	\$19,776	---
Total	\$2,205,153	\$756,648	\$1,448,505

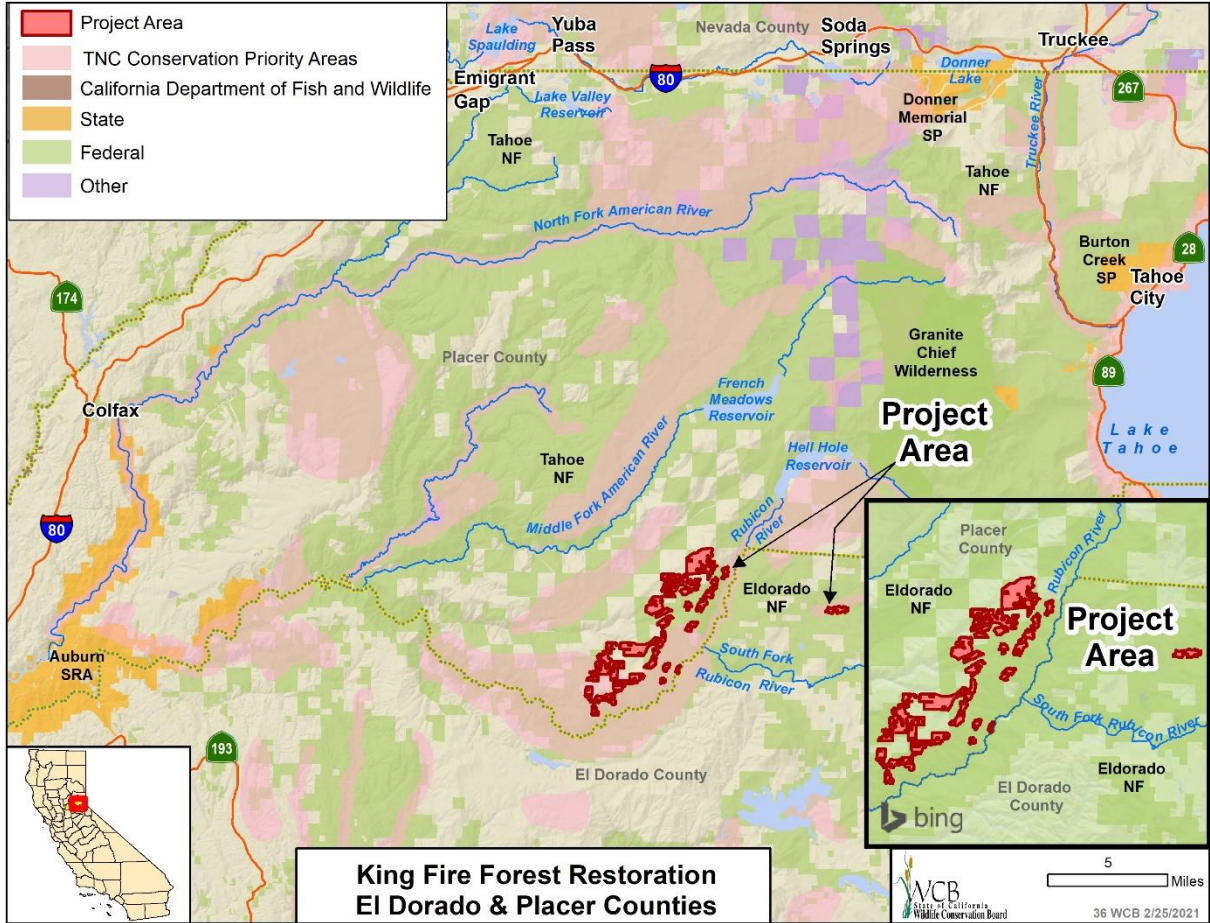


Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications and outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration Activities: Project implementation per implementation plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1), as the Project involves prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA. In addition, the Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 153301, Existing Facilities, as it involves maintenance and/or minor alteration of existing facilities or topographical features including maintenance of wildlife habitat to protect fish and wildlife resources, and Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, as it involves minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 37. Yosemite Area Forest Restoration, Phase 2

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,239,244 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Yosemite Area Forest Restoration, Phase 2
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Mariposa County Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$4,239,244
Funding Partners:	California Office of Emergency Services, Mariposa County Resource Conservation District, University of California, Berkeley, Yosemite Conservancy, National Park Service
Landowner(s):	National Park Service, Mariposa County, Mariposa County Unified School District, Yosemite Conservancy, Private Landowners.
County:	Mariposa
Program:	Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, B.1, C.1, C.4 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The Yosemite Area Forest Restoration, Phase 2 project (Project) is comprised of approximately 2,153 acres situated on public lands managed by Yosemite National Park as well as a mixture of public and private lands in the Yosemite West community, approximately 5 miles west of the town of El Portal. In February 2020, in a previous phase of this forest conservation work, WCB contributed \$1,362,000 to the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on 1,000 acres of Yosemite National Park and Sierra National Forest land in this same vicinity.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Giant sequoias are amongst the oldest and most massive organisms on earth. Some individual giant sequoias have survived up to 3,000 years through droughts, fires, and storms. However, climate change, drought, dense forests resulting from a century of fire suppression, and catastrophic wildfires exceed these trees' tolerances.

The entire Project area borders critical habitat for federally listed endangered Pacific fisher; a species that requires large trees for denning. Pacific fisher have lost 40 percent of their suitable habitat range since the 2012-2016 drought and

resulting fires. The Project area is also one of the few places occupied by great gray owls, a California endangered species. There are around 100 nesting pairs of the Yosemite subspecies and many of these pairs can be found in the Project area.

The proposed Project entails thinning small diameter conifers and removing dead and down biomass along the major road corridors connecting the western edge of Yosemite National Park. This Project supports prescribed fires in the Merced Grove, Yosemite Valley, Yosemite West, Wawona, and the long-term management of wildland fire in fire-prone, low elevation, heavily fuel-loaded and therefore vulnerable areas. This work will help protect the iconic Yosemite Valley, irreplaceable giant sequoias, threatened and endangered species habitat, and livelihoods of disadvantaged communities located near the Project area.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Yosemite National Park has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Yosemite West portion of the Project area and the Mariposa County Annual Budget addresses management of the portion of the Project area in the Yosemite West community. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Mariposa County Resource Conservation District does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$101,400	\$70,200	\$31,200
Restoration	\$5,420,458	\$3,923,088	\$1,497,370
Monitoring	\$206,462	\$206,462	---
Indirect Costs	\$39,494	\$39,494	---
Total	\$5,767,814	\$4,239,244	\$1,528,570

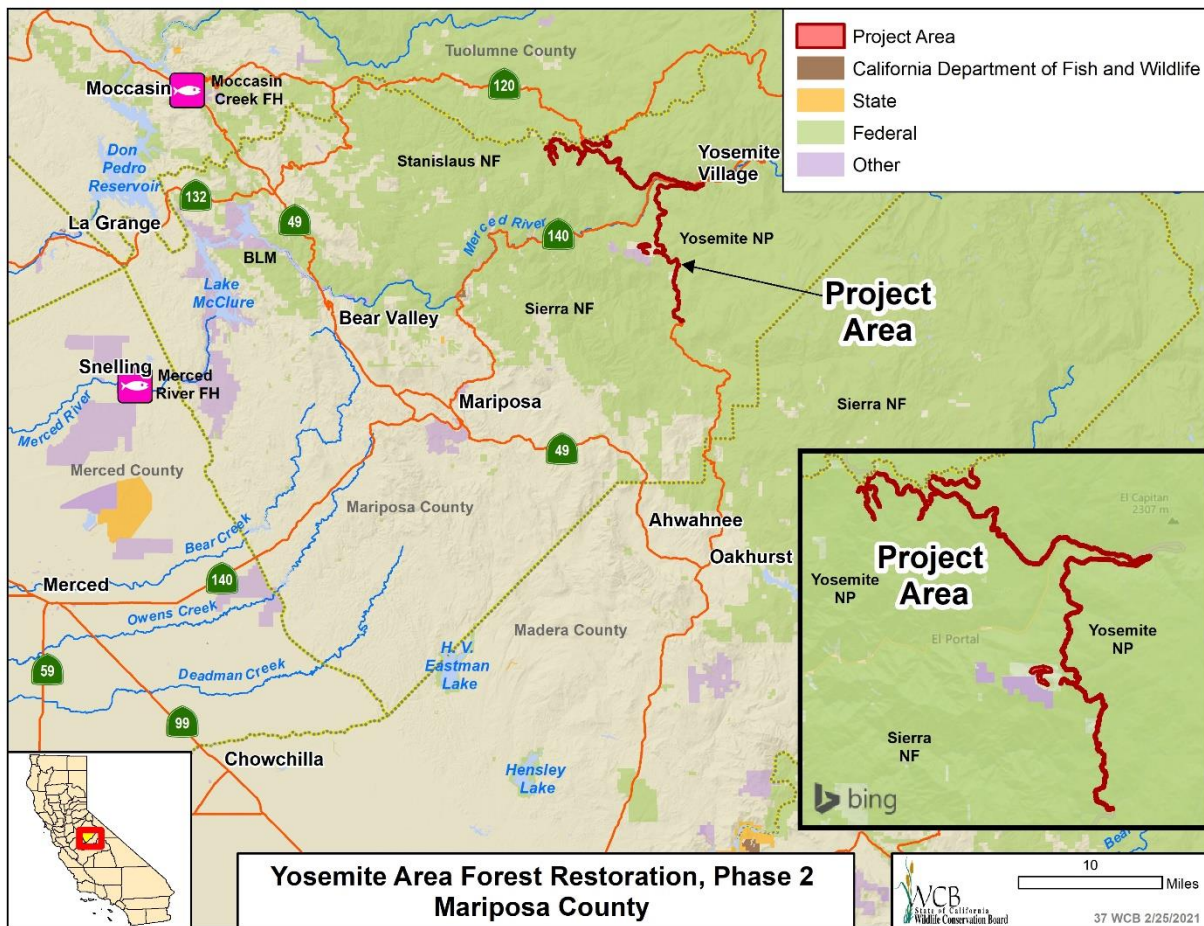
Project costs include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications and outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration Activities: Project implementation per implementation plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Monitoring: Pre- and post-Project monitoring per monitoring plan (e.g., photo points and vegetation).
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The portion of the Project to be conducted in Yosemite National Park is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1), as the Project involves prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA.

In addition, the portion of the Project to be conducted in the Yosemite West community is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 153301, Existing Facilities, as it involves maintenance and/or minor alteration of existing facilities or topographical features and Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, as it involves minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





### 38. Butano Creek Channel Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,735,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Butano Creek Channel Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	San Mateo County Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$1,735,000
Funding Partners:	County of San Mateo, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District
Landowner(s):	County of San Mateo, Peninsula Open Space Trust, Private Landowner
County:	San Mateo
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.2 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1b, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

Butano Creek, the largest tributary to Pescadero Creek, is a perennial stream on the western side of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Butano Creek Channel Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement (Project) site consists of a 625-foot reach of Butano Creek, approximately 3 miles south of the intersection of Pescadero Creek Road and Cloverdale Road near Pescadero in San Mateo County.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Historically, the Pescadero-Butano watershed supported robust runs of steelhead and coho salmon, but these species have experienced substantial declines over the past century. The 2012 Final California Central Coast Coho Recovery Plan referred to the coho population in Pescadero as “nearly extirpated.” However, adult coho have been observed in the watershed at a few locations over the past few years and the Butano watershed still contains high quality habitat for both coho and steelhead. These coho belong to the Central California Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit, which is listed as endangered under both the federal and state endangered species acts. The Pescadero-Butano watershed is one of two independent watersheds for coho recovery in San Mateo County and the second largest of the three independent watersheds south of the Golden Gate Bridge.

The Pescadero-Butano watershed also supports a Central California Coast (CCC) steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) which is a federally listed threatened

species. The Project reach of Butano Creek is designated as Critical Habitat for the CCC steelhead DPS.

Long-term impacts to Butano Creek, both natural and anthropogenic (i.e., agriculture, rerouting of the creek channel, timber harvesting), have resulted in major changes to channel characteristics, including up to 11 feet of incision through many portions of mid-lower Butano Creek. These changes in creek function have increased sedimentation and chronic channel incision, exacerbated bank failure, and reduced high flow refugia, habitat, and passage for salmonids, especially at high flows.

Under current conditions, the deeply incised and simplified reaches of Butano Creek cannot provide critical low velocity refuge for anadromous fish during high flows, pools for refuge during droughts, and high-quality spawning and rearing habitat. The Project will address the channel incision and the resultant bridge pier scour and bank instability, while providing habitat enhancement benefits for salmonids and other aquatic and riparian species along this reach of Butano Creek.

This will be accomplished by raising the channel bed with Engineered Stream Material (ESM) along a 625-ft reach of Butano Creek. The ESM will be sized according to CDFW and NOAA guidelines and placed approximately 5 feet thick on the channel bed to create a roughened natural channel. Four, approximately 50-ft-long habitat enhancement pools with large woody debris will be established downstream of the bridge. Placing ESM with willow stakes along the banks downstream of the bridge will provide additional channel stability and installing a rock buttress will repair a recent bank failure immediately upstream of the bridge on the north bank.

When complete, the Project will improve spawning habitat within the 625 linear feet of the Project reach and improve access to at least 3 miles of suitable spawning habitat in the upper reaches of the watershed.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The San Mateo County Resource Conservation District has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

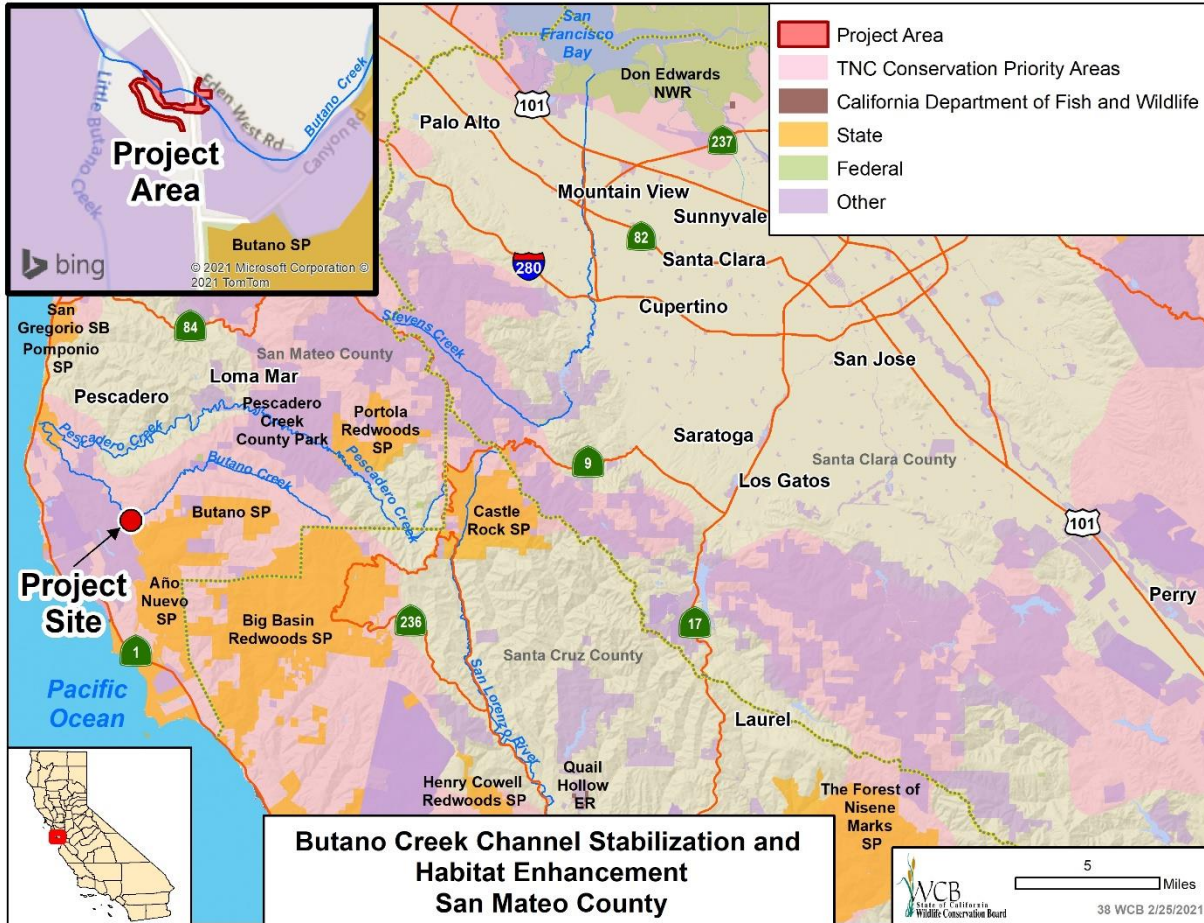
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Designs	\$254,289	---	\$254,289
Project Management	\$28,290	\$21,707	\$6,582
Construction	\$2,045,575	\$1,634,893	\$410,683
Regulatory Compliance	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
Restoration	\$73,000	\$58,400	\$14,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,431,154</b>	<b>\$1,735,000</b>	<b>\$696,154</b>

Project costs include:

- Project management: Includes reporting, invoicing, budget management, data management, and contracting with consultants.
- Construction: Includes site preparation, earthworks, placing of ESM, and erosion control.
- Regulatory Compliance: Includes environmental permitting compliance support, pre-construction surveys, and construction monitoring and reporting.
- Restoration: Includes installing large woody debris, seeding, live staking, and replanting disturbed areas.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15333, Small Habitat Restoration Projects, as it consists of a project not exceeding five acres in size to assure maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



### 39. Highway 17 Crossings Planning and Design

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$5,000,000 from the General Fund, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Provision; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Highway 17 Crossings Planning and Design
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Amount Recommended:	\$5,000,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Transportation, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
County:	Santa Clara
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The Highway 17 Crossings Planning and Design project (Project) is located along the State Route 17 corridor, near the Ravine and Trout Creek tributaries to Los Gatos Creek, in Santa Clara County near Lexington Reservoir. Steep, brushy hillsides are located to the north of the Project and the Los Gatos Creek Riparian area and Lexington Reservoir are located south. Land use is primarily open space preserves, county parks and water utilities bisected by State Route 17.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Pathways for Wildlife, a wildlife movement research organization, identified the Project area as one of the top two roadkill hotspots on State Route 17 in the Santa Cruz Mountains for mountain lions, deer, and other wildlife species. The Project will develop designs and conduct environmental review for a wildlife undercrossing project at the first hotspot, located on the eastern slope of the mountain range. A separate project, led by Caltrans District 5, is currently in the design phase to address the lack of wildlife connectivity at the second hotspot at the Laurel Curve on the western slope of the mountain range. Implemented in tandem, these two projects expect to provide a statistically significant reduction in wildlife mortality on this stretch of State Route 17.

Mountain lions in the Santa Cruz Mountains suffer from reduced habitat connectivity, poor genetic diversity, and small effective population size of adult mountain lions. Due to these factors, the California Fish and Game Commission is considering a petition to list the Southern California/Central California Coast (which includes the Santa Cruz Mountains) evolutionary significant unit of mountain lion as a threatened or endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act. Other listed species known to occur within two miles of the Project area will



also benefit from increased connectivity. These species include the California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, California giant salamander, Santa Cruz black salamander and Townsends big-eared bat.

Primary objectives of the wildlife undercrossing component include improvements to wildlife passage within the Project area, improvements to motorist safety by reducing the potential for collisions with wildlife and maintaining healthy wildlife populations through habitat connectivity. Habitat connectivity is important for the health of species and will become even more important with unpredictable future consequences of climate change. Well-placed, appropriately designed wildlife crossings will alleviate wildlife-vehicle collisions and enable wide-ranging animals like mountain lions to disperse. Key state plans such as the California State Wildlife Action Plan and the Safeguarding California Plan emphasize wildlife habitat connectivity as a critical goal for wildlife management and climate resilience.

The Project will also provide planning and designs for a recreational trails overcrossing that will connect public open space and parklands on either side of State Route 17. This will bridge a substantial regional trail gap by connecting over 50 miles of the Bay Area Ridge Trail and approximately 22 miles of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. Currently, the regional trails gap is due to State Route 17 bisecting the Project area and is exacerbated by the challenging topography and mosaic of ownership and jurisdictions. The recreational trails component will increase recreational access to horseback riding, biking, and hiking in the Lexington Basin for trail users.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

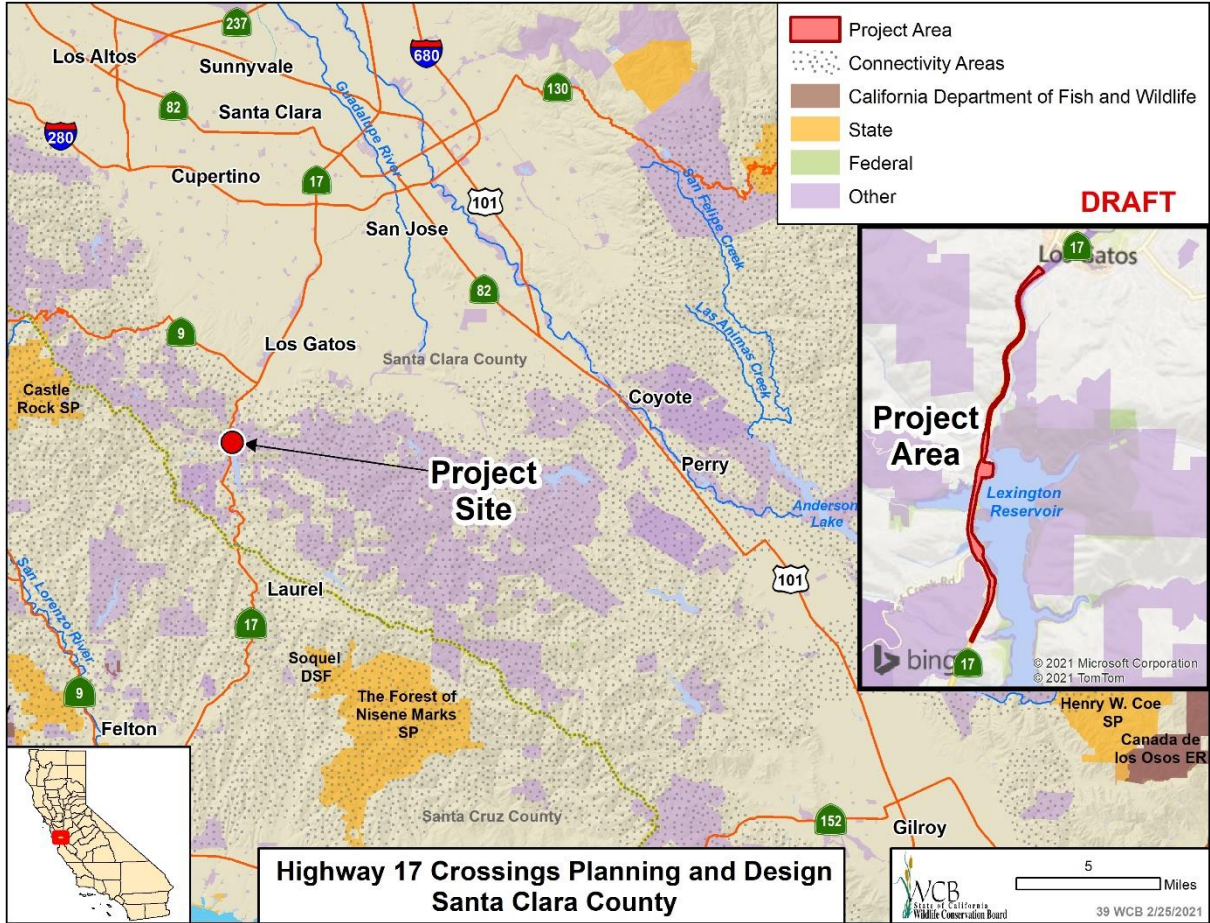
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$236,000	---	\$236,000
Environmental Review	\$2,600,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,600,000
Design	\$6,500,000	\$4,000,000	\$2,500,000
Permitting	\$30,000	---	\$30,000
Total	\$9,366,000	\$5,000,000	\$4,366,000

Project costs utilizing WCB funds include:

- Environmental Review: Will complete documentation required by Caltrans.
- Design: Develop plans, specifications, and cost estimates for the crossings.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.



#### **40. SR-152 at Pacheco Creek Wildlife Connectivity and Corridor Enhancement**

##### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$802,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(e)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	SR-152 at Pacheco Creek Wildlife Connectivity and Corridor Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
Amount Recommended:	\$802,000
Funding Partners:	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
Landowner(s):	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
County:	Santa Clara
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

##### **LOCATION**

State Route 152 (SR-152), also known as Pacheco Pass, bisects the Diablo Range-Inner Coast Linkage which is identified as an important wildlife migration corridor by the Bay Area Critical Linkages Project. The SR-152 at Pacheco Creek Wildlife Connectivity and Corridor Enhancement (Project) site is on the south side of SR-152, 13 miles east of the city of Gilroy, in the Pacheco Creek Reserve and is characterized by riparian sycamore woodland habitat.

The Project site is listed in CDFW's 2020 Wildlife Movement Barrier Priorities list and is also identified as a priority for connectivity by the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan, California State Wildlife Action Plan, California Essential Habitat Connectivity Plan, and the draft Santa Clara County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy.

##### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

In 2019, the Wildlife Permeability and Hazards Across Highway 152 Pacheco Pass wildlife connectivity study was completed for the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency and CDFW, who supported the study through a Local Assistance Grant. This study included monitoring three bridges and two dual box culverts for wildlife movement and conducting routine roadkill surveys along Pacheco Pass.

Based on the study results, several recommendations were developed for wildlife connectivity enhancements that would improve the ability for wildlife to safely cross

SR-152 as well as improve highway safety for drivers by reducing wildlife-vehicle conflict. The Project will fund the implementation of four of these recommendations: rip-rap improvements, bank improvements, Pacheco Creek restoration, and directional fencing.

Rip-rap modifications at the SR-152 Pacheco Creek Bridge at the Pacheco Creek Reserve will improve the ability for wildlife to walk by modifying the riprap at bridge abutments which act as a barrier to wildlife movement when bridges become flooded and banks are not available for use. Following advice from Caltrans and CDFW, the Project will fill in the rip-rap rocks with a sandy substrate to create a surface wildlife can walk along. Removal of the rip-rap rocks was not advised because the riprap was put in for bridge structural integrity.

Bank improvements will include the removal of dead trees, shrubs, and invasive vegetation along the banks to increase bank width at higher slope areas so that more bank is available for wildlife to pass under the bridge during flooding.

Riparian habitat restoration and enhancement will provide a visual screen within the linkage for wildlife species that are sensitive to human presence, such as mountain lions, American badger, and Tule elk. This visual screen will direct wildlife away from SR-152 and provide the ability for wildlife to travel through the linkage safely under SR-152 at the Pacheco Creek Bridge.

Directional fencing will be installed between the Pacheco Creek culvert with a “Critter Crossing” shelving unit and the Pacheco Creek Reserve Bridge in order to guide wildlife to the structures and keep them off the highway.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management, Monitoring and Reporting	\$90,000	\$66,000	\$24,000
Rip-Rap Improvements	\$22,500	\$18,000	\$4,500
Bank Improvements	\$22,500	\$18,000	\$4,500
Pacheco Creek Restoration	\$1,915,000	\$500,000	\$1,415,000
Directional Fencing	\$210,000	\$200,000	\$10,000

Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Critter Crossing Shelf Unit	\$10,000	---	\$10,000
Total	\$2,270,000	\$802,000	\$1,468,000

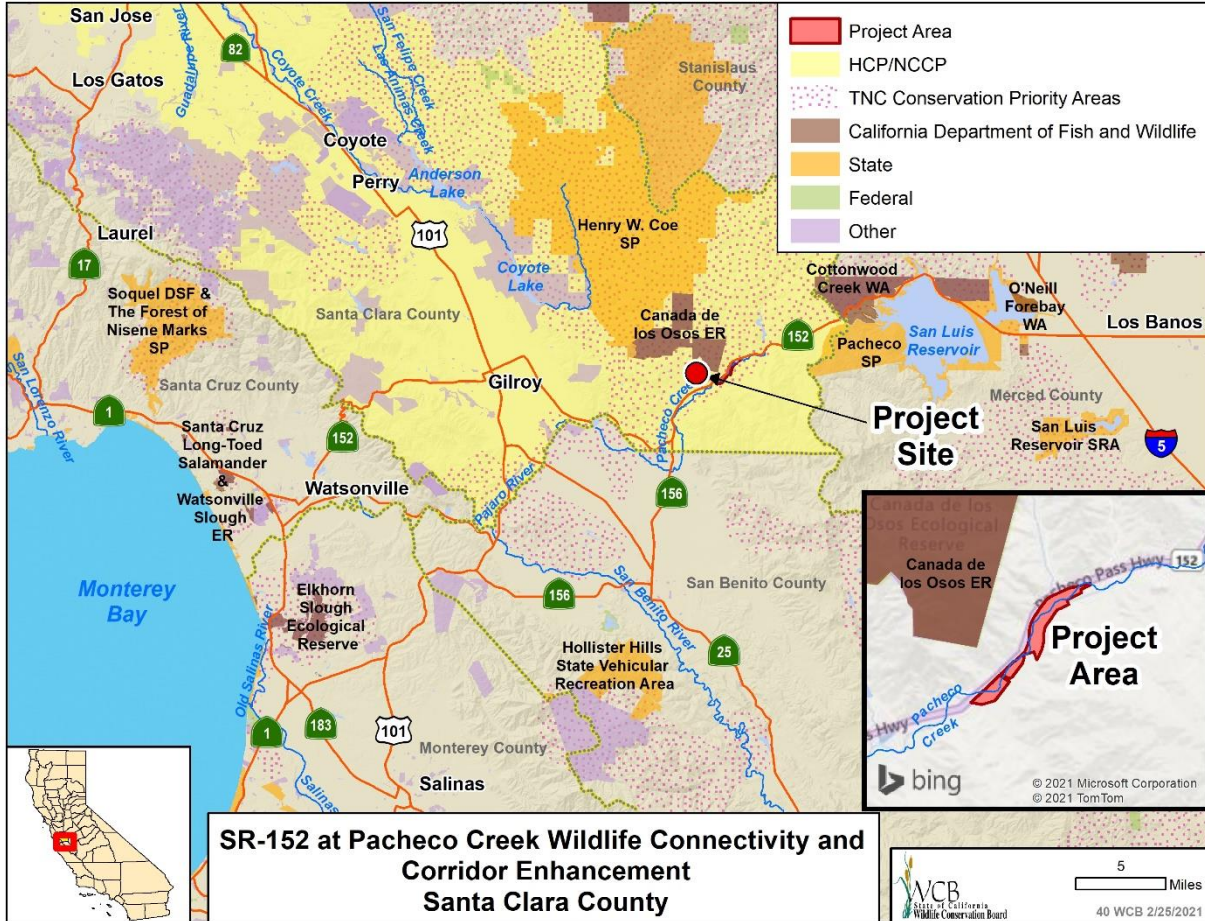
Project costs include:

- Project Management, Monitoring and Reporting: Grant management activities.
- Rip-rap Improvements: Filling in the rip-rap rocks with a sandy substrate.
- Bank Improvements: Removal of dead trees, shrubs, and invasive vegetation along the banks.
- Pacheco Creek Restoration: Restoring 17 acres of central California sycamore alluvial woodland.
- Directional Fencing: Fence installation between the Pacheco Creek culvert and the Pacheco Creek Reserve Bridge.

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The County of Santa Clara, as lead agency, prepared an EIR for the Project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





#### 41. San Joaquin River Parkway, Circle V (Vinnard) Public Access Plan

##### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,050,000 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5), and the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	San Joaquin River Parkway, Circle V (Vinnard) Public Access Plan
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	U.S. Green Building Council Central California
Amount Recommended:	\$1,050,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Green Building Council Central California
Landowner(s):	San Joaquin River Conservancy
County:	Madera
Program:	Public Access Program
Funding:	Proposition 40 and Proposition 84
Strategic Plan Goals:	C.1 Objectives: SI 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

##### LOCATION

The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is comprised of approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a 22-mile-long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and SR 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera counties.

The Circle V (Vinnard) property (Property), owned by the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC), is located in the Parkway approximately one mile from the city of Fresno. The site consists of approximately 13 acres of unirrigated pasture, a small hobby orchard, 2 residences, a steep bluff slope, and approximately 7 acres of sycamore/Valley oak woodland on the floodplain extending to the San Joaquin River.

##### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This San Joaquin River Parkway, Circle V (Vinnard) Public Access Plan (Project) seeks to develop a public access plan that will serve as a guide for future implementation projects on the Property. The Property includes two residential buildings and a storage shed. The two residences, which do not meet the specifications for office and meeting usage, have been emptied since the SJRC acquired the Property in 2016. This Project will prepare the site for public access by discussing programming and usage, and it will deliver a schematic design package for the buildings and site. The Project will also include site and

geotechnical surveys, a CEQA review document, and 65% design plans completed.

The Grantee, in collaboration with the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival, is looking to engage stakeholders and the general community in a discussion on potential uses of the Property as an Indigenous and Environmental Resource Center. The community outreach will be specifically focused on Native American tribes to include tribal members in the planning process and provide opportunities for input in the design with the hope that this inclusion will build a sense of ownership that will cultivate stewardship of the Property.

The main goal of this Project is to adaptively reuse the existing structures and develop highly efficient office and meeting spaces with low operational costs. The resulting structures and adjoining campus will also serve as a demonstration of current green building technology and design. Environmental impacts will be minimized by following green building guidelines with the goal of receiving a certification. Landscape design will also incorporate stakeholder input received through a discussion of options for native plant gardens and habitat restoration opportunities.

The Project is in line with the mission of SJRC and advances goals and policies defined in the Parkway Masterplan. When completed, the Project will minimize impact on sensitive ecological resources by updating and repairing existing facilities using the most current green building design protocols. These newly updated facilities will then provide public access to quality scenery and outdoor recreation and emphasize the engagement of tribal and other relevant stakeholders. The expectation is that the inclusion of local historical culture will conserve and share cultural knowledge and foster community pride and collaboration.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

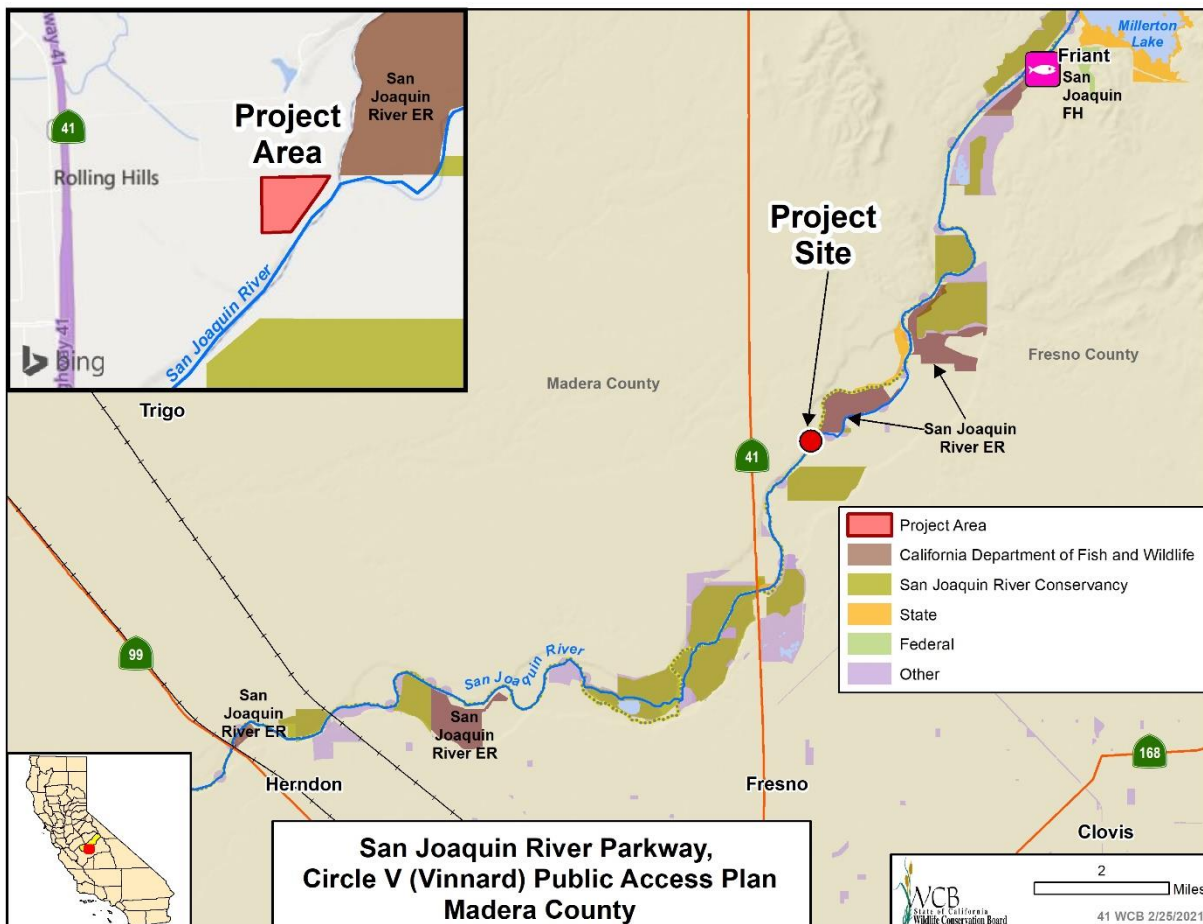
Project Task	Total Cost	WCB	Non-WCB Funds
Project Management	\$180,000	\$180,000	---
Inventory and Analysis	\$61,000	\$51,000	\$10,000
Outreach	\$221,675	\$221,675	---
Design	\$448,000	\$410,000	\$38,000
CEQA Documentation	\$57,000	\$57,000	---
Indirect	\$80,327	\$80,327	---
Contingency (5%)	\$49,998	\$49,998	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,098,000</b>	<b>\$1,050,000</b>	<b>\$48,000</b>

WCB funding costs include:

- Project Management: Grant administration and oversight.
- Inventory and Analysis: Site and Geotechnical surveys.
- Outreach: Stakeholder and community meetings, and a Visioning Document that will include design and engineering documents.
- Design: Conceptual and schematic design.
- CEQA Documentation: Environmental review in accordance with CEQA.
- Indirect: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency (5%): Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



## 42. San Joaquin River Parkway, Lanes Property

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,200,000 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f) for the acquisition; authorize a Transfer of Jurisdiction of the land by CDFW to SJRC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	San Joaquin River Parkway, Lanes Property
Project Type:	CDFW Fee (21± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$2,200,000
County:	Fresno
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 84
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

### LOCATION

The Property's (Property) physical address is 10637 North Lanes Road. It is located along the south of North Lanes Road west of Rice Road, with frontage along the east side of the San Joaquin River, within the Fresno City limits. The Property is accessed by a dirt/gravel driveway off of North Lanes Road, a paved, county-maintained road. The topography is essentially undulating, with areas of embankment and sloping terrain along the river.

Surrounding property uses consist of agriculture, rural residential, a recycling center, and sand/gravel extraction. SJRC's Jenco property is located south of the Property. SJRC owns and manages multiple properties that are located along both sides of the San Joaquin River and are in the Property's vicinity. These SJRC properties include Jensen River Ranch, Gibson, Van Buren Unit, and River West properties.

The Property is within the planning area for the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway), a natural and recreational area in the San Joaquin River floodplain that begins at Friant Dam and extends roughly 22 miles along the San Joaquin River to State Route 99. The Parkway includes portions of Madera County, Fresno County, and the city of Fresno. The planning area varies in width from a narrow wildlife corridor where the river bluffs are steep and close to the river, to extensive floodplains of several hundred acres.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is an irregularly shaped tract of land comprised of 40 assessor parcel numbers totaling approximately 21± acres. Three of the parcels are improved with a single-family home, an attached carport and converted garage, large back patio,



full landscaping, detached garage/shop, and garden shed. The remaining parcels are unimproved.

The house consists of three bedrooms, 2.5 baths, an office, a living room, a dining room, and a kitchen. A four-car garage attached to the home via a two-car carport area has been converted into two separate apartments. The first is a one-bedroom apartment unit that includes a living room, kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. The second one is a studio apartment that consists of a kitchenette, bathroom, and living/bedroom area.

A successful acquisition of the Property could provide a continuous trail connection from SJRC's Jensen River Ranch and Jenco properties and the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust's Caglia property to the adjacent Lewis S. Eaton Trail. SJRC would also convert the home into its office headquarters. The Property meets the following criteria for high-priority Parkway land acquisitions: protection of habitat values, connectivity, and protection of wildlife movement corridors; need for conservation in path of development; and spreads Parkway benefits among geographic areas.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (HSR) expressed interest in acquiring a portion of the property to fulfill mitigation requirements. If this acquisition is approved and CDFW finds that the portion of the Property meets HSR's mitigation requirements prior to close of escrow, HSR would place funds in escrow based on the per acre value determined by the DGS approved appraisal.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Following the acquisition, SJRC will manage the Property as an addition to existing Parkway properties and will also use the Property as SJRC's headquarters. Costs associated with managing the Property will be manageable as the main purpose of the acquisition is to retain the site in its natural state and to provide access to supervised stewardship groups until partnerships, programs, and features can be developed for general public access. Site visits will be performed from time to time to monitor the Property. These site visits will be included with other surrounding parcels in SJRC's ownership and management.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

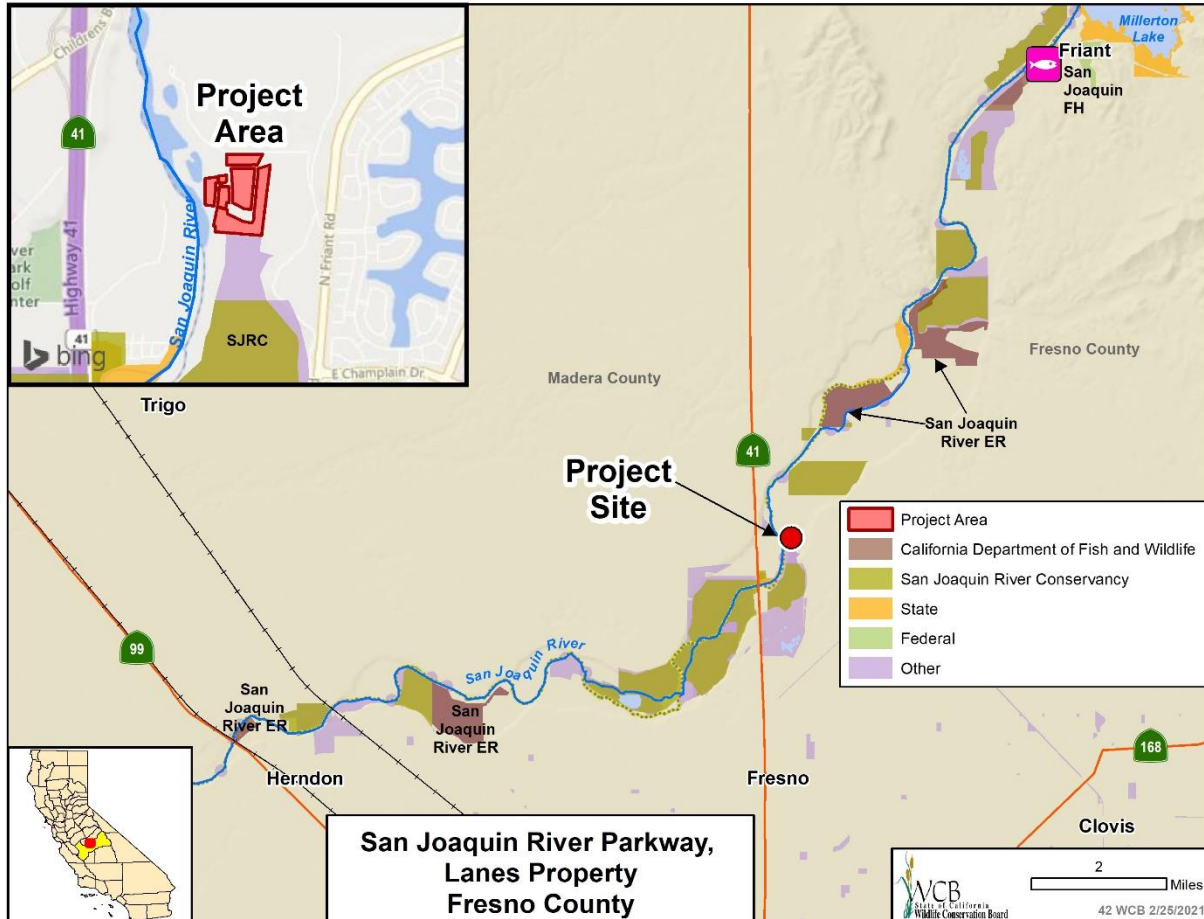
The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,200,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$2,200,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,200,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an

interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.



### 43. Western Riverside MSHCP (2019) Woods Canyon

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,932,500 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) for the grant to WRCRCA; approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$5,797,500 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to WRCRCA; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Western Riverside MSHCP (2019) Woods Canyon
Project Type:	Fee Title (62± acres)
Grantee:	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Amount Recommended:	\$1,932,500
Funding Partners:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
County:	Riverside
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.1, A.3, B.1      Objectives: SI 1.2,1.3, 2.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

#### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located in the western portion of the city of Hemet in Riverside County. Hemet is located 35 miles southeast of the city of Riverside. Florida Avenue (SR 74) and Warren Road border the Property to the north and east respectively and provide access to the Property.

Hemet is in the San Jacinto Valley, at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains and Santa Rosa Hills. The area encompasses most of the San Jacinto River floodplain and the associated low-lying alluvial plains along the foothills of the Lakeview Mountains to the northwest. The area is relatively flat alluvial plain at about 1,450 feet in elevation, with several canyons draining from the higher mountains to the east.

The area surrounding the Property is characterized by vacant agricultural and scattered low density residential land. Development increases to the east. The Hemet Auto Mall is located adjacent to the Property on the east side of Warren Road. Hemet-Ryan Airport is located to the south of the Auto Mall. Industrial land uses generally surround the airport.

The WRCRCA owns and manages several hundred acres of property in the immediate vicinity including two prior WCB projects, the Western Riverside MSHCP (2013) Kaelin acquisition in 2015, and the Western Riverside County MSHCP (2006), Expansion 5 acquisition in 2011. In addition to providing a connection to conserved lands owned by the WRCRCA, on a regional basis the

Property will provide linkages to various reserves across the broader landscape including CDFW's San Jacinto Wildlife Area and Lake Perris State Park further north, and the Diamond Valley Lake Reserve located further south.

The Property is within the Western Riverside County Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP), a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional Habitat Conservation Plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in western Riverside County.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is a single undeveloped, rectangular shaped parcel of generally level land. Approximately 6± acres of the Property are encumbered with easements traversing the Property in a southwesterly direction through the southeast quadrant of the Property including 2 water pipeline easements to Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) for a 20-foot-wide water pipeline, and an easement to the Metropolitan Water District's (MWD) First San Diego Feeder, for a 160-foot-wide water pipeline. The northeast corner of the Property is signalized. The Property has 2,150 feet of frontage along the west side of Warren Road and 1,250 feet of frontage on the south side of Florida Avenue. Utilities are available at the street.

Zoning is designated SP 89-19 in the governing Hemet Marketplace Specific Plan, consistent with the General Plan designation of mixed use. The Specific Plan identifies development of the Property to include 72 percent commercial, 18 percent light industrial, 10 percent public street, and 10 percent landscaping setback. There are no approved development entitlements for the Property.

Within the WRC MSHCP the Property is in the San Jacinto River Area Plan, subunit 4: Hemet Vernal Pool Areas. This subunit targets 940± to 1,445± acres of additional reserve lands. The Property supports very rare alkali vernal pool habitat that is inhabited by rare plants including San Jacinto Valley crownscale, Davidson's saltscale, vernal barley, Coulter's goldfields, little mousetail, and smooth tarplant, along with the common versatile fairy shrimp. This Property is an important part of the Hemet Vernal Pool Complex that is to be conserved in perpetuity under the MSHCP. Very few parcels under existing MSHCP conservation support San Jacinto Valley crownscale and Davidson's saltscale.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The WRCRCA 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, WRCRCA 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 WRCRCA's operating funds.

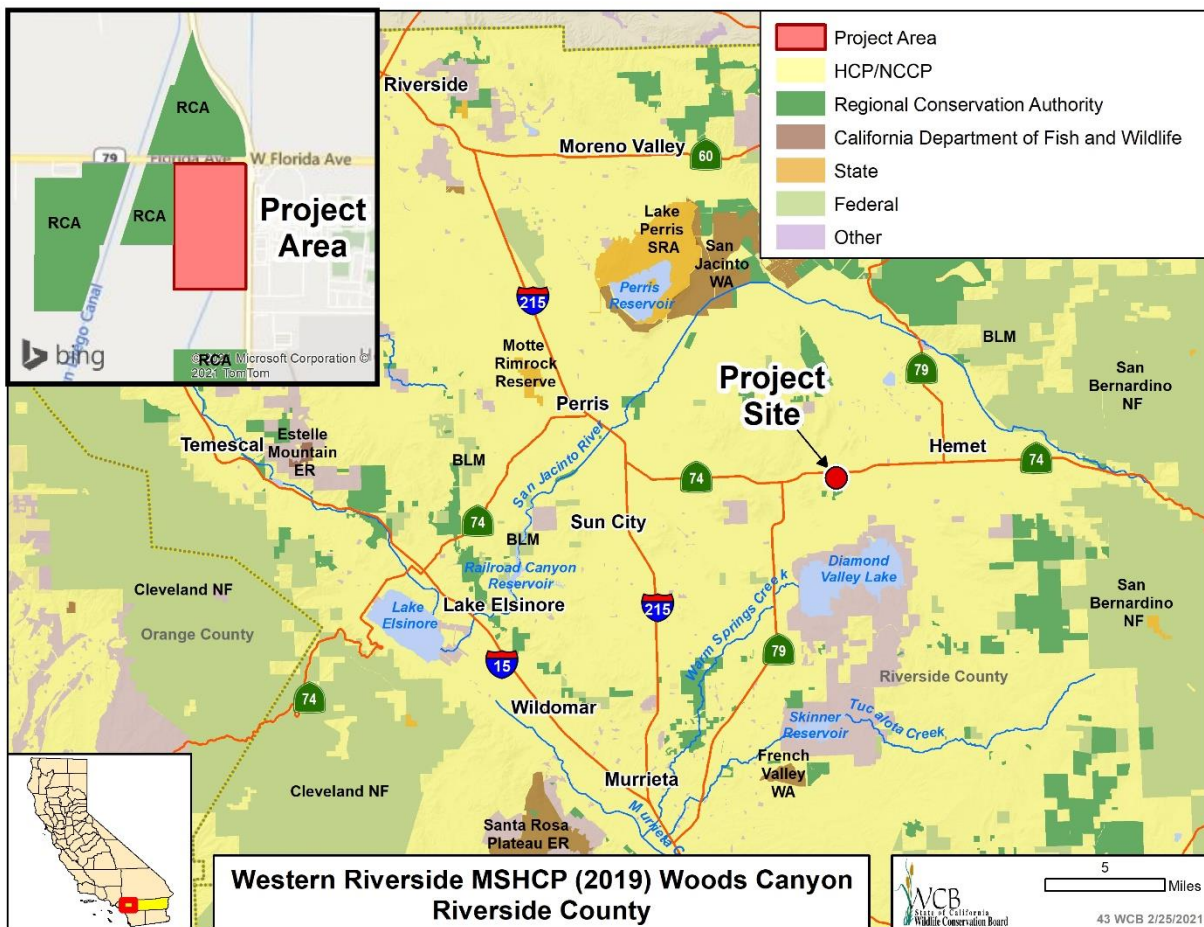
**PROJECT FUNDING**

The DGS approved fair market value is \$7,730,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,932,500
USFWS subgrant funds	\$5,797,500
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$7,730,000</b>

**CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.





#### 44. Blue Diamond Acquisition

##### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,640,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80100(a)(3) for the grant to City of Sacramento (City); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Blue Diamond Acquisition
Project Type:	Fee Title (19± acres)
Grantee:	City of Sacramento
Amount Recommended:	\$1,640,000
County:	Sacramento
Program:	Lower American River Conservancy Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.4, C.1 Objectives: 3.1, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

##### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located within the City in an area known as Sutter's Landing. The neighborhood boundaries consist of Business 80 to the east, the American River to the north, the American River levee and Union Pacific rail line to the south (B Street), and Union Pacific rail line to the west. The neighborhood has a central location immediately north of the Midtown area of Sacramento.

The Property is located within the American River Parkway Plan (Plan). The Plan is a general policy document that identifies land use designations and area plans, and broadly describes the resources within the American River Parkway (Parkway). Projects presented to WCB are first vetted through the Lower American River Conservancy Program (Program) and its advisory committee which was created in 2016 with passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 1716 to provide a state partner to work cooperatively with local agencies, particularly the County of Sacramento in its role as the Parkway Manager, and nonprofit organizations to help fund projects and provide grants to restore, enhance, interpret, protect and improve public access to the Parkway's natural, recreational, educational, and cultural resources.

##### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of four parcels containing approximately 19± acres of vacant land. The parcels are commonly identified as Assessor Parcel Numbers 003-0032-024, 003-0032-026, 003-0032-029, and 003-0032-032.

The acquisition will enable the City to protect vital habitat and will provide public access to the Property and a section of the American River that is currently not reachable from land. The acquisition increases access to the American River for anglers, hikers, bicyclists, and other visitors including residents of significantly disadvantaged communities.

Sutter's Landing Regional Park and the adjacent section of the Parkway provide habitat for wildlife including Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, coyote, and many other species. The acquisition will also provide greater opportunities for environmental education and interpretation within a 10-minute drive from downtown Sacramento and the State Capitol building.

Portions of the Property were previously used as a landfill containing inert construction material. The landowner will be remediating the contamination associated with the landfill before closing escrow with the City. The landowner is currently working with the County of Sacramento Environmental Management Department for approval of a landfill closure plan.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property is located within the Sutter's Landing area and the acquisition will allow the City to expand upon the Sutter's Landing Regional Park. The Property will allow for future extension of the Two Rivers Trail through Sutter's Landing, passive recreation, and access to nature areas for park users and will be an expansion of open space and habitat areas within Sutter's Landing. The City will fund ongoing maintenance of the land through its Park Maintenance Fund.

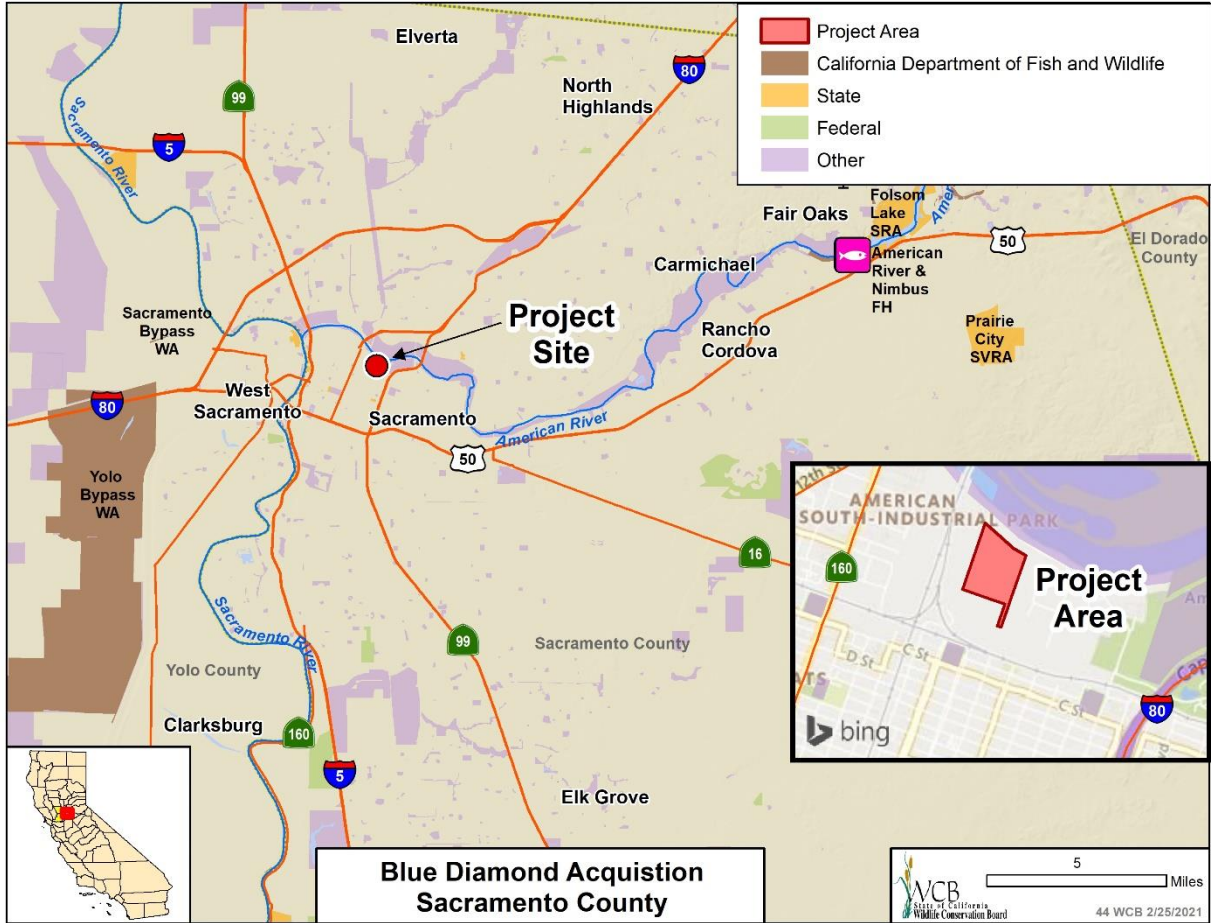
#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,640,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,640,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,640,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.



#### 45. Ventura River Parkway

##### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,750,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a)(b/c) (Proposition 1E) for the grant to Trust for Public Land (TPL) for a cooperative project with the Ventura Land Trust (VLT); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ventura River Parkway
Project Type:	Fee Title (29± acres)
Grantee:	Trust for Public Land
Successor Grantee:	Ventura Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$4,750,000
Funding Partners:	California Natural Resources Agency
County:	Ventura
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan Goals:	A.4, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

##### LOCATION

The property (Property) is located on the west side of North Ventura Avenue near the intersection of Ventura Avenue and Cañada Larga Road, more specifically, 5564-5798 North Ventura Avenue in an unincorporated area of Ventura County near the Ventura city limits.

The Ventura River watershed is the smallest of Ventura County's three major watersheds. The watershed measures 18 miles north to south, is 17 miles at its widest point and 1.3 miles wide at its narrowest point, the estuary. Steep mountains and foothills comprise most of the land area of the watershed, with altitudes ranging from seal level to 6,100 feet.

A notable feature of the Ventura River watershed is that its primary stream network remains largely un-channelized, with relatively natural stream shape and hydrologic patterns in many reaches. Two dams, three levees, and high rates of runoff from urban areas have modified stream shape and hydrologic patterns in other reaches.

The Property is within a high priority area of the Ventura River Watershed CAPP. The CAPP focuses on the richly biodiverse Ventura River watershed in Ventura County. The goals of the CAPP are to provide sustainable habitat, habitat connectivity, protection for the watershed's 138 sensitive status species, and provide compatible public access where suitable. The CAPP also seeks floodplain protection including the confluence of the Ventura River and Cañada Larga Creek, specifically, the riparian corridor along the lower section of Cañada Larga Creek. Habitat values consist of willow riparian forest, other associated riparian

vegetation, scattered fragments of sage/mule fat scrub and oak woodland, and open water habitat. Many of the areas within the CAPP are located between a bike path and the river, thus providing important public access to the river and to the Ventura River Trail. Additionally, these parcels also provide good opportunities for riparian/floodplain restoration.

Another significant biological resource in the watershed are the oak woodlands, which comprise about 13 percent of the habitat, with the densest concentration occurring in a band running through the lower middle part of the basin. The predominant oak type is coast live oak.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property includes 29± acres of floodplain just north of the city of Ventura, zoned for industrial use. The barren, vacant property is bisected by an existing .22-mile stretch of the Ventura River Trail (VRT), a 6.2-mile-long Class I multi-use trail that provides recreational and wildlife viewing opportunities. The VRT links the state-owned Omer Rains Trail with Ventura County's 9-mile-long Ojai Valley Trail to create nearly 20 miles of multi-use trails for recreational use from the Pacific Ocean, along the Ventura River, to downtown Ojai. VLT intends to work with the local community to implement potential future restoration and flood mitigation efforts including the construction of a trailhead and pathway from North Ventura Avenue and across the Property to reconnect visitors with the river, while protecting and enhancing hydrological and ecosystem resources.

The Property will maintain the open space character of land along the river and will enable the potential for a future flood risk reduction project that supports the goals of the Ventura County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Before restoration, VLT will complete a hydrologic and hydraulic study to determine the most effective restoration actions for the Property. VLT plans to implement future restoration and enhancement activities, which could include a seasonal drainageway to capture overflow from flooding of Cañada Larga Creek and habitat restoration, so that it may again function as floodplain for the Ventura River and Cañada Larga Creek while diverting floodwaters away from downstream developed property. The protection and potential future restoration of the Property, located within the Lower Ventura River Groundwater Basin, would create substantial benefits for drought relief through groundwater recharge, while preventing development that would impact water reserves.

The Property contains critical habitat for the southern California steelhead (federally endangered), California red-legged frog, southwestern willow flycatcher, California condor, least Bell's vireo, and tidewater goby. The Property is also an important piece in the wildlife movement corridor that provides essential habitat and linkages within the watershed and between the watershed and regional natural landscape blocks.

Seven acres of the Property is subject to an existing master ground lease for a county-permitted contractor storage yard use. This lease will continue for up to 20



years after the acquisition by VLT. A company related to the current landowner will receive all sublease revenue for the next 20 years with a nominal annual lease payment to VLT. The current landowner's company's retention of lease revenues was taken into account in the DGS approved appraisal and resulted in a decrease in the purchase price in the amount of \$2,260,000. The lease will terminate 20 years after closing, but will allow for VLT to buyout the remaining lease term on a pro-rated value basis should it have the funds and wish to do so. At the end of the 20-year lease and sublease terms (whether by buyout of the lease or its expiration), VLT will have the option to renew and receive all future lease revenues or terminate the lease will resume control of the seven acres and that portion of the property will become subject to granting agencies' deed restrictions for conservation and public access use.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

VLT will manage and monitor the Property to ensure the grant terms are being honored. VLT will implement ecological restoration and enhancement projects to maximize the wildlife habitat value of the Property and conduct appropriate weed abatement and fuel reduction work as a balanced approach to protect the Property. The primary management objectives will be to protect and enhance existing natural communities, water resources, and the multiple species of plants and animals these habitats support.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$5,750,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$4,750,000
CNRA EEM	\$1,000,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$5,750,000

#### CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with 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 WCB, a NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



Adjourn

**ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF FEBRUARY 2021 PROJECTS**

