



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 25, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

Natural Resources Building, First Floor Auditorium
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Board meeting will also be available via Zoom. A recording will be posted after the meeting.

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*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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Attachments

Attachment A – Map of August 2022 Projects

Attachment B – WCB Acronyms

Attachment C – WCB Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department's EEO Officer at (916) 653-9089 or EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. 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
Gayle Miller, Member
Chief Deputy Director, Policy, Department of Finance
Damon Nagami, Public Member
Fran Pavley, Public Member
Kathryn Phillips, Public Member
Samantha Murray, President
Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Andreas Borgeas
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Henry Stern
Assemblymember Luz Rivas
Assemblymember Laura Friedman – Alternate
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago – Alternate
Assemblymember Steve Bennett
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia – Alternate

Executive Director

John P. Donnelly

2. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda

This item provides an opportunity for the general public to share comments or concerns on topics that are not included in this agenda. Speakers shall be limited to two minutes. 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:

GENERAL FUND (0001)	\$559,251,790.00
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(7,697,745.00)
Total Project Development:	(12,305,580.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$539,248,465.00
 HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	 \$60,025,955.73
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,854,472.00)
Total Project Development:	(7,776,795.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$50,394,688.73
 WILDLIFE AND COASTAL PROTECTION ACT OF 1988 (0786))	 \$3,778,917.00
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$3,778,917.00
 GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	 \$5,553,014.67
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,689,600.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,785,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,078,441.67
 CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	 \$5,352,550.52
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(3,478,268.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,874,282.52
 WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	 \$10,927,900.96
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(4,393,655.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$6,534,245.96

SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	\$8,350,138.66
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,587,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(4,685,646.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$2,077,492.66
 WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	 \$50,762,870.22
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(3,326,806.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,557,560.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$44,878,504.22
 THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	 \$96,792,836.72
August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(4,810,240.00)
Total Project Development:	(21,833,499.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$70,149,097.72
 TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	 \$800,796,001.48
Grand Total – August 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(21,150,310.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(59,816,003.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$719,829,688.48

Consent Items

Items 4-14 are part of the Consent Calendar

4. Recovery of Funds, Thursday, August 25, 2022

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
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$10,000.03
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$1,349.61
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	\$0.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$58,986.80
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$0.49
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$30,430.50
Total Recoveries for All Funds	\$100,767.43

Table 2 - Habitat Conservation Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Centennial Point Ranch Conservation Easement	\$988,750.00	\$978,750.00	\$10,000.00
Elkhorn Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration	\$980,000.00	\$980,000.00	\$0.00
North Coast Non-native Invasive Weed Eradication	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$0.00
San Dieguito River Riparian Habitat Restoration	\$1,005,000.00	\$1,005,000.00	\$0.00
San Dieguito River Riparian Habitat Restoration, Augmentation	\$345,000.00	\$344,999.97	\$0.03
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			\$10,000.03

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Central Valley Nutria Eradication	\$600,000.00	\$598,650.39	\$1,349.61
Total Recoveries California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund			\$1,349.61

Table 4 - Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Newport Valley Habitat Restoration	\$381,000.00	\$381,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002			\$0.00

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP (Pugh)	\$56,000.00	\$54,750.00	\$1,250.00
West Shore Wildland Urban Interface Forest Restoration	\$950,000.00	\$892,263.20	\$57,736.80
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			\$58,986.80

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
San Gregorio Creek Stream Flow Enhancement, Blue House Farm	\$886,590.00	\$886,589.98	\$0.02
San Gregorio Creek Stream Flow Enhancement, Klingman-Moty Farm	\$621,754.00	\$621,753.53	\$0.47
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$0.49

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) KS California	\$76,000.00	\$64,870.00	\$11,130.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Lafleur	\$98,750.00	\$86,704.00	\$12,046.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Lafleur	\$165,250.00	\$161,413.00	\$3,837.00
Western Riverside MSHCP (2017) Stevenson	\$99,000.00	\$95,582.50	\$3,417.50
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All, Act of 2018			\$30,430.50

5. Contract Authorization Delegation of Authority

Contracts Executed by the Executive Director Informational

At the February 24, 2016, Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) meeting, the Board authorized the Executive Director to execute non-controversial contracts with private and public entities to support the mission and goals of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), limiting such authority to routine service and interagency contracts and amendments of no more than \$150,000.00 in value per year and no more than three years in length per contract.

The Board's action allowed the Executive Director to execute time-sensitive contracts as soon as practically possible and without the delays associated with bringing non-controversial contracts before the Board for approval at their next quarterly meeting. The action was also taken to ensure compliance with the California State Contracting Manual, Volume 1, Section 2.06(B), which requires that for contracts in excess of \$5,000.00, state boards and commissions must have either statutory authority for the executive officer to sign contracts, or the authority must be conveyed by the board or commission by written resolution, order or motion.

The Board placed one condition on its delegation of authority: WCB staff must report contracts executed under the delegation of authority to the Board at its next scheduled meeting. Pursuant to the aforementioned condition, the following contracts were executed by the Executive Director.

Contractor	Project/Purpose	Total Value	Term
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Legal services to support Stream Flow Enhancement Program	\$ 324,183.00	3 Years
State Water Resources Control Board	Technical Services to support Stream Flow Enhancement Program	\$ 450,000.00	3 Years
Clutch	75th Anniversary planning services	\$ 66,840.00	8 Months

Contract Authorization for Accounting Services Action

This proposal is to request approval for the Executive Director of WCB to execute a three-year interagency agreement not to exceed \$3,801,207 with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Accounting Services Branch (ASB) to provide the WCB with professional accounting and fiscal support services. The agreement does not fall into the amount of delegation authority to the Executive

Director of WCB from the February 24, 2016, Board meeting of no more than \$150,000 in value per year and seeks Board approval.

The services provided by ASB are integral to WCB's day-to-day administrative operations and support all of its land acquisition and habitat conservation programs. Examples of such services include but are not limited to the following: processing and facilitating payments for all incoming invoices for project development and land acquisition projects and activities; establishing and maintaining general ledger accounts; reviewing expenditures and reconciling FI\$Cal reports with State Controller's Office accounts; and preparing and reviewing financial statements, expenditure, and encumbrance reports for all WCB funds. WCB does not directly employ staff that possesses the diverse and extensive technical knowledge required to provide all of the independent professional accounting service functions required to support its daily operations. Historically, past interagency agreements have provided funding for approximately 1-3 ASB accounting positions. The number of positions funded is based largely on WCB's program needs, total available funding, and the number of planned and ongoing development and acquisition projects. The proposed agreement will provide funding for three Associate Accounting Analyst, one Accounting Administrator I, one Senior Accounting Officer (Specialist), and two Accounting Officer (Specialist) positions. Staff believes funding seven positions is reasonable to support WCB's current operations, as well as to manage the expected increase in accounting-related work as a result of the WCB's recent allocation from the Drought and Climate Change package and Water Resilience Package.

Staff recommends that the Board approves the Executive Director of WCB to execute a three-year interagency agreement not to exceed \$3,801,207 with CDFW, Accounting Services Branch to provide WCB with professional accounting and fiscal support services.

6. Modeling Actual Flows and Assessing Stream Flow Alterations in Ungaged Streams Across California

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$735,644 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), Public Resources Code Section 79733; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Modeling Actual Flows and Assessing Stream Flow Alterations in Ungaged Streams Across California
Project Type:	Scientific Study
Applicant/Grantee:	The Nature Conservancy
Amount Recommended:	\$735,644
Funding Partners:	None
Landowner(s):	N/A
County:	All
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	Proposition 1
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Modeling Actual Flows in Ungaged Streams scientific study (Project) will examine streams statewide. It includes developing models for all ungaged streams and rivers in the state of California on land that is in private and public ownership. The Project site is statewide, is currently an extensive range of uses and will cover all counties in the state.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Project will develop a modeling approach to use the available gage data more effectively to fill data gaps at locations that currently have gages and predict river flow and flow alteration in ungaged rivers. Using machine learning and tools developed as part of the California Environmental Flows Framework (a collaborative framework produced by a combination of California universities, state agencies, and non-profit organizations) and lessons learned from preliminary modeling of daily unimpaired and actual flows at stream gages across California, this Project will predict unimpaired and actual daily stream flow for all streams in the state, both gaged and ungaged. These model predictions for actual flows can then be compared to established ecological flow criteria to determine the gap between the two and so determine the additional amount of stream flows needed to support freshwater ecosystem function for all streams in the state.

Over the past decade, California has experienced drastic swings in precipitation resulting in an extended drought and record-breaking rainfall. The state has a world-renowned and highly engineered water system, which moves millions of gallons of water from north to south and east to west. Across the state, countless

sensitive species and unique habitats depend on adequate stream flows. But there is surprisingly little data available about how much water is moving through our streams at any given time and if our important landscapes are getting water when and where they need it.

Achieving the goals of the Stream Flow Enhancement Program, including improving ecological function to protect and restore freshwater biodiversity, requires assessing where stream flow restoration is needed. However, the lack of year-round stream flow data on the 87 percent of streams throughout California that are ungaged makes it difficult to assess the degree to which stream flow has been altered. Installing gages in all river reaches in the state is unlikely to be feasible in the foreseeable future due to the magnitude of effort required, financially and logistically. This Project develops a modeling approach to use the gage data we have more effectively to fill data gaps at gage locations and predict river flow and flow alteration in ungaged rivers. The Grantee will hire a subcontractor to translate the UC Davis functional flows calculator over to the Grantee's Natural Flows web-application so that all flows tools can be accessed at one website. The Grantee is responsible for the long-term maintenance of the calculator.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship and Pathway 9: Advance and Promote Complementary Conservation Measures.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management, Alteration Assessment, and Data Management	\$178,789	---	\$178,789
Technology and Model Development	\$500,914	---	\$500,914
Indirect	\$55,941	---	\$55,941
Total	\$735,644	---	\$735,644

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management, Alteration Assessment, and Data Management: Establishment of subcontracts, stakeholder outreach, project reporting and preparation of invoices, stream flow alteration assessments, and all collected data uploaded and made publicly available
- Technology and Model Development: Develop a model that will produce actual, daily functional flow metric predictions for all streams and rivers in California; a technical report describing the modeling approach, model accuracy, and

results; a publicly available online functional flows calculator; and code scripts for one or more seasonality metrics and decision tools to assess whether the functional flows calculator can be used to calculate functional flow metrics from a stream with altered flows

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Theodore (Ted) Grantham, Adjunct Professor, University of California, Berkeley
- Jeffrey Mount, Senior Fellow, Public Policy Institute of California
- Erin D. Stein, Principal Scientist, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
- Jeff Opperman, Ph.D., Lead Scientist for Freshwater, World Wildlife Fund
- Walter "Redgie" Collins, Legal and Policy Director, California Trout
- John McCaull, Land Acquisition Director, Sonoma Land Trust
- Matthew O. Clifford, Staff Attorney, Trout Unlimited
- Cindy Buxton, Watershed Program Associate II, The Watershed Research Center
- Don Chartrand, Executive Director, Creek Lands Conservation
- Thomas Mosier, Ph.D., Energy Systems Group Lead, Idaho National Laboratory

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted, or funded. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



7. McLaughlin Reserve Fire Safety Improvements

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$285,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(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:	McLaughlin Reserve Fire Safety Improvements
Project Type:	Infrastructure
Applicant/Grantee:	University of California, Davis
Amount Recommended:	\$285,000
Funding Partners:	University of California, Davis
Landowner(s):	University of California, Davis
County:	Lake
Program:	The University of California, Natural Reserve System
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.5 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The McLaughlin Reserve Fire Safety Improvements project (Project) is located at the McLaughlin Reserve (Reserve) in Lower Lake within Lake County. The Reserve belongs to the University of California Natural Reserve System and encompasses 7,050 acres of wildland and approximately 32,000 ft² of facilities in California's Inner Coast Range. The Reserve is known internationally as a model ecosystem for studying how geology and soil influence the evolution and distribution of biological diversity, particularly plants and pollinators, and how climate change will affect these processes. In 2011, WCB allocated \$1,725,000 to complete a combination of land and facilities acquisition, facilities and infrastructure renovation, and new facilities construction designed to meet the needs of both Reserve staff and visiting researchers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Increased frequency and intensity of fire in California is widely recognized as a consequence of climate change, and two major fires have burned most of the Reserve in the past five years. Reserve facilities are inadequately protected against fire, which compromises the safety of the staff, researchers, and students, and their ability to sustain the mission of research, teaching, and land management.

The Project will restore and improve fire protection infrastructure at the Reserve to meet basic indoor life safety requirements and to create a defensible zone that will allow reserve staff and users to shelter in place during a wildfire if necessary. The Project will restore the fire sprinkler and alarm system in the headquarters building.

A wildfire perimeter defense will be constructed by installing three, 5,000-gallon water tanks and water distribution pipes to newly installed fire hydrants.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The University of California, Davis 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, University of California, Davis 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
Headquarters Fire Sprinkler/Alarm System	\$285,000	---	\$285,000
Water Storage/Delivery/Hydrants	---	\$81,038	\$81,038
Equipment	---	\$14,094	\$14,094
Total	\$285,000	\$95,132	\$380,132

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Headquarters Fire Sprinkler/Alarm System: Construct new underground water service to Headquarters building, install sprinkler system and fire alarm system.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

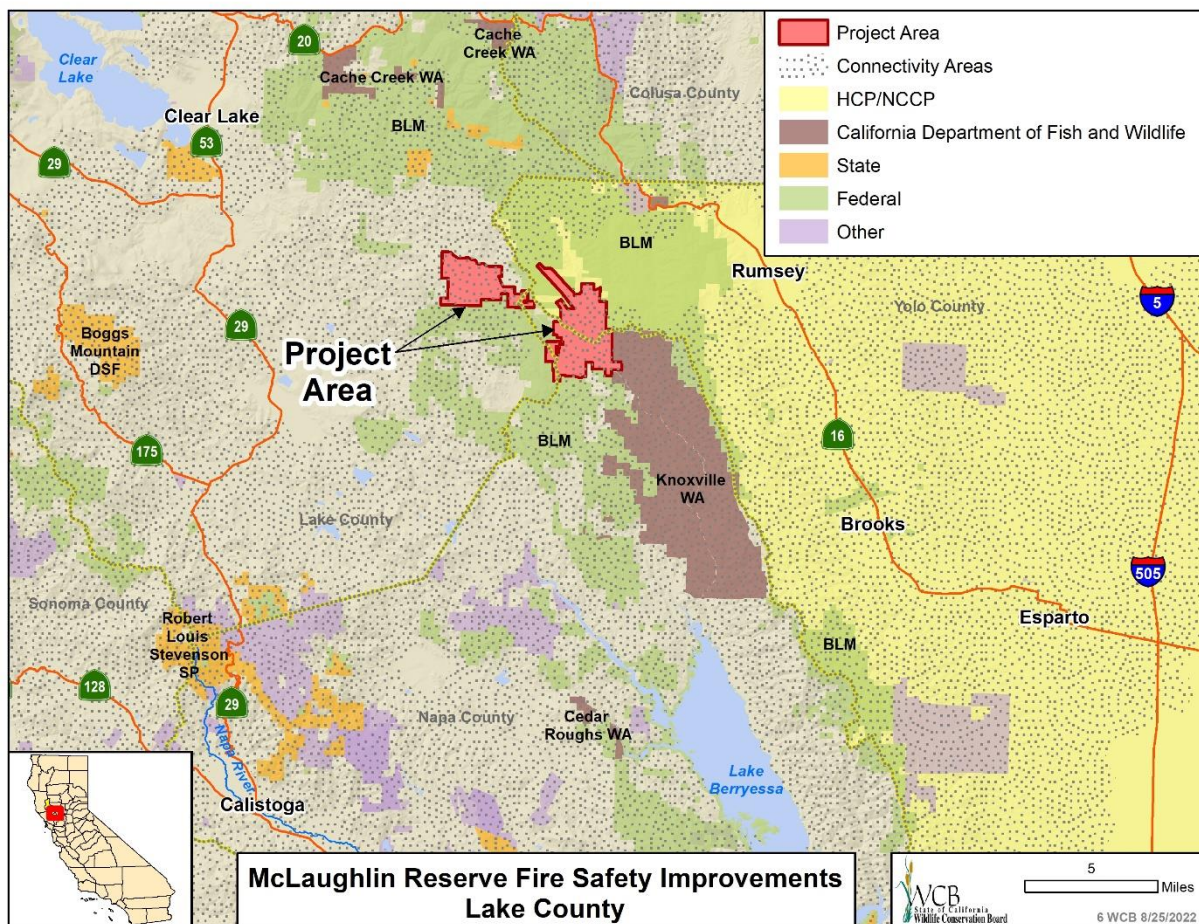
- None received

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. The Project consists of the repair of existing structures and facilities. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



8. Año Nuevo Reserve Equal Access Road Improvement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$65,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(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:	Año Nuevo Reserve Equal Access Road Improvement
Project Type:	Infrastructure
Applicant/Grantee:	University of California, Santa Cruz
Amount Recommended:	\$65,000
Funding Partners:	University of California, Santa Cruz
Landowner(s):	California Department of Parks and Recreation
County:	San Mateo
Program:	The University of California, Natural Reserve System
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: C.1 Objectives: SI 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Año Nuevo Reserve Equal Access Road Improvement project (Project) is located at the Año Nuevo Island Reserve (Reserve) located midway between San Francisco and Santa Cruz, along the rural San Mateo Coast, in San Mateo County. The Reserve has been a key site for the UC Natural Reserve System for the past 50 years with thousands of user-days each year.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Equal Access Road heads in an east - west direction away from Hwy 1. The road is sandwiched between agriculture fields and flat meadow with limited drainage which has left the road with large mud holes and makes access difficult during winter and spring months. The Project will improve the Reserve's Equal Access Road, improving accessibility to an ADA trail used for research and teaching. The Project will provide long-term repairs instead of short-term patches. This will sustain access for the research and teaching activities at the Reserve while also ensuring access to members of the public with mobility concerns. The road improvements will allow vehicles access throughout the year, allowing entire classes of students to access the key study areas using 12-passenger vans.

The work will include brushing back live vegetation, cleaning an existing inboard ditch line, construction of multiple rock drainage lens' through low lying areas, replacing four culverts, ripping class 2 base rock, and reshaping and compacting sections of roadway rock. All disturbed sites will be rehabilitated upon Project

completion which includes covering all bare soils with native mulch and brush generated from vegetation clearing.

The improvements will restore natural surface water flow patterns that have been obscured for many decades by the existing road. By facilitating the natural water flow patterns, the longevity of the road will be greatly enhanced and more effectively control storm-water runoff from the adjacent farm fields.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California key objective to expand access to nature.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The University of California, Santa Cruz has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, University of California, Santa Cruz 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
Equal Access Road Improvement	\$65,000	\$224,330	\$289,330
Total	\$65,000	\$224,330	\$289,330

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Equal Access Road Improvement: Install drainage lenses, culverts, and new surface

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

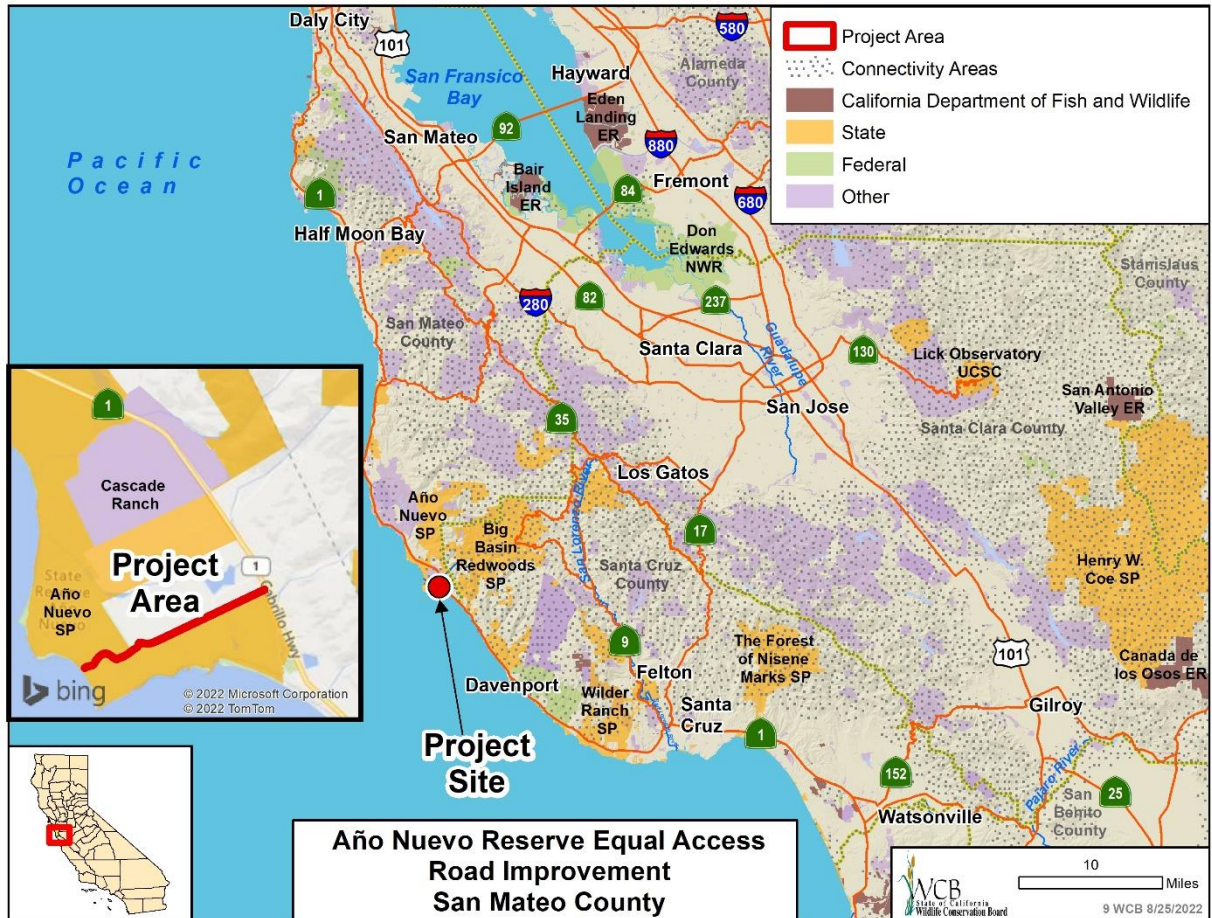
Opposition:

- 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 involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use, Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, consisting of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures or facilities where the new structure will be located at the same site and will have substantially the same purpose as the structure replaced, Section 15303, Class 3, New

Construction, consisting of construction of limited new small facilities or structures, and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Altercations to Land, consisting of minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, or vegetation.. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



9. Hastings Natural History Reservation Facilities Improvement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$232,500 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(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:	Hastings Natural History Reservation Facilities Improvement
Project Type:	Infrastructure
Applicant/Grantee:	University of California, Berkeley
Amount Recommended:	\$232,500
Funding Partners:	University of California, Berkeley
Landowner(s):	University of California, Berkeley
County:	Monterey
Program:	The University of California, Natural Reserve System
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.5 Objectives: SI 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Hastings Natural History Reservation Facilities Improvement project (Project) is located at the Hastings Natural History Reservation (Reservation) located in Carmel Valley. The Reservation is the oldest reserve in the University of California Natural Reserve System network and has been operating as a field station since 1937. In 2008, WCB allocated \$550,732 for a grant to the University of California, Berkeley to renovate and replace selected buildings within the Reservation and this grant will focus on additional buildings and infrastructure prioritized by UC Berkeley.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Since 1937, the Reservation has provided students and researchers with the opportunity to study and observe the native flora and fauna of central coastal California's upland habitat, ephemeral stream habitats, and historic indigenous and homesteader settlements. The Reservation facility consists of 25 buildings. The age of most structures, along with decades of heavy use, means that many of the structures require improvements. The Project will complete six tasks to improve Reservation facilities for users and staff:

- Replace the roof of three buildings: Red House 1, Red House 2 and Fanny's Cabin.
- Replace Bunk House and Red House Septic Tanks.
- Install solar panels and battery bank at Hallisey House and install propane generator at Fanny Arnold Conference Room.

- Replace kitchen, flooring and windows at the Robertson House.
- Replace flooring, plumbing, windows, doors, siding, insulation, and heat source in Fanny's Cabin.
- Install a foundation in the Carriage House and retaining wall on eastern face of building.

Ultimately these improvements will support the Reservation's mission of serving as a hub for field-based research and education, with a direct impact on the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The University of California, Berkeley 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, University of California, Berkeley 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
Roof Replacement	\$9,505	\$16,657	\$26,162
Septic Improvements	\$33,784	---	\$33,784
Back-up Power	\$93,000	---	\$93,000
Robertson House Remodel	\$22,543	\$14,482	\$37,025
Fanny's Cabin Remodel	\$8,168	\$23,758	\$31,926
Carriage House	\$65,500	\$3,500	\$69,000
Total	\$232,500	\$58,397	\$290,897

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Roof Replacement: Replace roof of three Reservation buildings.
- Septic Improvements: Install two septic tanks and associated connections.
- Back-up Power: Install solar panels and battery bank at Hallisey House and propane generator with tank at the Fanny Hastings Conference Room.
- Robertson House Remodel: Renovate kitchen and replace flooring and windows at the Robertson House.
- Fanny's Cabin Remodel: Renovate Fanny's cabin including upgrading heating, flooring, windows/doors, siding/insulation, and plumbing.
- Carriage House: Pour foundation and retaining wall at Carriage House.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

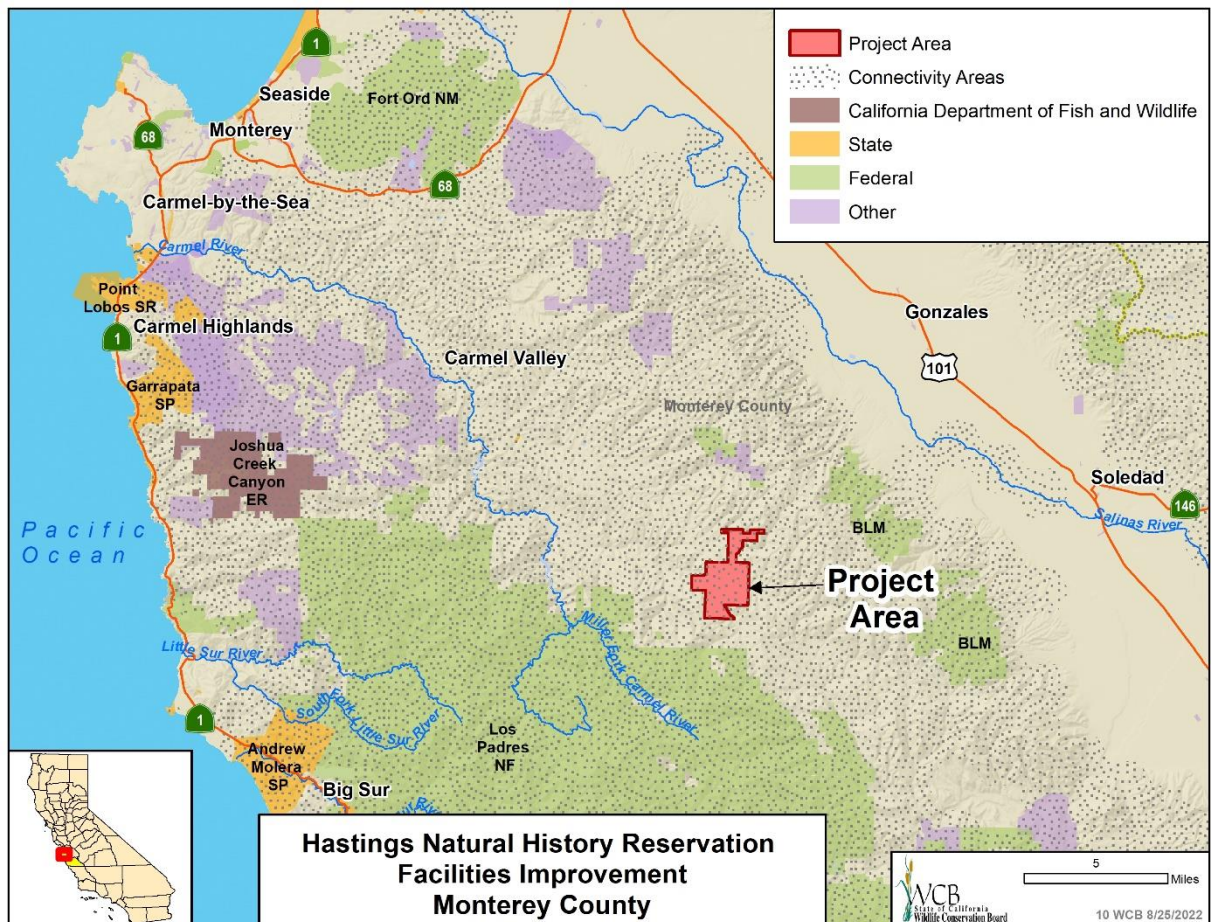
- None received

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. The Project consists of the repair of existing structures and facilities. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



10. Procter Ranch

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$360,000 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017 for the grant to The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo (LCSLO) for a conservation easement project; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Procter Ranch
Project Type:	Acquisition (321± acres)
Grantee:	The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County
Amount Recommended:	\$360,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Conservation California
County:	San Luis Obispo
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 1.6, 2.1, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not located within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Procter Ranch (Property) is located on Highway 14, six miles east of Morro Bay in San Luis Obispo County. The coastal range in this area is known for scenic vistas, rolling grasslands, avocado orchards, and oak studded hillsides. The Property is located approximately 18 miles from the city of San Luis Obispo.

The Property will address multiple goals and objectives of the Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk Plan. Protecting Procter Ranch will also lead to important wildlife conservation benefits. The Property sits within the Morro Creek watershed and provides habitat connectivity to Los Padres National Forest and lands downslope contained within the Morro Creek Watershed.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The approximate 321± acre site is predominantly open space and livestock rangeland characterized by oak-forested hillsides, coastal scrub, and open grasslands. The Property is a working cattle ranch and small avocado orchard. A light to moderate herd of cattle is grazed throughout the year.

Habitats present on the Property include coast live oak woodland and associated grasslands. These habitats support several important animal species including deer, golden eagle, and mountain lion. Species of special concern potentially occurring on the Property include the burrowing owl, western pond turtle, and California red legged frog. The Procter Ranch is located within an essential wildlife corridor connecting the southern Santa Lucia Range with the Carrizo Plain National Monument. This corridor is defined as the La Panza – San Geronimo Essential Connectivity Area (ECA). The location of the Procter Ranch within this ECA, in conjunction with its proximity to the Los Padres National forest, will

facilitate wildlife movement and provide access to climate refugia on the property as species elsewhere are displaced by climate change.

The Procter Ranch supports diverse vegetative communities that are expected to remain highly resilient to climate change impacts through the end of the century. The perennial and annual grasslands, coastal sage scrub, and riparian woodlands on the Procter Ranch are likely to remain suitable or become newly suitable habitat for vulnerable wildlife affected by climate change. Habitat on the Property supports many climate vulnerable species identified by CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) dataset. This includes multiple rare or threatened climate vulnerable reptiles and amphibians, such as the California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, Northern California legless lizard, and two-striped garter snake. Other climate vulnerable species found on the Procter Ranch include osprey, mountain quail, ringtail, and Costa's hummingbird.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

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

This Property contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements.

The California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) designates the area surrounding the Property as the Bay Delta and Central Coast Province. This acquisition will help advance CDFW's land conservation policies and wildlife protection goals in the SWAP by conserving sustainable plant and animal communities that support multiple species of interest.

PROJECT FUNDING

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$960,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$360,000
DOC	\$600,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$960,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

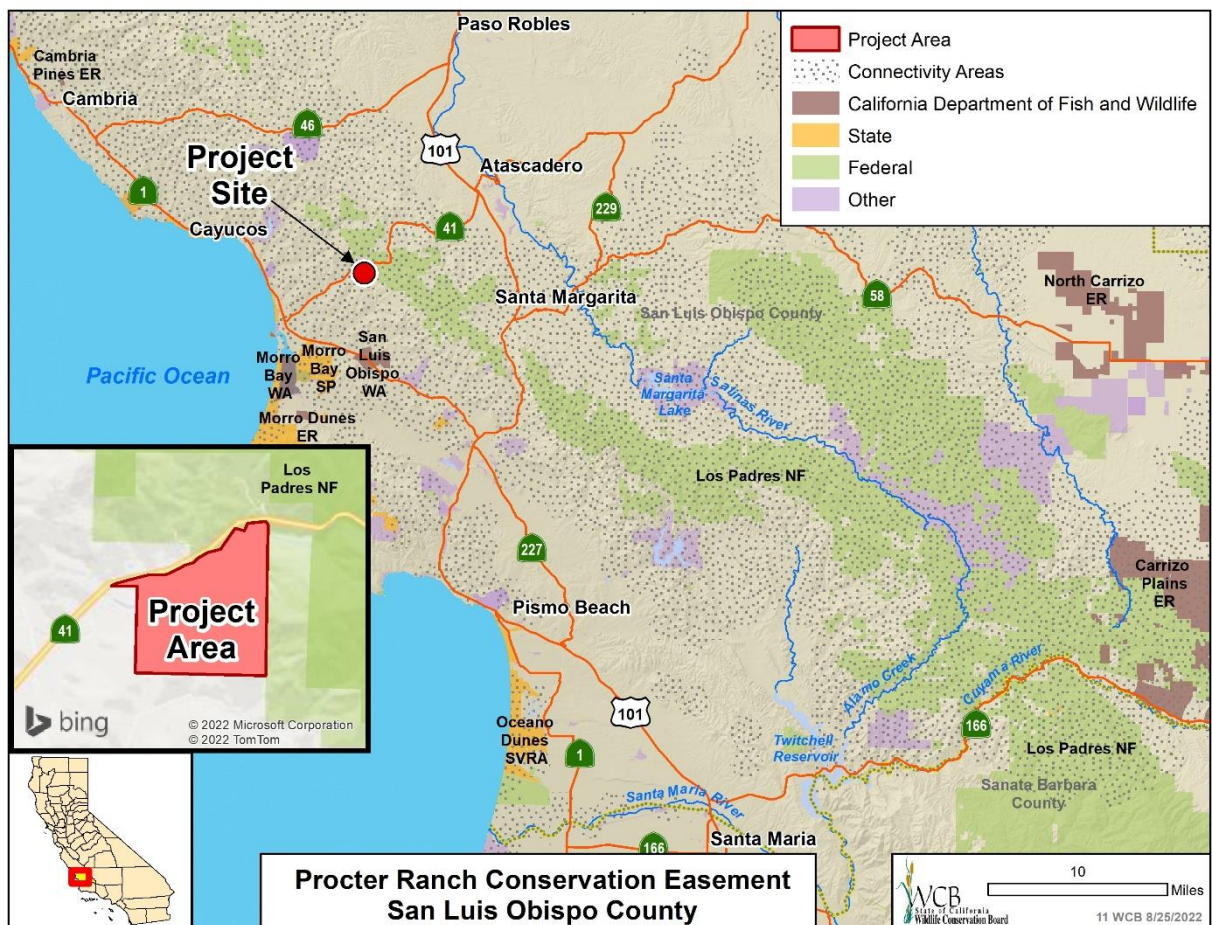
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Property 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. Ventura Watershed Instream Flow Enhancement and Water Resiliency Regional Framework Planning Project Phase 2

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$881,058 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), Public Resources Code Section 79733; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ventura Watershed Instream Flow Enhancement and Water Resiliency Regional Framework Planning Project Phase 2
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Ventura County Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$881,058
Funding Partners:	Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, Meiners Oaks Water District, Ojai City, Senior Canyon Mutual Water, Ventura River Water District, Merito Foundation, Watershed Progressive, Hicks Law
Landowner(s):	Private and public landowners
County:	Ventura
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	Proposition 1
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Ventura Watershed Flow Enhancement planning project (Project) is located in the Ventura River watershed. It includes Ventura River tributaries such as Matilija Creek, San Antonio Creek, and Thacher Creek on land that is in private and public ownership. The Project site is currently an extensive area of urban, rural, and open spaces including the town of Ojai in Ventura County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Project will develop a second phase of instream flow enhancement and water resiliency planning projects throughout the Ventura River watershed. These plans will build on a previously completed, collaborative Streamflow Framework and Planning Project supported by WCB funding in 2019. These previous planning projects utilized best available science and stakeholder involvement to maximize benefits for water resources for stream flow enhancement, native species, and habitat rehabilitation. These benefits will promote climate change adaptation and resilience.

With a collaborative, integrated watershed approach, this Project will plan over 200 multiple benefit projects throughout the Ventura River watershed needed to demonstrate readily available 1,540 acre foot per year (AFY) of critical dry season base flow and 112 AFY of treated volume for enhanced water quality, while

reversing depletion of, and competition for, the region's water resources. These projects will reverse depletion of the Ventura River region's water resources and prevent a catastrophic water shortage that currently has the potential to impact the region's livelihood and remaining aquatic resources and also meet the State Water Resource Control Board's unmandated instream flow targets for the Ventura River for the benefit of the watershed's aquatic and terrestrial species.

This Project will build deep collaboration and consistency of shared data for stream flow enhancement, while providing impactful demonstrations and scalable solutions in key watershed land uses. Led by the Grantee, this Project will include partners such as the City of Ojai, Ojai Valley Inn, Meiners Oaks Water District, Senior Canyon Mutual Water Company, the Ventura River Water District, and other local businesses, schools, agricultural stewards, residents, and other stakeholders. This Project will also coordinate, demonstrate, and monitor volunteer opportunities in the watershed.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship and Pathway 9: Advance and Promote Complementary Conservation Measures.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Administration	\$89,760	\$11,040	\$100,800
Framework Planning	\$73,000	\$11,325	\$84,325
100% Planning and Design	\$708,498	\$349,200	\$1,057,698
Outreach and Education	\$9,800	\$10,200	\$20,000
Total	\$881,058	\$381,765	\$1,262,823

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Administration: Establishment of subcontracts, stakeholder outreach, project reporting, and preparation of invoices
- Framework Planning: Conduct property and legal reviews to develop a framework of water rights and agricultural efficiencies
- 100% Planning and Design: Develop plans for alternate water sourcing waterwise use in vulnerable communities, a stormwater conveyance system for the City of Ojai, a neighborhood water efficiency and instream flow recharge plan, a land resiliency program for Senior Canyon, and a rainwater and greywater incentive program
- Outreach and Education: Develop a citizen science/student water monitoring methodology and lead streamflow water resilience workshops

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Monique Limon, California State Senator, Nineteenth District
- Steve Bennett, California State Assemblymember, Thirty-Seventh District
- Robert C. Wilkinson, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Matt LaVere, Supervisor, Ventura County
- Suza Francina, Council Member, Ojai City Council
- Jamie Whiteford, District Scientist, Ventura County Resource Conservation District
- Justin Martinez, General Manager, Meiners Oaks Water District
- Peter Thielke, President, Senior Canyon Mutual Water Company
- Bert J. Rapp, General Manager, Ventura River Water District
- Alex Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Besant Hill School of Happy Valley
- Portia Johnson, Head of School, Besant Hill School of Happy Valley
- Derek Poultney, Executive Director, Concerned Resource and Environmental Workers
- Don Chartrand, Executive Director, Creek Lands Conservation
- Paul Clark, Co-Owner, Eagle Aerial Solutions
- Thomas Hicks, Attorney at Law, Thomas D. Hicks
- Ann Scarborough Bull, Conservation Chair, Sespe Flyfishers
- S. Matt Drenner, Senior Fish Biologist, Stillwater Sciences
- Andrea Sender, Homeowner, City of Ojai
- Bryan Richard Benson, Homeowner, City of Ojai
- Fatima Robins, Homeowner, City of Ojai
- Julie Lovejoy, Homeowner, City of Ojai
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League
- Martha Davis, Private Citizen
- Peter Francis Deneen, Private Citizen

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 which have not been approved, adopted, or funded. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



12. Bonelli Regional Park Fishing Pier Replacement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$863,500 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:	Bonelli Regional Park Fishing Pier Replacement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Los Angeles County
Amount Recommended:	\$863,500
Funding Partners:	Los Angeles County
Landowner(s):	Los Angeles County
County:	Los Angeles
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 Bonelli Regional Park Fishing Pier Replacement project (Project) is located in the Frank G. Bonelli Regional Park in the San Gabriel Valley (Los Angeles County) at the east end of the San Jose Hills. Bonelli Regional Park is immediately surrounded by the cities of San Dimas to the north, Pomona to the east, and La Verne to the north. It is an 1,800-acre facility with 14 miles of multi-use trails and a 250-acre lake and flood control basin called Puddingstone Reservoir.

The park offers a wide variety of recreational activities, including boating, jet skiing, fishing, swimming, family and group picnicking, nature walks, hiking, jogging, and biking. The open space and natural areas are comprised mainly of rolling hills and moderately steep canyons covered with chaparral, cactus, and coastal sage scrub habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Puddingstone Reservoir fishing piers have been a popular fishing destination in a very urban environment since the early 1970s. The reservoir has trout, catfish (both stocked by CDFW when available), bass, bluegill, redear, and carp. Unfortunately, the 48-year-old wooden fishing piers have deteriorated significantly due to wear, extreme weather damage, and fire. The piers have gone from a highlight of the park to a public and boating hazard. Since 2020, the fishing piers have been closed to the public.

This Project will restore fishing access through the construction of a new fishing pier. A second pier will be constructed by Los Angeles County as cost share. Construction will include demolishing and disposing of the existing damaged

fishing pier, replacing the existing fixed pier with a new floating pier, providing Americans with Disability Act (ADA) improvements to pathways and restrooms, and related improvements. The proposed scope of work is part of a larger project that includes the replacement of two fishing piers currently closed to the public. The Project will also include multilingual interpretive signage to provide an enhanced experience for visitors.

Bonelli Park is not within a disadvantaged community; however, it will benefit both disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities. The Project is within 0.5 miles of disadvantaged communities and severely disadvantaged communities in Spadra and Pomona, and a mile from the severely disadvantaged community in La Verne. The Bonelli Park improvements and the fishing pier replacement will provide angling and recreational opportunities in a natural setting for the surrounding urban communities. Additionally, the County will implement the Project with robust hiring policies that include and prioritize local workers. The County's hiring policies include a best effort hiring goal of at least 30 percent of construction labor hours performed by workers facing employment barriers.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California key objective to expand access to nature.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Los Angeles County has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Frank G. Bonelli Regional Park. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Los Angeles County 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
Pier 1 Construction	---	\$606,101	\$606,101
Pier 2 Construction	\$605,000	\$50,000	\$655,000
ADA Improvements	\$175,000	\$75,000	\$250,000
Interpretive Panels	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Design, Engineering, & Permits	---	\$222,000	\$222,000
Contingency	\$78,500	---	\$78,500
Total	\$863,500	\$958,101	\$1,821,601

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Pier 2 Construction: Demolition of the existing pier and construction of the new pier.

- ADA Improvements: Construction of ADA pathways, parking lot modifications, and restroom improvements.
- Interpretive Panels: Development, construction, and installation of interpretive panels.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

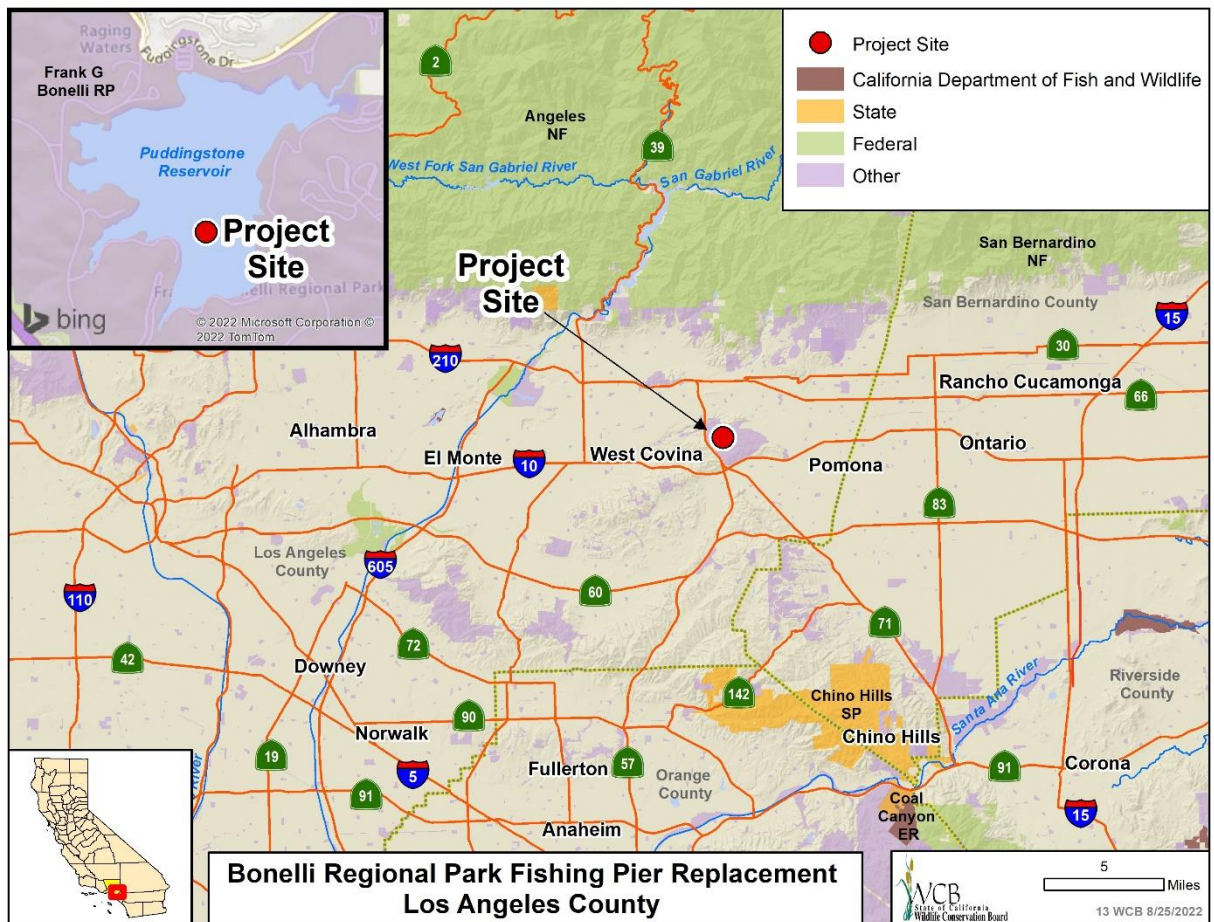
- Mark Soto, Owner, Wheel Fun Rentals

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, Replacement or Reconstruction, replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site and will have substantially the same purpose as the structure replaced; and Section 15303, Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, consisting of a limited number of new, or conversion of, small facilities or structures. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



13. **Boyd Desert Research Center Safety and Efficiency Improvements**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$133,863 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(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:	Boyd Desert Research Center Safety and Efficiency Improvements
Project Type:	Infrastructure
Applicant/Grantee:	University of California, Riverside
Amount Recommended:	\$133,863
Funding Partners:	University of California, Riverside
Landowner(s):	University of California, Riverside
County:	Riverside
Program:	The University of California, Natural Reserve System
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.5 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Boyd Desert Research Center Safety and Efficiency Improvements project (Project) is located at the Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center (Reserve), approximately six miles south of Palm Desert within the Coachella Valley. The property is operated as a Reserve within the University of California Natural Reserve System and is comprised of 6,122 acres of university-owned land and 10,000 acres of adjacent federal lands made available for research under use agreements. In 2013, WCB contributed \$1,182,000 to construct a new LEED certified education center and new campground facility to accommodate university-level field classes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Reserve facilities are in the Sonoran Desert, where temperatures can reach 125° F and pose significant danger to most living things on earth, including the researchers who study them. The unique adaptations of the flora and fauna are part of the draw for researchers. Use of the Reserve facilities is in high demand; over the last five years, 300-400 researchers and 8-10 classes per year have come to Boyd. The busiest period is during the spring, especially during ecological events like 2019's super bloom.

The Mayhew Building, including six dorm rooms, two bathrooms, and lounge area, was built in 1994 and now has a leaking roof and inefficient toilets and lighting. The Project will replace the roof, install new LED interior lighting, and install water efficient toilets at the Mayhew Building. The Project will replace the air conditioning

units in the Multipurpose Building as they are aging, inefficient, and ineffective, especially in record-setting summer heat. The Agave Hill facility was built in 1987, and many of the boards on the deck are failing from years of sun exposure and pose a safety risk. The Project will repair the Agave Hill deck and paint the interior. Each of these renovations has been carefully considered as a priority for safety and efficiency.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The University of California, Riverside 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, University of California, Riverside 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
Planning/Design	---	\$3,100	\$3,100
Mayhew Building Construction	\$58,974	\$21,257	\$80,231
Multi-Purpose Bldg. AC	\$62,889	\$20,963	\$83,852
Agave Hill Construction	\$12,000	\$17,000	\$29,000
Total	\$133,863	\$62,320	\$196,183

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Mayhew Building Construction: Replace roof, install LED interior/exterior lighting and motion sensors, replace toilets with water efficient dual flush units.
- Multi-Purpose Bldg. AC: Replace AC units with mini-split system.
- Agave Hill Construction: Replace wood deck, paint, and add shade structure.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

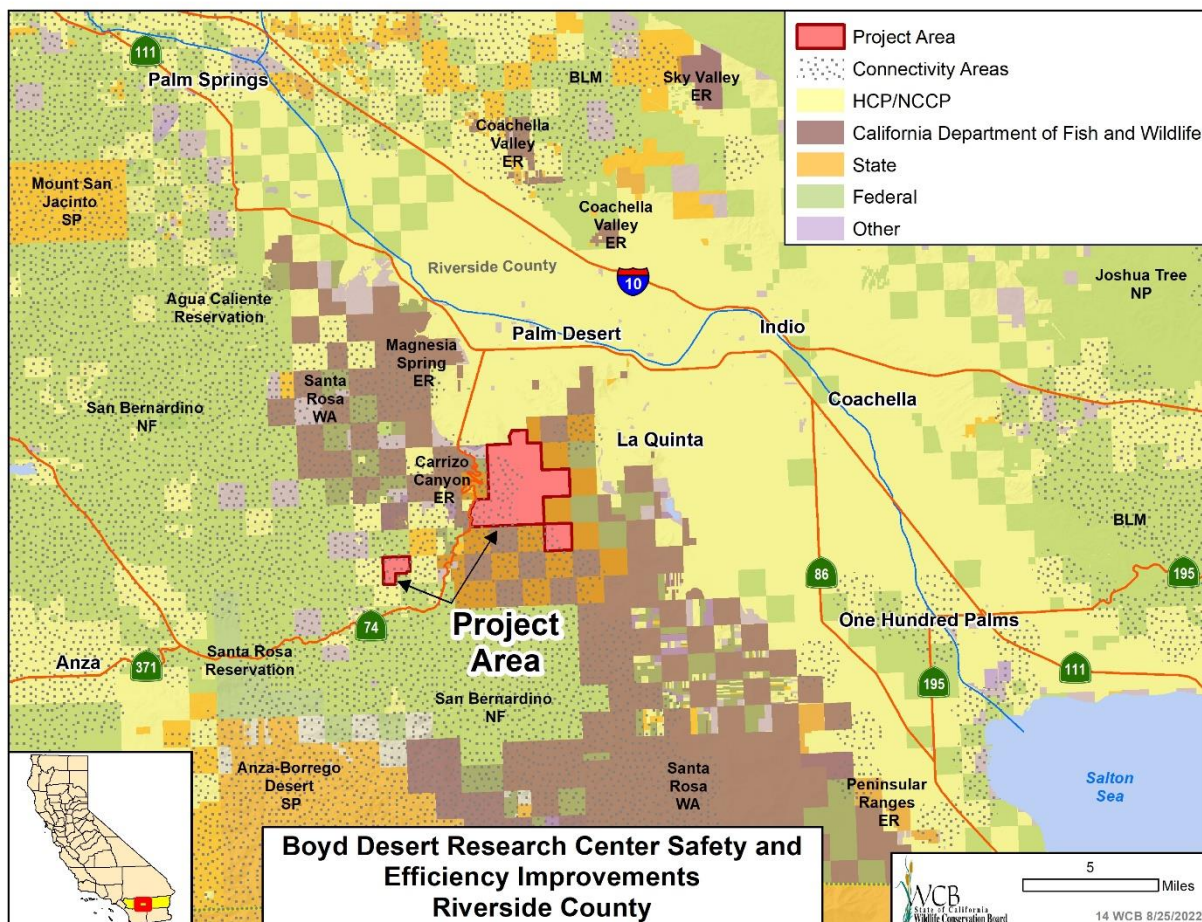
- None received

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. The Project consists of the repair of existing structures and facilities. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



**14. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
Reist Ranch**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a conservation easement (Easement) by CAL FIRE over 95± acres; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), and CAL FIRE to proceed substantially as planned. Funding for the Easement has been provided by CNRA through an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program Grant.

Project Title:	(CAL FIRE) Reist Ranch
Project Type:	CAL FIRE Conservation Easement (95± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$0
County:	Mendocino
Program:	California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007

LOCATION

The property (Property) is located west of Highway 101 and the community of Leggett, six miles east of the Pacific Ocean, in the northwest corner of Mendocino County. Access to the Property is provided from Highway 1 and over a gravel access road that is a dedicated easement.

The Property is in the South Fork Eel River watershed, which is home to a variety of salmon and steelhead species. The watershed is one of five stream systems selected as part of the California Water Action Plan effort to move California toward more sustainable water management.

The Property contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions. The SWAP designates the area surrounding the Property as the North Coast and Klamath Providence. The Property would conserve considerable habitat identified in the SWAP as the Pacific Northwest Conifer Forests Conservation Target for the Northern California Coast conservation unit and is consistent with several Conservation Strategies for this unit.

The Property is an inholding within the 50,000± acre Usual Forest conservation easement project area held by CAL FIRE that WCB approved on July 26, 2011. The proposed Easement has been developed based upon the existing Usual Forest conservation easement to provide continuity in management.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is 95± acres, consisting of a single, roughly rectangular parcel of land. Topography ranges from relatively level to gently sloping at the Property's north end. Elevations range from roughly 1,000 feet at the large open meadow in the middle eastern section of the Property to nearly 1,245 feet on a knoll on the south end of the Property. The Property is zoned TP (Timber Preserve, 160-acre

density). The zoning allows for residential development of one single family home per 160 acres. Threat of development is unlikely.

The Property is largely forested boasting old-growth stands of Douglas-fir, redwood, and tanoak. The Property also includes second-growth redwood/Douglas fir forest, meadow, mixed hardwood, springs, seeps, a wetland, and riparian habitat including a tributary to Hollow Tree Creek, which provides habitat for sensitive species including the northern spotted owl, south torrent salamander, tailed frog, Vaux swift, coho salmon, and steelhead trout.

Protection of the Property will help support many listed and non-listed plant and animal species, which are dependent on the water sources, nesting habitat, and food sources found on the Property. Also, it will enhance connectivity to the Usual Forest and other nearby protected areas and will help to ensure that this area, and its existing features, will continue to be available for its natural habitat values.

The CNRA Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant funding will be provided to the Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc., to purchase the conservation easement from the landowner. The landowner will direct deed the Easement to CAL FIRE.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CAL FIRE will enter into the Easement with the landowner and will monitor the Property for compliance consistent with the terms of the Easement. The Easement allows access by CAL FIRE, or its agents, annually for monitoring purposes. Ultimately, the Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc. (RFFI) will step into title with CAL FIRE holding the Easement.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$550,000. CAL FIRE will pay for indirect costs related to the project and all acquisition funding has been approved by CNRA. No WCB funding will be used for the project. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
California Natural Resources Agency	\$550,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$550,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

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.



Presentation Items

15. Lake Earl Wildlife Area Coastal Dune and Estuary Restoration, Phase 2

Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

16. South Fork Lost River Flow Enhancement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,710,104 from Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1), Water Code Section 79733; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	South Fork Lost River Flow Enhancement
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Sanctuary Forest, Inc.
Amount Recommended:	\$1,710,104
Funding Partners:	Bella Vista Foundation, California Conservation Corps, Sanctuary Forest, Inc.
Landowner(s):	Sanctuary Forest, Inc., Lost Coast Forestlands LLC
County:	Mendocino
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	Proposition 1
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Lost River is a tributary in the headwaters of the Mattole River watershed, south of Whitethorn in Mendocino County. The area is characterized by timber harvest activities, but also by conserved groves of old growth redwoods. The Lost River has been identified as a high priority tributary for coho salmon recovery in the Mattole River headwaters because of documented coho presence in recent years and habitat recovery potential. The entire watershed is conserved and there are no human water diversions on Lost River. Due to the Mediterranean climate and proximity to the coast, there is very little snowfall in the Mattole and, therefore, groundwater rather than snowpack sustains summer flows. However, climate change has resulted in longer dry seasons and land use impacts have further diminished groundwater storage.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Within most of the Lost River watershed and the project reach, limiting factors include channel entrenchment, loss of floodplain connectivity, reduced groundwater storage, low summer flows, and lack of pool habitat. In drought years, summer stream flows are insufficient to support rearing and thousands of juvenile salmonids perish as pools become disconnected and dry up. The South Fork Lost River Flow Enhancement (Project) is designed to improve stream flow in approximately one mile of Lost River and 0.6 miles of the Mattole mainstem, where coho salmon had to be rescued in 2015, 2018, and 2020.

The Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship. Pre-project surveys and monitoring, preparation of 90% designs,

draft permits, and a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), were completed under a WCB planning grant awarded in 2016.

The Project utilizes two complementary strategies to improve summer flows: increased groundwater storage and surface flow augmentation. Groundwater storage will be achieved through construction of a terrace “Stage 0 wetland,” a terrace pond, and approximately 400 feet of Class I instream treatments including weirs, subsurface clay barriers, and gravel augmentation. The designs for the wetland, pond, and channel-spanning log weirs all incorporate subsurface clay restrictive barriers for increased runoff detention with stream flow benefits that mimic the natural hydrograph. Under current conditions, groundwater levels at the Stage 0 wetland site drop to 14 feet below ground surface in early May. The subsurface clay layers are designed to slow the drainage of groundwater sufficiently to saturate the soil and hold more groundwater thereby raising the water table to improve early summer flows. Sanctuary Forest Inc. has implemented multiple projects in the Mattole watershed since 2017, evaluating different methods of groundwater retention and found the addition of subsurface clay barriers to be effective at improving stream flows in June and July. However, less improvement was seen in late summer when it is needed the most. The second strategy employed through the Project, surface flow augmentation through construction and operation of a terrace pond, is intended to bridge this gap. The pond will have a subsurface clay restrictive barrier and a pipe to provide metered surface flow augmentation to the creek during the driest months of August 1 to October 15. The pond will be filled by surface runoff and retention of shallow groundwater. The pond capacity when full is one million gallons with 750,000 gallons available after subtracting for evaporation.

Stream flow enhancement from the total increase in groundwater storage of 2.02 million gallons over the dry season (June 15 to October 15) is estimated at 11.5 gallons per minute (gpm). In addition, the late summer flow augmentation from the pond will be metered at approximately 6.8 gpm from August 1 to October 15. These benefits are significant given that downstream flows drop to 6 gpm by mid-July and no flow by mid-September. These stream flow increases are expected to be sufficient for pool connectivity when combined with other completed and ongoing restoration projects within the Lost River watershed.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The durability of the Project will be ensured through active stewardship by the two landowners, Sanctuary Forest Inc. and Lost Coast Forestlands LLC (LCF). Sanctuary Forest Inc. holds a conservation easement on the LCF property which includes watershed and stream flow protections as well as specified “Stream Flow Restoration Project Areas”. The Project site is within one of these areas identified on the South Fork of Lost River. Sanctuary Forest, Inc. has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, Sanctuary Forest, Inc. does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to

the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$13,704	---	\$13,704
Planning and Permitting	\$104,007	\$2,000	\$106,007
Implementation	\$1,342,992	\$18,233	\$1,361,225
Adaptive Management and Monitoring	\$124,276	\$5,500	\$129,776
Indirect Costs	\$25,125	---	\$25,125
Contingency	\$100,000	---	\$100,000
Total	\$1,710,104	\$25,733	\$1,735,837

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grantee staff time to administer the grant and manage subcontractors.
- Planning and Permitting: Final design and permit approvals.
- Implementation: Construction of a terrace wetland, pond, and instream habitat structures. Post-construction planting and propagation of native seed.
- Adaptive Management and Monitoring: Stream flow monitoring, evaluation of project success, and minimal modifications to pond and instream structures, if needed.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman, 2nd District
- Michelle Bushnell, Humboldt County Supervisor, 2nd District
- Jennifer Wheeler, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management
- Sarah Vroom, Executive director, Mattole Restoration Council
- Richard Sykes, Executive Director, Mattole Salmon Group

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Humboldt County, 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 Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



17. Ellis Ranch Conservation Easement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,289,600 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017), for the grant to Bear Yuba Land Trust; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ellis Ranch Conservation Easement
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (806± acres)
Grantee:	Bear Yuba Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$1,289,600
Funding Partners:	Landowner
County:	Nevada
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Property is located in a remote area of southwestern Nevada County, within the blue oak woodland and rangeland region. It is situated just southeast of the 11,942-acre Spenceville Wildlife Area, several miles east of Beale Air Force Base, which includes 17,000-acres of vital habitat including vernal pools and salmon spawning areas in the nearby/neighboring Yuba County, and about ten miles south/southwest of the Penn Valley community and State Highway 20.

The Property is located within the Bear Yuba Land Trust's (Land Trust) most critical strategic focus area and within CDFW's Spenceville Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). Additionally, the Property is adjacent to an existing Land Trust conservation easement that covers 560 acres to the north that is contiguous with Spenceville Wildlife Area. Conservation easements within the Land Trust's strategic focus area make up a total of 8,000 acres of protected land with 3,500 acres more in progress. The large block of protected land provides immense climate change adaptation and resiliency benefits within the blue oak woodlands belt of the Sierra Nevada Foothills. In addition, CDFW's Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) has designated the land stretching north and south from the Bear River to the Yuba River as an Essential Connectivity Area for Habitat Connectivity. The Property contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of 13 Assessor Parcel Numbers and incorporates a total of 806± acres. It consists of generally hilly terrain with valleys, meadows, and ridgelines, and elevations that range from 757' to 1,046'. The Property consists of

blue oak woodlands, wetlands, lacustrine, and grassland habitat and is used as rangeland. There are 11 reservoirs, including 10 ponds and one, 17-acre lake, all with extensive associated wetland habitat located on the Property. Current zoning on the Property is AG-20, which is general agricultural with a minimum parcel size for subdividing to 20-acres, allowing the Property to be split into 40 homesites.

Target species for conservation on the Property include the Foothill yellow-legged frog, tricolored blackbird, bald eagle, California black rail, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted Chat, and ringtail. Wildlife in this region depend on high quality riparian habitat and healthy mature blue oak woodlands for migration and residency. Both habitats are found on the Property in addition to a significant population of young blue oaks representing woodland regeneration. Wildlife that requires large areas for their survival, such as mountain lion, gray wolf, mule deer, and black bear are dependent on strategic protection of lands that support their life cycles and nutritional needs. The land is undeveloped and has been used for seasonal livestock grazing.

Conservation of this Property will expand on a large block of existing protected lands within a strategic focus area allowing for climate adaption and resiliency as habitat connectivity will aid in the inland and upland migration of wildlife species suffering from climatic changes which will shift habitat ranges. Additionally, because this property also contains extensive wetlands and water resources, and is located in a strategic location for conservation, there are very significant natural benefits to the wildlife. Protection of the Property will provide multiple benefits including sustaining local agriculture, protecting water resources, protecting inland wetlands, providing guided public access for wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Bear Yuba Land Trust will manage the project. The Land Trust currently holds conservation easements on 10,000 acres of similar land in the area. A baseline will be provided prior to close of escrow and the Land Trust will conduct annual monitoring and provide a monitoring report to WCB. Additionally, WCB will have access not less than once every three years to also conduct on-site inspections.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,690,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,289,600
Landowner donation – bargain sale	\$400,400
TOTAL Appraised Value	\$1,690,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

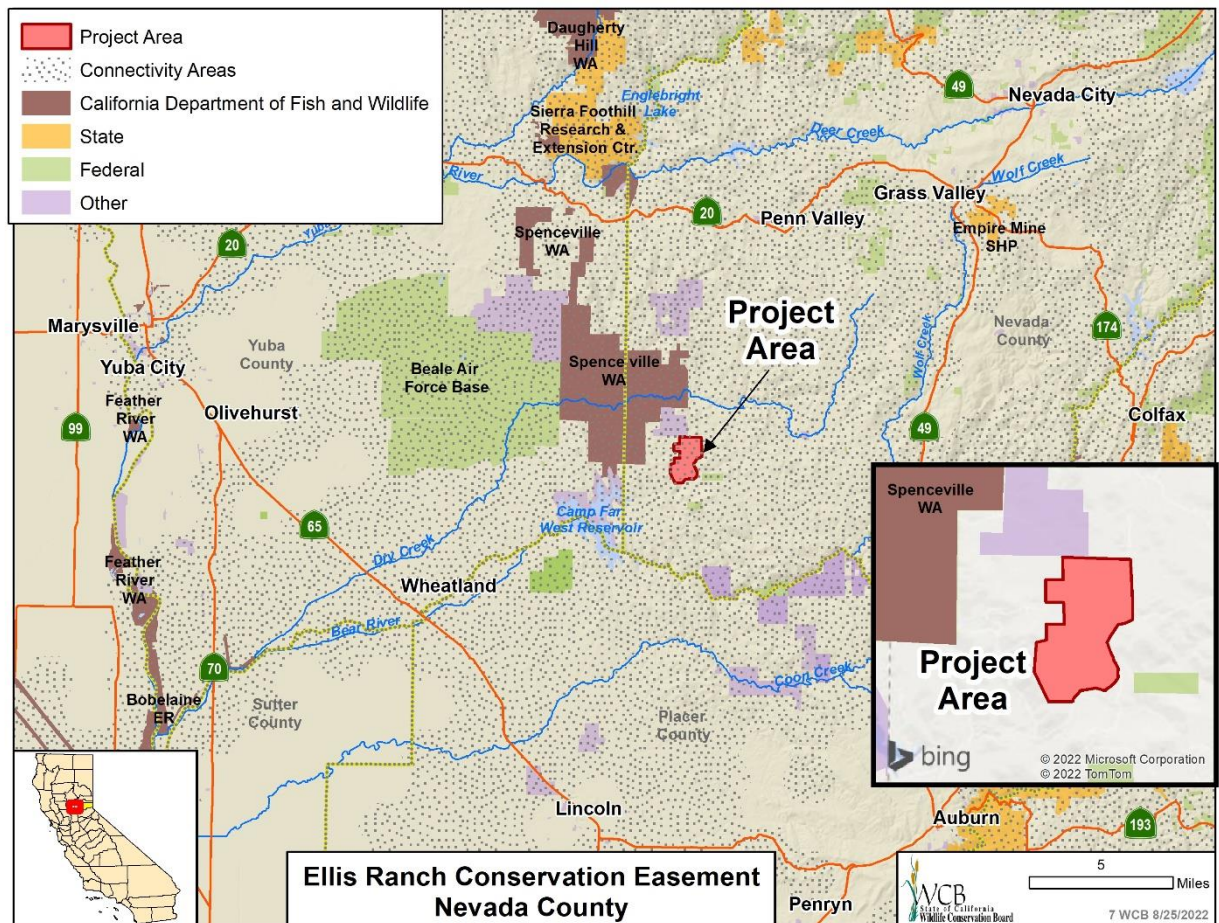
- None received

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.



18. Truckee River Wildlife Area, Boca Unit Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,190,000 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:	Truckee River Wildlife Area, Boca Unit Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Truckee River Watershed Council
Amount Recommended:	\$1,190,000
Funding Partners:	Truckee River Watershed Council
Landowner(s):	CDFW
County:	Nevada
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

The Truckee River Wildlife Area, Boca Unit Restoration project (Project) is located entirely within the Boca Unit of CDFW's Truckee River Wildlife Area, which was designated as a wildlife area by the California Fish and Game Commission in 1996. The Project area, situated within an oxbow of the Truckee River and bounded by Interstate 80 on the north, lies approximately five miles northeast of Truckee in Nevada County. Boca Unit is a popular recreational fishing site and offers opportunities for wildlife viewing and environmental education. In 2020, WCB approved a \$309,000 grant to the Truckee River Watershed Council for restoration planning in the Truckee River watershed (e.g., design, environmental review, permitting), including the Boca Unit.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 2018 Truckee River Revitalization Assessment identified that the Boca Unit had been degraded through past land use and could be restored to improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and hydrologic function. Specifically, an historic railroad spur from the 1870s disconnects the Truckee River from approximately 11 acres of floodplain in Boca Unit. Multiple roads and trails in the Project area further impact the site and runoff from the adjacent freeway conveys stormwater and additional sediment to the Project area.

The Project aims to restore 11 acres of floodplain and montane riparian habitat by reconnecting the Truckee River to its historic floodplain. Specific Project objectives include removing 350 feet of railroad spur, stabilizing 0.5 miles of floodplain channels, converting a 3,300 square foot soil borrow pit into a stormwater basin to treat stormwater runoff, decommissioning 3,500 feet of unused roads, and

improving the trail system for public recreation. Anticipated benefits from the Project include 11 acres of montane floodplain, enhanced riparian habitat, restored hydrologic function, improved water quality, and increased resilience to climate change.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW 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, Truckee River Watershed Council 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	\$92,000	---	\$92,000
Restoration	\$942,000	\$27,500	\$969,500
Monitoring	\$31,000	\$6,000	\$37,000
Indirect Costs	\$17,000	---	\$17,000
Contingency	\$108,000	---	\$108,000
Total	\$1,190,000	\$33,500	\$1,223,500

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Project implementation per the design plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Monitoring: Evaluation of Project effects on ecologically relevant indicators like vegetation, wildlife, geomorphology, and hydrology.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

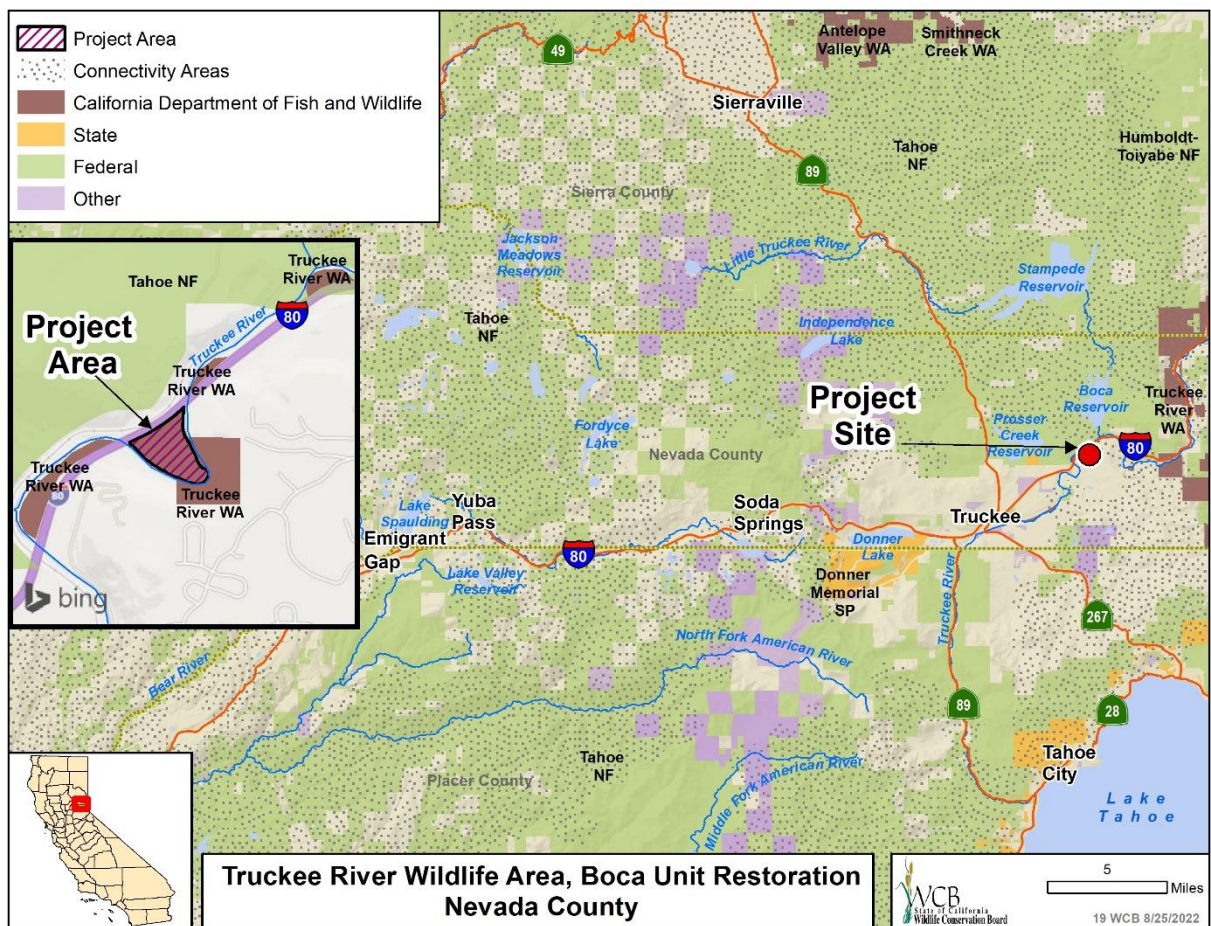
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), Public Resources Code section 21080.56, as a project that meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project is exclusively to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or is exclusively to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife; (2) the Project may have public benefits incidental to the Project's fundamental purpose; (3) the Project will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment; and (4) Project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



19. Western Placer County HCP/NCCP (Redwing Ranch South)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,311,000 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 a grant to the Placer Conservation Authority (PCA); approve the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$5,244,000 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to PCA; 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 Placer County HCP/NCCP (Redwing Ranch South)
Project Type:	Fee Title (560± acres)
Grantee:	Placer Conservation Authority (PCA)
Amount Recommended:	\$1,311,000
Funding Partners:	USFWS, Placer County Conservation Program
County:	Placer
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1, A.3 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property), known as Redwing Ranch South, is located in rural Placer County immediately east of the unincorporated community of Sheridan. The Greater Sheridan Area sits on the northwestern edge of Placer County and is primarily devoted to agriculture and rural residences. The Property is more specifically located approximately two and a third air miles southeast of the intersection of State Route 65 and Riosa Road. Surrounding land uses include, rural ranchettes, private cattle ranching and conservation lands.

The Property directly abuts the neighboring 400± acre Bradley Property on the northwestern boundary, and the 200± acre Ellis Ranch Property to the West, both of which are recently acquired PCA reserves for preservation of habitat subject to Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP) Conservation Easements. These three properties significantly expand the function of the Yankee Slough Preserve along the southern boundary, which contains both preserved and restored vernal pools and seasonal wetlands in preserved vernal pool grasslands.

The Property is also located within the potential Reserve Acquisition Area for the PCCP due to its landscape position and presence of high-quality habitat types. This Property contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions.

The SWAP designates the area surrounding the Property as the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Province. This acquisition will help advance CDFW's land conservation policies and wildlife protection goals in the SWAP by conserving sustainable plant and animal communities that support multiple species of interest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is located in the Central Valley plain with a minimum elevation of 115 feet in the northwest corner and a maximum elevation of 174 feet near the southeast corner. The topography varies between level to gentle, rolling slopes. In the central section of the eastern half of the Property is a large vernal pool/playa that is dry in the late summer and early fall. The Property has historically been operated as a seasonal cattle ranch from April to November of each year. There are no improvements on the Property.

The PCA administers the PCCP and is responsible for acquiring and managing reserve units across western Placer County for both conservation and mitigation purposes. The Property is proposed for fee title acquisition and will contribute to the conservation goals and objectives of the PCCP.

The PCA anticipates utilizing the Property for multiple purposes including the preservation of both Federal and State listed species and their habitat. The Property contains about 170 acres of wetlands, 150 acres of which are comprised of a historically terraced vernal pool/pond complex. Protocol-level surveys conducted in 2010-2011 by Restoration Resources confirmed the presence of both the federally threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp and the non-listed California linderella onsite. The Property also supports habitat for five additional covered species including Swainson's hawk, western burrowing owl, tricolored blackbird, California black rail, and elderberry longhorn beetle. Occurrences of Swainson's hawk, California black rail, western burrowing owl, tri-colored blackbird, and dwarf downingia have been documented on the Property based on the California Natural Diversity Database Occurrences Maps.

All of the listed species will benefit directly from the acquisition of the Property, and indirectly from the implementation of the Western Placer County HCP/NCCP's conservation strategy of establishing a 47,300± acre interconnected Reserve System.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

PCA will manage the Property once it is acquired. The habitat will be maintained in conjunction with other properties to be acquired by PCA.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$8,120,000 and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$7,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,311,000
USFWS	\$5,244,000
County of Placer, Placer Legacy Program	\$445,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$7,000,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

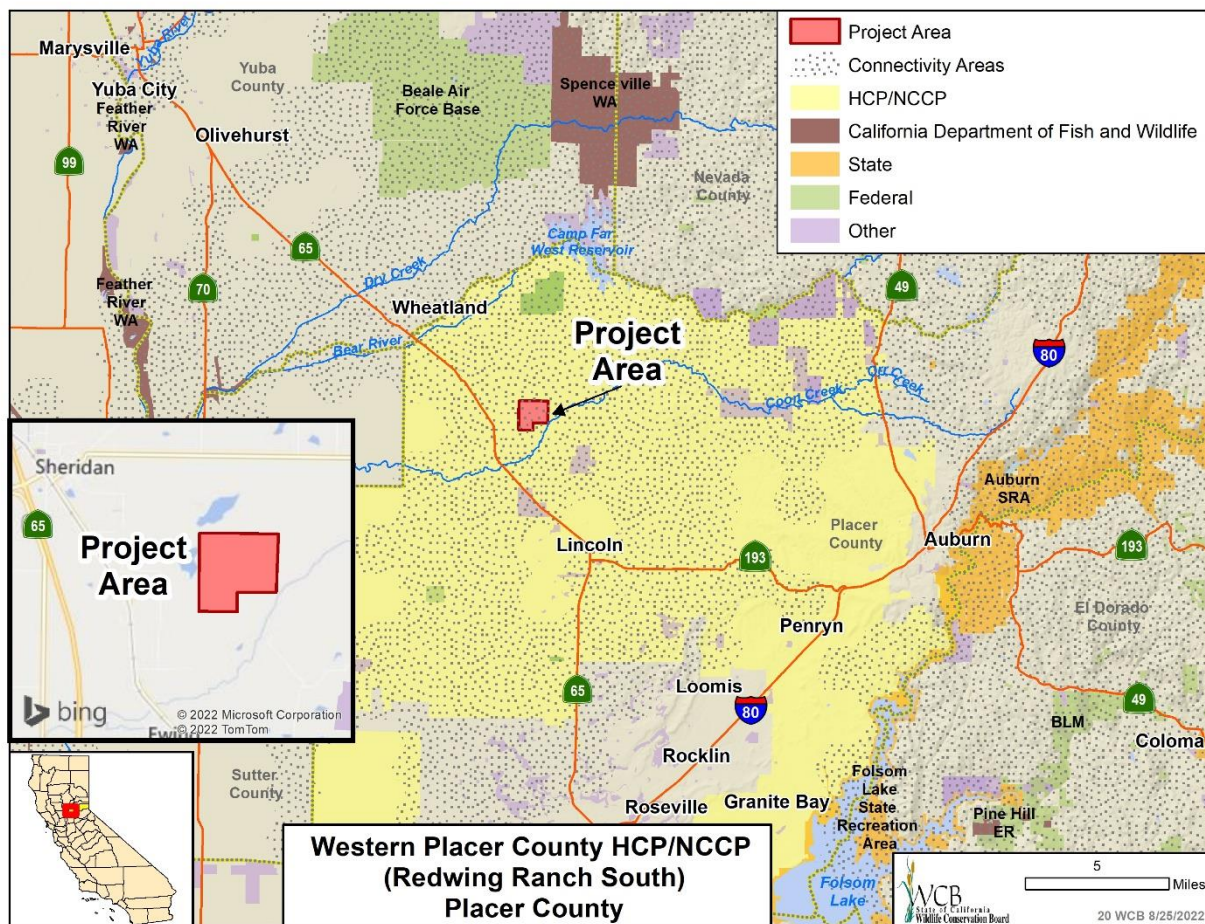
- None received

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.



20. Climate Smart Restoration at River Garden Farms

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$709,377 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:	Climate Smart Restoration at River Garden Farms
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Audubon California
Amount Recommended:	\$709,377
Funding Partners:	USFWS, Audubon California, River Garden Farms, Center for Land-based Learning, River Partners
Landowner(s):	River Garden Farms
County:	Yolo
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, B.5 Objectives: SI 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Climate Smart Restoration at River Garden Farms project (Project) is located within a 15,000-acre privately-owned farm (River Garden Farms), along the Sacramento River, 4 miles north of Knights Landing and 24 miles northwest of Sacramento.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Starting in late 2018, a comprehensive planning effort was initiated, led by American Rivers, to develop a Farm Restoration Plan (Plan) to advance practices at River Garden Farms that would enhance the conservation value of the farm and contribute to the habitat objectives of the Central Valley Joint Venture. The Plan includes restoration design plans for seven different sites totaling 550 acres including floodplain, wetland, and riparian habitat. Collaborators on the Plan include Audubon California, River Partners, Environmental Defense Fund, and Ducks Unlimited.

The Project is an element of the Plan and will install native plants along two, linear strips on River Garden Farms on either side of Road 98A. On the west side of the road is a 275-foot-wide irrigation canal with little vegetation between it and the road. To the east side of the road are crops and a relatively new, but sparsely planted hedgerow that the Project will substantially enhance to create riparian habitat. The planting design has been carefully crafted to maximize the climate resiliency of the habitat for the long-term benefit of wildlife. The Project would also create riparian habitat connectivity between the Sacramento River and the existing, large area of protected wetlands on Roosevelt Ranch, south of the Project.

Additionally, a series of three hands-on field days will be held to help students develop knowledge and skills in science, habitat restoration, environmental stewardship, and basic tool use. The Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship Program serves high school students ages 14-18 that reside in the Sacramento Valley region, including Sacramento, Yolo, and Solano counties. Many of the participating schools are located in disadvantaged communities in Sacramento and rural agricultural communities.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Audubon California has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Audubon California 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	\$122,102	\$4,375	\$126,477
Implementation	\$256,953	\$83,398	\$340,351
Monitoring	\$107,601	\$7,876	\$115,477
Maintenance	\$125,680	---	\$125,680
Community Engagement	\$9,360	\$5,580	\$14,940
Indirect Costs	\$23,181	---	\$23,181
Contingency	\$64,500	---	\$64,500
Total	\$709,377	\$101,229	\$810,606

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project scheduling, budgeting, invoicing, contracting, reporting, coordination, and data management.
- Implementation: Site preparation, irrigation installation, plantings, and training for volunteer workdays.
- Monitoring: Vegetation monitoring including weed monitoring, mowing, and weed control.
- Community Engagement: Three field days with Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship Program participants.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- James Cogswell, Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture
- Jeffrey McCreary, Director of Operations, Western Region, Ducks Unlimited
- Lewis Bair, General Manager, Reclamation District 108
- Mike Davis, Associate Director of Central Valley River Restoration, American Rivers
- Mary Kimball, Chief Executive Officer, Center for Land-Based Learning
- Curtis McCasland, Project Leader, Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex, USFWS
- Dominic Bruno, Assistant General Manager, River Garden Farms
- Julie Rentner, President, River Partners

Opposition:

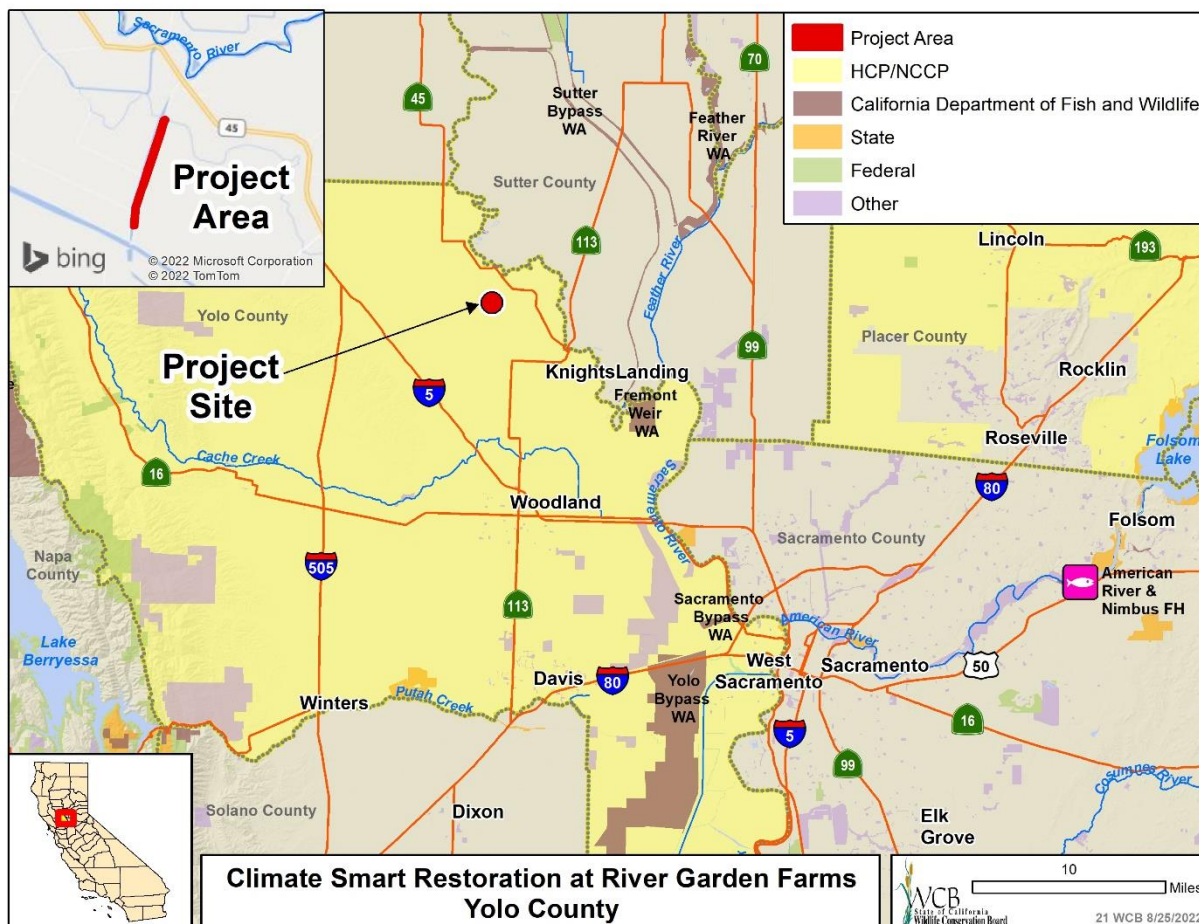
- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), Public Resources Code section 21080.56, as a project that meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project is exclusively to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or is exclusively to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife; (2) the Project may have public benefits incidental to the Project's fundamental purpose; (3) the Project will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment; and (4) Project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Submittal to public record

NRDC v. USEPA - Pesticide Opinion Dated June 17, 2022 (PDF)



21. Ackerson Meadow Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,786,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Ackerson Meadow Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	American Rivers
Amount Recommended:	\$2,786,000
Funding Partners:	American Rivers, U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service, CDFW, CAL FIRE, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Yosemite Conservancy
Landowner(s):	U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service
County:	Tuolumne
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Ackerson Meadow Restoration (Project) area encompasses the 230-acre Ackerson Meadow complex, one of the largest low-elevation montane meadows in public ownership in the Sierra Nevada and an important wildlife corridor. Ackerson Meadow is an important resource for wildlife in the Sierra Nevada, as evidenced by it supporting the highest documented density of breeding great gray owl pairs in the Sierra Nevada. The Project area extends into both Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest and is situated within the Tuolumne River watershed, approximately 12 miles north of El Portal in Tuolumne County. In 2020, WCB approved a \$275,000 grant to American Rivers for restoration planning (e.g., design, environmental review, permitting) at three meadow sites, one of which was Ackerson Meadow.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Prior to transfer to public ownership in 2016, Ackerson Meadow was largely under private ownership for 140 years and used for grazing and hay production. Associated activities included ditching, road building, logging, and modifications for water supply. As a result of those impacts, more than 150,000 cubic yards of meadow soil have been washed downstream and the meadow's main channel has eroded to a deeply incised channel measuring 15 feet deep and 100 feet wide over a three-mile reach.

Flows through the incised channel are disconnected from the meadow floodplain in all but the most extreme floods (e.g., 500-year flood event). This greatly altered hydrology has reduced groundwater recharge, converted historic wetlands to

upland habitat, and degraded willow communities that are critical for focal bird species such as willow flycatcher.

The proposed Project aims to restore hydrologic function, landforms, vegetation, and ecosystem processes in Ackerson Meadow by reconnecting the channel with its floodplain. Project design elements to accomplish this include channel fill and a robust, downstream grade control structure. Due to the scope of work required to restore Ackerson Meadow in its entirety, the meadow will be restored in two phases. The Project constitutes Phase 1: installing the downstream grade control structure and filling roughly half of the incised channel in the meadow. Project activities will also include revegetation, post-implementation monitoring, and outreach. A future Phase 2 will include filling the remaining upstream portion of the incised channel.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

USFS and NPS have developed 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, American Rivers 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	\$211,000	\$209,500	\$420,500
Restoration	\$2,225,000	\$410,570	\$2,635,570
Monitoring	\$74,000	\$135,800	\$209,800
Indirect Costs	\$26,000	\$30,100	\$56,100
Contingency	\$250,000	---	\$250,000
Total	\$2,786,000	\$785,970	\$3,571,970

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Project implementation per the design plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Monitoring: Evaluation of Project effects on ecologically relevant indicators like vegetation, wildlife, geomorphology, and hydrology.

- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

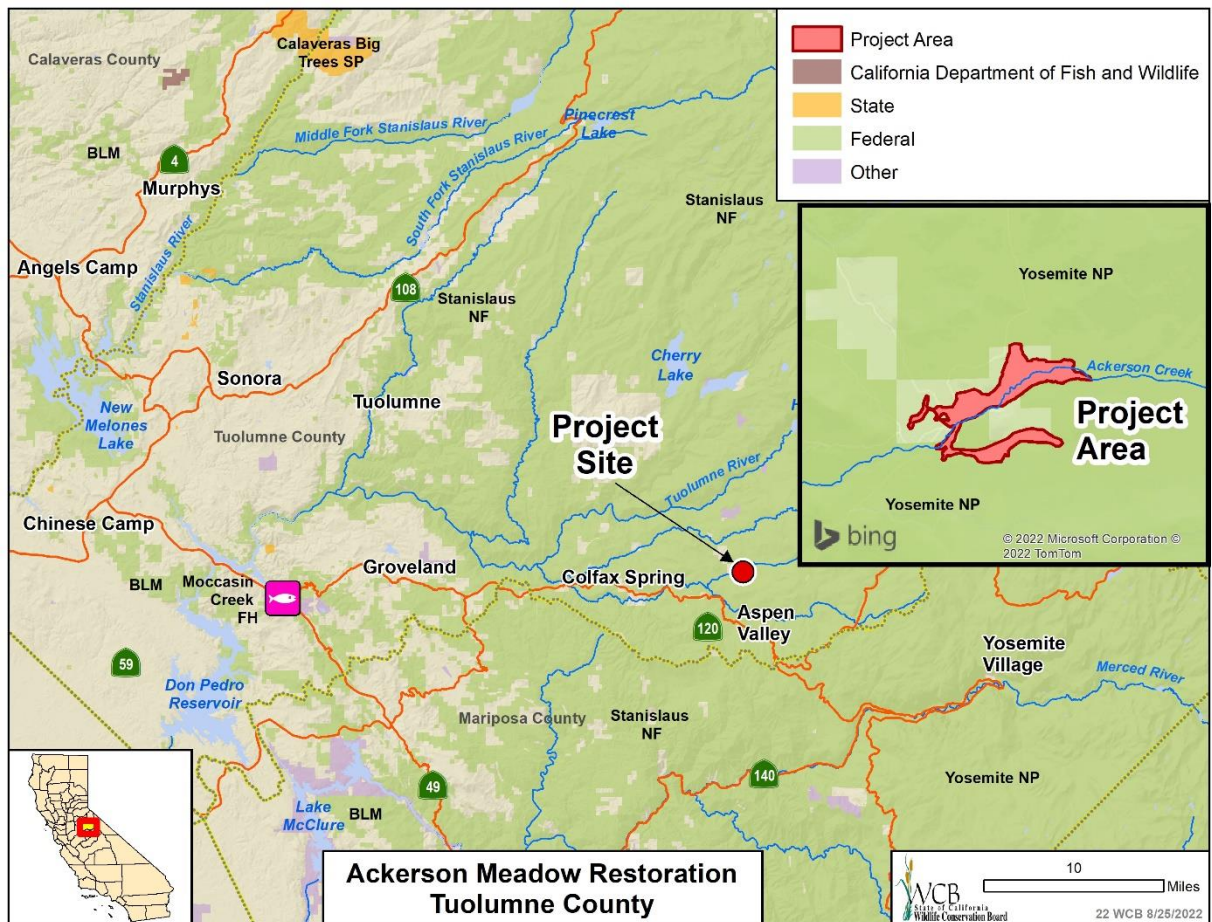
- Cicely Muldoon, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
- Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor, Stanislaus National Forest
- Helen Loffland, Meadow Species Specialist, The Institute for Bird Populations
- Frank Dean, President, Yosemite Conservancy
- John Buckley, Executive Director, Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center
- Chris Graham, Water Operations and Maintenance Manager, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Wes Monier, Chief Hydrologist, Turlock Irrigation District
- Gordon Enas, Interim Civil Engineering Manager, Modesto Irrigation District

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, 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.



22. Sequoia Grove Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,587,000 from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(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:	Sequoia Grove Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Great Basin Institute
Amount Recommended:	\$1,587,000
Funding Partners:	Great Basin Institute, National Park Service, Sequoia Park Conservancy
Landowner(s):	National Park Service
County:	Tulare
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	Proposition 84
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Sequoia Grove Restoration (Project) is located in Sequoia Kings Canyon National Parks (SEKI) approximately 50 miles east of Fresno in Tulare County. Specific groves of giant sequoias included in the Project area include Granite Creek, Redwood, Little Redwood Meadow, Lost, Redwood Mountain, and Board Camp groves.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The frequency and severity of fires in the Sierra Nevada have increased dramatically as a result of climate change and a buildup of hazardous fire fuels. Giant sequoias, an iconic tree species renowned for growth potential and longevity, are endemic to the western slope of the Sierra Nevada and are now restricted to roughly 73 groves which are vulnerable to wildfires. For example, 59 percent of the total area occupied by giant sequoia groves has burned since 2017, killing upwards of 14,200 giant sequoias. Those wildfires included the Castle Fire (2020), Windy Fire (2021), and KNP Complex (2021).

Prior to 2016, giant sequoias greater than 4-5 feet base diameter were seldom killed by wildfire due to their multiple adaptations to fire. However, the Railroad Fire and the Pier Fire (both in 2017) burned multiple giant sequoia groves at high intensity and caused 75-100 percent mortality within those groves. The Castle Fire, Windy Fire, and KNP Complex wildfires followed a few years later with extensive mortality to giant sequoias.

The Project will help protect giant sequoia groves, water quality, and wildlife habitat (e.g., fish, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, and mountain yellow-legged frog) by reducing small-diameter conifers and reducing shrub density in the Granite Creek, Redwood, Little Redwood Meadow, and Lost sequoia groves.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

SEKI follows a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Great Basin Institute 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	\$344,900	\$79,000	\$423,900
Restoration	\$1,029,100	\$375,000	\$1,404,100
Indirect Costs	\$69,000	---	\$69,000
Contingency	\$144,000	---	\$144,000
Total	\$1,587,000	\$454,000	\$2,041,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Project implementation per the design 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.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Clayton Jordon, Superintendent, National Park Service SEKI
- Theresa Benson, Forest Supervisor, Sequoia National Forest
- Jeromy W. Caldwell, Assistant Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management
- Glenn Miller, University of Nevada, Reno
- Joanna Nelson, Science Director, Save the Redwoods League
- Britta Dyer, California State Director, American Forests

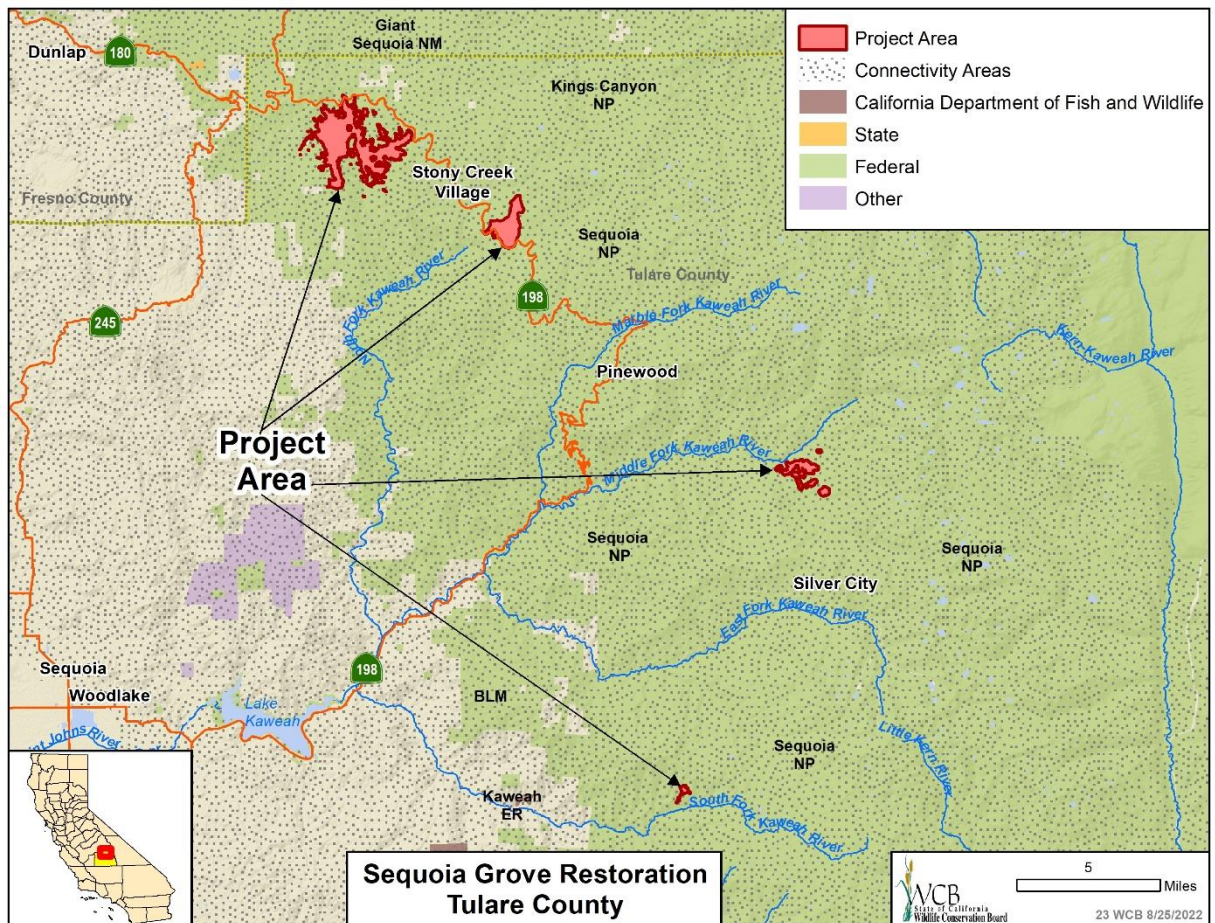
- Savannah Boiano, Executive Director, Sequoia Park Conservancy
- Dirk Charley, Tribal Liaison, Dunlap Band of Mono Indians
- Benje Williams, Executive Director, Understory
- Sharlynn Childers, CEO, San Joaquin Forest Products

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.



23. Camino Cielo Bridge Replacement Final Design

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,310,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Camino Cielo Bridge Replacement Final Design
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Ventura County Watershed Protection District
Amount Recommended:	\$1,310,000
Funding Partners:	California State Coastal Conservancy
County:	Ventura
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Camino Cielo Bridge Replacement Final Design project (Project) is located where Camino Cielo Road crosses over the upper Ventura River near the intersection of Camino Cielo Road and State Highway 33. This area is approximately one mile downstream of the obsolete, sediment-laden Matilija Dam and approximately four miles northwest of the city of Ojai in unincorporated Ventura County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project will complete final design plans, specifications, and cost estimates for a new bridge across the Ventura River near the intersection of Camino Cielo Road and State Highway 33. These “shovel ready” design plans will enable construction of a new bridge to replace an existing three-cell box culvert across the upper Ventura River that is regularly overwhelmed by moderate and high flows.

The Project will include (a) Value Engineering (VE) review of the current preliminary design for the replacement bridge and associated elements; (b) a revised preliminary design based on the VE review; (c) associated CEQA updates and completion of 70% design plans based on the revised preliminary design; and (d) completion of 90% and final design plans based on the 70% design.

A new bridge at Camino Cielo is one of six essential downstream infrastructure components of the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project (MDERP). The MDERP is a watershed-scale initiative to safely remove the obsolete Matilija Dam after a high-flow sediment release, enabling the re-wilding of Matilija Creek upstream of the current barrier to benefit federally endangered southern California steelhead and other species in the Ventura River watershed. Matilija Dam is on CDFW’s 2019 Fish Passage Priorities List (#719058), and a new bridge at Camino Cielo must be completed (along with other essential MDERP components) before Matilija Dam can be removed.

Once the implementation phase is completed, the new bridge will enhance steelhead migration through this narrow perennial reach of the upper Ventura River. It will increase both flow and sediment transport capacity, enhancing natural sediment flows to downstream floodplain and coastal habitats under current conditions, during Matilija Dam removal, and sustainably over time following Dam removal.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$316,677	\$215,439	\$532,116
Designs	\$660,145	\$457,850	\$1,117,995
Environmental Review	\$214,178	\$136,500	\$350,678
Contingency	\$119,000	---	\$119,000
Total	\$1,310,000	\$809,789	\$2,119,789

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grant administration, project coordination, public outreach.
- Designs: Completion of preliminary and final designs.
- Environmental Review: CEQA compliance and public outreach.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

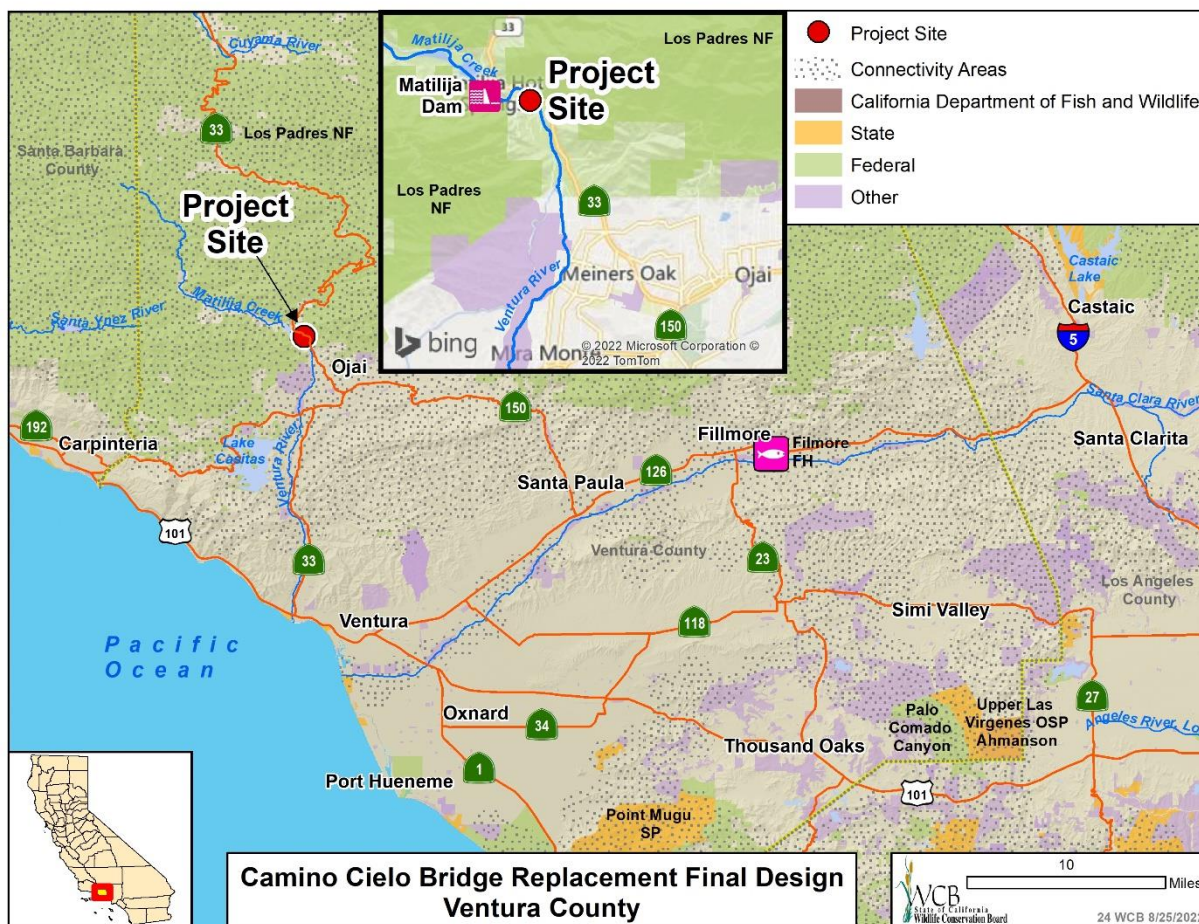
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

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.



24. State Route 91 B Canyon Wildlife Crossing, Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,811,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	State Route 91 B Canyon Wildlife Crossing
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Caltrans
Amount Recommended:	\$1,811,000
Funding Partners:	Caltrans, Riverside County Transportation Commission
Landowner(s):	Caltrans
County:	Riverside
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The State Route 91 B Canyon Wildlife Crossing project (Project) is located in Corona, at a culvert under State Route 91 (SR-91), approximately 0.4 miles east of the Riverside/Orange County line. SR-91 is an eight to ten lane freeway that separates the Santa Ana Mountains south of the roadway from the Chino Hills to the north.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Wildlife researchers have identified over 350,000 acres of habitat in the Santa Ana Mountains of southern California as being at risk of isolation and fragmentation by roads and urban development. A big contributor to this is SR-91 at the Riverside-Orange County border. This freeway is identified as a nearly impenetrable barrier to gene flow and movement for mountain lions and other wildlife between the Santa Anas and the Chino Hills.

The Chino Hills is identified by the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project as a natural landscape block that supports native biodiversity with connections to an Essential Connectivity Area between the Santa Ana Mountains and the Eastern Peninsular Range. Restoring this connection is needed to ensure the long-term survival for mountain lions and other wide-ranging species against the threats of ecological isolation and a changing climate.

In 2020, CDFW identified an area of SR-91, known as “B Canyon,” as a priority wildlife barrier because it impedes wildlife movement and is a source of wildlife mortality that affects gene flow, demographics, and resilience of California’s wildlife. 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. The studies concluded that if genetic connectivity 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 sets in.

The Project consists of an upgrade to an existing concrete culvert underneath SR-91 at B Canyon. The culvert currently does not function as a wildlife corridor due to a “bend” in the culvert that unintentionally developed over the years from successive highway widening projects. Many animals that are wary of human presence, like the mountain lion, are reluctant to enter any culvert without a clear line of sight to the other side. The bend in the culvert prevents that from happening, so most animals in the region that are looking to cross SR-91 will either turn back and give up or they will risk crossing the freeway with a high probability of a vehicle collision.

The Project will provide the final designs necessary to install a new 12-foot culvert that will provide a straight crossing with unobstructed sight lines under SR-91. The design of the crossing structure will focus on meeting the connectivity needs of mountain lions as well as a variety of other wildlife species, including bobcat and mule deer.

When completed, the Project will enable the undercrossing to fully function as a wildlife corridor that will extend from the Santa Ana River, through Chino Hills State Park to the north, across SR-91, and to future conserved lands to the south included within the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Conservation Plan.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$156,038	--	\$156,038
Planning and Design	\$1,192,426	\$312,390	\$1,504,816
Indirect costs	\$297,536	\$32,775	\$330,311
Contingency	\$165,000	---	\$165,000
Total	\$1,811,000	\$345,165	\$2,156,165

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Oversight of the Project to ensure deliverables are within scope, schedule, and approved budgeted costs.
- Planning and Design: Final project designs, preparation of cost estimates, and securing any necessary right of way permits.

- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

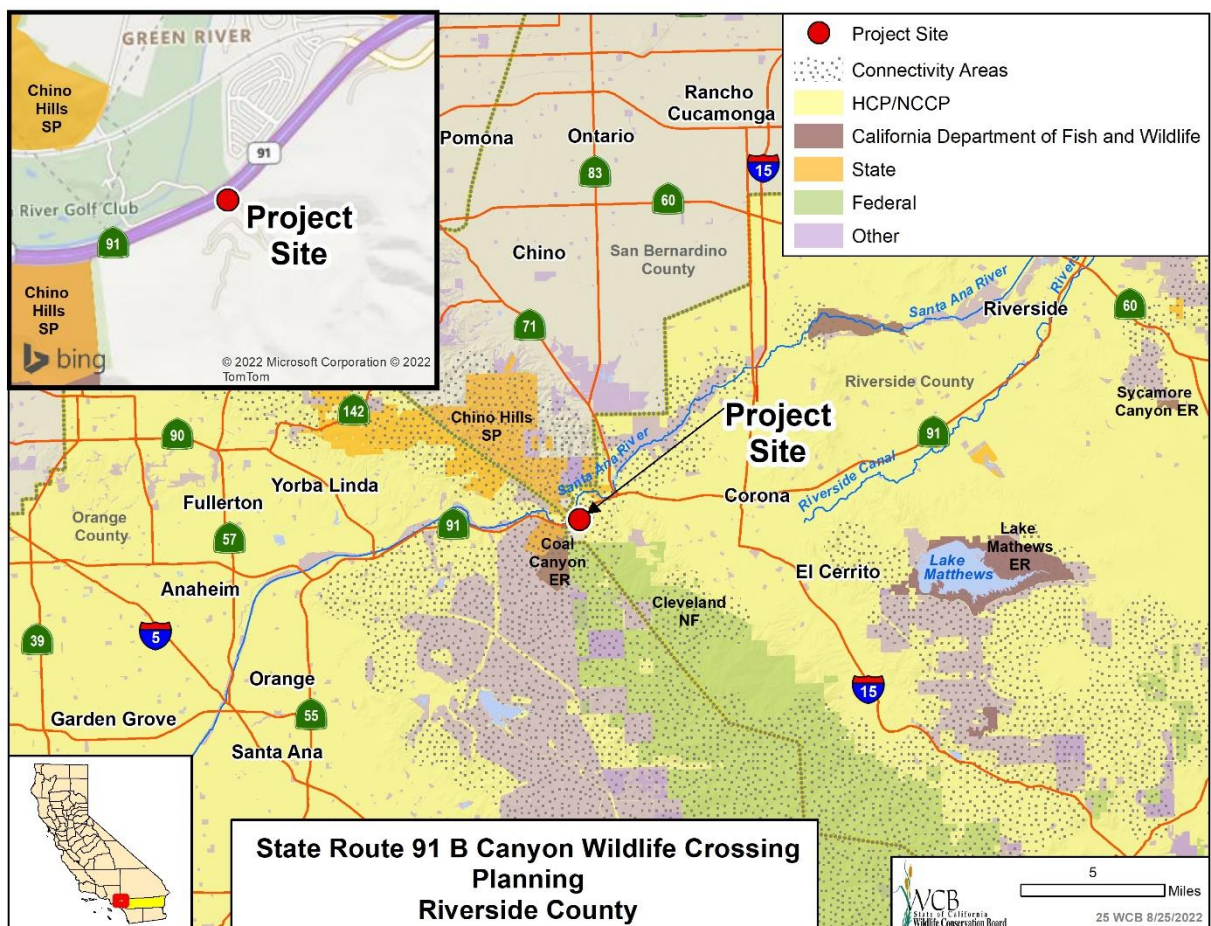
- Richard D. Roth, Senator, 31st District, California State Senate
- Jacque Casillas, Mayor, City of Corona
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

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 which have not been approved, adopted, or funded. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



25. Escondido Creek Riparian Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,028,919 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(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:	Escondido Creek Riparian Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Nature Collective
Amount Recommended:	\$2,028,919
Funding Partners:	Nature Collective
Landowner(s):	County of San Diego, Nature Collective
County:	San Diego
Program:	California Riparian Habitat Conservation
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, B.5 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Escondido Creek Riparian Restoration project (Project) is located within the Escondido Creek watershed of the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit (CHU) and extends 28 miles from its headwaters in Bear Valley to the San Elijo Lagoon. The Project area includes three sites within the lower 5 miles of the watershed, including the County-owned 70-acre Val Sereno Preserve, and the 20-acre La Bajada Bridge North site and 8-acre La Orilla Creek site that are part of CDFW's San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve but owned by Nature Collective.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CDFW Areas of Conservation Emphasis identifies the Project area as ranking high in species diversity and terrestrial habitat significance, and mid-high in aquatic significance. Several riparian-dependent birds have been documented within the Project area including the federal and state endangered least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-breasted chat, Swainson's thrush, yellow warbler, and orange-crowned warbler. Currently, the Project area's riparian habitat is characterized by limited native species with expanding populations of non-native, invasive plants such as eucalyptus trees, large and small palm trees, perennial pepperweed, yellow flag iris, giant reed, Cape ivy, pampas grass, tamarisk, castor bean, and other invasive shrubs and grasses. These conditions reduce the quality of habitat for resident and migratory birds and wildlife and limit the ecosystem functions and services that riparian corridors provide such as wildlife refugia and movement corridors, reduced soil erosion, improved water quality, reduced fire and flood risk, and a buffer against the surrounding urban landscape.

The goals of the Project are to: 1) restore approximately 30 acres of high-quality riparian woodland and riparian scrub habitat for special status birds, 2) maximize water availability in Escondido Creek and side drainages, 3) improve habitat corridors and connectivity, 4) facilitate climate change adaptation, 5) reduce fire hazard, and 6) document and assess response of vegetation, wildlife, and invertebrates to restoration efforts.

The Project will meet these goals by completing invasive species management over 30 acres in highly disturbed habitats, actively restoring 19 acres of regionally significant wildlife habitat, developing and implementing a comprehensive ecological monitoring program that will focus on multiple trophic levels including invertebrates, and completing three years of maintenance including retreatment of target species, supplemental watering, and replacement planting as needed.

Invasive species control methods will include both manual and chemical removal. Eucalyptus and palm treatment will employ professional tree felling staff supported by the Nature Collective restoration crew, California Conservation Corps, and volunteers. CDFW's integrated pest management specialist reviewed and commented on the Project's herbicide use form and Nature Collective has agreed to modify their chemicals based on CDFW's recommendation. All steps will be taken to reduce the scope or intensity of herbicide applications. The Final Project Report will include a section dedicated to quantifying the amount of chemical used per acre and explaining the rationale for herbicide use. All measures will be taken to treat targets before they go to flower to avoid incidental manual and chemical impacts to pollinators.

Passive revegetation will occur where site conditions and processes can facilitate it. Active revegetation will include installation of 400 to 600 container plants per acre depending on the surrounding vegetation, soil, and hydrology. Container plants will be primarily riparian trees including Western sycamore, Fremont cottonwood, and coast live oak. To support climate adaptation, the plant palette will include species that can withstand periods of drought but that also provide quality habitat for wildlife. Additionally, staff and volunteers will collect and install willow cuttings in areas that can benefit from additional cover to suppress favorable conditions for weeds and to increase native plant cover, habitat heterogeneity, and diversity.

The Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30X30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship and Pathway 10: Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

As part of the Project, Nature Collective will develop and adopt a Management Plan that guides management actions for 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	\$136,590	\$120,000	\$256,590
Monitoring/Mapping	\$297,982	\$11,160	\$309,142
Habitat Restoration & Maintenance	\$1,405,900	\$292,020	\$1,697,920
Training	\$4,000	---	\$4,000
Contingency	\$184,447	---	\$184,447
Total	\$2,028,919	\$423,180	\$2,452,099

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Overall coordination and planning, development of Management Plan, contracting, invoicing, and reporting.
- Monitoring/Mapping: Quantitative monitoring of sites pre- and post-restoration and GIS mapping of invasive treatments.
- Habitat Restoration and Maintenance: Stump treatments, biomass removal, integrated pest management, plant purchase, installation, irrigation, and retreatments.
- Training: Annual trainings that provide continuing education hours for Qualified Applicator License/Certificate renewal and information on best management practices.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Tasha Boerner Horvath, Assemblymember, 76th District, California Legislature
- Brian Albright, Director, County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation
- Hans Schmidt, Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention Bureau, City of Encinitas
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

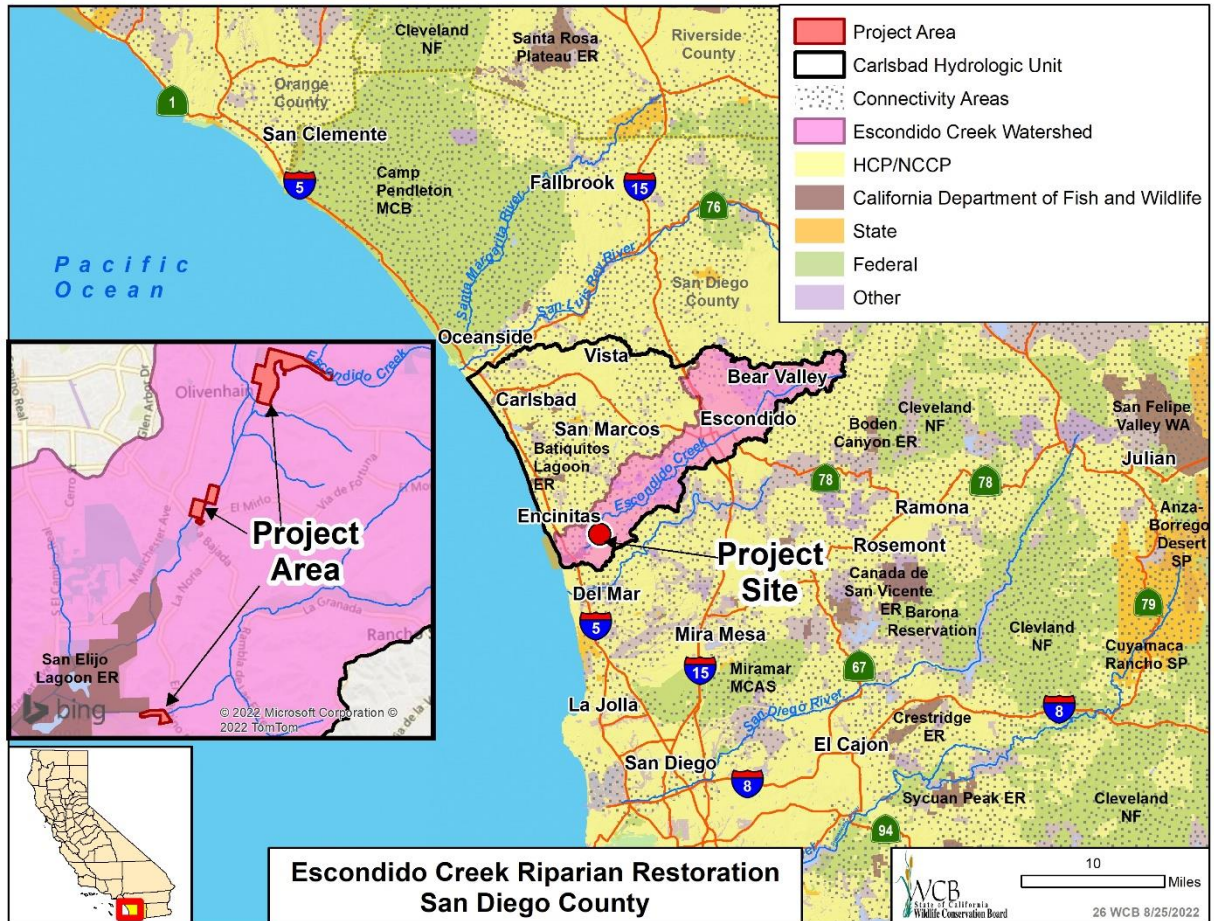
Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

San Diego County, 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.



26. 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 2022 PROJECTS

