



Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
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Final Meeting Agenda

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

August 26, 2021, 1:00 p.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](#)

If you can only join via telephone, email Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov for a phone number or call WCB at 916-445-8448.

*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 prior to the day of the meeting.

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Attachment A – Map of August 2021 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. 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, Vice Chair, 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. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda

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

3. Funding Status – Informational

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

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	\$77,097,729.40
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(3,612,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(17,635,737.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$55,849,992.40

SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 12) (0005)	\$845,790.00
August Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$845,790.00

CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	\$7,592,258.98
August Board Meeting Allocation:	(776,000.000)
Total Project Development:	(6,052,370.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$763,888.98

WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	\$17,764,900.86
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	(14,023,955.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$3,740,945.86

SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	\$9,841,230.44
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(376,720.00)
Total Project Development:	(5,514,145.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$3,950,365.44

WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	\$57,481,551.98
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$57,481,551.98

THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	\$160,090,057.00
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(16,081,992.00)
Total Project Development:	(36,561,476.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$107,446,589.00
GENERAL FUND (0001)	\$75,165,000.00
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(26,000,000.00)
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$49,165,000.00
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	\$5,823,450.00
August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(299,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(4,484,600.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,039,850.00
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$411,701,968.66
Grand Total - August 2021 Board Meeting Allocation:	(47,145,712.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(84,272,283.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$280,283,973.66

4. Executive Director’s Report

- Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI) Update

Consent Items

Items 5-30 are part of the Consent Calendar

5. Recovery of Funds, Thursday, August 26, 2021

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

Fund Name	Amount
General Fund	\$2,250.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund	\$0.00
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	\$4,152.50
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	\$0.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$45,636.83
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$22,586.75
Total Recoveries for All Funds	\$74,626.08

Table 2 – General Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Keyhole Acquisition	\$1,085,000.00	\$1,082,750.00	\$2,250.00
Total Recoveries to General Fund			\$2,250.00

Table 3 - Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Watson Property	\$21,574.00	\$21,574.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund			\$0.00

Table 4 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Vanauken Creek Conservation Easement	\$1,515,000.00	\$1,510,847.50	\$4,152.50
Total Recoveries to Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund			\$4,152.50

Table 5 - Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Newland Marsh	\$1,083,129.00	\$1,083,129.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002			\$0.00

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Green Gulch Creek Water Conservation	\$214,000.00	\$200,069.70	\$13,930.30
Integrated Water Strategies to Enhance Flows in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties	\$581,141.00	\$581,141.00	\$0.00
Marshall Ranch Flow Enhancement Design	\$257,467.00	\$257,463.04	\$3.96
McKee Creek Bedrock and Inset Floodplain Stream Flow Enhancement	\$135,720.00	\$135,714.51	\$5.49
Oroville Wildlife Area Floodplain Reconnection and Habitat	\$825,897.00	\$825,897.00	\$0.00
Salinas River Arundo Eradication Project Phase III	\$3,389,560.00	\$3,386,063.13	\$3,496.87
Truckee River Flow Enhancement	\$173,585.00	\$145,384.79	\$28,200.21
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$45,636.83

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
San Diego County HCP (2019) White	\$464,229.00	\$464,229.00	\$0.00
San Diego County MSCP (2019) Donelson	\$107,900.00	\$102,085.00	\$5,815.00
Watson Property	\$1,404,426.00	\$1,399,076.00	\$5,350.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup	\$52,000.00	\$47,425.00	\$4,575.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2019) Woods Canyon	\$1,952,500.00	\$1,945,653.25	\$6,846.75
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018			\$22,586.75

6. State Route 97 Wildlife Migratory Corridor Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve this project as proposed; allocate \$584,000 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 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	State Route 97 Wildlife Migratory Corridor Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Caltrans
Amount Recommended:	\$584,000
Funding Partners:	California Deer Association, Caltrans, Ore-Cal Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, U.S. Forest Service, Western Transportation Institute – Montana State University
County:	Siskiyou
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The State Route 97 Wildlife Migratory Corridor Planning project (Project) is located along State Route 97 (SR-97) about 20 miles north of the city of Weed in Siskiyou County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Northeastern California supports an abundance of wildlife habitat and is home to many wildlife species identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need by CDFW's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). These species benefit from a combination of protected lands and low road density that is typical in that part of the state. A big exception, however, is where SR-97 bisects the southern Cascades.

Truck-borne freight traffic on SR-97 between northern California and eastern Oregon has increased in recent years, increasing the probabilities of wildlife-vehicle collisions. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) in 2016 was 4,546 vehicles per day with 30 percent of those vehicles being trucks. Oftentimes, truck drivers do not stop for wildlife because it does not pose a significant hazard to drivers, swerving is difficult or dangerous, or it does not result in substantial vehicle damage. According to models, AADT growth is projected to increase 5 percent a year over the next several years

SR-97 in Siskiyou County is now a well-documented barrier to daily and seasonal migratory movement of wildlife. It was included in the CDFW’s 2020 Wildlife Movement Barriers Priority List due to concerns over the road’s impact on elk, mule deer, and mountain lions. Caltrans maintenance crews and the California Highway Patrol have also confirmed the high frequency of roadkill, including deer and elk, along SR-97.

In response, a group of federal, state, and local stakeholders formed the “State Route 97 Strike Prevention Team” to discuss locations and viable options to restore elk/deer migratory corridors. Their efforts will inform the completion of the planning process and support the development of construction-level design plans that will be used for the construction of an overcrossing to enhance connectivity across SR-97.

The Project will develop design plans to 65 percent completeness for a fiber-reinforced polymer (FRP) wildlife crossing structure. FRP bridges are made of recyclable plastic materials and can be assembled and constructed quickly relative to traditional concrete or other transportation infrastructure. They also last longer than concrete bridges and keep plastic waste out of landfills. FRP bridges are routinely used to construct pedestrian and trail crossings.

When built, this crossing would be the first of its kind in the U.S., providing an example that could be applied in other states. This technology has the potential to substantially reduce the costs of constructing standalone wildlife crossings, which are generally cost prohibitive in California because of the state’s seismic design requirements.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Preliminary Design	\$256,600	\$463,797	\$720,397
Environmental Document	\$19,500	\$124,500	\$144,000
Final Designs	\$292,900	\$295,000	\$587,900
Right of Way	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000
TOTAL	\$584,000	\$898,297	\$1,482,297

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Preliminary Design: Preliminary plans, reports, geotechnical drilling, and preliminary bridge design.
- Environmental Document: Caltrans Environmental Clearance, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance documents.
- Final Designs: Final plans, contract documents, engineer's estimate of construction cost.

- Right of Way: Outreach to private owners and obtaining special use permits.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

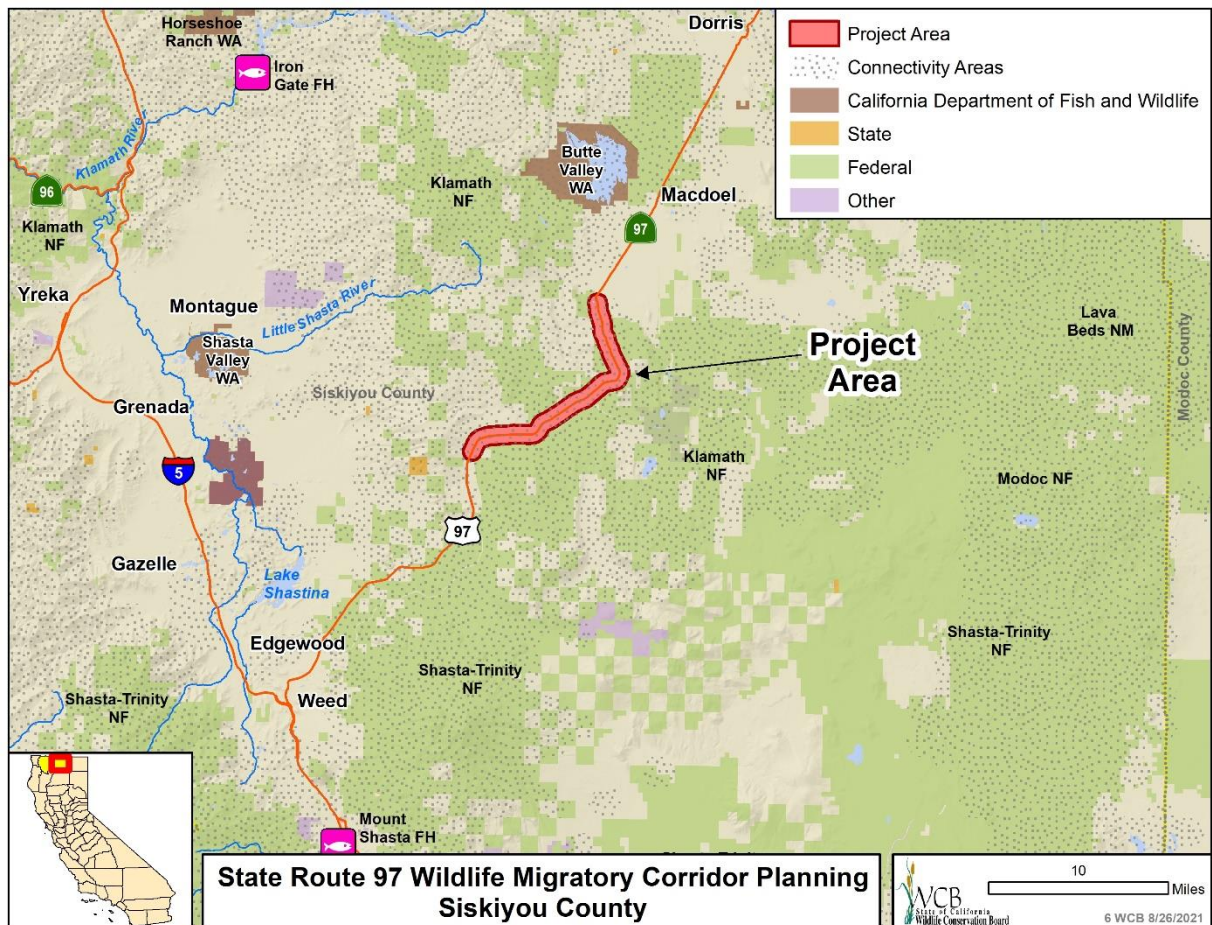
- Kristeen Penrod, Director, SC Wildlands
- Letter of Support from 36 NGOs
- Letter of Support from 1052 individuals
- Partner's Letter signed by a coalition of 37 environmental organizations
- Coalition of 1052 private citizens

Opposition:

- None received

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.



7. Dicus Slough Access Easement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

Project Title:	Dicus Slough Access Easement
Project Type:	CDFW Access and Well Easement Exchange
Amount Recommended:	\$0
County:	Butte

LOCATION

The Sacramento River Wildlife Area, Dicus Slough Unit (DSUWA) is located off the Cana Highway approximately 17 miles northwest of Chico in Butte County. It is also located at River Mile 209 on the Sacramento River, and this is considered the primary access point.

The entirety of the Sacramento River Wildlife Area is approximately 3,900 acres of riparian forest, grasslands, oxbow lakes, and gravel bars. The riparian forest is dominated by cottonwood, willow, ash, sycamore, and box elder trees with a dense understory of wild grape, pipevine, and poison oak. Among the diversity of species that can be seen along the river are otters, beavers, gray fox, bobcat, western pond turtles, ash-throated flycatchers, great blue herons, egrets, and a variety of birds of prey.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project entails CDFW accepting the quitclaim of an access and well easement from an adjacent landowner and then granting the same landowner a replacement access and irrigation easement (exchange) that is less circuitous through the DSUWA.

According to CDFW, the exchange provides an ideal opportunity to address several past land management challenges with the existing easement winding through the DSUWA. The new access easement will provide a direct route through the DSUWA and resolve a long history of management challenges.

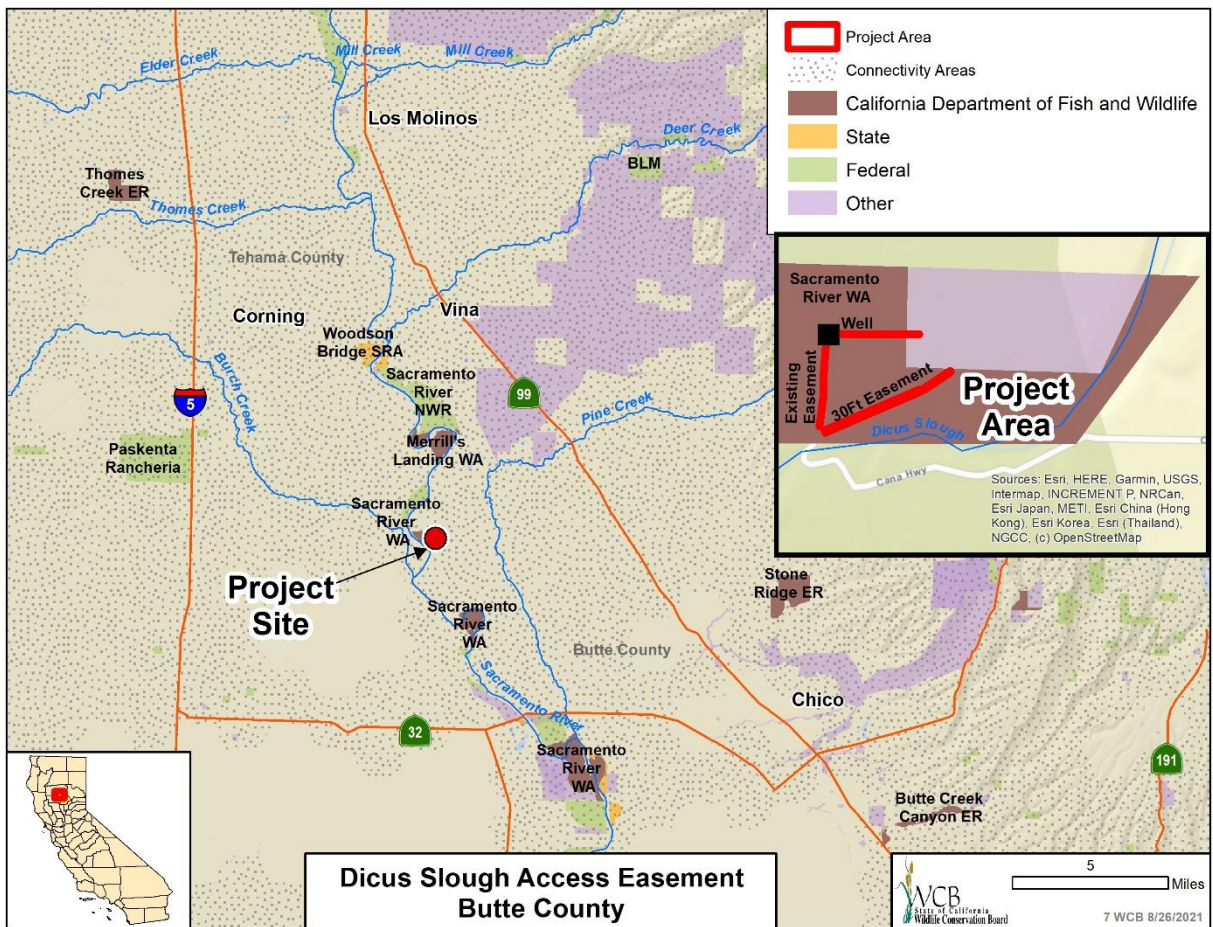
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will continue to manage the DSUWA, and the exchange will have no additional impact. Public access will be available consistent with the existing access practices.

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.



8. Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Fields 21 & 22 Wetland Enhancement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$614,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(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:	Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Fields 21 & 22 Wetland Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Amount Recommended:	\$614,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
County:	Butte
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.5, 3.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Fields 21 & 22 Wetland Enhancement project (Project) is located at CDFW's Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (Gray Lodge WA) in Butte County.

The Gray Lodge Gun Club was first organized in 1921 and was primarily used as pastureland for cattle while the lower areas were flooded in the fall and winter for waterfowl hunting. The state of California acquired the Gray Lodge Gun Club in 1931 and renamed the property the Gray Lodge Refuge. From 1931 through 1952, the area was maintained as a sanctuary for waterfowl. In 1953, public hunting for waterfowl and pheasants was initiated on the area and it was once again renamed and became the Gray Lodge Waterfowl Management Area.

In 1970, to indicate a broader wildlife management interest, the area was renamed to its current name, the Gray Lodge WA. Today, Gray Lodge WA consists of over 9,000 acres of seasonal, semi-permanent and permanent wetlands, riparian habitat, wetland-associated uplands, and wildlife food plots. The wildlife area provides critical habitat for over 200 species of birds and numerous fish, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals, including several special-status species. Gray Lodge WA is one of the most important wetland areas in the Pacific Flyway and supports up to one million ducks and 100,000 geese during the winter.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project area consists of four managed wetland units and one upland unit. These managed units provide foraging, nesting, brood rearing, and molting habitat for waterfowl and other upland nesting birds. However, the habitat quality in these units has diminished due to limited water and vegetation management capabilities. The wetland units lack independent fill and drainage capabilities and a functioning swale system. The existing water control structures are dilapidated, too small, and set too high to allow complete drainage. As a result, the wetland units cannot be filled or drained efficiently. The wetland units are becoming dominated by cattails and tules, serving as breeding grounds for mosquitos, with habitat value greatly diminished. The adjacent upland unit is dominated by invasive star thistle. Fields 21 and 22 are far below their potential to provide high-quality wintering, foraging, and nesting habitat.

The Project will upgrade water and vegetation management capabilities so the wetlands can be managed to provide desirable water depths, increased food production, reduced mosquito production, and support a desirable mix of open water and emergent vegetation. The grantee will conduct a topographic survey and prepare an engineering design for habitat improvements. Select areas within the wetlands will be recontoured to remove high and low areas and to prevent areas of stranded water. Dilapidated water control structures will be replaced, and several new water control structures will be installed to provide independent drain and fill capabilities to each wetland unit. A swale system will be constructed in the wetlands to improve water circulation, distribution, and drainage. The levee separating the wetlands and uplands in Field 21 will be improved to realign it with the natural topography and the south boundary levee in Field 22 will be improved by raising its height and realigning it with the adjacent water conveyance ditch. Islands and loafing bars will be constructed to provide habitat diversity. The upland unit will be improved by removing star thistle and replanting with native grasses and forbs, providing upland nesting habitat for waterfowl and foraging habitat for pollinator species.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project area.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$45,382	\$12,000	\$57,382
Wetland Enhancement	\$507,152	---	\$507,152
Upland Enhancement	\$52,500	\$13,000	\$65,500
Overhead	\$8,966	---	\$8,966
Total	\$614,000	\$25,000	\$639,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Topographic survey, engineering design, project and construction subcontract management, and travel and per diem costs.
- Wetland Enhancement: Subcontractor to prep site, complete earthwork, install water control structures, pipe, canal gates, and gravel.
- Upland Enhancement: Purchase and apply herbicide, and purchase and plant native grasses and forbs.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

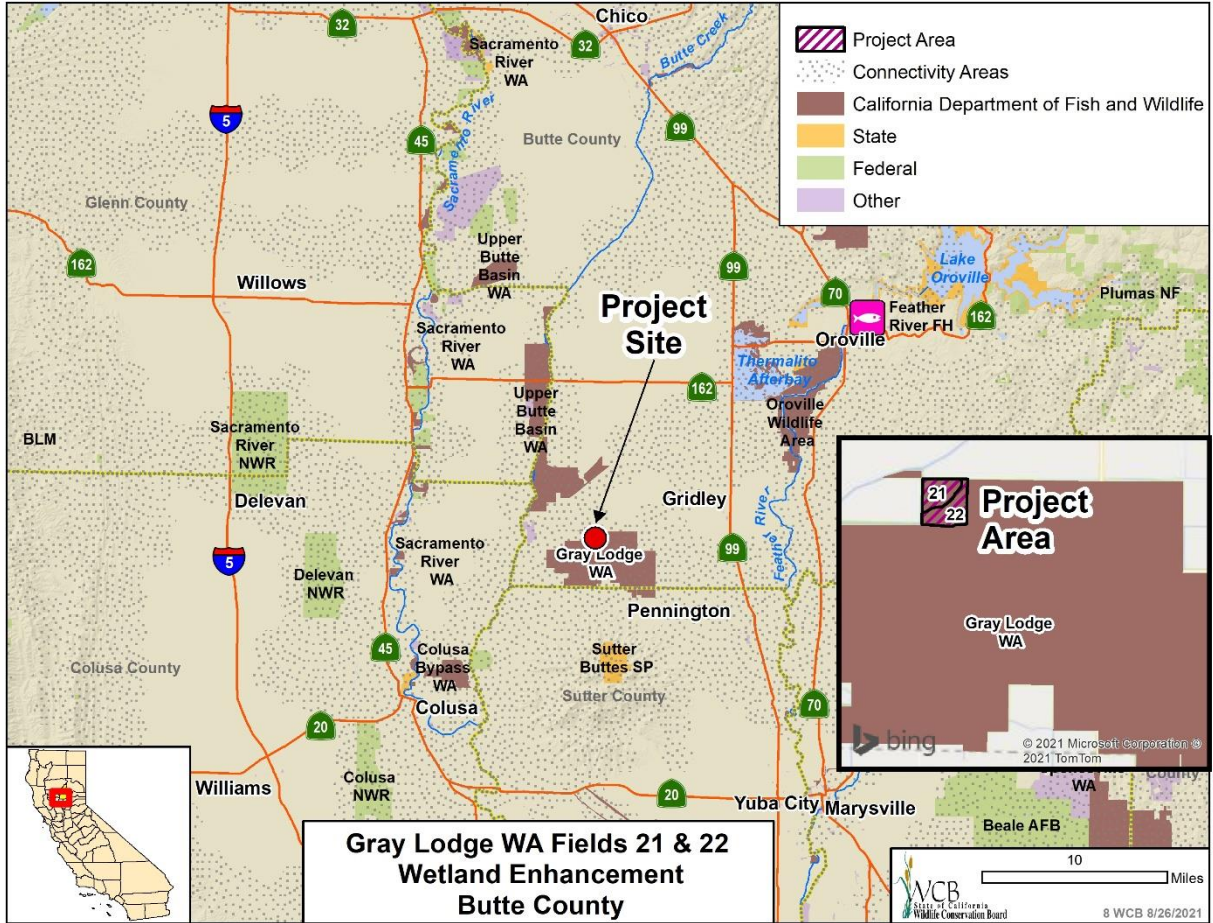
- James Cogswell, Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities, as repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public facilities and topographical features, Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, as replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities, and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



**Gray Lodge WA Fields 21 & 22
Wetland Enhancement
Butte County**

9. Truckee River Wildlife Area, West River Unit Transfer

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This proposal is to consider the no cost transfer of 41± acres of land by CDFW to the Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) to own, operate, and maintain in perpetuity for purposes of public access, public recreation, and habitat preservation.

Project Title:	Truckee River Wildlife Area, West River Unit Transfer
Project Type:	CDFW Fee Title Transfer (41± acres)
Transferee:	Truckee Donner Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$0
County:	Nevada, Placer
Program:	Land Acquisition
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.2, C.1, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located approximately 1/3 mile west of the western terminus of South River Street in the town of Truckee. The majority of the Property is located in Truckee's River Overlay Protection District with 1.5± acres located in Placer County and zoned for single family residential.

The Property is bounded by the Truckee River to the north and west. The properties on the north side of the river include single family homes and industrial-commercial uses. The Truckee Springs property which TDLT acquired in May of 2021, with the assistance of WCB funding, is immediately east of the Property and undeveloped sloping terrain is located to the southeast.

The Property, in combination with adjacent protected open spaces, preserves roughly one mile of riparian habitat along the Truckee River and 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.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of three contiguous parcels that total approximately 41± acres of undeveloped land. The Property is an irregular, elongated east-west orientation infill with its northern perimeter providing approximately 2,150 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 southern 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 moderate with dense conifer groves along portions of the southern and eastern boundary. Several large bears have been 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 originally acquired from a private owner by the state of California in 1978 to provide fishing access. The Property was designated a fishing access until 1996 when the Property was re-designated a wildlife area for enforcement purposes. Unfortunately, the Property is landlocked as there is no legal access. Transfer of the Property will allow for one ownership, legal access for public use, a local partnership that can easily manage the land, and continued conservation.

The proposed transfer of this Property is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program. Under Fish and Game Code Section 1348(c)(2), WCB may authorize the transfer of real property or rights in real property held under the jurisdiction of CDFW. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which prepared a Land Conversion Evaluation (LCE) report to provide justification for the transfer. The LCE must be approved by subdivisions within CDFW, including the land acquisition coordinator in the Regional Office, as well as the Lands Program, Regional Manager, and Deputy Director for the Wildlife and Fisheries Division. The LCE is then submitted to the Director for final approval and submitted to WCB for consideration and final approval. CDFW approved the Truckee River Wildlife Area-West River Unit LCE on January 28, 2021, and recommends the proposal for approval.

Acquisition of the Property fits into two of TDLT's conservation plans: (1) to protect and provide access to the Truckee River between Truckee and the Nevada state line, and (2) to provide open spaces and public access points adjacent to Truckee's neighborhoods.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TDLT owns the adjacent Truckee Springs property. Following the transfer, TDLT will own and manage the Property as an addition to existing TDLT lands. If at any point in the future TDLT fails to manage the Property for public access, public recreation, and habitat preservation, the state will have the ability to retake title to the Property.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

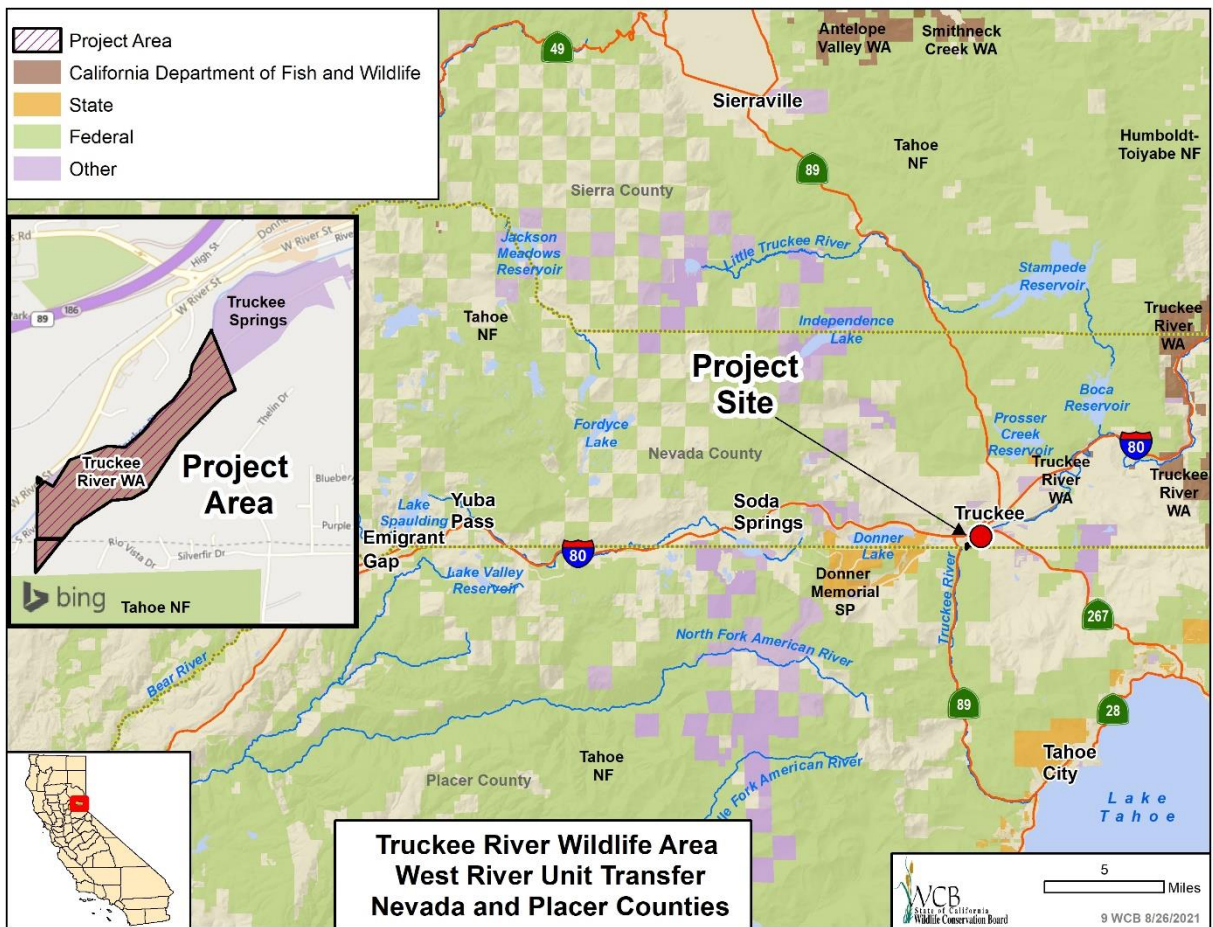
Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



10. Peabody East Ranch

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$183,360 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) for the grant to Yolo Habitat Conservancy (YHC); approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the amount of \$416,640 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to YHC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Peabody East Ranch
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (101± acres)
Grantee:	Yolo Habitat Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$183,360
Funding Partners:	USFWS Section 6
County:	Yolo
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 84
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.3 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located south and west of Interstate 5 and north of Interstate 80 off Old River Road in West Sacramento in Yolo County. The Property is south and west of the Sacramento River and the existing Kachituli Wetlands and is in close proximity to urban development occurring in the Natomas area of Sacramento County, with the city of Sacramento located 6+ miles southeast.

This Property is part of the Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) which ensures regional protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The Yolo HCP/NCCP alone will conserve more than 32,000 acres of habitat for 12 covered species, including the state threatened Swainson's hawk, state and federally threatened giant garter snake, and the tricolored blackbird, which the Fish and Game Commission recently voted to list as threatened. The Yolo HCP/NCCP is also the first NCCP to focus on conserving working landscapes, primarily agriculture, to meet species conservation needs. This project specifically preserves habitat benefitting Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, western pond turtle, and valley elderberry longhorn beetle under the Yolo HCP/NCCP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregular in shape consisting of 101± acres. Current zoning for the Property is for Agricultural Intensive. While the Property has historically supported

rural residential use, the dominant character of the Property is its productive irrigated land. The topography is generally level with the majority of the acreage.

The Property is adjacent to the existing Kachituli Wetlands on the west with the Sacramento River directly to the north and is considered a core habitat area for Swainson's hawk due to both the high density of mature riparian trees suitable for nests and surrounding agricultural fields that provide foraging habitat. Additionally, the Property will benefit and help to meet the HCP/NCCP conservation objectives for the white-tailed kite. Several mature valley oak, cottonwood, and willow trees are on the Property and provide suitable habitat for the Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite nest habitat located along the northern portion of the Property.

The Property primarily obtains water for agricultural purposes via a groundwater well although it also has riparian rights to the Sacramento River. The Property contains three rotationally planted agricultural fields that have included both field and row crops that provide suitable Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite foraging habitat including but not limited to alfalfa, wheat, milo, and tomatoes.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

YHC will hold and manage the conservation easement (Easement). A baseline conditions report will be provided and monitoring will occur yearly. YHC will enroll the Easement into the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system and will monitor and manage for the protection of covered species habitat consistent with other reserve system lands. Costs associated with enrollment of the Easement and ongoing compliance and biological monitoring incurred during the 50-year permit period of the Yolo HCP/NCCP are factored into overall reserve system administration costs, which are paid for with Yolo HCP/NCCP permit coverage fees collected under the Yolo HCP/NCCP. A post-Yolo HCP/NCCP endowment fund has been established to fund monitoring and management obligations beyond the permit period of the Yolo HCP/NCCP.

PROJECT FUNDING

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$600,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$183,360
USFWS	\$416,640
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$600,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

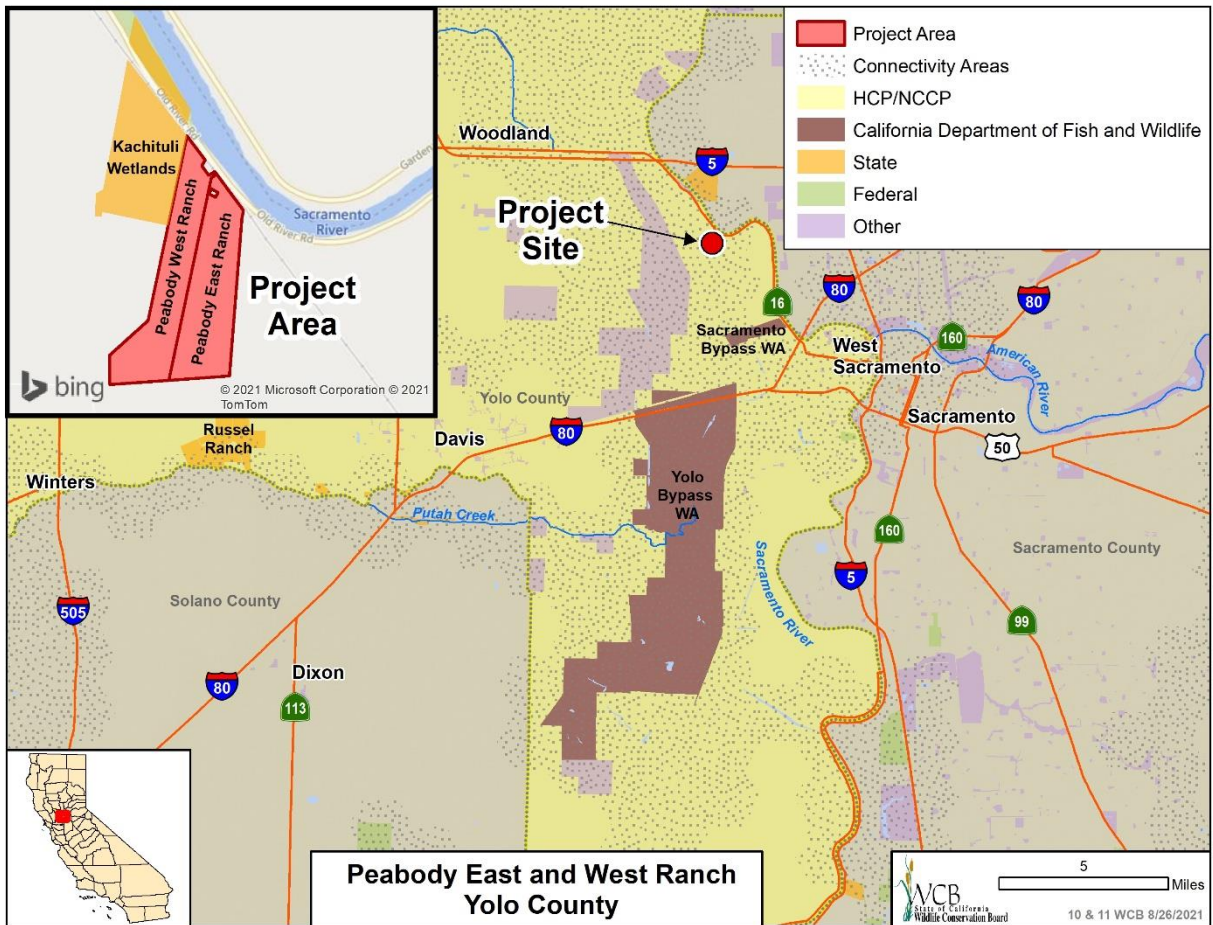
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



11. Peabody West Ranch

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$183,360 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) for the grant to YHC; approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$416,640 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to YHC; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Peabody West Ranch
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (101± acres)
Grantee:	Yolo Habitat Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$183,360
Funding Partners:	USFWS Section 6
County:	Yolo
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 84
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.3 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located south and west of Interstate 5 and north of Interstate 80 off Old River Road in West Sacramento in Yolo County. The Property is south and west of the Sacramento River and the existing Kachituli Wetlands and is in close proximity to urban development occurring in the Natomas area of Sacramento County, with the city of Sacramento located 6+ miles southeast.

This Property is part of the Yolo HCP/NCCP which ensures regional protection of plants, animals and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The Yolo HCP/NCCP alone will conserve more than 32,000 acres of habitat for 12 covered species, including the state threatened Swainson's hawk, state and federally threatened giant garter snake, and the tricolored blackbird, which the Fish and Game Commission recently voted to list as threatened. The Yolo HCP/NCCP is also the first NCCP to focus on conserving working landscapes, primarily agriculture, to meet species conservation needs. This project specifically preserves habitat benefitting Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, western pond turtle, and valley elderberry longhorn beetle under the Yolo HCP/NCCP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregular in shape consisting of 101± acres. Current zoning for the Property is for Agricultural Intensive. The dominant character of the Property is its productive irrigated land. The topography is generally level with the majority of the acreage.

The Property is adjacent to the existing Kachituli Wetlands on the west with the Sacramento River directly to the north and is considered a core habitat area for Swainson's hawk due to both the high density of mature riparian trees suitable for nests and surrounding agricultural fields that provide foraging habitat. Additionally, the Property will benefit and help to meet HCP/NCCP conservation objectives for the white-tailed kite, western pond turtle, and valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Several mature valley oak, cottonwood, and willow trees are on the Property and provide suitable habitat for the Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite nest habitat located along the northern portion of the Property. Native oak trees and shrubs have also been planted in a hedgerow along the western edge of the Property.

The Property primarily obtains water for agricultural purposes via a groundwater well although it also has riparian rights to the Sacramento River. The Property contains three rotationally planted agricultural fields that have included both field and row crops that provide suitable Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite foraging habitat including but not limited to alfalfa, wheat, milo, and tomatoes.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

YHC will hold and manage the conservation easement (Easement). A baseline conditions report will be provided, and monitoring will occur yearly. YHC will enroll the Easement into the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system such that it is monitored and managed for the protection of covered species habitat consistent with other reserve system lands. Costs associated with enrollment of the Easement and ongoing compliance and biological monitoring incurred during the 50-year permit period of the Yolo HCP/NCCP are factored into overall reserve system administration costs, which are paid for with Yolo HCP/NCCP permit coverage fees collected under the Yolo HCP/NCCP. A post-Yolo HCP/NCCP endowment fund has been established to fund monitoring and management obligations beyond the permit period of the Yolo HCP/NCCP.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$600,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$183,360
USFWS	\$416,640
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$600,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

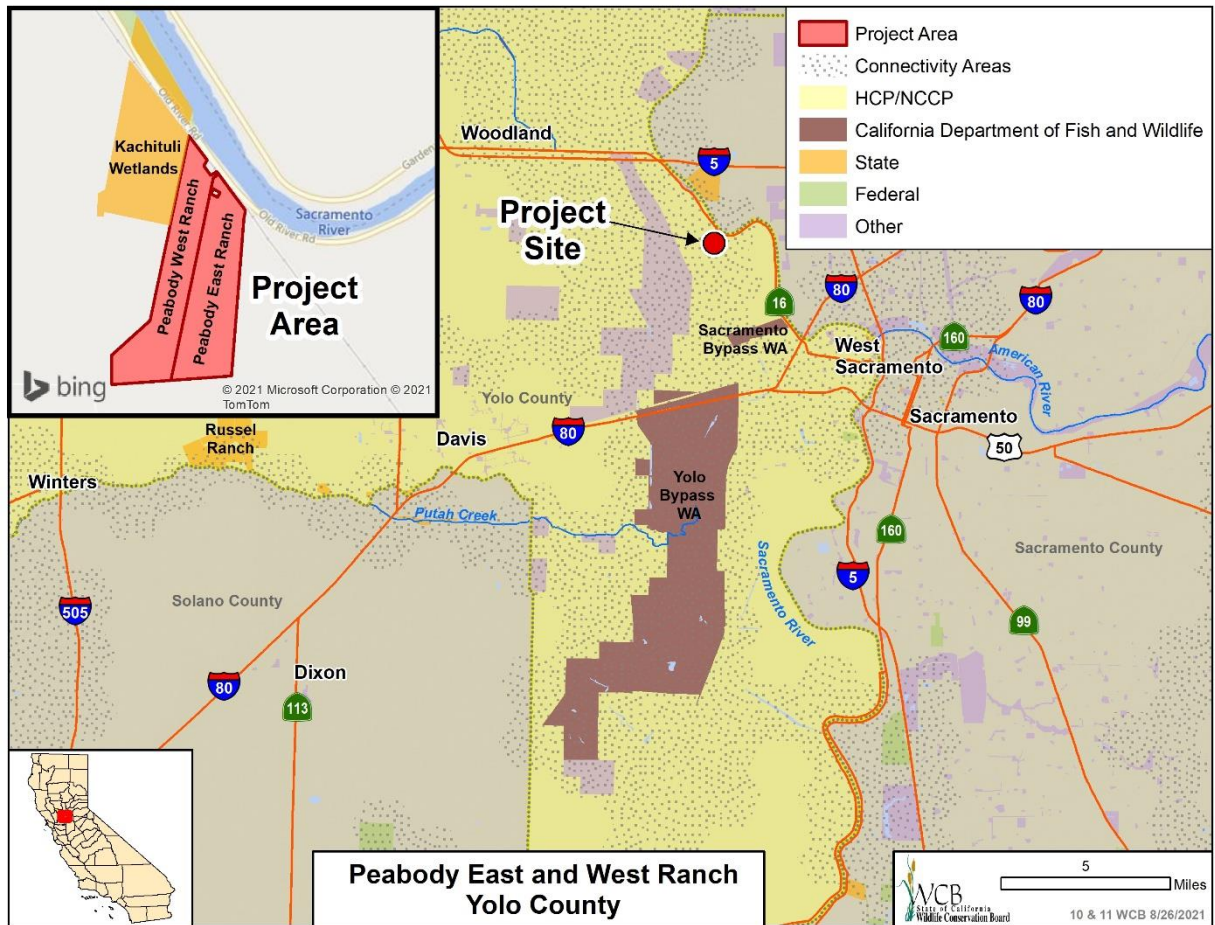
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



12. Ervin Ranch, Expansion 1

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$140,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the purchase of 40± acres, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ervin Ranch, Expansion 1
Project Type:	CDFW Acquisition (40± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$140,000
County:	El Dorado
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.1, A.4, B.2, C.1, C.4 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, 3.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located west of Latrobe Road, approximately 1 mile east of the Sacramento/El Dorado County line, approximately 4 miles northeast of the Rancho Murrieta community, and 36 miles east of Sacramento in southwestern El Dorado County. The Property lies in a corridor of protected properties located along the Cosumnes River that are owned by CDFW, the American River Conservancy (ARC), the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The Property is a 40-acre inholding in the larger 1,781-acre Ervin Ranch purchased by WCB for CDFW in 2019 with funding from WCB and the Pittman-Robertson Act.

The closest protected land within this corridor is the nearby El Dorado Ranch which was acquired by ARC with funding from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) and WCB. The Property is also located within the Upper Cosumnes River Basin Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), which helps guide efforts to preserve an intact, landscape-scale ecosystem, running the entire 80-mile length of the Cosumnes River and protects the foothill belt of the Cosumnes watershed that supports intact blue oak woodlands and several sensitive wildlife species.

CDFW and ARC have worked together to identify and expand protected lands inside the CAPP. It is intended that these projects will build a future publicly accessible wildlife area that will allow for consumptive and non-consumptive uses.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is a single legal parcel that is zoned for agricultural use. The Property is characterized by a slightly sloping to rolling topography, covered with oak woodlands, grasslands, and riparian vegetation.

Acquisition of the Property will help expand the protection of the area around the Cosumnes River. The acquisition will also expand the protection of upland habitats and help maintain wildlife corridors extending from the downstream protected areas of the Cosumnes River up into the higher foothill areas and into the El Dorado National Forest. Projects such as this also help provide protection against the effects of climate change by providing varying elevations for species to move between to better adapt to temperature variations. The Property is also potentially suitable for future development of public access uses and facilities.

As one of the last undammed rivers, the Cosumnes, flowing from the Sierra Nevada Mountains into the greater Central Valley, is an important wildlife corridor. The river harbors salmonid runs including steelhead trout and fall-run Chinook salmon, and provides habitat for otters, beavers, both red and yellow-legged frogs, and the giant garter snake. The river and riparian corridor support numerous species including deer, mountain lion, wild turkey, and coyotes along with numerous migratory songbirds and waterfowl.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will operate and manage the property as a wildlife area, but the Property has not yet been designated as a wildlife area and is not yet open to public access. Costs will be minimal and will be provided for by the CDFW Region 2 annual budget. Region 2 is in the planning stages of allowing public access to the Property and future activities will include hunting, fishing, birdwatching, hiking, and wildlife viewing.

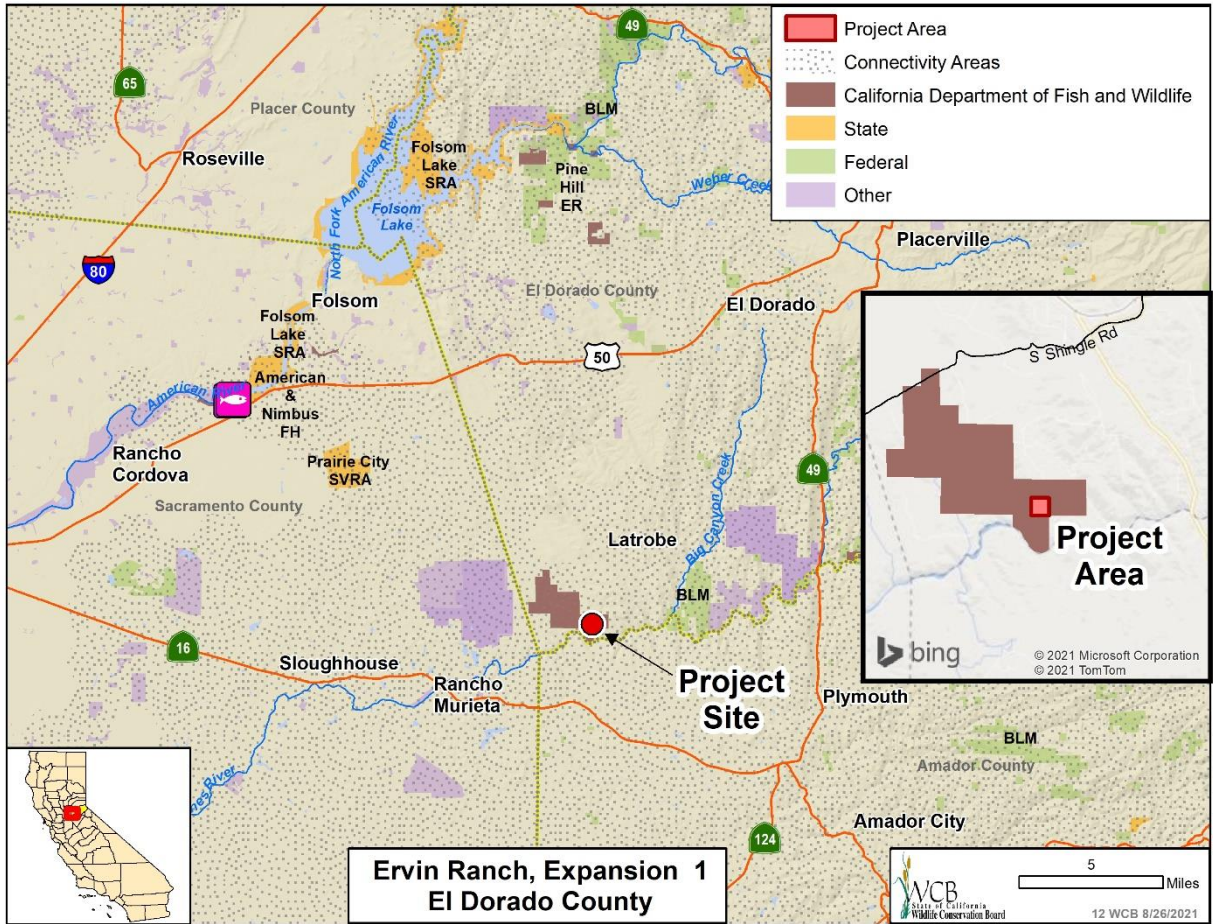
PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$140,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$140,000
---	---
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$140,000

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.



13. Hawk Hill Visitor Access Improvements

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$204,077 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:	Hawk Hill Visitor Access Improvements
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$204,077
Funding Partners:	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Marin Community Foundation, National Park Service, Private Donation, State Coastal Conservancy
Landowner(s):	National Park Service
County:	Marin
Program:	Public Access
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: C.1 Objectives: SI 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Hawk Hill Public Access Improvements project (Project) is located on the Marin Headlands approximately five miles northeast of Sausalito in Marin County. This headlands property has sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean, Golden Gate Bridge, and San Francisco. Hawk Hill consists primarily of coastal prairie that supports the silver lupine, a host plant for the federally endangered mission blue butterfly. Hawk Hill is a popular site for Bay Area residents, visitors, birders, history buffs, and hikers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hawk Hill is a popular destination in poor condition. The trails, parking, and the WWII fortifications on the property, including a Battery Commander Station and elevated Nike Radar Platform, are either in disrepair or nonexistent. These items are being addressed in phases 1 and 2 of the Project. The larger Hawk Hill restoration project will dramatically improve the visitor experience. Improvements will allow more individuals to:

- Participate in the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory's (GGRO) Hawkwatch raptor research program.
- See the historic military fortifications first-hand.
- Participate in award-winning wildlife education programs.
- Experience a striking 360-degree window on the intersection of the urban and natural world that surrounds Hawk Hill.

The goals of the larger Hawk Hill Visitor Access Improvement project are to enhance vital wildlife habitat for raptors and the mission blue butterfly, protect and rehabilitate historic structures, and upgrade the current trail system for improved accessibility for the disabled and overall visitor safety.

WCB funding assists with Phase 3, the final phase for Hawk Hill improvements. WCB funding will replace approximately 500 linear feet of existing dirt trail with accessible trail surfacing and 450 feet of existing asphalt with new accessible asphalt pathways. In addition, seating will be installed including four new benches and 30 linear feet of metal benches installed on a concrete seat wall. The Project will complete the last components of the larger restoration project providing universal access to a biologically and historically rich location.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of Hawk Hill. 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	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Install Pathways	\$167,090	---	\$167,090
Install Site Furnishings	\$36,987	---	\$36,987
Compliance	---	\$175,500	\$175,500
Construction	---	\$1,825,531	\$1,825,531
Revegetation	---	\$141,475	\$141,475
Project Management	---	\$706,241	\$706,241
Total	\$204,077	\$2,848,747	\$3,052,824

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Install Pathways: Replace existing trails with accessible pathways.
- Install Site Furnishings: Install new benches and metal benches on a concrete seat wall.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

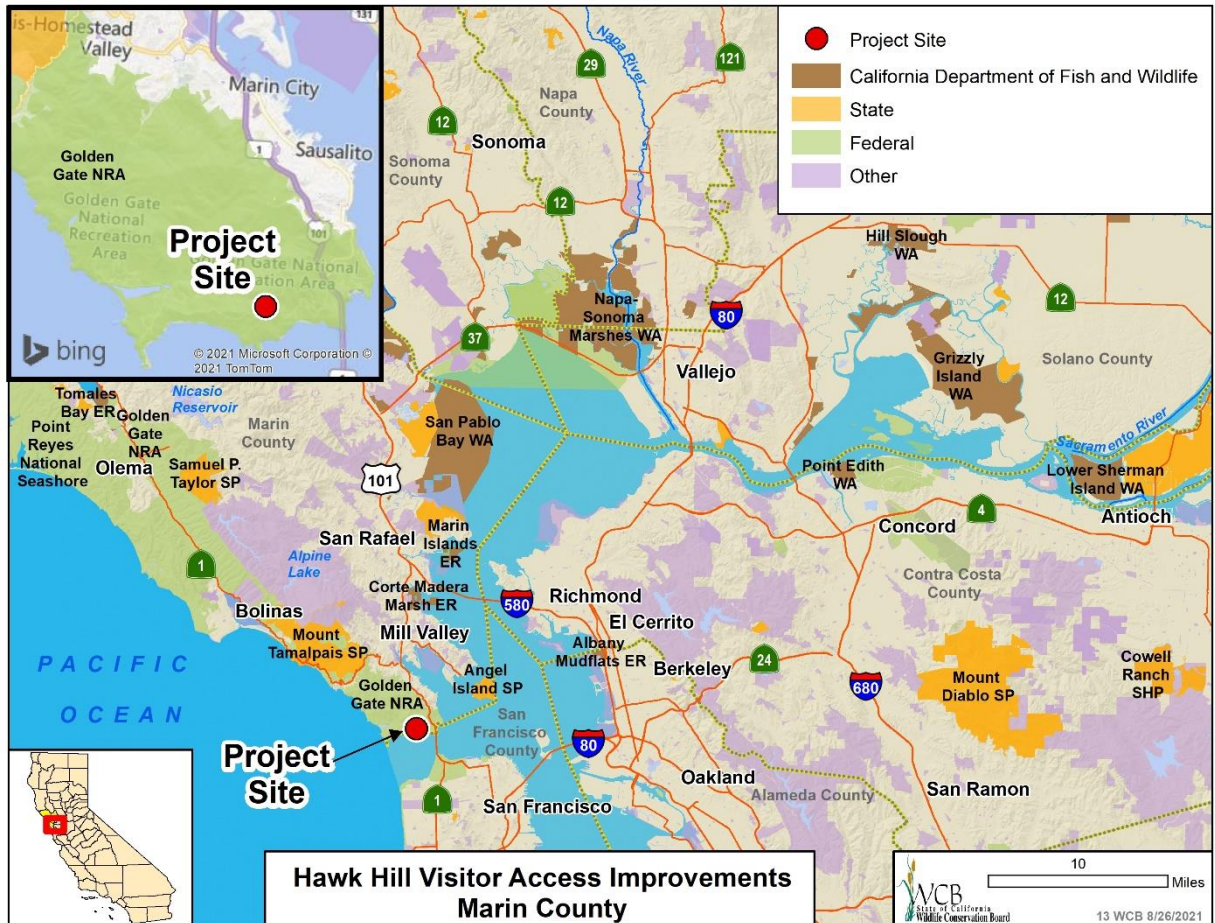
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities, consisting of repair and maintenance of existing facilities and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alteration to Land, as minor alterations in the condition of land. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



14. Montezuma Slough Fish Screen Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$367,000 from Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(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:	Montezuma Slough Fish Screen Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Amount Recommended:	\$367,000
Funding Partners:	Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
County:	Solano
Program:	Inland Wetlands Conservation
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Montezuma Slough Fish Screen Planning project (Project) is located at CDFW's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area (GIWA) within the Suisun Marsh, in Solano County. The GIWA was established in 1950 to preserve wetlands and to provide wintering habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds. GIWA consists of approximately 8,600 acres of CDFW owned lands and provides habitat for more than 100,000 wintering waterfowl annually.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The water supply for nearly half of GIWA is provided through two, 48-inch water control structures. These two intakes are located on the eastern boundary of the GIWA and pull water via gravity and tidal fluctuation from the tidally influenced Montezuma Slough. The existing intakes are approximately 3.2 river miles upstream from the confluence of Montezuma Slough and the Sacramento River.

These existing intakes are beyond repair and must be replaced entirely. For the past several years, these intakes have not functioned properly for both water management and fish protection. New water delivery intakes and screens are needed to enhance the wetland habitat and wildlife values of GIWA while protecting anadromous fish within the Montezuma Slough system.

The Project will develop a feasibility analysis and the necessary baseline surveys to design, engineer, permit, and complete compliance obligations for a new water delivery intake and fish screen facility that is consistent with the California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual, Appendix S Fish Screen Criteria. The feasibility analysis will identify the challenges, constraints, and benefits for two scenarios of the replacement of the intake/fish screen facility: replace the facility in its current location or relocate the facility to the terminus of the Grizzly Ditch.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$23,577	---	\$23,577
Feasibility Analysis	\$15,648	---	\$15,648
Engineering and Design	\$152,968	---	\$152,968
Permitting and Compliance	\$147,680	---	\$147,680
Indirect Costs	\$27,127	\$23,000	\$50,127
Total	\$367,000	\$23,000	\$390,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project management and administration, prepare progress reports, invoices, access agreements, develop bid process, and manage subcontractor agreements, project meetings, and coordination.
- Feasibility Analysis: Complete feasibility analysis for two scenarios, and draft technical memo identifying implementation and management costs.
- Engineering Design: Complete 65% engineering design for the chosen scenario.
- Permitting and Compliance: Complete a permitting plan, permits, and compliance documents for the chosen scenario.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

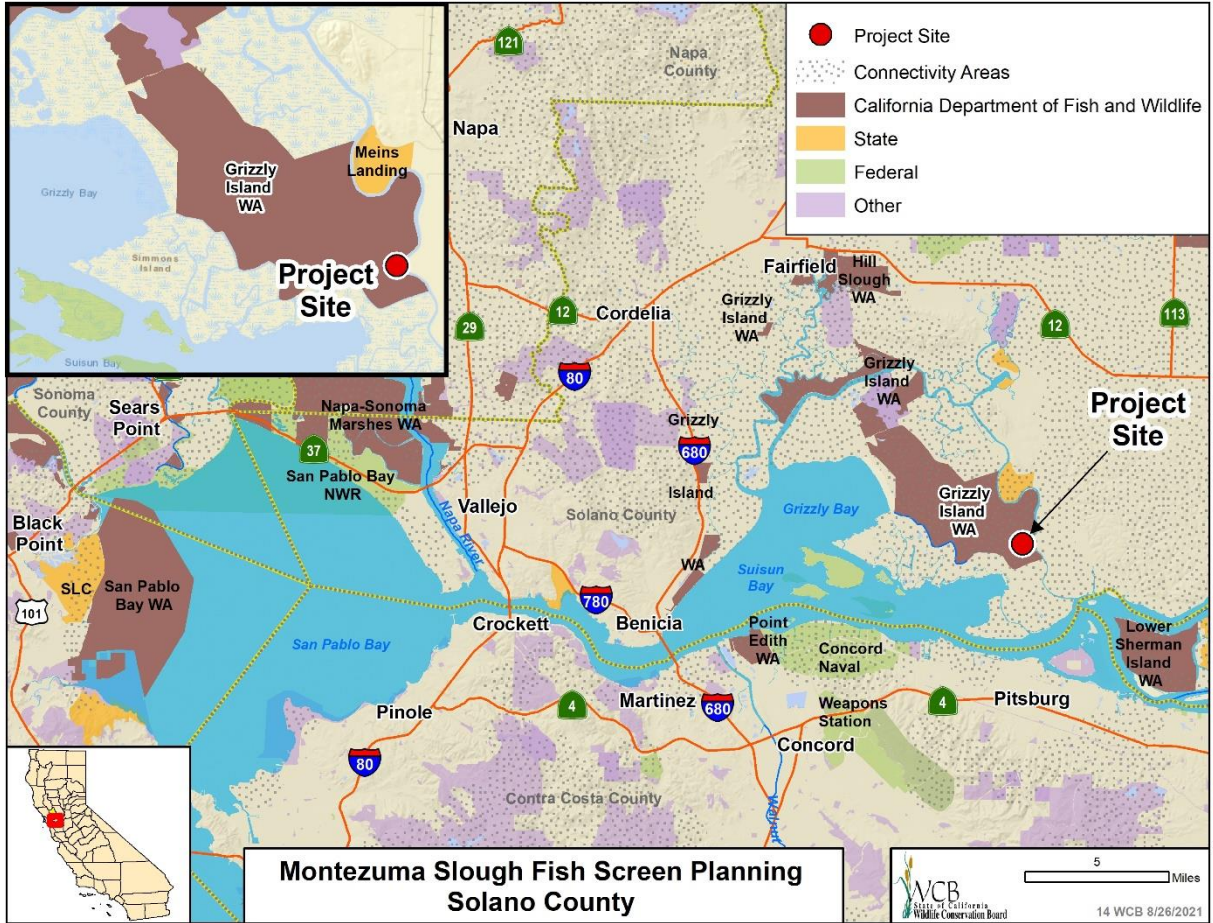
- James Cogswell, Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

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.



15. East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Pugh)

Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

16. Upper Hess Creek Habitat Enhancement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$133,000 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); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Upper Hess Creek Habitat Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$133,000
Funding Partners:	East Bay Regional Park District, East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
Landowner(s):	East Bay Regional Park District, East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
County:	Contra Costa
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Upper Hess Creek Habitat Enhancement project (Project) is located approximately five miles northeast of the city of Walnut Creek, along Kirker Pass Road in Contra Costa County. The Project is within the 469-acre Hess Property, which is part of the Preserve System for the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy. The northern 420 acres are referred to as the "Upper Hess Creek" property, and the southern 50 acres as the "Lower Hess Creek" property. The Project will address grassland ecosystem management needs for the 420-acre Upper Hess Creek portion of the property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The goal of this Project is to improve grassland ecosystem management of the larger Upper Hess Creek property, while protecting a previous restoration investment. In 2010, the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and the East Bay Regional Park District acquired the property, consistent with ecosystem conservation priorities identified in the 2007 East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). In 2012, the Habitat Conservancy constructed a large creek and wetland restoration project on the site, primarily to support California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander. Successful maintenance of the grassland and wetland habitat on this property includes the use of livestock to manage invasive weeds and reduce fuel loads. Grazing is a widely recognized and powerful tool to help control invasive weeds, reduce grassland height and thatch to support healthy and functional

habitat for special status species, and reduce fuel loads related to fire risk. The fencing and watering infrastructure that supports livestock management, however, has been experiencing failures over the last seven years. These failures have jeopardized the quality of habitat on the site by unintentionally allowing grazing access to sensitive wetland habitat areas. Reactive measures to fix repetitive well failures, broken fences, and leaking waterlines have become more and more expensive and ineffectual, necessitating an overhaul of the livestock infrastructure rather than mending what was inherited with the property. This Project will install and overhaul the livestock infrastructure necessary for the proper management of the wetland, upland, and grassland habitats on the Upper Hess Creek property. Specifically, two wells, fencing, and shade structures will be installed to encourage the cattle to move around the site for better weed management while avoiding access to restored wetland habitat areas.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The restoration and management objectives for this Project are covered in the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, East Contra Costa County Habitat 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	WCB	Non-WCB Funds*	Total Cost
Well Establishment	\$76,000	\$3,800	\$79,800
Water System Installation	\$40,000	\$2,000	\$42,000
Shade Structures/Fencing	\$17,000	\$850	\$17,850
Total	\$133,000	\$6,650	\$139,650

*The East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy and East Bay Regional Park District will provide match for in-kind grant management and oversight.

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Well Establishment: Costs associated with the establishment of two wells.
- Water System Installation: Costs for the installation of a second storage tank, solar panels and electrical connections, pumps to move water uphill, additional water troughs, and a buried water line.
- Shade Structures and Fencing: Cost to install two shade structures near installed water sources and rehabilitate exclusion fencing.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

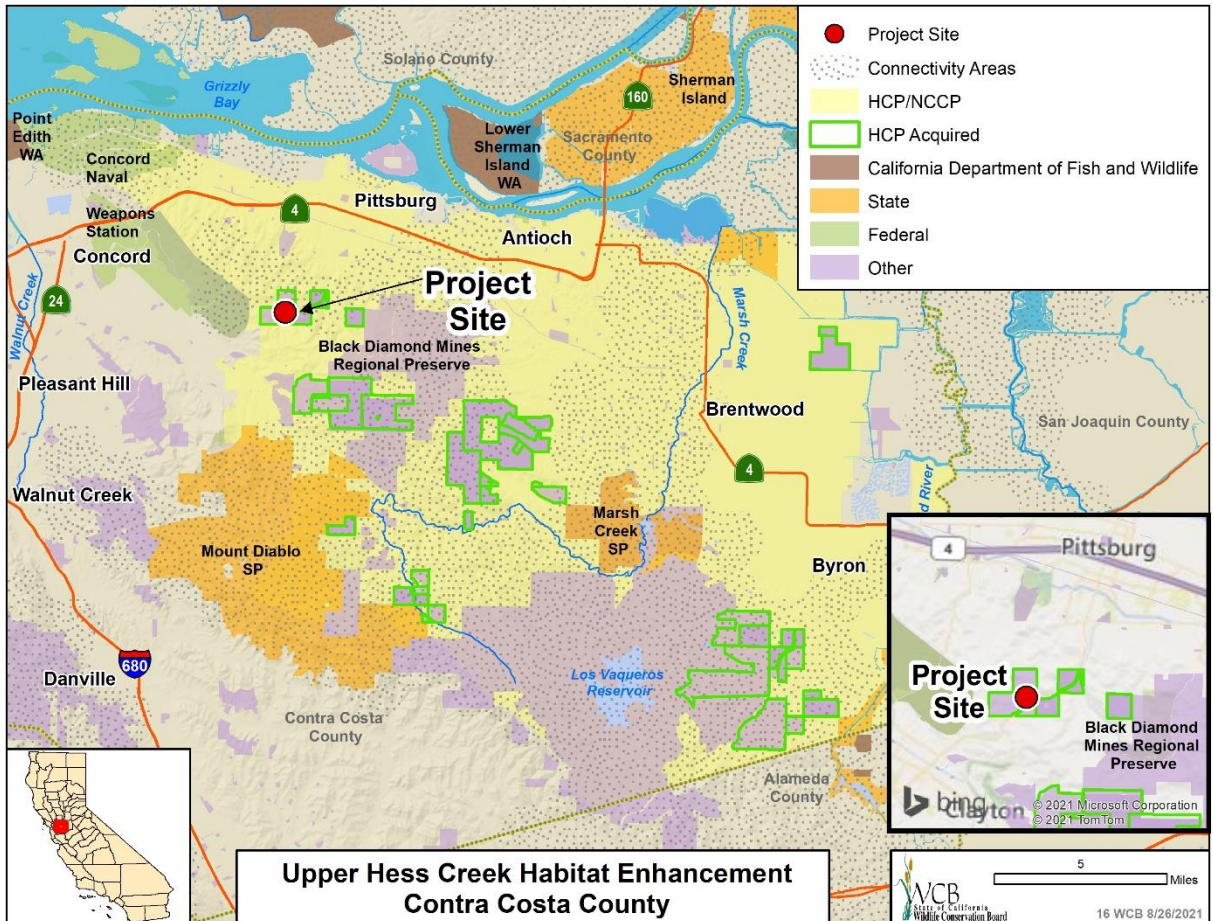
- John Hopkins, Director, California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304(d), Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as a minor alteration to the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



17. Del Valle Regional Park Restroom Renovation

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 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:	Del Valle Regional Park Restroom Renovation
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	East Bay Regional Park District
Amount Recommended:	\$300,000
Funding Partners:	East Bay Regional Park District, Department of Water Resources
Landowner(s):	California State Parks, Department of Water Resources
County:	Alameda
Program:	Public Access
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: C.1 Objectives: SI 3.3, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Del Valle Regional Park Restroom Renovation (Project) is located in a beautiful, oak covered valley in Del Valle Regional Park (Park). The Park's centerpiece is Del Valle Lake. The lake is five miles long and a popular fishing site for trout, catfish, small and large-mouth bass, and striped bass. The lake also draws kayakers, windsurfers, and families for picnicking and swimming in the lake. The Park is known for spectacular wildflower blooms. The Ohlone Wilderness Trail links into Del Valle Regional Park making it a great hiking destination. The Park's approximately 3,000 acres are just 10 miles from Livermore in Alameda County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Del Valle is a popular recreation spot in the East Bay where 65 percent of the residents live in areas with fewer than three acres of park per 1,000 people. Unfortunately, 40-plus years of use and weather have left the park facilities in disrepair. Additionally, Del Valle predates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and some of the Visitor Center's facilities are not ADA compliant. The dilapidated state of the restroom is a problem, and inadequate restroom facilities can be a barrier for visitors.

The East Bay Regional Park District will demolish the current women's restroom/changing area and transform the present women's group space into ten unisex private stalls, and provide for the necessary ADA upgrades, as well as upgrades to the electrical, water, and sanitary sewer systems. The men's restroom will be renovated in the near future. Clean and safe restrooms are an

essential amenity providing safe and equitable recreation for all. These improvements will enhance public access at the Park, especially for people who might not otherwise visit because of the limited facilities.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The East Bay Regional Park District has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of Del Valle Regional Park. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, East Bay Regional Park 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	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Construction Management	---	\$20,000	\$20,000
Architectural Design	---	\$45,000	\$45,000
Demolition/Site Preparation	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Relocate Utilities	---	\$25,000	\$25,000
Restroom Installation	\$250,000	\$660,000	\$910,000
Total	\$300,000	\$800,000	\$1,100,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Demolition/Site Preparation: This will include demolition of the existing restroom facility, installation of the building foundation and ADA access, and concrete work.
- Restroom Installation: This will include installation of a prefabricated, ADA compliant, unisex restroom with ten stalls.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

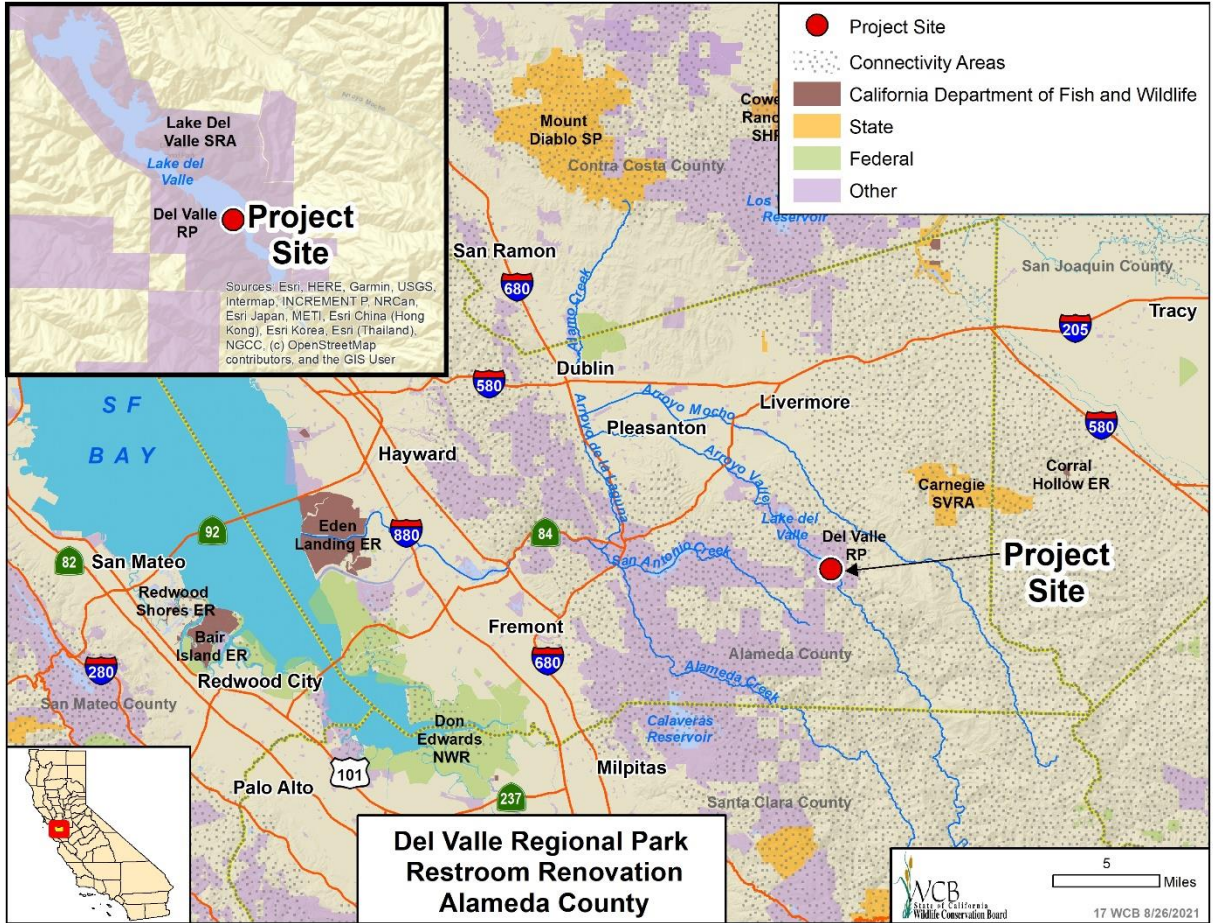
- Steven M. Glazer, Senator, Seventh Senate District.
- Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Assemblymember, Sixteenth District
- Scott Haggerty, Alameda Board of Supervisors
- Juan Escobar, Chief, Department of Water Resources, North Central Region

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15302, Class 2, Repair and Replacement. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



18. Coyote Valley Wildlife Linkage Master Plan

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$350,000 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:	Coyote Valley Wildlife Linkage Master Plan
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Amount Recommended:	\$350,000
Funding Partners:	Peninsula Open Space Trust, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Landowner(s):	Peninsula Open Space Trust, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, and the City of San Jose
County:	Santa Clara
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1, 4.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Coyote Valley Wildlife Linkage Master Plan project (Project) will develop an ecological master plan for conserved lands in Coyote Valley. Coyote Valley is a roughly 2-mile-wide and 7-mile-long (approximately 7,400 acres) portion of the Santa Clara Valley in the southernmost part of San Jose, California. The Santa Cruz Mountains lie to the west and connect to the Diablo Range to the east through the valley. Coyote Valley's largely undeveloped open space lands fall between densely urbanized areas of San Jose to the north and Morgan Hill to the south.

The North Coyote Valley Conservation Area encompasses 953 acres of recently conserved lands along Bailey Road in Coyote Valley, including the heart of the historic Laguna Seca freshwater wetland complex. These lands were protected from development with funding from WCB (Sobrato South project, approved in May 2020), State Coastal Conservancy, City of San Jose, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (Authority), and Peninsula Open Space Trust. WCB funded conservation of the nearby 1,831-acre Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve in the foothills to the east and the 1,861-acre Tilton Ranch in the foothills to the southwest.

The Project is located entirely within the Coyote Valley Conservation Program Area, established in 2019 by California State Assembly Bill 948. AB948 defines Coyote Valley as a resource of statewide significance which provides agricultural,

wildlife, recreational, climate, and other natural infrastructure benefits, including serving as a critical corridor for wildlife migrating between the Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Coyote Valley Wildlife Linkage Master Plan (Master Plan) will guide the future use and management of approximately 1,000 acres of open space within Coyote Valley, will serve as a blueprint to implement the Authority's Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage Report, and achieve the floodplain preservation goals of San Jose's 2018 Measure T.

The objectives of the Project are to complete assessments to ensure the Master Plan will result in effective enhancement of wildlife habitat, ecological connectivity, and sustainable management of water resources. Although many research studies evaluated the conservation values of Coyote Valley, the Authority did not have site control until 2019-2020, making site specific surveys and assessments unfeasible until recently. These inventories and assessments are essential for understanding opportunities and constraints and developing restoration scenarios, which are fundamental to developing a master plan.

Site inventory and assessments will include reviewing site specific wildlife studies, including those for special status species, and a road ecology study evaluating where wildlife is crossing roads and where they are being hit by vehicles. This will include inventories of hydrological and groundwater resources, as well as a cultural resources assessment. Understanding the biological and water resource opportunities and constraints, and development of restoration scenarios based on this analysis, will form the foundation for how to thoughtfully integrate cultural and historic resources, agriculture, and recreation into a comprehensive Master Plan. A monitoring plan will also be developed in this initial phase to establish baseline conditions.

Opportunities and constraints analysis will synthesize the data from previous research with the data collected during the site inventory phase to summarize the opportunities and constraints for natural and historic resources.

Once the opportunities and constraints are understood, restoration scenarios will be developed to support the Master Plan's primary objectives of enhancing wildlife habitat and ecological connectivity and sustainably, and management and restoration of water resources. The Master Plan will create a roadmap for implementing a resilient landscape linkage on Coyote Valley's conserved lands.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Site Inventory and Assessment	\$300,000	\$230,000	\$530,000
Opportunities and Constraints Analysis	\$25,000	\$75,000	\$100,000
Develop Restoration Scenarios	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$125,000
Total	\$350,000	\$405,000	\$755,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Site Inventory and Assessment: Background review, baseline site surveys, land cover mapping, wetland delineation, road ecology study, special status amphibian surveys, wildlife surveys, monitoring plan, cultural resources assessment, hydrological inventory and topographic surveys, groundwater and surface water monitoring study, hydrologic and hydraulic model update, calibration, flow assessment, and natural and historic resources existing conditions report.
- Opportunities and Constraints Analysis: Evaluate natural water supplies and natural and historic resources existing conditions opportunities and constraints analysis.
- Develop Restoration Scenarios: Initial restoration design scenario evaluation, existing condition and initial restoration design reporting, and habitat restoration scenarios.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Ash Karlra, Assemblymember, Twenty-Seventh District
- Mark Stone, Assemblymember, Twenty-Ninth District
- Sam Liccardo, Mayor, City of San Jose
- Walter T. Moore, President, Peninsula Open Space Trust
- Brian Schmidt, Legislative Advocacy Director, Green Foothills
- Cayce Hill, Executive Director, Veggielution
- Partner’s Letter signed by a coalition of 36 environmental organizations
- Coalition of 1052 private citizens

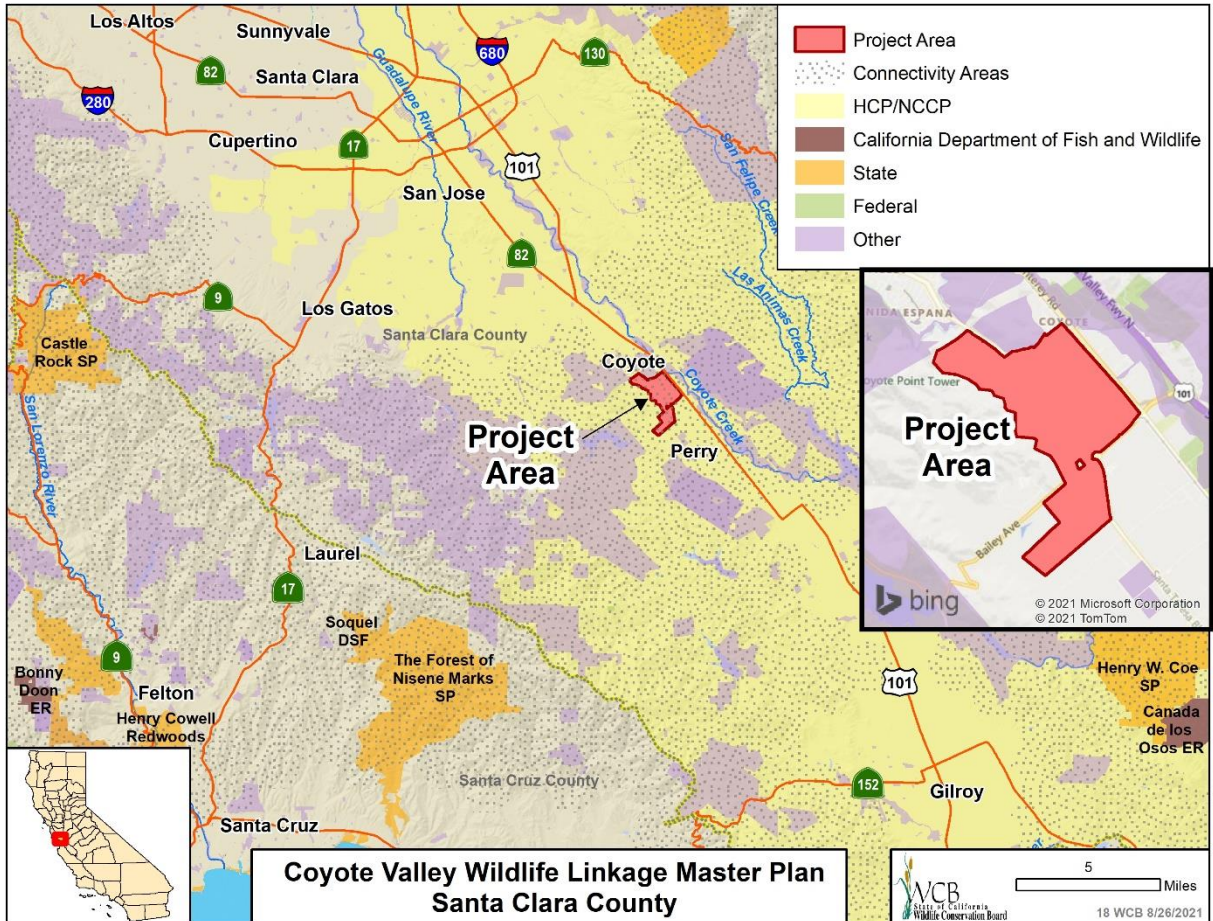
Opposition:

- None received

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



19. Newman Seasonal Inland Wetland Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$299,000 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:	Newman Seasonal Inland Wetland Restoration
Project Type:	Technical Assistance
Applicant/Grantee:	City of Newman
Amount Recommended:	\$299,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Fish and Wildlife, City of Newman
County:	Merced, Stanislaus
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.4 Objectives: SI 1.4, 2.5, 3.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Newman Seasonal Inland Wetland Restoration project (Project) is a 102-acre site located on the southeast border of the city of Newman, in both Stanislaus and Merced counties.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, and riparian habitat once covered vast areas of California's Central Valley. Over 90 percent of vernal pool habitat in the valley has been destroyed, with similar losses of other wetland types. To counter these losses, wetlands restoration has become an important part of the conservation landscape. Recognizing the ability of wetlands to sequester and store carbon, greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction programs are available for restoring these habitats. Currently, however, there is only limited study of the GHG dynamics of these restored habitats. To effectively access GHG funding for restoration of this important habitat type, particularly for smaller Central Valley landowners and municipalities, effective tools are needed to monitor the GHG dynamics of their projects.

The goal of this Project is to help fill the knowledge gap for GHG dynamics of seasonal inland wetlands through comparative pre- and post-restoration, in both the currently degraded pasture (baseline) and the various restored mosaic of wetland landscapes during their first two years of development. The demonstration site for the Project is currently perennial grassland habitat on a 102-acre site located southeast of the city of Newman. The Project area is primarily located in northwestern Merced County, with a small segment extending into neighboring

Stanislaus County. This area will be restored under the City of Newman’s Seasonal Inland Wetland Restoration Project. Planning and implementation funding for this effort has already been awarded by CDFW, and includes restoration of inland seasonal wetland, riparian, and perennial grassland habitat.

The data produced by the Project will improve regional and statewide GHG inventories, advance understanding of the potential that restoring wetlands offer in mitigating California GHG emissions, and help develop restoration designs and management practices to maximize GHG sequestration and emissions reductions. Further, the quantification of GHG emissions reductions associated with restoring wetlands could possibly be used in the carbon market, for programs funded through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, and to incentivize land managers to restore degraded and GHG emitting landscapes in California.

The City of Newman has adopted a Monitoring Plan that features the Project objectives and performance measures, and proposed metrics of the Project. All data will be collected, analyzed, and stored by the subcontractor.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds*	Total Cost
Habitat Restoration Planning and Implementation	---	\$604,999	\$604,999
Baseline soil carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane (CH4) fluxes	---	\$30,570	\$30,570
Baseline soil and biomass carbon pools	---	\$19,430	\$19,430
Ecosystem CO2 and CH4 fluxes	\$171,850	---	\$171,850
Soil fluxes of CO2, CH4, and nitrous oxide (N2O)	\$59,001	---	\$59,001
Regional assessment	\$35,094	---	\$35,094
Periodic and final reports	\$33,055	---	\$33,055
Total	\$299,000	\$654,999	\$953,999

*CDFW Wetlands Restoration for Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program (\$609,999), and in-kind from the City of Newman (\$45,000).

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Ecosystem CO2 and CH4 fluxes: Monitor GHG fluxes of the restored project area for two years following restoration.

- Soil fluxes of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O: Complete soil CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O measurements at least 12 times for one year in each of the areas where habitats will be restored.
- Regional assessment: Analyze, summarize, and extrapolate the results of the Project to the regional level and plan for future site GHG monitoring with the City of Newman.
- Periodic and final reports: Preparation of reporting materials during and following the Project.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

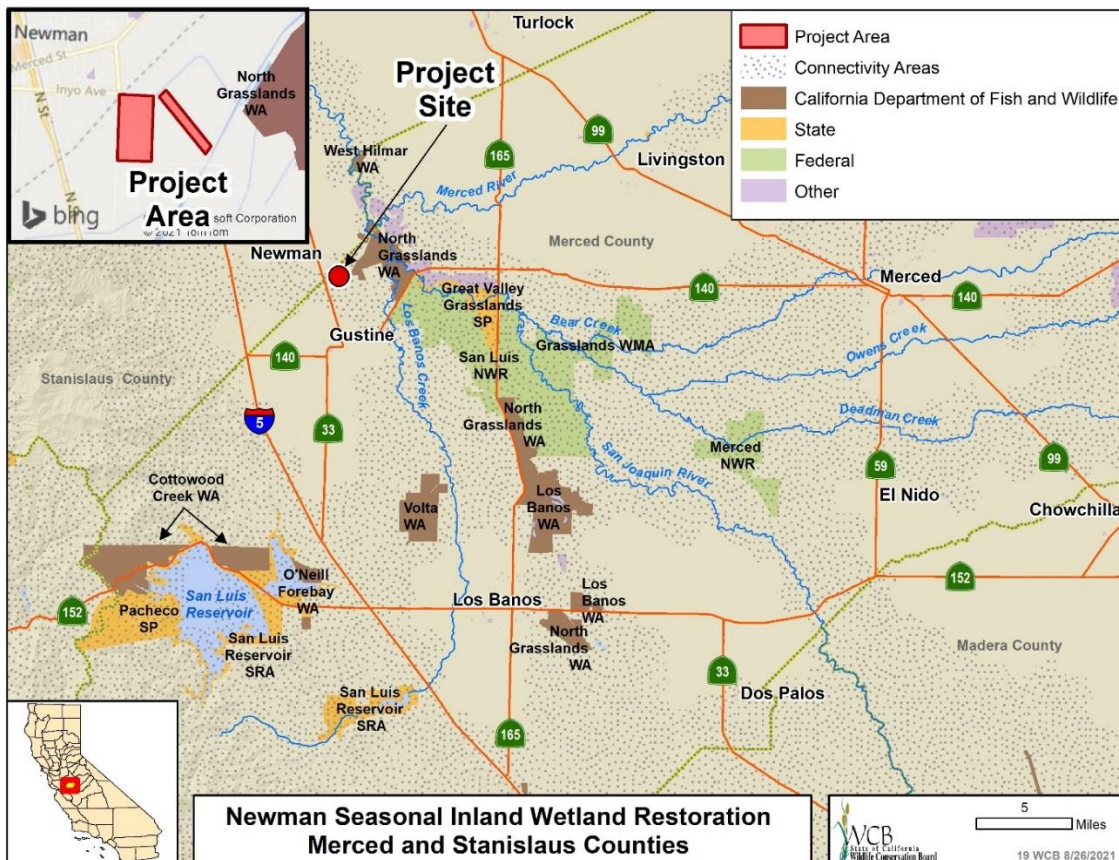
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The City of Newman, as lead agency, prepared an Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the 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.



20. Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Stevenson

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$84,000 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 \$156,000 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) Stevenson
Project Type:	Fee Title (20± acres)
Grantee:	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Amount Recommended:	\$84,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
County:	Riverside
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.1, A.3, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2,1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is 20± acres and is located on the north side of Camino De Las Brisas, north of Avocado Mesa Road in unincorporated western Riverside County. The Property has frontage along Camino De Las Brisas, a dirt road without offsite improvements. The Property is located 11 miles southwest of the city limits of Murrieta.

The Property is positioned toward the southern end 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 4,148± acres in the area since 1991, the most recent WCB project in the area, Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup, was approved by the Board at its February 2021 meeting.

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 2,112 feet at the north corner of the parcel rising to 2,510 feet at the south end of the parcel, a change of 398 feet over 20± acres. The terrain is gently rolling to very steep. The Property is zoned R-R, Rural Residential – potentially allowing residential development with a minimum lot size of 1/2 acre.

Within the WRC MSHCP, the Property contributes to Proposed Linkage 9. Proposed Linkage 9 is comprised of a mosaic of upland and wetland habitats in the area known as the Tenaja Corridor. This linkage provides live-in habitat for a number of planning species and movement for species connecting to core areas in the Santa Rosa Plateau or to the Santa Ana Mountains in the Cleveland National Forest. This linkage also provides for movement of species, including mountain lion and bobcat, through the Tenaja Corridor to the Santa Rosa Plateau and the Cleveland National Forest. The Property consists of a north-facing slope of a plateau covered by dense, mature chaparral. Dominant species include chamise, scrub oak, toyon, holly-leaf redberry. Engelmann oaks are present.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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 \$240,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$84,000
Partner	\$156,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$240,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

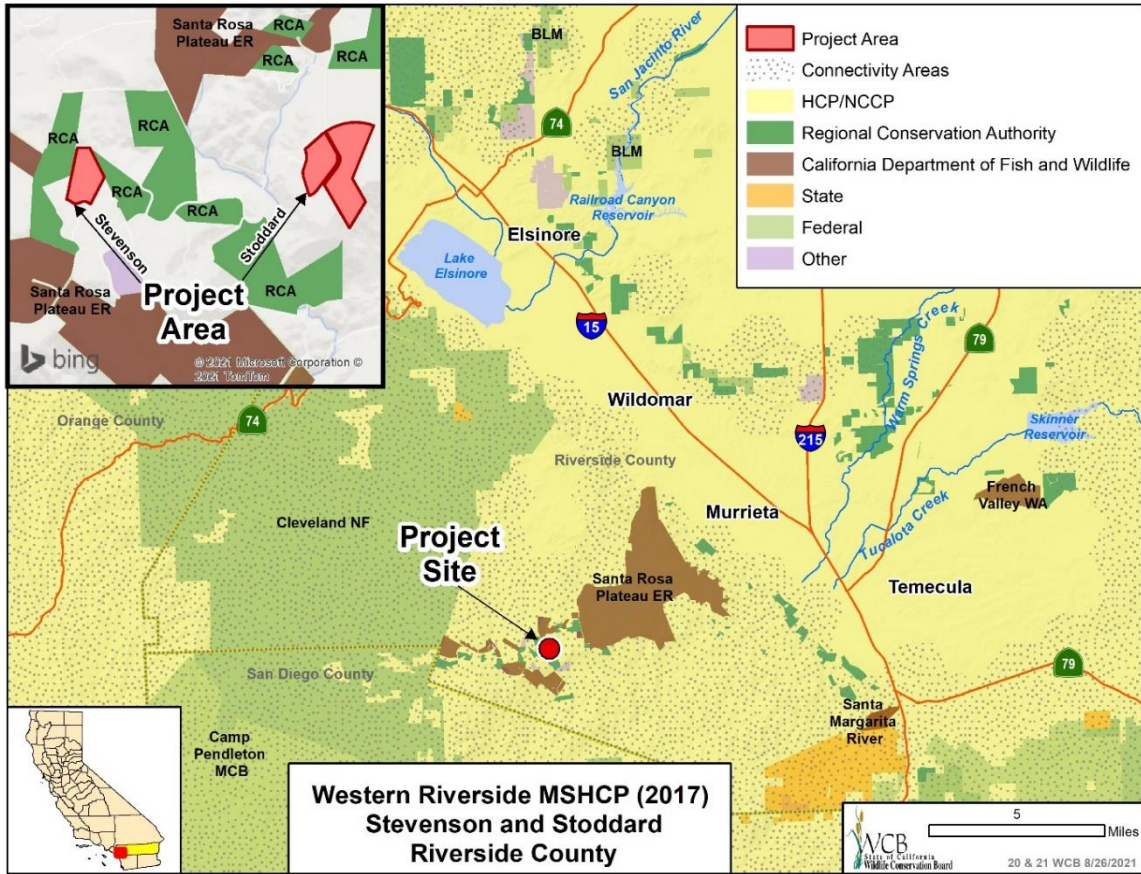
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



21. Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Stoddard

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$259,000 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 WRCRCA; approve the acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$481,000 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) Stoddard
Project Type:	Fee Title (57± acres)
Grantee:	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Amount Recommended:	\$259,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
County:	Riverside
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.1, A.3, B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2,1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is 57± acres and is located on the south side of Avocado Mesa Road, east of Vail Road in unincorporated western Riverside County. The Property has legal access and frontage on Avocado Mesa Road and Vail Road. The Property is located 11 miles southwest of the city limits of Murrieta.

The Property is positioned toward the southern end 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 4,148± acres in the area since 1991, the most recent WCB project in the area, Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Startup, was approved by the Board in February 2021.

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 comprised of three undeveloped, irregularly shaped parcels of land. Topography of the Property ranges from 1,932 to 2,510 feet. The terrain is rolling to rough. APNs 932-180-014 and -015 are zoned R-R, Rural Residential, potentially allowing residential development with a minimum lot size of 1/2 acre. Subject APN 932-200-024 is zoned R-A-20, Residential Agricultural, potentially allowing residential development with a minimum lot size of 20 acres.

Within the WRC MSHCP the Property is within Constrained Linkage 9. Constrained Linkage 9 is one of four constrained linkages connecting the Santa Rosa Plateau and Tenaja Corridor to San Diego County. It provides an upland connection to the Cleveland National Forest and areas in San Diego County via the Tenaja Corridor for large mammals. This connection may serve as one component of a larger movement corridor for mountain lions traveling between the Santa Ana Mountains and the Palomar Mountains. This linkage also may serve as foraging habitat for raptors and other wildlife species. The Property consists of a mix of Engelmann oak savanna, mixed grass/forblands, and chaparral vegetation.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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 \$740,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$259,000
Partner	\$481,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$740,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

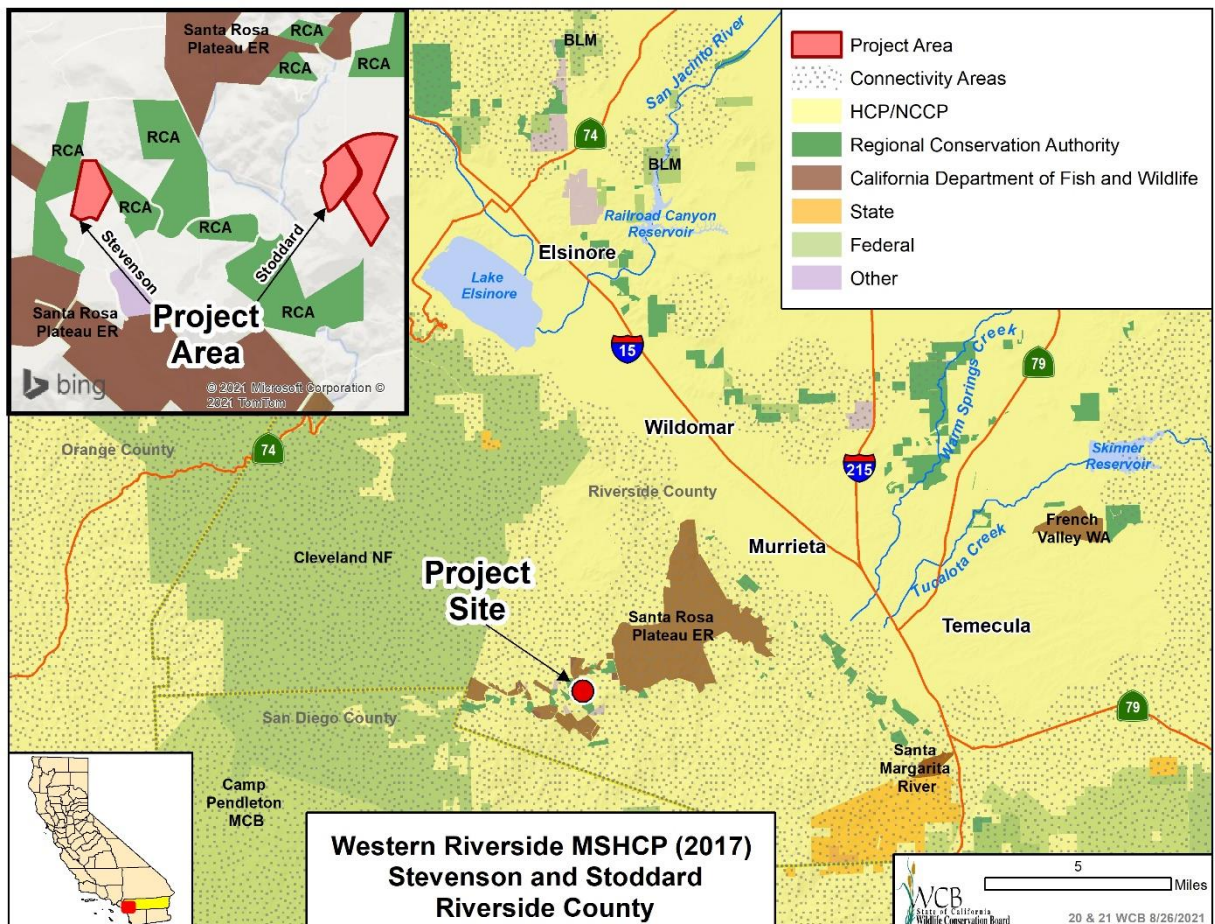
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



Proposed Items

22. Reducing Drought Impacts in California

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$6,000,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021, Chapter 21, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Reducing Drought Impacts in California
Project Type:	Block Grant
Applicant/Grantee:	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Amount Recommended:	\$6,000,000
Funding Partners:	None
Landowner(s):	Grantee will determine
County:	Various
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 4.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Reducing Drought Impacts in California project (Project) area lies throughout California. California is in a second consecutive year of dry conditions, resulting in drought in all parts of the state and extreme or exceptional drought in most of the state.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

California is home to a remarkably diverse array of wildlife and contains the highest number of native species in the United States, many of which can be found nowhere else on earth. While many of these species are adapted to tolerate occasional droughts, extreme and prolonged drought conditions are likely to impact even the toughest organisms. With much of the state experiencing extreme or exceptional drought conditions, many fish and wildlife species are facing degraded habitat. This funding will allow CDFW to administer a block grant to reduce the negative effects of drought on fish and wildlife passage including but not limited to projects to address impediments to passage, voluntary drought agreements, and forbearance/land following. CDFW will allocate grant funds to participating landowners, reclamation districts, local agencies, and non-profit organizations in areas or watersheds that provide habitat to special status species, or those that are expected to face the greatest risks from drought. Examples of potential projects and project types include:

- Fish Passage Improvements – Agricultural diversions in the Sutter Bypass are reliant upon Weir 1 to create the water elevation that allows water users to divert from the West Burrow Canal of the Sutter Bypass. However, in times of

low flow and increased aquatic invasive plants, Weir 1 in the Sutter Bypass is often rendered inoperable. A new operable weir structure and fish ladder, along with treatment of aquatic invasive plants and coordinated operations of diversions by landowners, would significantly improve adult fish passage for Chinook salmon in the Sutter Bypass by allowing fish to migrate over the weir during low flows, while also not impacting surrounding agricultural diversions.

Similarly in Butte Creek, the volcanic Lahar formation creates an impediment to the passage of adult spring-run salmon to spawning ground in the upper reaches of the creek during dry years. Planning and implementation of a project would be to cut a channel through the 700-foot reach of Butte Creek that flows over the Lahar formation to allow fish to migrate upstream.

- Flow Enhancement Projects – CDFW will work with willing landowners to voluntarily reduce water diversions in the summer, such as within the Russian River watershed. Increased summer flows from reduced water diversions will improve dissolved oxygen concentrations and reconnect pool habitat, all to the benefit of juvenile salmon and steelhead trout survival and growth. These projects will allow landowners to store water from the wet months into off-channel water storage and stock-water systems for use during the dry months thereby reducing summer diversions. Funding for these projects will go towards infrastructure that is necessary for implementation.
- Water conservation – CDFW will work with willing landowners to voluntarily forgo planting and irrigation of their fields that otherwise would have been irrigated that will provide supplemental surface water flows to benefit fish and wildlife.

Proposed projects funded under this grant will satisfy the May 10, 2021 and July 8, 2021 state of emergency proclamations by Governor Newsom that states CDFW (1) shall ensure instream flows for species protection and work with water users and other parties on voluntary measures to implement actions needed to protect salmon, steelhead trout, and other native fishes in critical stream systems in the state, and (2) shall identify and coordinate actions to mitigate drought-related fisheries impacts in critical stream systems and identify possible mechanisms for accomplishing those actions.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will manage the block grant and sub-award grants to eligible entities, consistent with the WCB grant agreement. CDFW will be responsible for all implementation activities. Management and monitoring will be completed by CDFW during the grant construction period. After the grant construction period concludes, CDFW will enter into appropriate agreements to ensure the landowner or land manager will be responsible for maintaining the habitat improvements for the remainder of the project life. CDFW will also determine when and where their staff may be able to support landowners and land managers with monitoring activities. If at any time during the life of the sub-awarded projects, the project

improvements are not maintained, the Grant Agreement requires that CDFW 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:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$6,000,000
---	---
TOTAL	\$6,000,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Fish Passage Improvements: This includes engineering, design, environmental compliance, permitting, and construction at various sites.
- Flow Enhancement: Infrastructure to help store winter flows. This includes items such as tanks, PVC pipe, pumps, data loggers, etc.
- Water Conservation: Compensate landowners forgoing planting and irrigating crops.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the grant of funds to CDFW for a project to administer a block grant to eligible entities to reduce the negative effects of drought on fish and wildlife is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, as a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. Prior to commencement of any project funded by CDFW for the Project, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed.

23. Lone Pine Ranch, Phase I

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,910,000 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 The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Lone Pine Ranch
Project Type:	Fee Title (7,479± acres)
Grantee:	The Wildlands Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$4,910,000
Funding Partners:	State Coastal Conservancy and private funding
County:	Mendocino, Trinity
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.1, A.2, A.4, B1, C.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The subject property (Property), known as Lone Pine Ranch, is located in northern Mendocino County and southwestern Trinity County, approximately 25 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean and just south of the community of Alderpoint. Primary access to this area is provided by State Route 101 which is approximately 15 miles west of the Property. Alderpoint Road, off State Route 101, provides access to the Property's entrance beginning at its northern boundary.

The immediate outlying area of the Property is rural in nature, with a landscape consisting of rolling hills, high valleys, waterways, and forested mountains that host smaller scale private ranches, primarily dedicated to cattle grazing, agriculture, and timber uses. Just one mile west of the Property is the Six Rivers National Forest which borders the Mendocino National Forest along with TWC's 3,000± acre Emerald Waters Reserve lying approximately 10 miles north and the 5,800± acre Spy Rock Reserve that is less than 5 miles to the south. The Property's western boundary immediately abuts the mainstem of the eastern bank of the Eel River while its southern boundary abuts the eastern bank of the North Fork Eel River which separates the Property from the Round Valley Indian Reservation.

Designated as a National Wild and Scenic River in 1981, the 196-mile Eel River is the third largest watershed in California, draining more than 3,500 square miles across five counties. Ninety percent of the land along the Eel River is in unprotected private ownership. The Eel River ecosystem supports over 75 mammal species, 400 bird species, and 15 species of fish. This includes coho

salmon and steelhead trout which have seen dramatic population declines because of impacts to water quality, overfishing, water diversion, and dams.

This proposed acquisition is supported by a CDFW Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE). The LAE validates this proposed Property acquisition as a major conservation benefit that will provide the greatest ecological lift through management of invasive species, wetland and stream enhancement, and improved forest management along with anchoring an area of essential habitat connectivity with the Pacific Coast. The Property is also identified in the California Wildlife Action Plan associated within the North Coastal and Montane Riparian Forest and Woodland Ecoregion which provides that the protection of this ecological intact Property will allow the diverse habitats and species to persist through time even in the face of climate change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Lone Pine Ranch consists of 26,600± acres and TWC is working to secure additional funding and agreements with the owner to conserve the entirety of the Ranch. The 7,479± acre Property being considered in this agenda item is the southern portion of the larger ranch. The Property consists of 24 contiguous legal parcels forming an irregular tract of land with topography characterized as sloping to steeply sloping terrain with elevation ranges of 400 feet along the Eel River frontage to 4,200 feet on the mountain ridges that traverse the eastern portion of Property. Improvements on the Property include the well-maintained Horse Ranch Compound that consists of two, single family residences, a bunk house along with a variety of barns, ranch structures, and a bordering fence line. Utilities for the compound are generated by solar panels and water is provided by natural springs that occur on the Property. A series of well-maintained unpaved roads provide easy vehicle access from maintained county roads into the interior of the Property. The Property has been under the same ownership since the 1920s and has been historically used for timber harvesting but has since transitioned into the present use of cattle grazing, recreation, and rural residential living. Full-time caretakers occupy the Property to ensure that trespass for illegal marijuana cultivation and wildlife poaching does not occur, as both activities commonly occur in this regional area.

The Property is characterized by a variety of habitats including freshwater creeks, oak woodlands, grasslands, ponds, marshes, riverine habitat, and conifer forests. The larger Wilson Creek, considered a prominent creek on the southeast portion of the Property, flows southerly emptying into the North Fork of the Eel River eventually draining into the main stem of the Eel River, further enhancing the 8.5 miles of river frontage that borders both the western and southern boundaries of Property. This river frontage is a natural barrier to encroachment from vehicle trespass while also providing natural connectivity to surrounding lands via the river corridors. Water resources on the Property are important to the region and anadromous fish found within the Eel River watershed. Efforts by TWC to monitor water quality parameters and flow conditions throughout the water year will support understanding the critical function and the management of this Property's precious

water resources. Initial reconnaissance surveys, habitat inventories and biological surveys, and ongoing monitoring of spawning activity, including but not limited to nest and carcass surveys and summer water quality, will be used to determine how water resources could be improved. These improvements could include fish passage obstruction removal, restoration of riparian trees to provide shade for pools, and installation of large woody debris.

The protection of the Property will not only support both the state and federally threatened anadromous fish species of coho salmon and steelhead trout, but will also benefit other wildlife species including the state and federally threatened northern spotted owl, state threatened Pacific fisher, and the federally threatened plant species water howellia. Additionally, there are many state species of special concern that will benefit from this project which includes the southern torrent salamander, foothill yellow-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, northern red-legged frog, northern goshawk, and the yellow warbler along with the common species of mountain lion and deer.

Protection of the Property will also allow TWC to establish public recreation opportunities that are currently limited due to most of the land along the Eel River watershed being privately owned. Compatible with its conservation management of the Property, TWC will develop and deliver much needed passive recreation and interpretive education opportunities for the public, potentially including new hiking trails, bicycling, horseback riding, camping, and kayak put-ins on the Eel River.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TWC will own, manage, and monitor the Property as a protected nature preserve ensuring that natural resources remain undisturbed and restored for compatible public access and public recreation. Near term conservation will include improvements to sustainable cattle grazing and ensuring timber harvest only occurs to improve ecological conditions. Other anticipated conservation efforts include invasive species management, wetland and stream restoration, erosion control, improved forest management, and native tree planting. Established in 1995, TWC created a nature preserve system comprised of 21 preserves encompassing 163,000 acres of diverse mountain, valley, desert, river, and oceanfront landscapes in California. These preserves are open to the public for passive recreation including camping, hiking, birding, and other compatible uses.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$7,100,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$4,900,000
State Coastal Conservancy	\$2,000,000
Private	\$200,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$7,100,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

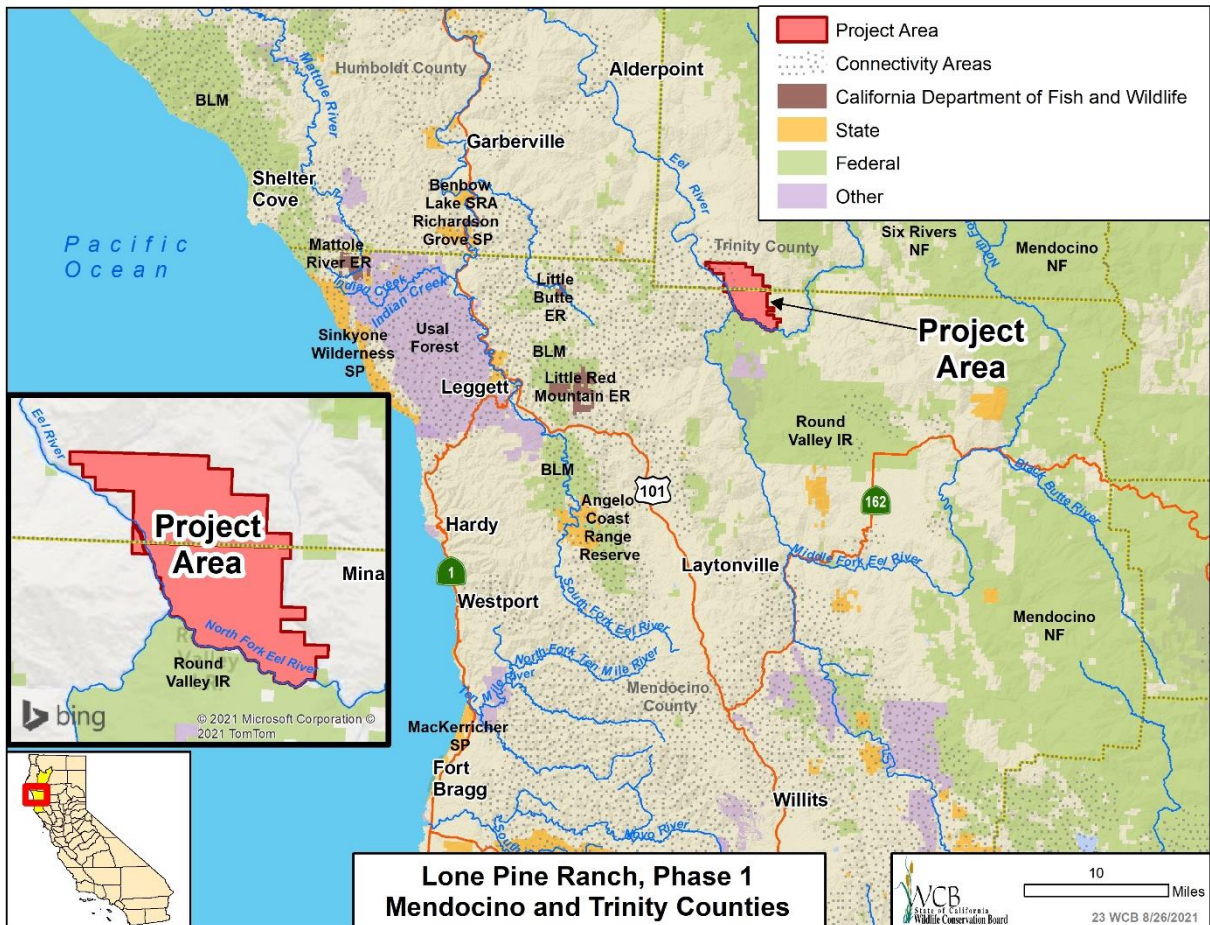
- Jane Doe, Acting District Ranger, Green Tree Ranger District, Jellystone National Forest.
- Dan Silver, MD, Chief Executive Officer, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



24. Upper Butte Creek Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,440,000 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:	Upper Butte Creek Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Butte County Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$1,440,000
Funding Partners:	Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service
County:	Butte, Plumas, Tehama
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Upper Butte Creek Planning project (Project) will analyze 15,800 acres of USFS land in Lassen National Forest, approximately 39 miles north of Chico in Butte, Plumas, and Tehama counties.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Upper Butte Creek watershed supports a diversity of wildlife habitat and sensitive natural resources. Under current and changing conditions, those resources are increasingly degraded or at risk of significant impacts. For example, fire suppression, passive management, over-stocked forests, and climate change undermine the ecological integrity of forest, aspen, and meadow habitat in the Project area. The Project will analyze 15,800 acres in the Upper Butte Creek watershed and complete planning and design to support future restoration and enhancement work that will benefit mixed conifer forests, aspen stands, meadows, and streams (e.g., eight meadows assessed by Point Blue Conservation Science in the Project area to benefit from restoration). This Project will support shovel-ready implementation of restoration work through future projects.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$87,750	---	\$87,750
Planning	\$1,234,750	\$215,000	\$1,449,750
Indirect Costs	\$117,500	---	\$117,500
Total	\$1,440,000	\$215,000	\$1,655,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications and outreach, and grant reporting.
- Planning: Project design, CEQA and NEPA environmental review, preparation of permit applications, etc.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

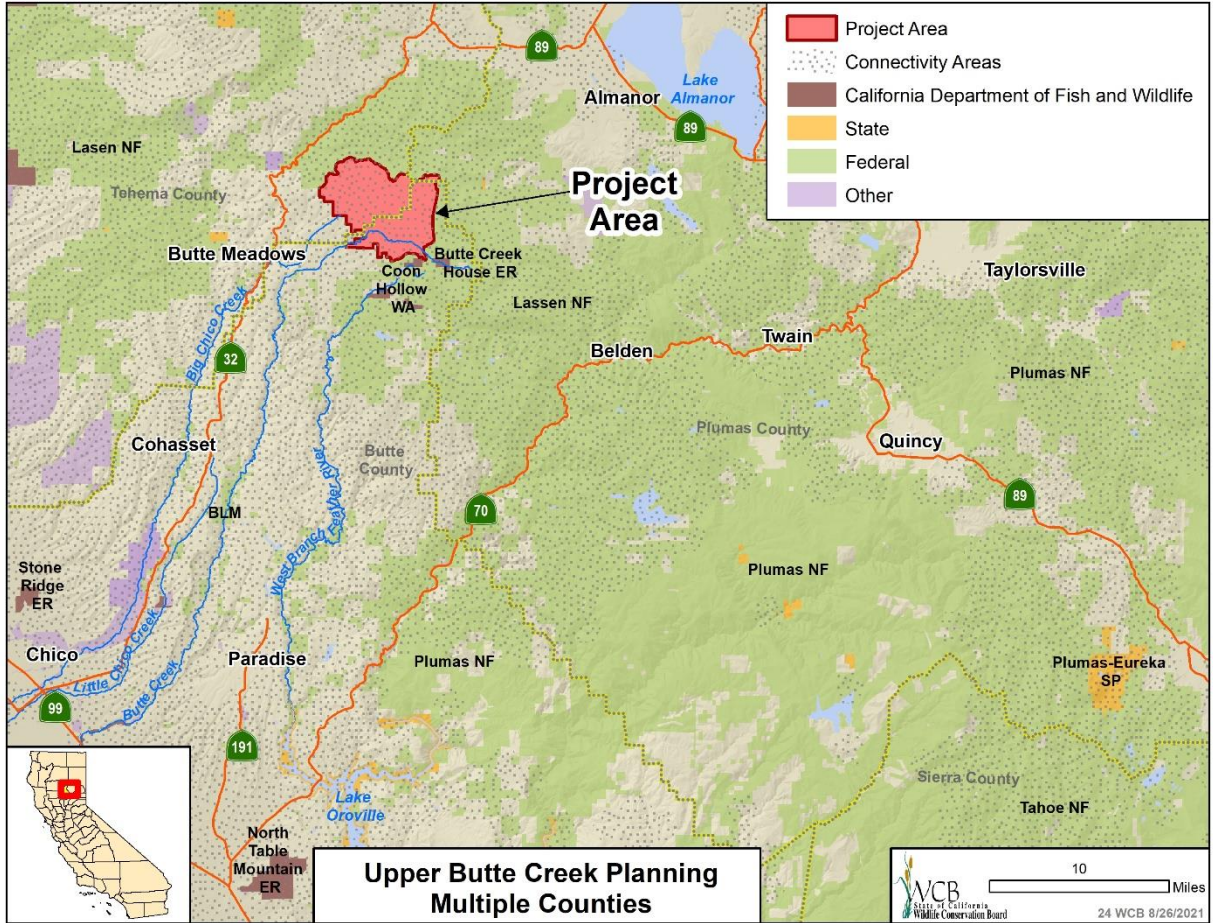
- Russell Nickerson, District Ranger, Almanor Ranger District, Lassen National Forest
- Brittany Dyer, California State Director, American Forests
- Jamie Ervin, Fire Restoration Advocate, Sierra Forest Legacy
- Peggy Moak, Butte County Federal/State Land Use Coordinating Committee
- Darrel Wilson, Chairman, Butte County Fire Safe Council
- Carrie Wendt, Partner Biologist, Point Blue Conservation Science
- Peter Washington, Secretary, Jonesville Cabin Owners, Inc.

Opposition:

- None received

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.



25. English Meadow Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,251,000 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:	English Meadow Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Nevada Irrigation District
Amount Recommended:	\$1,251,000
Funding Partners:	Nevada Irrigation District
Landowner(s):	Nevada Irrigation District
County:	Nevada, Sierra
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

English Meadow Restoration project (Project) comprises 380 acres of meadow and forest habitat on private land in the Middle Yuba River watershed, 20 miles northwest of Truckee in Nevada and Sierra counties. The Project area is 1.5 miles upstream of Jackson Meadows Reservoir.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Due to past land use (e.g., grazing practices and Rudyard Reservoir construction and demolition), the main channel passing through English Meadow is greatly incised. As a result, habitat in the Project area suffers from excessively dry soil conditions, headcut tributaries, and lodgepole pine encroachment into the meadow. In addition, remnant drainage ditches divert water from the meadow before flows can reach the floodplain, further reducing groundwater recharge and soil moisture.

The Project includes repairing headcuts, filling remnant drainage ditches, and installing woody debris jams in the main channel to slow water velocity within the stream, reduce headcuts, decrease the rate of water loss, and prevent lodgepole pine encroachment. In addition, 180 acres of understory thinning will be implemented on the slopes surrounding the meadow to improve forest health and decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfire, which has the potential to severely impact this montane meadow watershed. The Project is expected to improve water availability and quality, decrease sedimentation into Jackson Meadows Reservoir, improve seasonal release of water from the meadow aquifer, and improve forest health overall.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Nevada Irrigation District has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Nevada Irrigation 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	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	---	\$244,000	\$244,000
Restoration	\$1,251,000	\$99,000	\$1,350,000
Total	\$1,251,000	\$343,000	\$1,594,000

Costs associated with WCB funding 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.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

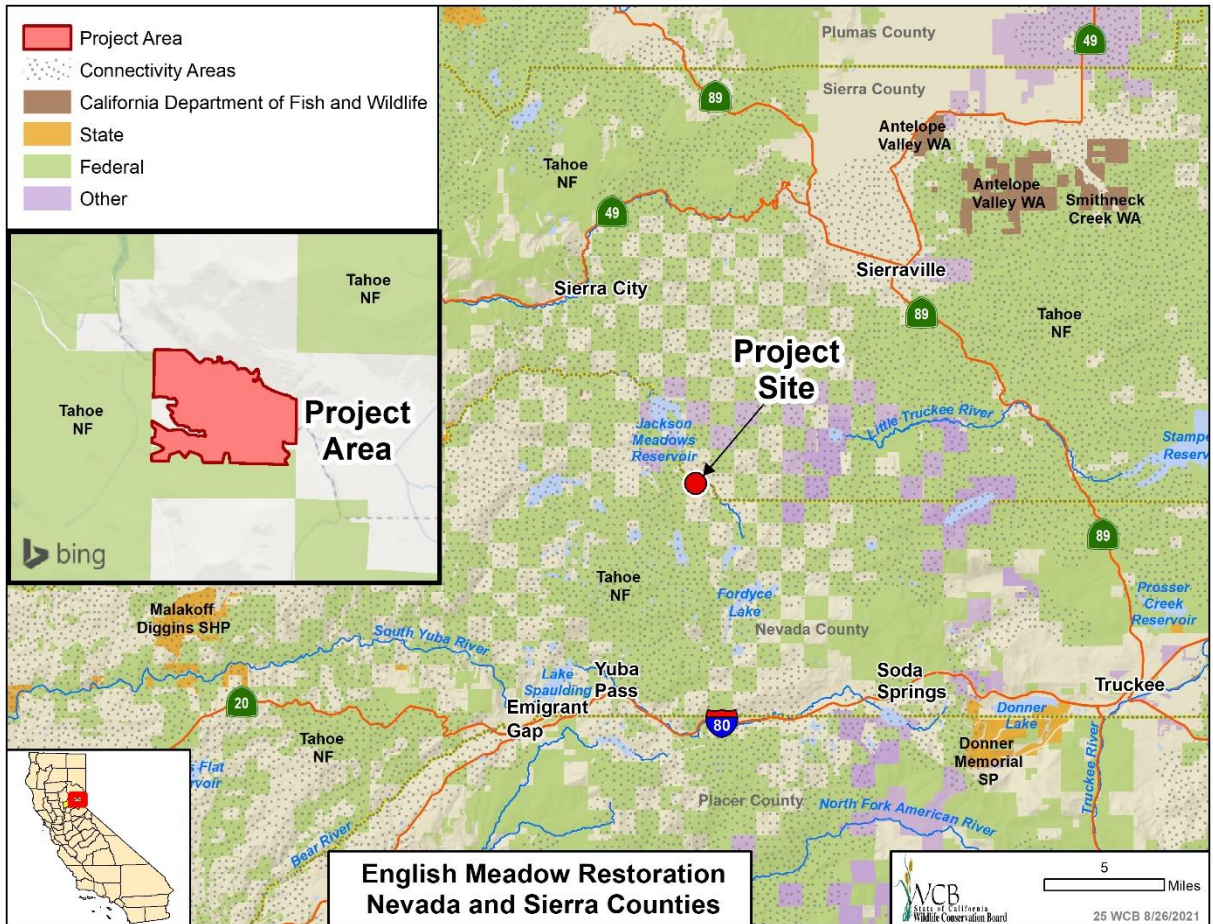
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Nevada Irrigation District, as lead agency, prepared an 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.



26. Camp-Pendola Forest Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,381,000 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:	Camp-Pendola Forest Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	National Forest Foundation
Amount Recommended:	\$1,381,000
Funding Partners:	U.S. Forest Service
Landowner(s):	U.S. Forest Service
County:	Yuba
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Camp-Pendola Forest Restoration project (Project) is comprised of 1,180 acres of forest habitat north of New Bullards Bar Reservoir in the North Yuba River watershed and on Tahoe National Forest, approximately three miles west of Camptonville in Yuba County. The Project lies within the larger North Yuba Forest Partnership (NYFP) area that encompasses 275,000 acres and aims to be the largest forest restoration project developed for USFS lands in the Sierra Nevada.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 1999 Pendola Fire burned nearly 12,000 acres around the New Bullards Bar Reservoir, including 2,000 acres that burned at high to moderate severity in the Tahoe National Forest. That fire destroyed a majority of overstory conifers and hardwoods. The current forest condition is characterized as structurally homogenous and overstocked due to the abundance of re-sprouted hardwoods and brush. The Pendola Fire also stimulated the spread of invasive, fire-prone plants (e.g., Scotch broom) by eliminating established native species.

All proposed treatment units will occur within the boundaries of the larger Tahoe National Forest's Camp Project. The Camp Project is improving forest health, enhancing watershed health and wildlife habitat, and reducing surface fuel loadings and ladder fuels to a level that would allow safe fire suppression on approximately 25,453 acres. The Project advances both the Camp Project and post-fire recovery in the Pendola Fire burn area by providing a direct addition to a diverse network of already completed and ongoing forest health treatments, and

will contribute to a more resilient landscape across the North Yuba River watershed.

The Project includes 550 acres of forest restoration through hardwood culturing, hand thinning, and invasive species removal. These treatments will advance post-fire habitat recovery by reducing hardwood overgrowth, reestablishing natural stand composition, and reducing hazardous fire fuels. The Project is also designed to benefit bald eagle nesting territory by reducing wildfire threat to large diameter conifers near water bodies. Additional hardwood treatment will extend beyond bald eagle nesting territory and promote habitat restoration to benefit bald eagle as well as California spotted owl through increased acorn production and protection of large trees and snags. Habitat restoration will include construction of wildlife cover piles to increase the diversity of habitat structure and promote foraging opportunities for multiple species.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Tahoe National Forest has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, National Forest 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	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$154,975	\$30,000	\$184,975
Restoration	\$1,195,030	\$534,450	\$1,729,480
Indirect Costs	\$30,995	---	\$30,995
Total	\$1,381,000	\$564,450	\$1,945,450

Costs associated with WCB funding 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.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

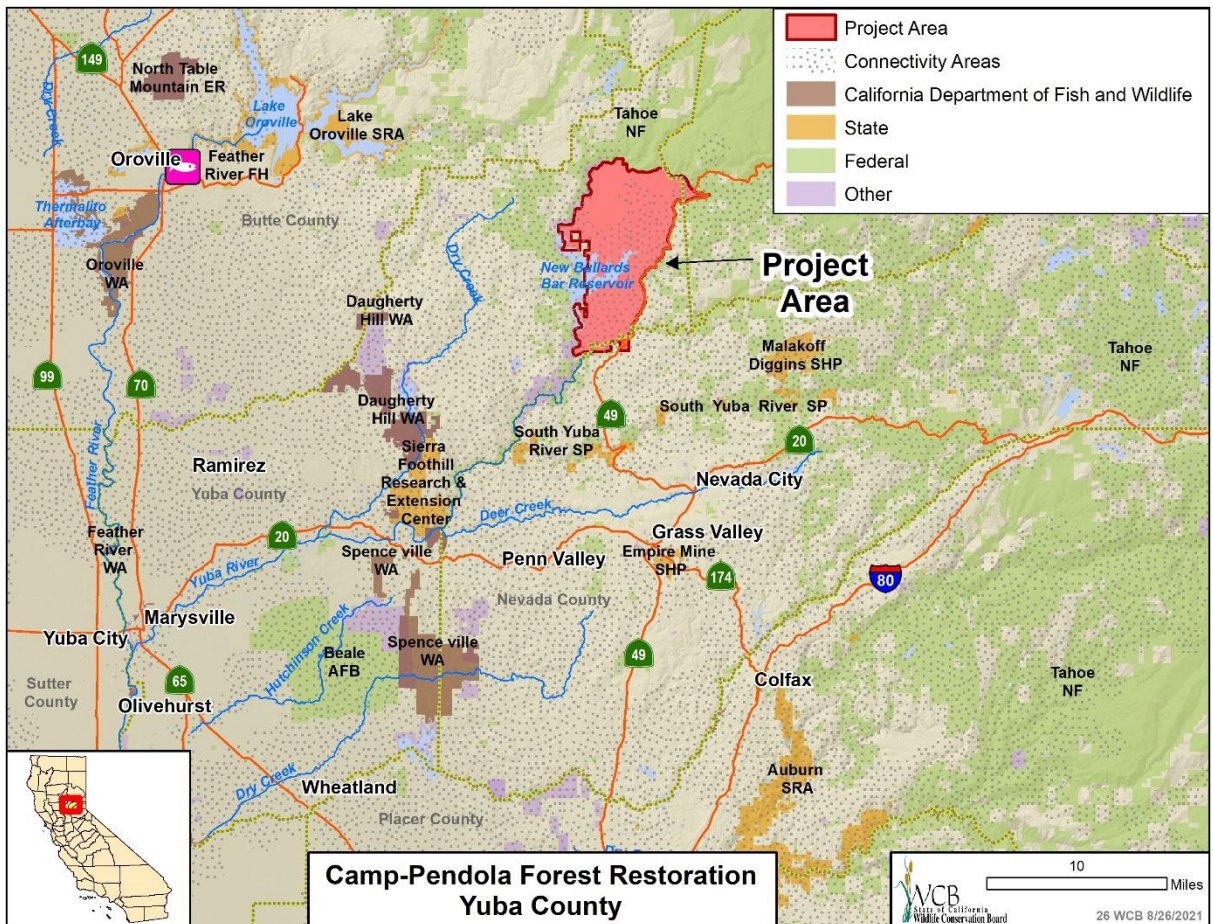
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

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



27. Stookey Ranch Preserve

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$740,000 from Proposition 68, Public Resources Code Section 80132(f) for the grant to Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Stookey Ranch Preserve
Project Type:	Acquisition (226± acres)
Grantee:	Sierra Foothill Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$740,000
Funding Partners:	N/A
County:	Mariposa County
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan	Goals: A.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located approximately 3.5 miles north of State Route 49 on Triangle Road, where it is situated at the southeast corner of E. Westfall Road and Triangle Road in Mariposa County.

Topography is undulating to gently hilly. The highest elevation is 3,250 feet. The Property totals 226± acres, of which approximately 76 acres is mountain meadow, and 150 acres is mixed hardwood conifer forest consisting of pine, cedar, and oaks. The Property also has a riparian corridor and four ponds. The Property is within the Chowchilla River watershed.

The Property is a critical piece in SFC's Jerseydale Meadows Focus Area (JMFA) by strategically connecting a mosaic of habitat types, such as mountain meadow, wetlands, riparian corridors, and mixed hardwood conifer forest of the Chowchilla River watershed. The JMFA creates a corridor of conserved land that is among Mariposa County's remaining privately-owned intact meadow complexes adjacent to the Sierra National Forest. SFC currently holds several conservation easements in the JMFA, three of which are within CDFW's Portuguese Ridge Ecological Reserve CAPP. Stookey Ranch is located just south of this CAPP, within seven miles of Yosemite National Park, and approximately a quarter of a mile from the National Forest boundary.

The Property is located in SWAP's Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Province specifically within the Sierra Nevada Foothills Ecoregion. The Property's diverse ecosystems provide high quality habitat opportunities for great gray owl, olive-sided flycatcher, western pond turtle, yellow warbler, pallid bat, ringtail, porcupine, foothill yellow-legged frog, and other Species of Greatest Conservation Concern.

Several rare plants and animals have been identified just a few miles from the Property, per the California Natural Diversity Database, including, but not limited to, slender-stemmed monkeyflower, western pond turtle, short-leaved hulsea, Congdon's lewisia, yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower, Mariposa clarkia, slender-stalked monkeyflower, and foothill yellow-legged frog. According to the Statewide Terrestrial Native Species Richness Summary CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis, the Property's Climate Vulnerable Species Count is 25, and both its Ecoregion and Statewide Native Species Rank "high" at a score of 5.

The Property's several miles of riparian corridors encourage the resilience of species in fragmented forested landscapes. The riparian corridors serve as a food source while also facilitating movement between habitat areas, which is critical to adaptation. Per CDFW's Northern Sierra Nevada foothills wildlife connectivity project, wildlife corridors were modeled for focal species between landscape blocks within the northern Sierra Nevada foothills and neighboring ecoregions. This includes swaths of habitat that species have the potential to reside in or move through. The Stookey Ranch is in the "Ahwahnee, Mariposa, Merced River" corridor, which trails northwest along the Sierra National Forest southern boundary, providing a critical transitional zone between the Sierra Nevada's lower elevation foothills and higher elevation mountains.

Currently, SFC has conserved 2,755 acres within the JMFA, with another 960 acres in progress (excluding this property). Addition of the Property will bring the total conserved acreage to just under 3,000 acres adjacent to, and in some cases, adjoining Sierra National Forest property at approximately 1.3 million acres.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The acquisition of the Property will remove the ability to develop the Property. Because adjacent land has been developed into rural residences, development and/or fragmentation would significantly disrupt habitat continuity. A small cattle operation (approx. 20 head) was in effect in the past, however, currently, the Property's use is merely for scenic and recreational uses. Upon SFC taking ownership of the Property, it will be grazed for vegetation and soil management purposes. SFC will implement a Hikes & Classes program to utilize the Property for a variety of recreational opportunities in the future.

The Property consists of mainly forest and watershed lands. Three named creeks intersect the Property: Camp Meeting Creek, Fox Creek, and DeLong Creek, and other unnamed drainages all drain to the Chowchilla River, composing the river's upper watershed lands. The Chowchilla River drains to Eastman Lake, where it then drains to the Central Valley, providing critical drinking and irrigation water supply. The landscape's gentle gradient includes overstory vegetation consisting of Ponderosa pine, incense cedar, and several oak species, as well as an understory vegetation consisting of various shrub species, such as manzanita, deer brush, and wild rose. Riparian species observed on the Property include walnut, California buckeye, big leaf maple, elderberry, and alders, in part.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be grazed and stewarded via management practices that are consistent with other preserve lands. Stewardship practices on the Property will include management practices conducive to improving forest stands, facilitating riparian and meadow health, and reducing fire danger. SFC staff will follow WCB's established monitoring protocol and will complete a long-term management plan for the Property within one year of close of escrow. SFC's stewardship staff will monitor the Property a minimum of four times a year. Monitoring visits will consist of an inspection of the condition of the conservation values, fencing, roads, and other Property infrastructure. Reporting will be completed on a quarterly basis and stored in SFC's online Landscape software, and available to funding agency partners at any time. Additionally, guided public access on the Property will be administered through SFC's Hikes & Classes Program. The Property's vast natural resources and diverse habitats will continue to provide abundant opportunities for docent-led bird walks, school group functions, and Native American demonstrations.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$900,000. The landowner has agreed to a bargain sale of the Property, where they will donate \$160,000 of its value. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$740,000
---	---
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$740,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

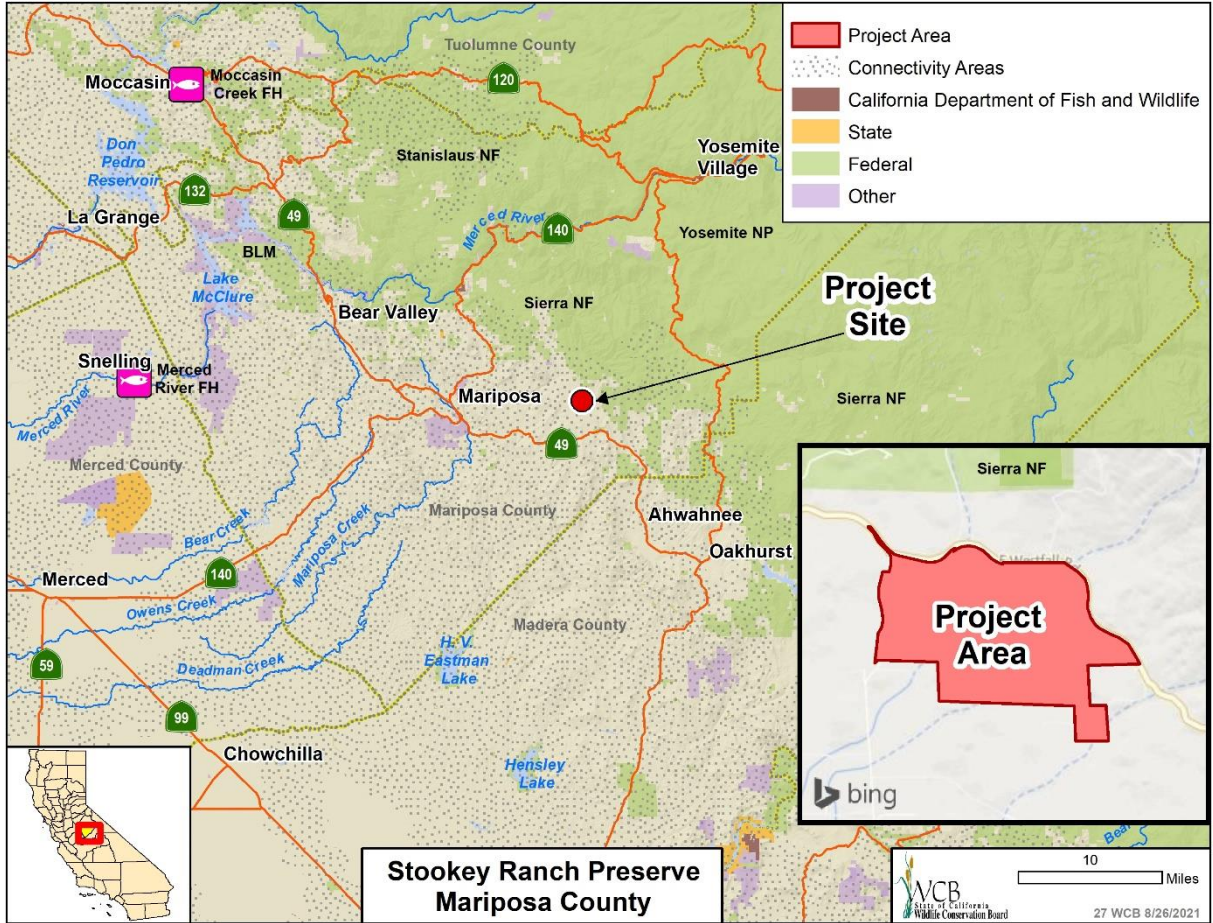
- Julie Fair, Director, California Headwaters Conservation, American Rivers
- Bonnie Eyestone, Rangeland Monitoring Network Coordinator, Point Blue Conservation Science

Opposition:

- None received

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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



28. Kingfisher Flat Hatchery, Fire Recovery

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$494,915 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:	Kingfisher Flat Hatchery, Fire Recovery
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project
Amount Recommended:	\$494,915
Funding Partners:	Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project, NOAA Fisheries, Reiter Family Fund, Monterey County Fish and Game Commission
Landowner(s):	Big Creek Timber Company and The Kenneth A. and Jeanine C. McCrary Family Trust
County:	Santa Cruz
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Kingfisher Flat Hatchery (KFH), Fire Recovery project (Project) is located on privately-owned land on Big Creek, a tributary to Scott Creek, approximately five miles north of the town of Davenport. Scott Creek is a 30-square-mile watershed that supports the state and federally listed endangered Central California Coast CCC coho salmon (CCC coho). The hatchery facility is located approximately one river mile upstream of the confluence of Big Creek and the mainstem of Scott Creek and approximately three river miles from the estuary and Pacific Ocean. KFH has been in operation since 1982 and has supported salmonid spawning and rearing for conservation for nearly 40 years. State and federal recovery plans for CCC coho cite the importance of a viable captive broodstock program to prevent the extinction of the species and describe continued operation of the captive broodstock program at KFH as a top priority.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In August of 2020, the CZU lightning complex wildfire swept through the Scott Creek watershed and the hatchery sustained substantial damage to its rearing infrastructure, outdoor facilities, and bridge access. The primary goal of the Project is to restore KFH to its pre-CZU wildfire status and capacity of rearing and releasing up to 100,000 juvenile CCC coho and steelhead each year. The Project consists of five components to restore the hatchery:

- Replace two water intake infrastructure components on Big Creek and Berry Creek and harden them against flood, debris flow, tree fall, and other risks; and acquire equipment essential for maintaining water flow to the hatchery under high bedload transport and debris flow conditions.
- The former location of the broodstock rearing and spawning area was in the floodway of Big Creek and was threatened by flooding on a 10-year occurrence. The area was separated from the main hatchery footprint by a long timber retaining wall. All the infrastructure and retaining wall were destroyed by the fire. This area will be naturalized, and the bank stabilized by placing a fill prism at a 3:1 slope against the vertical bank and vegetating it with native riparian plants.
- Restore the broodstock rearing and spawning facilities by filling the unused upper raceway with gravel and replacing two 20-foot diameter and two 15-foot diameter pools on the gravel bed. Install three smaller fish sorting and handling tanks in the same area and build a roofed section to protect the spawning process from sun and rain. Replace the 15-foot diameter Pool #8 in its prior location on the lower raceway. Replace and reconfigure all recirculation, plumbing, and electrical facilities damaged and destroyed by the fire.
- Rebuild an 8-foot by 16-foot bathroom and changing room with water and flush toilet connected to an engineered septic system. This facility will be located out of the floodplain and will be supported by 10,000 gallons of water storage replaced at the former tank location. Storage tank plumbing will serve the bathroom, hatchery wet-lab, emergency supplemental water for fish rearing operations, and fire suppression.
- Replace the upper bridge that is needed to access the hatchery in a safe, secure, and reliable fashion for Project construction and hatchery operations and management. Complete minor dirt road alterations as needed for public safety and to restore to serviceable condition.

Project includes preparation of a habitat restoration and management plan (HRMP) for the riparian area and finalization of engineering, designs, and permitting for the upper bridge work, naturalization of Big Creek floodplain and bank stabilization, and bathroom and septic system construction.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$35,000
Engineering, Designs, and Permits	\$56,000	\$92,730	\$148,730
Bridge, Bathroom, Septic, and Bank Stabilization	\$276,900	\$18,500	\$295,400
Site Prep and New Tanks	\$147,015	\$139,610	\$286,625
Total	\$494,915	\$270,840	\$765,755

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Administer grant, oversee project activities and contracting, procurement of equipment and supplies, coordinate with project partners, and prepare invoices and project reports.
- Engineering, Designs, and Permits: Complete engineering work, advance 65% designs to 100%, prepare HRMP, and secure local/county/state permits.
- Bridge, Bathroom, Septic, and Bank Stabilization: Procure materials and equipment and construct non-fish related facilities, stabilize bank, grade roads, and revegetate riparian area.
- Site Prep and New Tanks: Procure materials and equipment for fish-related facilities, fill upper raceway with gravel, install tanks and pools, and connect all plumbing and electrical components.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Amanda Ingram, Central Coast Branch Chief, North Central Coast Office, NOAA National Marine Fisheries
- Joseph Kiernan, PhD, Research Ecologist, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

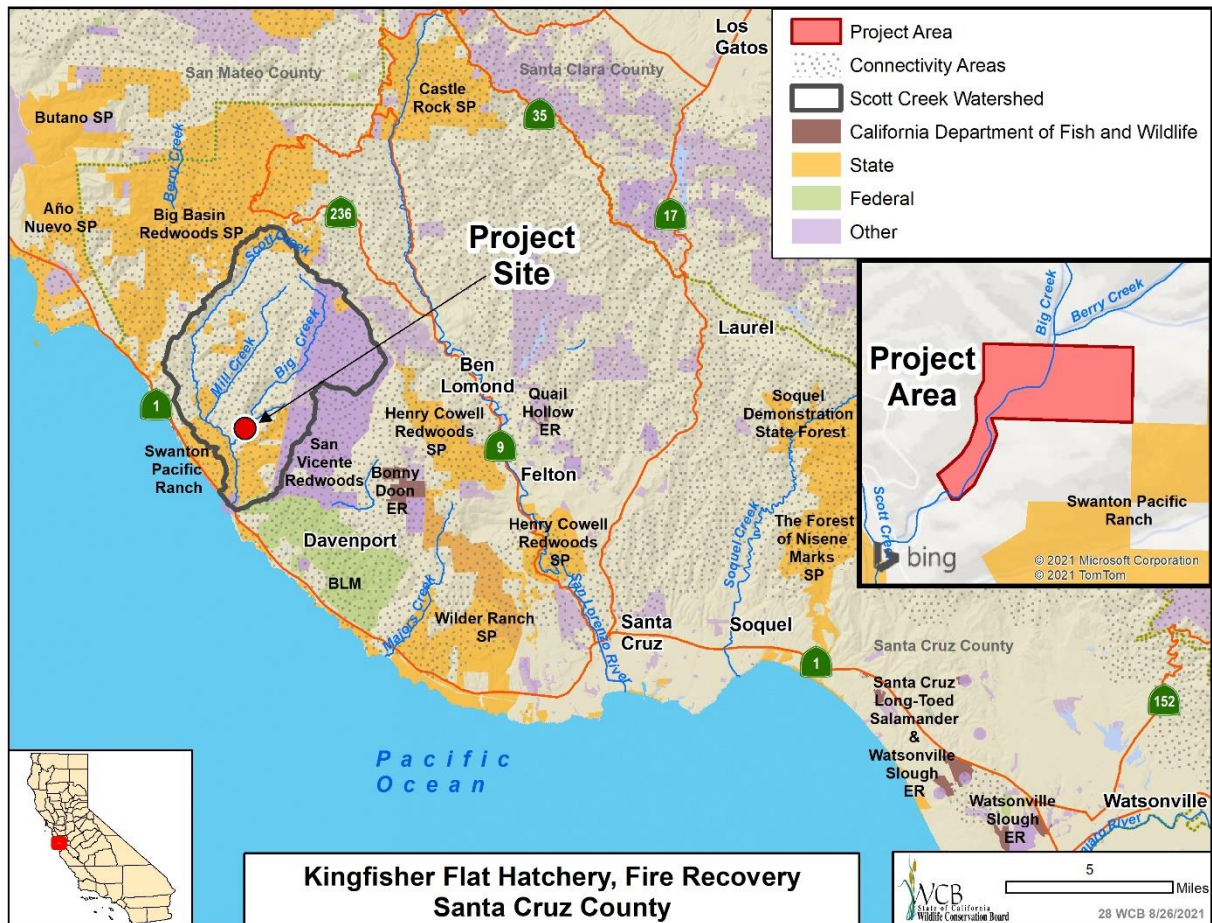
Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15269 (a), Declared Emergency, as it involves maintenance, repair, restoration, demolish, or replacement of property or facilities damaged or destroyed by a disaster in a disaster-stricken area in which a state of emergency has been proclaimed by the Governor pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act, commencing with Section 8550 of the Government Code; pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities, as it involves the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features,

involving negligible or no expansion of an existing use; pursuant to Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement and Reconstruction, as it involves the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced; and, pursuant to Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as it involves minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



29. Carr Lake Restoration Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$776,000 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Carr Lake Restoration Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Big Sur Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$776,000
Funding Partners:	Laurel Foundation
Landowner(s):	Big Sur Land Trust
County:	Monterey
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 40
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Carr Lake Restoration Planning project (Project) covers a 73-acre portion of the Carr Lake Basin, a 480-acre swath of agricultural fields located in the center of Salinas, a densely populated city of roughly 160,000 people. Over a century ago, Carr Lake was the largest of a seven-lake system that captured water from the upper Gabilan watershed beginning at Fremont Peak (via Gabilan, Natividad, and Alisal Creeks) before discharging into a network of creeks and wetlands that ran out to Monterey Bay. During the early part of the 20th century, the three creeks that once flowed naturally through Carr Lake were channelized and a reclamation ditch was built to drain Carr Lake and allow flood-prone areas to be farmed. The resulting Carr Lake basin was farmed beginning in the 1920s. In 2017, Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) purchased 73 acres of the Carr Lake basin to create a new multi-benefit park and open space area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BSLT's Carr Lake property has been in agricultural production for over 100 years. Two channelized creeks, Gabilan Creek and Hospital Creek, run through the property and are nearly devoid of habitat. Gabilan Creek is listed under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list as an impaired stream due to agricultural runoff and urban pollution sources. Despite being converted into a basin, Carr Lake serves as the primary flood storage area for the city of Salinas, and most of the property is in a FEMA floodway. Studies and analyses conducted since purchase of the 73-acre property have identified a lack of riparian habitat, poor water quality, limited groundwater recharge capacity, and limited flood storage capacity. Restoration is needed to restore ecosystem function and services.

This Project seeks to complete all planning and design work necessary to create and restore the once diverse seasonal wetland, riparian, and upland habitats that flourished in the area. Initial 30% designs have already been developed. This Project would allow BSLT to secure local, state, and federal permits and approvals as well as complete 90% and 100% designs. Once permits and plans are complete, the Project will be shovel ready. The restoration portion afforded through this planning effort will involve the conversion of agricultural land to restored riparian and upland habitats. Once restoration is implemented, restored habitats will include up to 26 acres of riparian habitat, consisting of freshwater emergent wetland, freshwater forested/shrub wetland, seasonal wetland, and riparian tree grove upland. Up to 40 acres will be diverse upland grassland habitat. Additional acreage will be designed for trails, bridges, and boardwalks. Distributary channels and a large inset floodplain will encourage infiltration, capture floodwaters, and filter sediment. Seasonal and treatment wetlands will capture trash and filter pollutants. Along with restoring biodiversity, these natural features will offer adaptability to climate change in several ways, including carbon sequestration and improved resilience to flood impacts.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds*	Total Cost
Community Engagement	---	\$75,000	\$75,000
Project Management	\$101,400	---	\$101,400
Permitting (preparation/approvals/ consultant fees)	\$218,000	---	\$218,000
Final Design	\$424,200	---	\$424,200
Indirect Costs	\$32,400	---	\$32,400
Total	\$776,000	\$75,000	\$851,000

*The Laural Foundation.

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Funding for overall coordination, administration, and reporting for the Project.
- Permitting: Costs to complete all regulatory requirements necessary to deliver a shovel-ready project.
- Final Design: Building on relationships already developed with local and regulatory agencies, this task involves continued involvement in coordination with stakeholders to develop and finalize the project design.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The City of Salinas, as lead agency, prepared an MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the 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.



30. Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, Augmentation

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$20,000,000 from the General Fund (Budget Act of 2021, Chapter 21); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, Augmentation
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	National Wildlife Federation
Amount Recommended:	\$20,000,000
Funding Partners:	National Wildlife Foundation, Annenberg Foundation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California State Coastal Conservancy, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, National Park Service
Landowner(s):	Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Caltrans District 7, City of Agoura Hills
County:	Los Angeles
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2, 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, Augmentation project (Project) will consist of creating a wildlife overpass that will span the 101 Freeway and Agoura Road near the Liberty Canyon Road exit in Agoura Hills, California. This location is the best remaining connection between undeveloped open space in the Santa Monica Mountains to the south and the Simi Hills and Los Padres National Forest to the north. Due to the purchase of public lands in the vicinity and limited development, this is one of the only remaining stretches of U.S. Highway 101 with undeveloped habitat on both sides of the freeway. At its narrowest point, there is at least a quarter mile of protected land between the nearest suburban development which makes large animal movement to and from the project site feasible.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Project will provide an augmentation to an existing grant that was approved by WCB on August 26, 2020. In the year since that agreement was passed, a severe drought in Southern California has compounded the wildlife mortality issue and increased the urgency to begin construction. This has shortened the timeline to raise the additional funds needed to start construction. The funds from this augmentation will allow construction to start in the fall of 2021 and begin the process of protecting mountain lions and other migratory species that reside in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The Santa Monica Mountains are one of the largest and most significant examples of Mediterranean-type ecosystems in the world. The mountains are located in one of just 35 'biodiversity hotspots' worldwide, and the only one in the continental United States. Currently, the mountains are home to over 1,000 plant species in 26 distinct natural communities. These communities provide habitat for nearly 400 species of birds, 35 species of reptiles and amphibians, and numerous mammal species that include bobcats, coyotes, and mountain lions. The Santa Monica Mountains are also home to more than 50 threatened or endangered plants and animals, which is among the highest concentrations of such listed species in the United States.

The Los Angeles freeway system, most critically U.S. Highway 101 transiting through the Santa Monica Mountains, acts as a significant barrier to genetic movement for mountain lions and all wildlife. Re-connecting the entire region is of significant ecological importance. Along with providing connectivity that will help ensure the sustainability of the overall biodiversity of the region, the most prominent and time-sensitive threat this Project addresses is the likely extinction of the local mountain lion population in the Santa Monica Mountains. The permanent loss of the southern California mountain lion would be devastating for conservation, but more importantly for the entire ecosystem because, as apex predators, they play a key role in the health of the landscape.

The historic drought Southern California is currently facing has made this situation even more dire. The lack of rain has reduced the carrying capacity of the fragmented habitat areas. This can stress wildlife populations to the point that the need to find new habitat will make wildlife desperate enough to risk crossing the freeway. This desperation is already visible with mountain lions searching for a mate, and the drought makes the mountain lions' condition even worse. The drier conditions will also lead to species that are not currently under the same genetic pressure as the mountain lion to begin taking the same risks as they search for new hunting and foraging habitat.

The Liberty Canyon area, near the city of Agoura Hills, has been identified as the ideal location for a wildlife crossing over U.S. Highway 101. Prime habitat, contiguous with large swaths of protected habitat north and south of this connection, has already been protected on both sides of the freeway. Connecting these areas would give mountain lions and numerous other species living in these highly fragmented habitats the room they need to roam, mate, and thrive.

Decades of local, regional, and statewide scientific study, research projects, and planning have informed the purpose and need for the wildlife crossing at Liberty Canyon. These efforts determined that building a wildlife crossing over the ten lanes of freeway and an access road is the optimal solution to connecting habitat north and south of the freeway. The crossing design has been developed through conceptual design and environmental document phases. It proposes a multi-option crossing zone that leverages the underpass wildlife connectivity restoration funded by a prior WCB grant immediately to the east of the proposed crossing site.

To complement the overpass, Liberty Canyon riparian areas that were channelized by a large dirt fill area placed when the freeway was built will be restored, with the fill being used to create the southern approach landscape. The new topography will allow the riparian corridor to be restored and expanded to the west, directing wildlife passage toward the overpass landscape. The crossing topography will restore the “nose” of the mountain previously lost to the freeway, effectively restoring a portion of the mountain that was removed.

The wildlife crossing will connect native chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitat to the north and south of the 101 Freeway by providing an additional 8 acres of restored habitats, without impacting existing riparian areas on the south of the freeway. In addition, the fill from a former 2-acre development pad will be relocated to restore the former natural mountain slopes over the freeway, allowing 500 feet of channelized stream to be restored to natural sinuosity within 2 acres of restored riparian woodland. The remainder of the new topography will be restored as coastal sage scrub and oak savannah habitats, including the 1 acre of new habitat that will be constructed over the wildlife bridge itself.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The National Wildlife Federation 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, National Wildlife Federation 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	New WCB Funds	Original WCB Funds	Non-WCB Funds	Total
Project Management	\$240,000	\$240,000	\$116,033	\$596,033
Environmental Review	---	---	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000
Final Designs	---	---	\$8,700,000	\$8,700,000
Construction	\$19,760,000	\$4,760,000	\$40,480,000	\$65,000,000
Total	\$20,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$51,056,033	\$76,056,033

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Implementation oversight, invoicing, reporting, and agency communications.
- Construction: Building the wildlife overpass.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Henry Stern, Senator, Twenty-Seventh Senate District
- Sheila Kuhl, District Three Supervisor, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
- Linda L. Northrop, Mayor, City of Agoura Hills
- Irma Munoz, Chairperson, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League
- Partner's Letter signed by a coalition of 36 environmental organizations
- Coalition of 1052 private citizens

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Caltrans, as lead agency, prepared an MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the 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.



31. Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,331,000 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:	Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Caltrans
Amount Recommended:	\$1,331,000
Funding Partners:	Caltrans, The Nature Conservancy
County:	Riverside
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning project (Project) is located in a region of the Santa Ana Mountains known as Rainbow Canyon along a stretch of Interstate 15 (I-15) between the San Diego/Riverside County line and a point three miles south of Temecula Creek.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Over 25 years ago, wildlife researchers documented the Santa Ana Mountains in southern California, despite being 370,000 acres of nearly contiguous habitat, as being at risk of isolation and fragmentation by roads and urban development. The portion of I-15 at the Riverside-San Diego County border, in an area known as Rainbow Canyon, was specifically identified as a nearly impenetrable barrier to movement for mountain lions and other wildlife into the Santa Anas from the larger Palomar Mountains/Eastern Peninsular ranges.

Findings of recent mountain lion genetic analyses have amplified these concerns, indicating significant genetic restriction and minimal evidence of migration into the Santa Ana Mountains population in recent years. It is feared that if east-west genetic connectivity across I-15 is not restored, the mountain lion population of the Santa Ana Mountains may be extirpated within 50 years, and possibly as early as 12 years if inbreeding depression becomes an issue. The relatively healthier mountain lion population in the Eastern Peninsular Ranges will also begin to experience the same issues that Santa Ana cougars currently face if connectivity between the Santa Ana and Palomar Mountains is not restored in the next decade.

The Project area is now recognized as one of the most critical wildlife corridors in the state and has been included in CDFW's 2020 Wildlife Barrier Priority List. The

area’s inclusion was due to I-15 acting as a source of wildlife mortality and as a barrier to wildlife movement that affects gene flow, demographics, and climate change resilience

Numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate the best location along I-15 for a wildlife crossing structure. These studies have unanimously concluded that a new wildlife overcrossing or undercrossing is needed in the I-15 linkage area just north of the San Diego/Riverside County line. The studies have also concluded that a dual system of over- and undercrossings is required to provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of wildlife species over the long term.

The Project will evaluate alternatives and potential environmental effects of vegetated wildlife overcrossing and undercrossing structures. The design of the crossing structure will focus on meeting the connectivity needs of mountain lion as well as a variety of other wildlife species, including bobcat, fox, and mule deer.

When implemented, the Project will provide safe wildlife movement, gene exchange, climate adaptation, and live-in habitat for a wide range of terrestrial plant and animal species while increasing driver safety on I-15. The project will also restore genetic connectivity between mountain lion subpopulations in the Santa Ana Mountains and Eastern Peninsular Ranges. The future crossing will help ensure the protection of a regional ecological gradient from the coast to the desert, thereby facilitating adaptation of wildlife species in response to changing climate conditions.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$74,880	\$24,654	\$99,534
Project Planning and Development	\$975,975	\$321,084	\$1,297,059
Environmental Review	\$280,145	\$191,198	\$471,343
Total	\$1,331,000	\$536,936	\$1,867,936

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: All project management activities for the development of the designs, environmental review, and permitting plus conducting outreach coordination with stakeholders and wildlife crossing experts.
- Designs: Development of the project scoping document and the preliminary engineering and draft project report.
- Environmental Review: Conducting environmental studies, preparation of the draft environmental document, selection of the preferred alternative, and preparation and approval of final environmental document.
- Permitting: Obtain permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

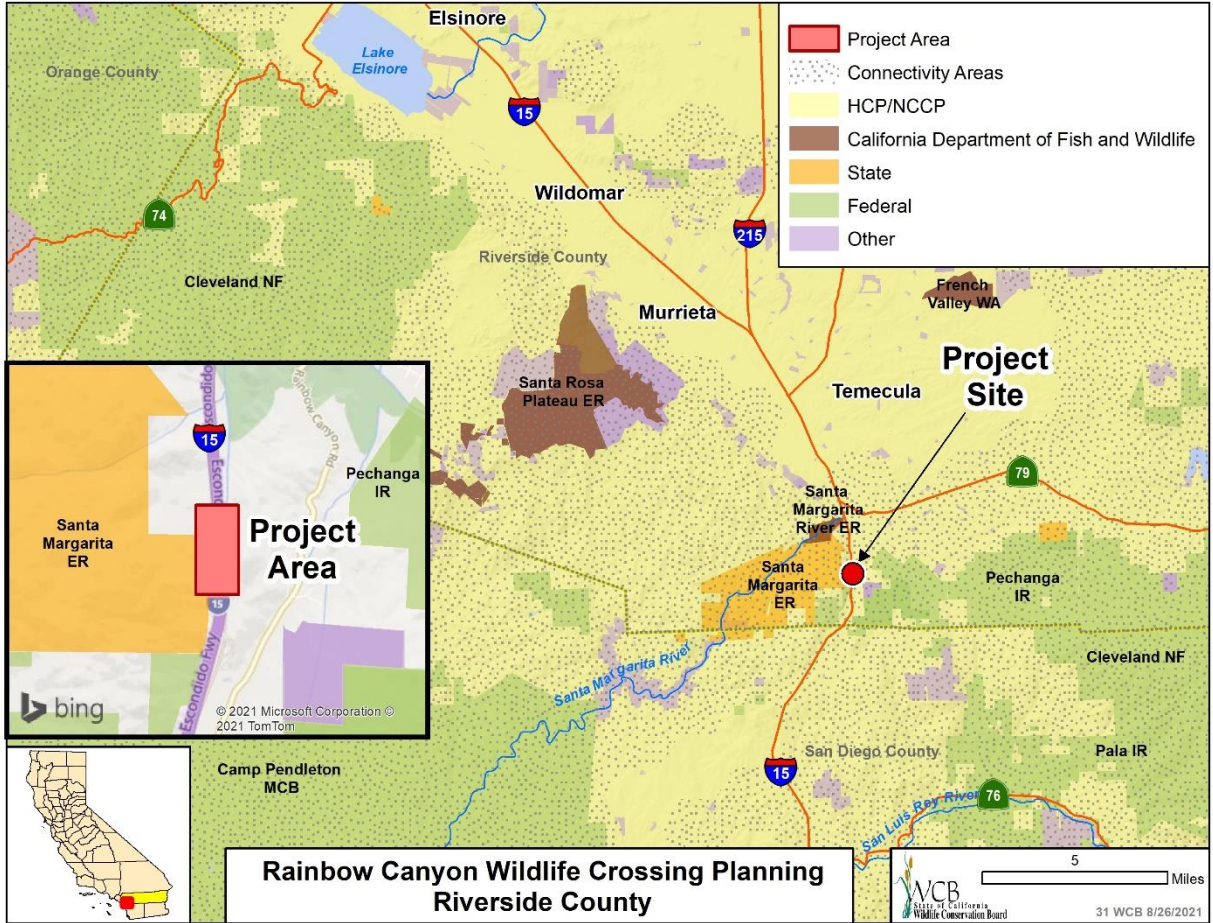
- Janet E. Cheek, Acting Field Manager, U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- David Lipson, Professor, Department of Biology, San Diego State University
- Cara Lacey, Director of Connected Lands, The Nature Conservancy
- Honey Bernas, Interim Executive Director, Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
- Stacey Blackwood, Director, Orange County Parks
- T. Winston Vickers, Director, U.C. Davis Wildlife Health Center Southern California Mountain Lion Project
- Doug Fermenda, Director of Environmental Planning, Transportation Corridor Agencies
- Kristine Preston, Ecologist, San Diego Monitoring and Management Program
- Mike Hughes, Chair, Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority
- Debra Chase, CEO, Mountain Lion Foundation
- Claire Schlotterbeck, Executive Director, Hills For Everyone
- Nathan Gregory, Vice President and Chief Programs Officer, Irvine Ranch Conservancy
- Kristeen Penrod, Director, SC Wildlands
- Karla Standridge, Executive Director, Fallbrook Land Conservancy
- J. P. Rose, Staff Attorney, Center for Biological Diversity
- Tiffany Yap, Wildlife Corridor Advocate, Center for Biological Diversity
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League
- Pam Nelsom, Chair, Santa Margarita Group/San Gregonio Chapter/Sierra Club
- Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- Scott Sobitch, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Partner's Letter signed by a coalition of 36 environmental organizations
- Coalition of 1052 private citizens

Opposition:

- None received

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



32. Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,065,000 from 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:	Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Groundworks San Diego – Chollas Creek
Amount Recommended:	\$3,065,000
Funding Partners:	City of San Diego, Department of Water Resources, CNRA
Landowner(s):	City of San Diego, Caltrans
County:	San Diego
Program:	California Riparian Habitat Conservation
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.4 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.5, 4.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration project (Project) is located in an urbanized community called City Heights in the city of San Diego. The Project site is surrounded by SR-94 to the south, Federal Boulevard to the north, Home Avenue to the west and the I-805/SR 94 offramp to the east. Just upstream from the Project location is Sunshine Berardini Field Park, and beyond that, an open space canyon that is included in the City of San Diego's Multi-Habitat Planning Area program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project site is a concrete lined segment of Chollas Creek that is dominated by invasive plants. The use of a hardened stream channel coupled with the resulting degradation of native riparian habitat has led to three significant issues:

1. The channel does not provide habitat that can function as a wildlife corridor to connect animals to the more naturalized areas of the creek located upstream and downstream.
2. The concrete does not allow water to infiltrate, and contributes to local stormwater quality issues, and does not withstand a 100-year flood event.
3. There is not a trail connecting the disadvantaged neighborhoods to the north and south along Home Avenue to Sunshine Berardini Field Park, which is compounded by a lack of open space and recreational trails in the neighborhood.

To rectify this, the concrete channel will be removed and the banks of the naturalized creek will be planted with native plant and tree species appropriate to the region, providing habitat and a wildlife corridor for animals. By removing the existing concrete lining, expanding the depth and width of the channel, and installing a soft cobble-lined bottom, the Project will improve flood control and water quality in the area.

The Project will also include a trail that will extend from Home Avenue on the west, along the side of the creek to a crossing adjacent to Sunshine Berardini Field. Trees will be planted along the length of the trail, providing a shaded route for neighbors to the north and south along Home Avenue to travel to the park.

New habitat resulting from the overall Project will include 2,000 linear feet of riparian corridor varying from 65 to 90 feet in width (the existing concrete channel is about 40 feet wide), and 3,100 linear feet of native trees planted along the trail, which will be approximately eight feet in width. In total, the Project will restore five acres of native riparian habitat.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Project improvements will be managed by the City of San Diego as part of its ongoing stormwater maintenance (for the channel) and parks maintenance (for the trail) programs. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Groundworks San Diego - Chollas Creek does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$100,000	\$186,500	\$286,500
Environmental Review and Permitting	\$285,000	\$267,000	\$552,000
Design, Drawings and Specifications	\$330,000	\$575,500	\$905,500
Construction Management	\$384,360	\$275,136	\$659,496
Construction	\$1,630,640	\$2,654,472	\$4,285,112
Contingency	\$335,000	\$2,892	\$337,892
Total	\$3,065,000	\$3,961,500	\$7,026,500

Project costs include:

- Project Management: Grant management activities and grant and fiduciary compliance with the Project's fiscal sponsor.
- Environmental Review and Permitting: Coordination with the CEQA lead agency and development of permit applications.

- Design, Drawings and Specifications: Geotechnical investigations, hydraulic modeling, final designs and updating FEMA maps.
- Construction Management: On site management of construction activities.
- Construction: Removal of the concrete channel, restoration of the stream bed and riparian corridor, and installation of native plants.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

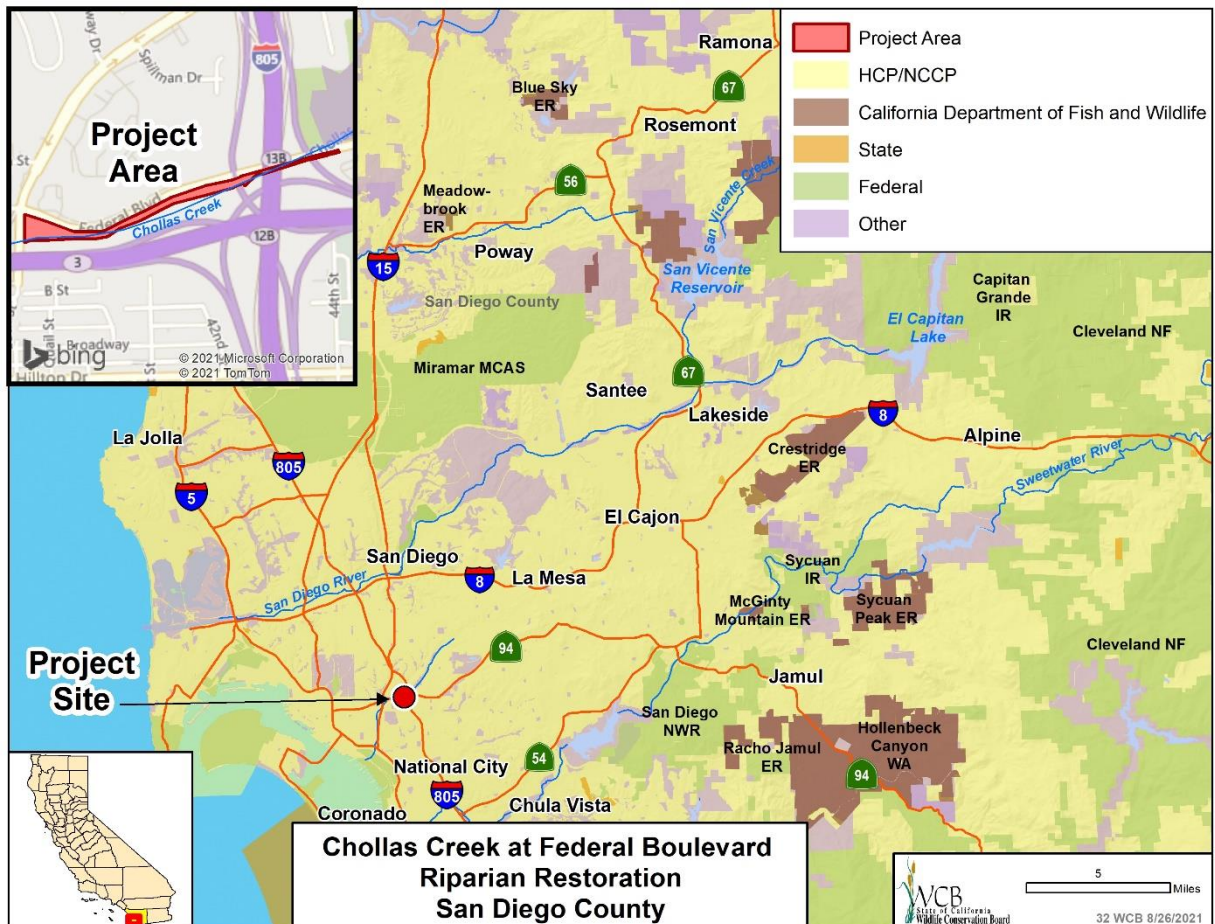
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The City of San Diego, 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. San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve Habitat Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,976,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(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:	San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve Habitat Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Nature Collective
Amount Recommended:	\$1,976,000
Funding Partners:	Nature Collective
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife, County of San Diego, Nature Collective
County:	San Diego
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.1, 2.5
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve Habitat Restoration project (Project) is located at the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve (SELER), within the Escondido Creek watershed, in San Diego County. The SELER was acquired to preserve, protect, and maintain coastal wetland habitat and provide for the needs of coastal wetland dependent species. It was designated as an ecological reserve by the Fish and Game Commission in 1983. The Project area is comprised of protected parcels owned by CDFW, San Diego County, and the Nature Collective.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Currently, the riparian habitat within the Project area is characterized by the dominance of native species such as arroyo willow and black willow, and non-native species such as eucalyptus and palm trees. Understory species are primarily weedy non-natives and there is limited transitional upland species such as mulefat, seep willow, and other shrubs. The main goal of the Project is to increase plant diversity across the Project area, which will provide climate-resilient, high-quality habitat for migratory birds and other associated wildlife within the Pacific Flyway.

The Project will restore 25 acres of riparian woodland, scrub, and freshwater and alkali marsh habitats to provide climate-resilient, high-quality habitat for the coastal least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, coastal California gnatcatcher, Ridgway's rail, other migratory/resident birds, and other associated wildlife.

Restoration efforts include complete removal of all eucalyptus trees, palm trees, and other non-native vegetation within the Project area. Native plants will be planted at a density of 400-600 container plants per acre and will be irrigated during their first year of growth. The plant palette will be designed to reduce climate vulnerability by creating redundancy in climate-related plant traits and ensure that a variety of resources for wildlife remains available year-round. The Project will simultaneously improve buffer habitat to protect adjacent ongoing wetland and riparian restoration projects by reducing soil erosion and invasive plant seed dispersal into these areas.

Nature Collective will implement a robust wildlife monitoring program to assess the response of target species (least Bell’s vireo) to restoration efforts. Nature Collective will also design, develop, and implement a Brown-headed Cowbird management program within the Project area. Brown-headed cowbirds are obligate brood parasites known to parasitize the nests of other bird species. Managing for brown-headed cowbirds will help to increase nest success of neotropical migratory birds within the Project area.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$74,373	---	\$74,373
Avian Monitoring	\$146,527	---	\$146,527
Riparian Restoration	\$1,578,500	\$116,000	\$1,694,500
Brown-headed Cowbird Management Program	\$90,000	---	\$90,000
Indirect Costs	\$86,600	---	\$86,600
Total	\$1,976,000	\$116,000	\$2,092,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project coordination, planning, design, coordination with subcontractors, invoicing, and creation of a final report.
- Avian Monitoring: Quantitative monitoring of project sites, including annual bird surveys for special status species, and GIS mapping of invasive treatments.
- Riparian Restoration: Non-native eradication and removal of biomass, revegetation of native plants, irrigation, and herbicide purchase and application.

- Brown-headed Cowbird Management Program: Development of a management document, monitoring, and trapping of brown-headed cowbird.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League
- Brian Albright, Director of Parks and Recreation, County of San Diego

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The County of San Diego, 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.

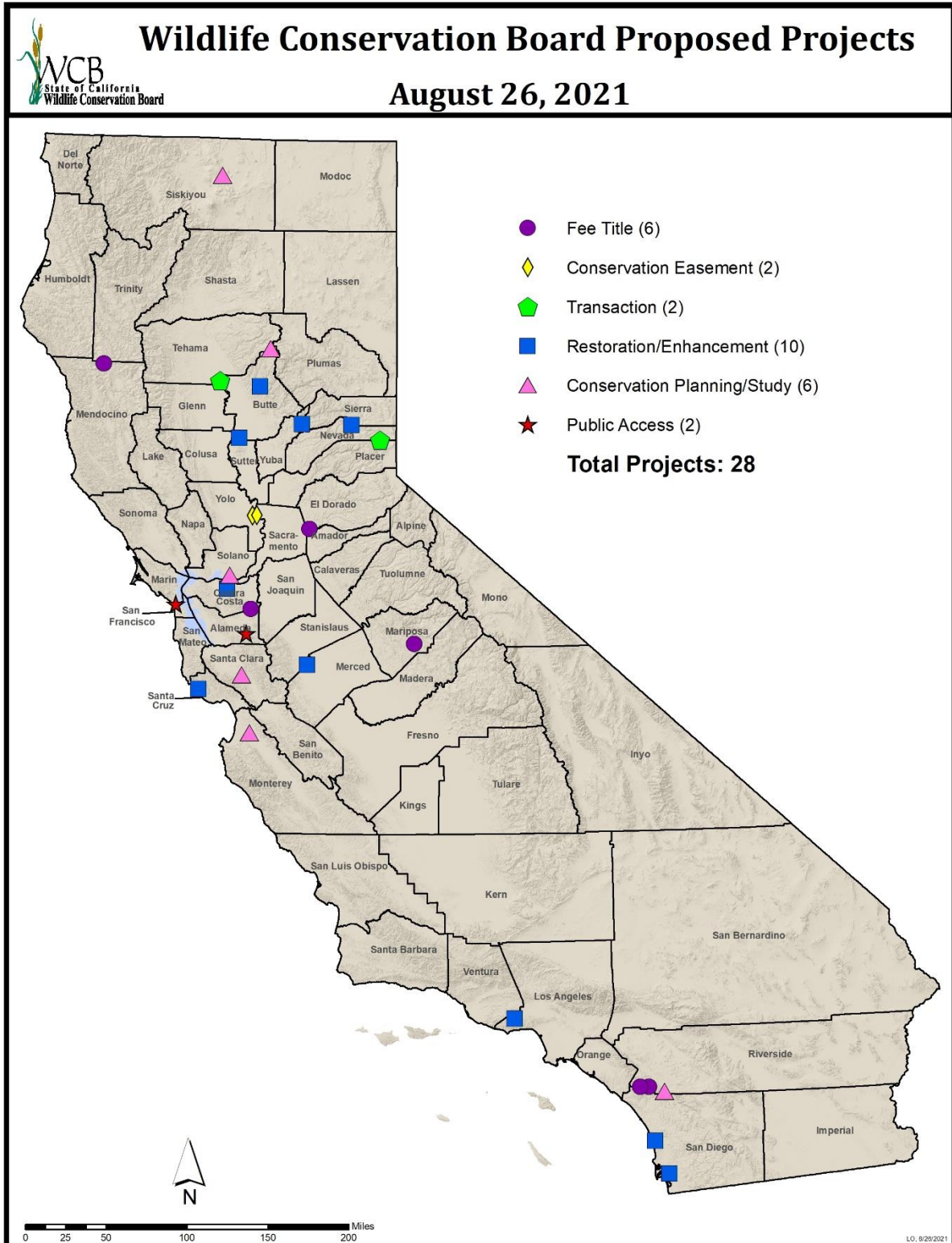


34. Executive Session (Not Open to the Public)

The Board may meet in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 11126(e) to confer regarding Jacoby Creek Land Trust v. Douglas A. Shaw, et al., Humboldt County Superior Court, Case No. CV 2100568. After closed session, the Board will reconvene in public session, which may include announcements about actions taken during closed session.

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF AUGUST 2021 PROJECTS



ATTACHMENT B – WCB DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

Disadvantaged Community – a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average (PRC § 80002[e]).

Severely Disadvantaged Community - a community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average (PRC § 80002[n]).

ACRONYMS

Americans with Disabilities Act	ADA
Bureau of Land Management	BLM
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	CDFW
California Department of Finance	DOF
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	CAL FIRE
California Department of General Services	DGS
California Department of Transportation	Caltrans
California Department of Water Resources	DWR
California Endangered Species Act	CESA
California Environmental Quality Act	CEQA
California Fish and Game Commission	FGC
California Natural Resources Agency	CNRA
Conceptual Area Protection Plan	CAPP
Disadvantaged Community	DAC
Habitat Conservation Plan	HCP
National Environmental Policy Act	NEPA
National Marine Fisheries Service	NMFS
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA
Natural Community Conservation Plan	NCCP
Notice of Exemption	NOE
Resource Conservation District	RCD
Resource Conservation Investment Strategy	RCIS
Severely Disadvantaged Community	SDAC
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	SNC
State Coastal Conservancy	SCC
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act	SGMA
Tahoe National Forest	TNF
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS
U.S. Forest Service	USFS
Wildlife Conservation Board	WCB

ATTACHMENT C – WCB STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL A. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Acquire and invest in wildlife habitat and natural areas, and work towards long-term, landscape level conservation, habitat quality and connectivity, and the success of wildlife species and populations.

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

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

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

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

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

A.6 Coordinate acquisition application processes to ensure that WCB project evaluation is unified across programs to the fullest possible extent.

GOAL B. ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Work with partners to restore and enhance natural areas, create viable habitat on working lands, manage adaptively, and ensure long-term ecosystem health.

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

B.2 Strengthen the grant application process to further highlight the importance of the following factors in project design and selection: robustness and resilience to extreme weather events, ecosystem services (e.g. groundwater recharge, flood reduction, fire prevention, etc.), water quality and quantity, and compatible public use and access.

B.3 Improve transparency and efficiency of WCB and CDFW project evaluation and recommendations to approve or deny applications.

B.4 Expand project monitoring and evaluation of restoration activities to assess long-term project success, moving beyond compliance monitoring.

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

GOAL C. PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION

Leverage WCB investments in programs and projects by expanding opportunities for outdoor wildlife-oriented recreational activities that are compatible with conservation goals.

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

C.2 Document and describe the current public access project evaluation and selection processes and explore the option of establishing a competitive grant making cycle for the Public Access Program.

C.3 Standardize existing project monitoring protocols to facilitate consistent reporting and improved performance management.

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

GOAL E. Fiscal and Organizational Effectiveness

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

SI 1: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, RESILIENCY, AND MITIGATION (PLAN GOALS A, B, AND C)

OBJECTIVE SI 1.1 Invest in at least three wildlife under-or over-crossings each year for the next three years (2019 - 2021), in locations deemed high priority by both transportation and fish and wildlife agencies.

OBJECTIVE SI 1.2 Invest in at least five projects that contribute to connectivity as highlighted in the California Terrestrial Connectivity Map, or linkages as mapped in regional assessments.

OBJECTIVE SI 1.3 Ensure 40 percent of all acquisition and restoration projects are in areas identified as habitat for vulnerable species or as highly resilient to climate change.

OBJECTIVE SI 1.4 Invest in at least five projects that provide long-term measurable carbon sequestration benefits.

OBJECTIVE SI 1.5 Collaboratively develop and publish criteria for addressing catastrophic natural resource events like extreme fire and prolonged drought, for inclusion as priorities in future solicitations.

OBJECTIVE SI 1.6 Collaboratively identify and fund five upper watershed improvement projects each year that have a primary or secondary purpose of providing resilience to climate change

SI 2: BIODIVERSITY ACTIONS (PLAN GOALS A AND B)

OBJECTIVE SI 2.1 Increase habitat for sensitive species to support biodiversity through statewide protection or restoration of oak woodlands, riparian habitat, rangeland, grazing land, and grassland habitat by funding at least 10 projects in each of these WCB programs with at least 25 percent of restoration projects on conserved lands.

OBJECTIVE SI 2.2 Each year, invest in at least three acquisitions and two restoration grants that advance habitat and natural community targets embodied in RCIS, NCCPs, or regional conservation plans.

OBJECTIVE SI 2.3 Implement at least 10 projects each year that enhance stream flow, increase water resiliency and meet priorities in the California Water Action Plan.

OBJECTIVE SI 2.4 Ensure 75 percent of all approved projects meet one or more conservation priorities expressed in the SWAP.

OBJECTIVE SI 2.5 Protect or restore at least 1,000 acres each of riparian, wetlands, and grassland habitats in priority areas as defined in the SWAP.

SI 3: PUBLIC ACCESS AND WILDLIFE-ORIENTED RECREATION (PLAN GOAL C)

OBJECTIVE SI 3.1 Invest in at least five projects providing public access for disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities.

OBJECTIVE SI 3.2 Invest in at least five projects providing boating/fishing/hunting access to disadvantaged communities and providing additional facilities for mobility-impaired visitors and/or access compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

OBJECTIVE SI 3.3 Invest in at least 10 projects that provide hunting or fishing opportunities (at least five each).

OBJECTIVE SI 3.4 Invest in at least 10 projects that have a primary or secondary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

OBJECTIVE SI 3.5 Attend or conduct at least two meetings per year that provide outreach, workshops, and materials to increase visibility of the WCB Public Access Program. At least one should be in a disadvantaged community.

SI 4: ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (PLAN GOAL A, B AND D)

OBJECTIVE SI 4.1 Each year, invest in at least five acquisition or restoration projects that have a demonstrated and measurable upper watershed ecosystem services benefit.

OBJECTIVE SI 4.2 Each year, invest in at least three projects that have a primary purpose of conserving or restoring native pollinator habitat in locations that provide a measurable ecosystem services benefit.

OBJECTIVE SI 4.3 Invest in at least five projects that provide tangible ecosystem services benefits to local lower watershed (urban or rural) communities, and document that benefit.

SI 5: PARTNERSHIPS (PLAN GOALS A, B, C, AND D)

OBJECTIVE SI 5.1 Invest in at least three projects that support state or federal Safe Harbor programs.

OBJECTIVE SI 5.2 Conduct outreach, including meetings or field visits to five new partners per year.

OBJECTIVE SI 5.3 Implement at least three competitive grant solicitations over the next five years that have been coordinated among multiple organizations and are directed at a high priority habitat per WCB program priorities.

OBJECTIVE SI 5.4 Per the USFWS Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, establish a new partnership with one urban community each year to support nature and wildlife connections consistent with WCB programs.

SI 6: WCB ORGANIZATION AND TRANSPAREN-CY (PLAN GOALS D AND E)

OBJECTIVE SI 6.1 By the end of 2020, implement a system to make WCB meetings accessible online.

OBJECTIVE SI 6.2 By the end of 2020, make substantial progress in standardizing solicitation content, criteria, and process, and develop an online application portal for competitive grants.

OBJECTIVE SI 6.3 By the end of 2020, update the WCB website to include current goals, targets, metrics, and conservation priorities for each WCB Program.

OBJECTIVE SI 6.4 By the end of 2020, develop and make mapped data that illustrates WCB projects and their relationship to program conservation objectives available to the public.

OBJECTIVE SI 6.5 Each year, hold at least one conservation partner workshop in a different part of the state, to discuss competitive grant programs and receive feedback.

OBJECTIVE SI 6.6 Sponsor at least five conferences or workshops each year throughout the state and distribute outreach materials about WCB programs.

SI 7: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP (PLAN GOALS D AND E)

OBJECTIVE SI 7.1 Take the lead to coordinate among the state conservancies and other agencies, regarding habitat-based priorities for upcoming competitive grant solicitations.

OBJECTIVE SI 7.2 Participate in the development and implementation of the natural working lands elements of the State Safeguarding and Scoping Plans.

OBJECTIVE SI 7.3 With CDFW, complete a unified, simplified process to identify CDFW's acquisition investment priorities and obtain CDFW's review and endorsement of WCB projects

OBJECTIVE SI 7.4 Participate in statewide policy development efforts to improve fire resiliency and forest management through natural resource protection and restoration.

OBJECTIVE SI 7.5 Refine priority conservation areas for each WCB program (consistent with overall WCB goals), and report progress toward program-specific goals annually or biannually

SI 8: MONITORING AND PROGRAM EVALUATION (PLAN GOAL E)

OBJECTIVE SI 8.1 By 2021, define criteria for effectiveness monitoring by program, habitat or geography.

OBJECTIVE SI 8.2 Through continued implementation of the annual monitoring program, by 2024, cumulatively monitor 20 percent of completed projects, summarize the project compliance results, and post on the WCB website.

OBJECTIVE SI 8.3 By 2024, make the monitoring survey platform accessible on the WCB website for use by project partners.

OBJECTIVE SI 8.4 Include monitoring data in each WCB annual report and list projects by county and by SWAP habitat type.

OBJECTIVE SI 8.5 By 2022, update the WCB 60-year assessment—for WCB’s 75th anniversary—to highlight program accomplishments, including the acreage of habitat type preserved and restored.