



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

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

February 15, 2024, 9:00 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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Conference code: 506989

*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. *Note: Public comments will be limited to 2 (two) minutes.*

The Board will break for a 30-minute lunch at approximately 12pm.

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 15, 2024

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PERSONS WITH DISABILITES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department’s EEO Office at EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. Please make any such requests at the earliest possible time to help ensure that accommodations can be in place at the time of the meeting. 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

Alina Bokde, Chair, Public Member
Charlton H. Bonham, Vice Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Michele Perrault, Member
Legislative Director, Department of Finance
Damon Nagami, Public Member
Fran Pavley, Public Member
Kathryn Phillips, Public Member
Eric Sklar, President
Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator *Vacant*
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Henry Stern
Assemblymember Luz Rivas
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks – Alternate
Assemblymember Rick Zbur
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago – Alternate
Assemblymember Steve Bennett
Assemblymember Marc Berman – Alternate

Executive Director

Jennifer M. Norris, PhD

2. **Approval of Agenda**
3. **Executive Director’s Report**
4. **Board Member Updates and Reports**
5. **Discussion and Election of Board Chair**
6. **Funding Status - Informational**

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

GENERAL FUND (0001)	\$476,877,731.70
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(102,047,660.00)
Total Project Development:	(138,675,604.26)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$236,154,467.44
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	\$55,699,641.31
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(459,069.00)
Total Project Development:	(5,103,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$50,137,572.31
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	\$1,477,104.95
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,477,104.95
CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	\$307,744.00
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,500.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$305,244.00
WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	\$7,088,323.43
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(6,954,066.74)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$134,256.69
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	\$6,833,764.36
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,520,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$4,313,764.36

WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	\$50,167,583.30
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(752,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$49,415,583.30
THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	\$74,361,141.04
February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(6,109,163.00)
Total Project Development:	(3,302,400.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$64,949,578.04
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$672,813,034.09
Grand Total – February 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(109,367,892.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(156,557,571.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$406,887,571.09

Funding Reference Corrections

This is an update to the Board regarding incorrect funding references for a number of Board items from all 2023 board meetings. After the November 2023 Board meeting, it was discovered that a number of projects cited fund sources that were not correct, nor were they actual funding citations (i.e. the citations do not identify any existing fund source). This was due to a clerical error from inputting incorrect citations into WCB’s internal project tracking system. All approved projects were paid out of correct funding allocations despite the error in the agendas. In addition, staff are working to document the funding description changes for 2023 approved grants so the grant documents will reference the correct funding source. Below is a table of the funding sources and their correct references.

Corrected Fund Citation	Previously Identified Fund Citation in Board Agenda
AB179, Sec.83(3)(a)	General Fund, Budget Act of 2022
	AB179, Sec. 83(a)
AB211, Ch.574, Sec.35(h)(1)	AB211, Sec. 35(h)(1)
SB154, Climate	General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Climate Resilience
	General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Sec. 53.5
	SB170, Sec. 53.5
SB154, Drought	SB129, Sec. 89(3)
SB154, Flow	General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Flow
	General Fund, Budget Act of 2021, Sec. 54
	SB170, Sec. 54

Consent Items

Items 7-27 are part of the Consent Calendar

7. Recovery of Funds, Wednesday, February 15, 2024

The following projects previously authorized by the Board are now completed, and some have balances of funds that can be recovered and returned to their respective funds. It is recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

Table 1 - Recoveries by Fund

Fund Name	Amount
General Fund	\$142,987.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$27,413.00
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$1.92
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$0.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$0.00
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$10,926.53
Total Recoveries for All Funds	\$181,328.45

Table 2 - General Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Basin Ranch	\$8,613,200.00	\$8,601,044.00	\$12,156.00
Bates Ranch	\$2,020,000.00	\$2,008,670.00	\$11,330.00
Big Morongo Canyon Springs	\$30,000.00	\$7,372.00	\$22,628.00
Dos Rios Norte	\$22,695,000.00	\$22,681,213.00	\$13,787.00
El Dorado Ranch Expansion 4	\$2,720,000.00	\$2,700,000.00	\$20,000.00
Fay Creek Ranch (Tribe)	\$2,057,581.00	\$2,044,041.00	\$13,540.00
Hart Ranch Conservation Easement - Rabbit Hill	\$1,495,000.00	\$1,482,140.00	\$12,860.00
Hart Ranch Conservation Easement - Soda Springs	\$1,265,000.00	\$1,256,120.00	\$8,880.00
Monarch Wings Across California, Expansion and Connectivity	\$329,400.00	\$329,000.00	\$0.00
Rana Creek Ranch	\$24,062,000.00	\$24,034,194.00	\$27,806.00
Total Recoveries to General Fund			\$142,987.00

Table 3 - Habitat Conservation Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Barber Creek	\$290,000.00	\$262,587.00	\$27,413.00
Big Morongo Canyon Springs	\$1,850,000.00	\$1,850,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			\$27,413.00

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Pleitito Creek Riparian Restoration	\$142,000.00	\$141,998.08	\$1.92
Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund			\$1.92

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			\$0.00

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Alameda Creek Fish Passage	\$5,358,075.00	\$5,358,075.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$0.00

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

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Ano Nuevo Reserve Equal Access Road Improvement	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$0.00
Bean Meadow Enhancement for Climate Resiliency	\$341,000.00	\$341,000.00	\$0.00
Concow Pyrodiversity Planning	\$180,000.00	\$170,541.18	\$9,458.82
Dye Creek Low Water Crossing Fish Passage Planning	\$375,000.00	\$373,532.29	\$1,467.71
Programmatic Permitting for Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Augmentation	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018			\$10,926.53

Funding Change Request

To consider an alternative funding source for two previously Board approved projects as a result of original fund sources being proposed for reversion in the 2024 State Budget.

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 15, 2024

- Middle Truckee Watershed Forest Health Funded \$8,272,000 originally from AB 102 Sec.85 (3)(c) Budget Year 23 will be funded with General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions, [AB102, Sec. 85 (3)(a)].
- Sierra Foothill Forest Climate Resilience funded \$2,396,000 originally from AB 102 Sec.85 (3)(c) Budget Year 23 will be split funded with \$1,406,719 funded from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Prop. 84) Public Resource Code Section 75055(a) and \$989,281 funded from General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions,[AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)].

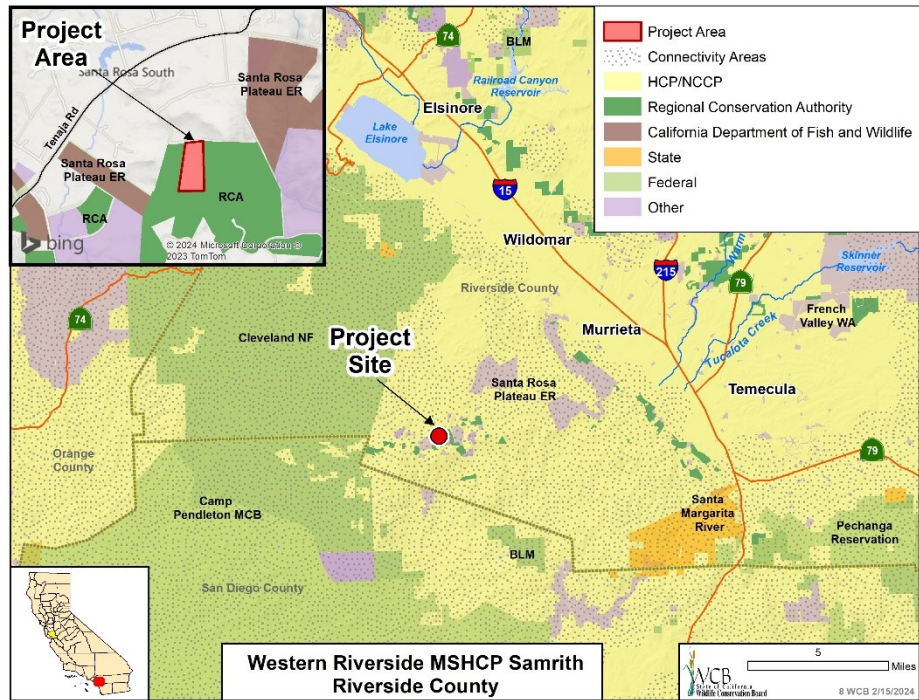
8. Western Riverside MSHCP Samrith

Acquisition Fee

Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) Grantee: Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA)
 County: Riverside
 WCB Grant: \$88,069
 USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$163,556
 Location: 5 miles west of the city of Temecula
 Acres: 20± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Supports a critical movement corridor for wildlife traveling between the Santa Ana Mountains, Cleveland National Forest, Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve, Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve, and Agua Tibia Mountains.
- This linkage is of utmost importance for the long-term survival of the Southern California/Central Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit of mountain lion population in the Santa Ana Mountains.
- Habitats represented: chaparral, forest, woodland, and riparian woodland.
- Other key species: coastal California gnatcatcher, rainbow manzanita, and Engelmann oak.
- Regional or Species Plan: Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Executive Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes, access will include passive wildlife-oriented recreation such as hiking, biking, bird watching, and equestrian use within an existing trail.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

RCA will conduct a detailed baseline analysis of the Property upon acquisition and will permanently manage the Property, supported by a comprehensive team of fully

dedicated staff that will monitor, steward, and study it. Local development mitigation fees and other local sources fund RCA's endowment for long-term management.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$272,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$88,069
USFWS	\$163,556
RCA	\$20,375
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$272,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Kate Sanchez, District 71

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to proceed substantially as planned.

9. **Western Riverside MSHCP Johnson**
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

10. Burns Piñon Ridge Reserve Enhancement

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$240,493

Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(c)

Grantee: University of California, Irvine

Landowner: University of California, Irvine

County: San Bernardino

Location: Pioneertown

Project Highlights

- Located at the University of California Natural Reserve System's Burns Piñon Ridge Reserve (Reserve).
- Reserve habitats include piñon-juniper woodland, Joshua tree woodland, montane chaparral, desert wash, and freshwater seep.
- Project supports research and education of desert ecology, field zoology methods, biology of deserts, and more.

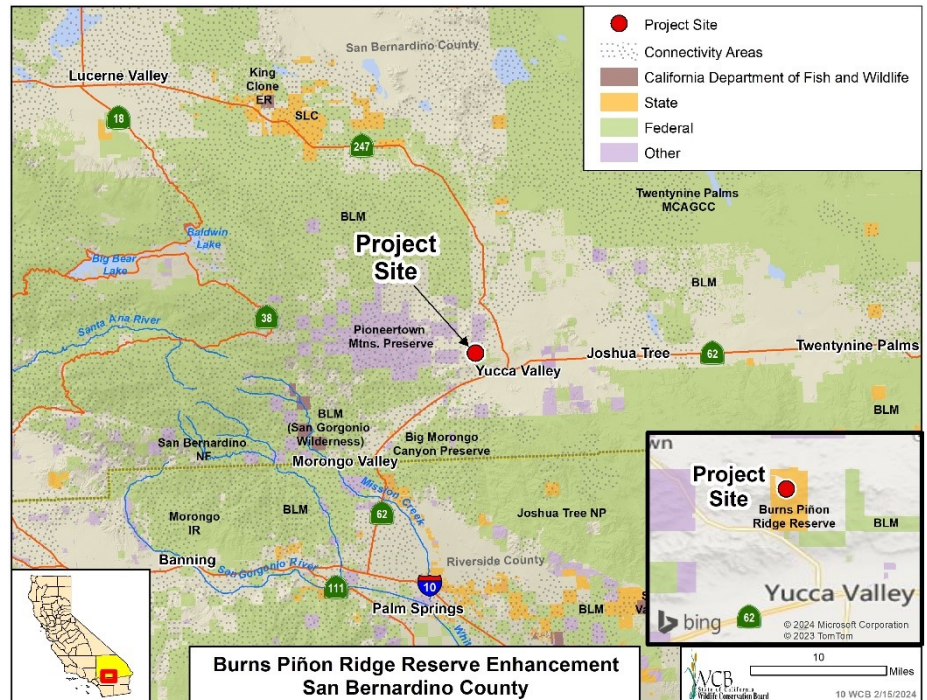
Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3

Project Description

The Reserve facilities were constructed in the 1950s and were designed for a single-family residence. Repairs are needed to bring the facilities and surrounding outdoor areas up to the function and programming needs of a university field station with an array of research, education, and outreach needs. The project involves:

- A building assessment to document existing building conditions requiring near-term action and to establish priorities for future work.
- A visioning process to determine the Reserve's quantitative and qualitative goals and requirements. This will be carried out via a series of two progressive workshops and discussions with project stakeholders.



- A programming process to determine the Reserve’s functional and spatial requirements. This will be carried out through a series of two progressive interviews with project stakeholders.
- Development of a master plan for the residence, workshop, and outdoor instructional, camping, and interpretive areas in addition to implementation of immediate construction needs.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

The University of California, Irvine has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the Reserve. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, University of California, Irvine 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	Totals
Project Management	\$25,543	\$4,455	\$29,998
Assessment, Visioning, Master Planning	\$47,700	\$12,800	\$60,500
Construction	\$167,250	\$10,000	\$177,250
Total	\$240,493	\$27,255	\$267,748

Non-WCB funders include:

- University of California, Irvine - \$27,255

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Michael W. Kisgen, M.E.M., J.D., Associate Director, UC Natural Reserve System

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1 (Existing Facilities). Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
- Assembly: Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47

Staff Recommendation

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

11. Joshua Tree Conservation Coalition and Monitoring

Planning Study

WCB Grant: \$1,433,000

Fund Source: General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources – Western Joshua Tree Conservation Provision [AB102, Sec. 84(5)]

Grantee: California Desert Land Conservancy DBA Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT)

Landowner: MDLT and various private and public landowners

Counties: Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Riverside, and San Bernardino

Location: Entire range of the western Joshua tree

Project Highlights

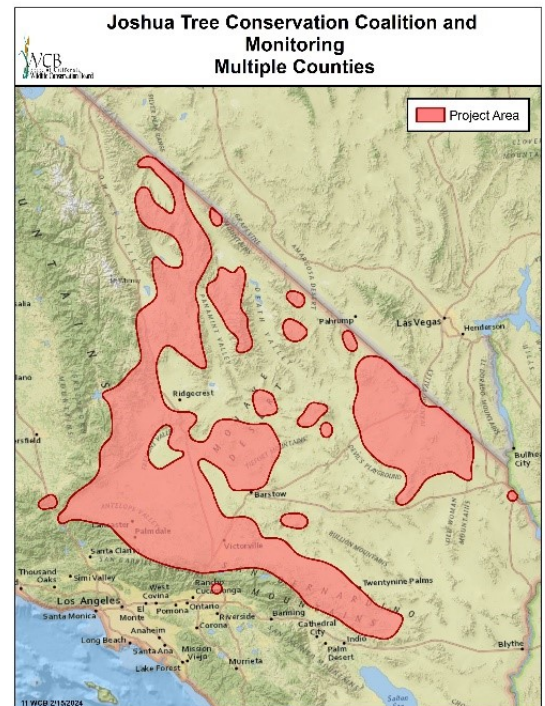
- Project is needed to assist CDFW in its preparation of the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan as required by the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act.
- Project focuses on two programs critical to the creation of the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan: (1) the formation of a Joshua Tree Conservation Coalition; and (2) a range-wide western Joshua tree population monitoring study.
- Key species: western Joshua Tree

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Tribal partnership and engagement are part of another related project proposal, Joshua Tree Conservation Tribal Engagement
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship; Pathway 10: Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and Objectives 2.4

Project Description

The Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA) requires CDFW to complete the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan (WJTCP) by December 2024 in collaboration with governmental agencies, California Native American tribes, and the public. The WJTCA also requires regular reviews of the species' status and the effectiveness of the management actions and conservation plan. Although there has been considerable debate for decades on the best way to protect this iconic species, all sides of the listing issue embrace the need for a data-informed approach based on the best available science. As part of the 2023 California state budget, five million dollars was set aside for environmental organizations to participate in conservation efforts for the western Joshua tree. This project will help aid CDFW and proposes to do the following:



- Create the Joshua Tree Conservation Coalition comprised of western Joshua tree subject matter experts, land managers, and tribal representatives. The coalition will act as a resource for CDFW as it drafts the WJTCP.
- Conduct a study using a standardized method for range-wide monitoring of western Joshua tree population demographics with the following goals:
 - Goal 1: finalize the sampling method and experimental design for the long-term, range-wide monitoring of Joshua trees.
 - Goal 2: implement a one-year field study for the novel method to estimate baseline western Joshua tree demographic parameters.
 - Goal 3: use data and parameter estimates obtained from the study to determine baseline understanding of western Joshua tree population demographics across its range in California.
 - Goal 4: further refine methods or protocols as needed to inform next steps towards a long-term, range-wide monitoring program for western Joshua Tree that allows detection of population declines/increases and range contractions/expansions with high confidence.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management and Reporting	\$232,278	---	\$232,278
Western Joshua Tree Conservation Coalition	\$35,000	---	\$35,000
Long-term Population Monitoring Study	\$1,000,000	---	\$1,000,000
Indirect Costs	\$34,842	---	\$34,842
Contingency	\$130,212	---	\$130,212
Total	\$1,432,332	---	\$1,432,332

Non-WCB funders include:

- None

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Kristine Peterson for Scott A. Sobiech, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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. In addition, the project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306, Class 6, Information Collection, consisting of basic data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4
Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
Senator Susan Rubio, District 22
Senator Rosilicie Ochoa, District 23
Senator Anthony J. Portantino, District 25
- Assembly: Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47
Assemblymember James C. Ramos, District 45
Assemblymember Chris Holden, District 41
Assemblymember Juan Carrillo, District 39
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36
Assemblymember Tom Lackey, District 34
Assemblymember Jim Patterson, District 8

Staff Recommendation

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

12. Joshua Tree Conservation Tribal Engagement

WCB Grant: \$921,260

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources – Western Joshua Tree Conservation Provision [AB102, Sec. 84(5)]

Grantee: Native American Land Conservancy

Landowner: Private and Public landowners

Counties: Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Riverside, and San Bernardino

Location: Entire range of the western Joshua tree

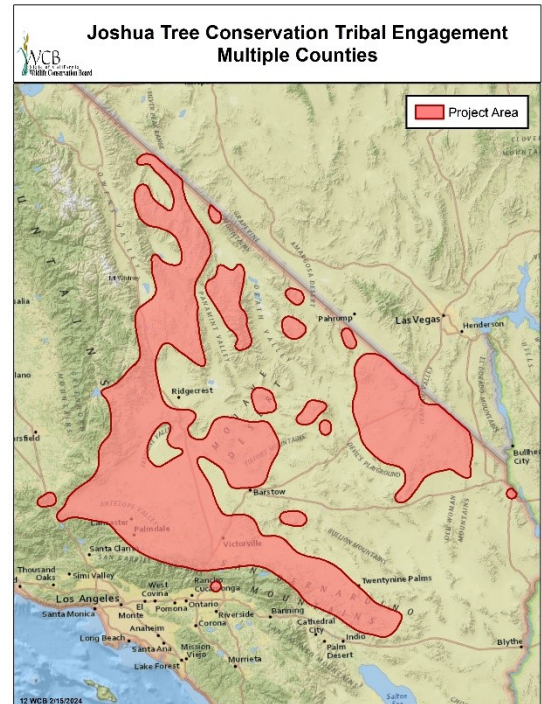
Planning Study

Project Highlights

- Project is intended to assist CDFW with its tribal engagement which is needed for the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan and required by the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act.
- Key species: western Joshua Tree

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: The project proposed is to secure the participation of all tribes within the range of the western Joshua tree. A contact list of individual tribal members representing over 60 tribes can be provided.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 7, Strengthen Coordination Among Governments; Pathway 10: Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and B.5 and Objectives 1.3, 2.4



Project Description

The Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA) requires that CDFW complete the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan (WJTCP) by December 2024 in collaboration with governmental agencies, California Native American tribes, and the public. The WJTCA requires that CDFW consult with California Native American tribes, include co-management principles in the WJTCP, provide for the relocation of western Joshua trees to tribal lands upon a request from a tribe, and ensure traditional ecological knowledge is incorporated into the WJTCP. The Legislature's due date of December 31, 2024, for the completed draft WJTCP to the Fish and Game Commission for its review and approval, leaves a limited time for meaningful collaboration with tribes.

Financial security often becomes a barrier that leads to unintended inequities across tribes, and unequal access to meeting locations, including online access. Securing funding for California Native American tribes supports tribal sovereignty and self-determination to engage and participate, so that all interested California Native

American tribes, regardless of their economic stature, can contribute in meaningful ways to the development of the WJTCP. As part of the 2023 California state budget, five million dollars was set aside for environmental organizations to participate in conservation efforts for the western Joshua tree. The project will address the following issues:

- Meeting the Legislature’s December 2024 deadline for a completed WJTCP that includes the priorities of California Native American tribes as outlined in the WJTCA;
- Providing funding for California Native American tribes to meaningfully participate and engage in developing the WJTCP; and
- Providing financial compensation for supporting staff including a full-time tribal facilitator, grant administrator, and supporting Native American Land Conservancy staff.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$187,508	\$15,000	\$202,508
Meeting Facilitation	\$549,500	---	\$549,500
Indirect Costs	\$110,551	---	\$110,551
Contingency	\$73,701	---	\$73,701
Total	\$921,260	\$15,000	\$936,260

Non-WCB funders include:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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. In addition, the project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306, Class 6, Information Collection, consisting of basic data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4
Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
Senator Susan Rubio, District 22
Senator Rosilicie Ochoa, District 23
Senator Anthony J. Portantino, District 25
- Assembly: Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47
Assemblymember James C. Ramos, District 45
Assemblymember Chris Holden, District 41
Assemblymember Juan Carrillo, District 39
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36
Assemblymember Tom Lackey, District 34
Assemblymember Jim Patterson, District 8

Staff Recommendation

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

13. Los Banos Wildlife Area, Expansion 10 (Soares)

Acquisition Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154)

County: Merced

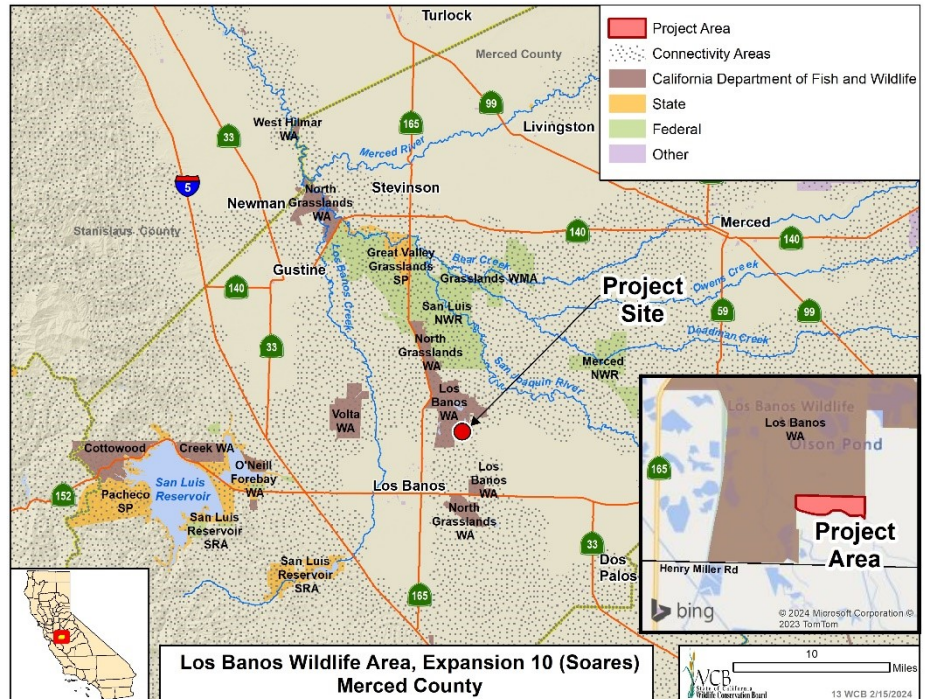
Purchase Price: \$3,700,000

Location: Three miles northeast of the City of Los Banos

Acres: 168± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Will be added to the Los Banos Wildlife Area for restoration from farmland to grasslands and managed wetlands.
- Provide an additional 168± acres for public recreation in a disadvantaged community.
- Sensitive species include tricolored blackbird, giant garter snake, Swainson’s hawk, and western spadefoot.
- Supports cismontane alkali marsh, a sensitive habitat recognized by CDFW.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, serves a DAC
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions; Pathway 4. Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A and C and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4
- Public Access: Los Banos Wildlife Area is open to the public

Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of the Los Banos Wildlife Area, with the potential to restore the existing farmland to upland or freshwater wetland habitat.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$3,700,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

WCB	\$3,700,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$3,700,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Anna Caballero, District 14
- Assembly: Esmeralda Soria, District 27

Staff Recommendation

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

14. Malech Ranch Conservation Easement

Acquisition Conservation Easement

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency (SCVHA)

County: Santa Clara

WCB Grant: \$1,200,000

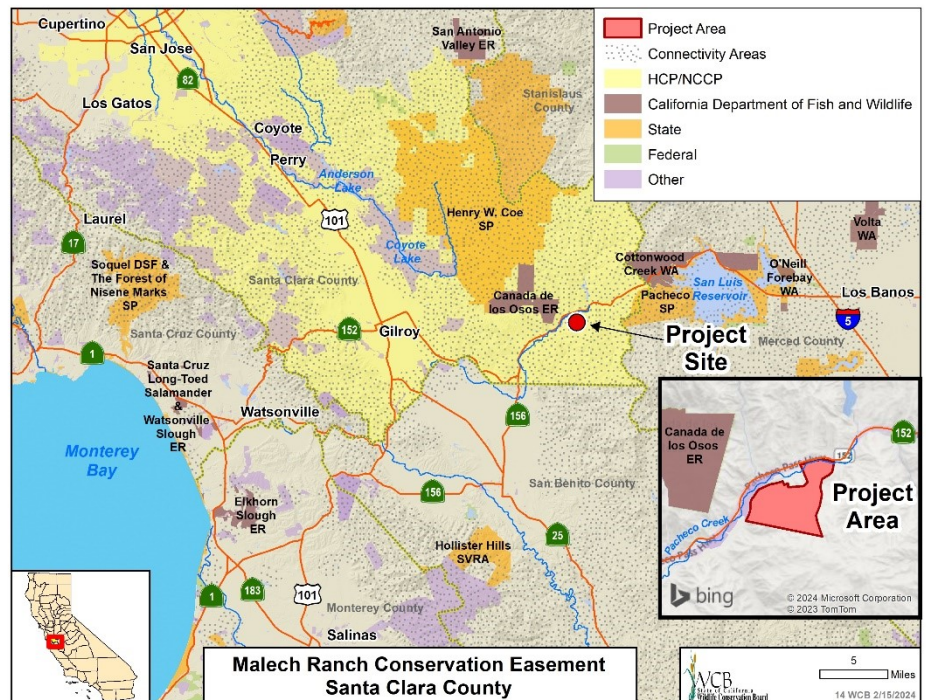
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$500,000

Location: Twelve miles east of the city of Gilroy

Acres: 761± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: mixed oak woodland, mixed serpentine chaparral, and Central California sycamore alluvial woodland.
- Contains 761± acres designated as critical habitat for California red-legged frog.
- Contains 5.5 miles of streams including Pacheco Creek. Spawning South Central California Coast steelhead migrate through Pacheco Creek.
- Other key species: tricolored blackbird, western burrowing owl, California red-legged frog, and California tiger salamander.
- Regional or Species Plan: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan (SCVHP).
- Prevents subdivision: There is an approved Tentative Tract Map which would allow three homesites.
- Connectivity: The Property will provide an east west wildlife corridor along Pacheco Creek which includes the existing Pacheco Creek Reserve and the pending (Agenda item 38) O’Connell Ranch Property.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1.1, Invest in regional conservation planning and implementation
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A.3 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
- Public Access: No

Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- All present and future development rights are terminated and may not be used on or transferred to any portion of the Property or any other property.
- No legal or de facto division, subdivision, or partitioning of the Property or any fee transfer of less than the entire Property.
- No manipulating or altering any water course, body of water, or water circulation on the Property.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

SCVHA will hold, monitor, and enforce the terms of the Conservation Easement, which provide that the Property will be used primarily as an open space landscape supporting seasonal cattle grazing and wildlife habitat. SCVHA will be responsible for enforcing the Conservation Easement through detailed baseline conditions documentation, planned annual compliance monitoring, recordkeeping, and regular communication with the landowners. A baseline conditions report will be provided to WCB prior to the close of escrow.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,760,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$2,700,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,200,000
USFWS	\$500,000
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	\$650,000
Wildlife Conservation Network	\$350,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,700,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Ash Karla, District 25

Staff Recommendation

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

15. Mokelumne River Floodplain Reconnection and Restoration

Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

16. Tomato Stand Fish Passage Planning

Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$180,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD)

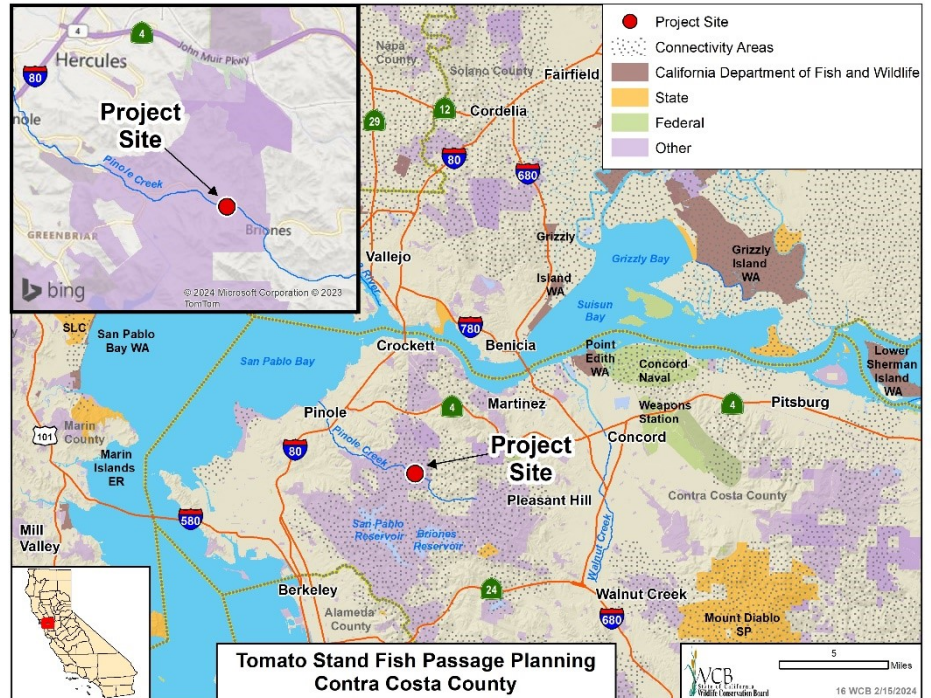
Landowner: EBMUD

County: Contra Costa

Location: Two miles east of Pinole

Project Highlights

- Located in the protected Pinole Creek watershed.
- Final culvert within Pinole Creek that restricts access to 1.4 miles of fish spawning and rearing habitat upstream.
- Key species: Central California Coast steelhead.
- Regional and Species Plans: NOAA Coastal Multispecies Recovery Plan, EBMUD's Watershed Master Plan and East Bay Low Effect Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Project will foster collaboration with community organizations and encourage participation in future restoration actions in the watershed.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 2.4

Project Description

The Tomato Stand Culvert is the last remaining culvert within Pinole Creek that restricts steelhead access to spawning and rearing habitat upstream. The existing culvert is perched and undersized, which impedes fish passage due to the lack of depth at low flows and excessive leap height and velocities at higher flows. The Tomato Fish Stand Passage Planning project (Project) will develop shovel-ready plans to provide fish unrestricted access to spawning and rearing habitat upstream by:

- Completing baseline surveys of the Project site to determine current fish passage conditions.
- Providing concept level designs, 65% engineering designs, and 90% engineering designs for the preferred fish passage design.
- Completing environmental compliance, including CEQA requirements and the required project permits.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	---	\$45,000	\$45,000
Analysis and Design	\$95,000	\$26,000	\$121,000
Permitting	\$85,000	\$12,000	\$97,000
Indirect Costs	---	\$37,350	\$37,350
Total	\$180,000	\$120,350	\$300,350

Non-WCB funders include:

- EBMUD - \$120,350

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Christopher Lim, Executive Director, Contra Costa Resource Conservation District
- Ann Moriarty, Board of Directors, The Friends of Pinole Creek

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Nancy Skinner, District 9
- Assembly: Assemblymember Timothy S. Grayson, District 15

Staff Recommendation

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

17. Faith Valley Meadow Restoration - Augmentation Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$67,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: American Rivers

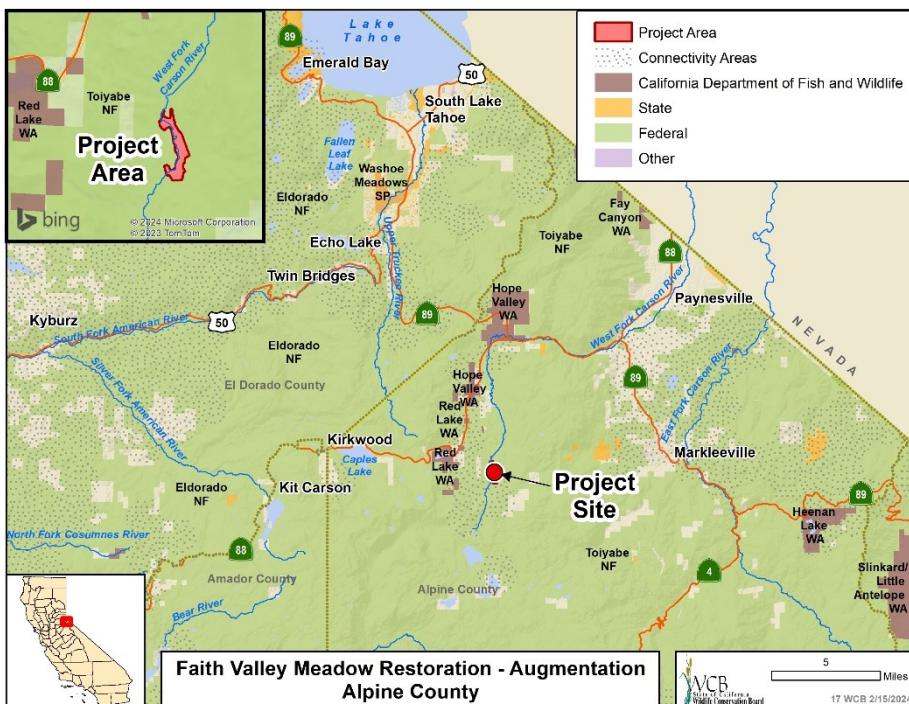
Landowner: United States Forest Service

County: Alpine

Location: Located along the West Fork Carson River five miles south of State Highway 88

Project Highlights

- Located four miles upstream from Hope Valley, a previously completed WCB funded meadow restoration in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.
- This project augments a previously funded and completed project to restore 120 acres of forest and meadow habitat.
- Augmentation is to support post project monitoring of groundwater, streamflow, avian, aquatic habitat, and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Key species: Willow flycatcher, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, Lahontan cutthroat trout.
- Regional or Species Plan: Supports State Wildlife Action Plan Conservation Targets for Wet Meadow and Carson River Native Fish Assemblage.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.6, 2.3, 2.4, 4.1

Project Description

This project is for an augmentation of funding for the Faith Valley Meadow Restoration (Project) approved by WCB for funding in November 2020. An augmentation is needed

for this Project, as additional and more rigorous stream flow monitoring was identified as a need after project implementation. This augmentation will provide funding for this post-project monitoring. Historic land use, overgrazing, road construction, and recreational impacts have impaired Faith Valley Meadow’s hydrologic function. The channel passing through Faith Valley Meadow is incised and flows are largely disconnected from the surrounding meadow. As a result, the groundwater table has dropped and vegetation in the meadow has partially converted from wetland plants to upland plants. The Project includes:

- Installing a series of “beaver dam analogs” to capture sediment in the stream channel, raise the water table, and improve hydrologic connection between channel flows and the meadow floodplain.
- Implementing improvements to a road adjacent to the meadow to restore more natural drainage patterns on the meadow surface, and to enhance recreational values.
- Conducting pre-and-post project monitoring including groundwater, streamflow, photo points, and bird and aquatic habitat monitoring and GHG monitoring.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

The U. S. Forest Service (USFS) has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, 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	Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$21,145	\$13,343	\$58,576	\$93,064
Restoration	\$299,235	---	\$461,500	\$760,735
Monitoring	\$21,940	\$45,460	\$53,500	\$120,900
Indirect Costs	\$8,920	\$8,197	\$9,460	\$26,577
Total	\$351,240	\$67,000	\$583,036	\$1,001,276

Non-WCB funders include:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife - \$407,283
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - \$170,753

- Alpine Watershed Group - \$5,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15333, Class 33, Small Habitat Restoration Projects, as a project not to exceed 5 acres in size to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as a minor alteration to land, water and vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecelia M. Aguiar-Curry, District 4

Staff Recommendation

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

18. Montezuma Slough Fish Screen

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$2,113,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

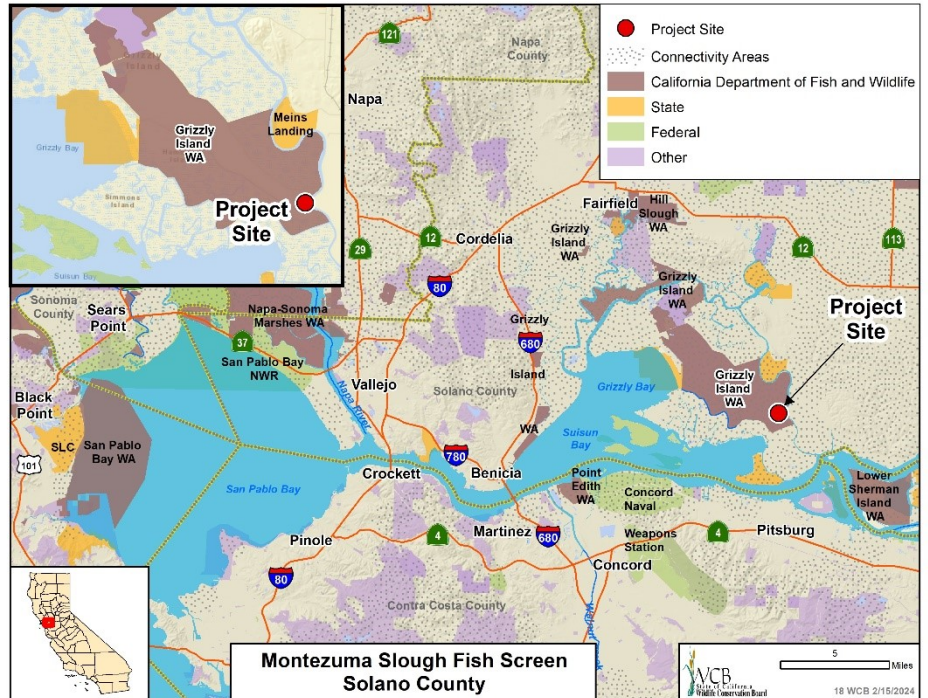
Landowner: CDFW

County: Solano

Location: 13 miles south-east of Fairfield

Project Highlights

- Located on Grizzly Island Wildlife Area within the Suisun Marsh.
- Approximately 3,000 acres of managed wetland and upland habitat will be enhanced.
- Project will install fish screen/water diversion infrastructure benefitting anadromous fish and migratory birds.
- Listed on CDFW 2023 Fish Passage “Top Priorities” list.
- Key species: Sacramento River winter-run Chinook, Central Valley steelhead, North American green sturgeon, Delta smelt, longfin smelt, salt marsh harvest mouse, Swainson’s hawk, and numerous waterbird, shorebird and waterfowl species.
- The project supports the Central Valley Joint Venture – 2020 Implementation Plan; Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation, and Restoration Plan; North American Waterfowl Management Plan; NMFS 2014 Recovery Plan for the Evolutionarily Significant Units of Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook Salmon and Central Valley Spring-run Chinook Salmon and the Distinct Population Segment of California Central Valley Steelhead.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.1

Project Description

The water supply for nearly half of the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area (GIWA) is provided through two 30-year-old, 48-inch water control structures. These two intakes are located on the eastern boundary of the wildlife area and pull water via gravity and tidal fluctuation from Montezuma Slough. The existing intakes are approximately three river miles upstream from the confluence of Montezuma Slough and the Sacramento River. This proximity to the Sacramento River is important, as it provides a source of relatively fresh water to GIWA.

These existing intakes are beyond repair and must be replaced entirely. New water delivery intakes and fish screens are needed to enhance the wetland habitat and wildlife values of GIWA while protecting anadromous fish within the Montezuma Slough system. The project will achieve these goals by:

- Relocating and replacing the existing water diversion intakes and associated fish screens approximately 1,500 feet to the southeast of the existing structures.
- Installing two 36-inch water control structures at the current water diversion location to serve as a drain to Montezuma Slough.
- Construction of a ponding basin as a permanent wetland, to help reduce erosion at the new discharge location.
- Installation of three new water control structures to control water levels in the new permanent pond.
- Interior ditch cleaning and levee improvements within the project area to improve water delivery capabilities and ensure ditch integrity.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

CDFW has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, Ducks Unlimited, 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	Totals
Project Management	\$124,912	---	\$124,912
Construction	\$1,763,264	\$3,210,000	\$4,973,264

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Indirect Costs	\$32,187	---	\$32,187
Contingency	\$192,637	---	\$192,637
Total	\$2,113,000	\$3,210,000	\$5,323,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- CDFW - \$3,210,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- James Cogswell, Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

CDFW, as lead agency, prepared an EIR for the project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Bill Dodd, District 3
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lori D. Wilson, District 11

Staff Recommendation

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

19. Redwood Creek Enhancement Planning

Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$674,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB 154)

Grantee: Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

Landowner: California State Parks

County: Marin

Location: Approximately 4.5 miles west of Mill Valley

Project Highlights

- Develop plans to enhance 7,000 linear feet of instream habitat and streambank habitat along Redwood Creek including one acre of floodplain and one acre of riparian habitat to enhance habitat for several listed aquatic and riparian species.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Federated Indians Graton Rancheria will consult on design plans and is a federally recognized tribe.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3



Project Description

Redwood Creek in Mount Tamalpais State Park has become incised and disconnected from its historic floodplain. This reduces channel complexity, instream habitat value, riparian habitat value, and refugia from high flow velocities. These habitat impacts have reduced overall habitat for several listed species including coho salmon, steelhead, and California red-legged frog. This project will:

- Develop plans to reconnect Redwood Creek with its historic floodplain
- Develop plans to establish one acre of floodplain and off-channel habitat and one acre of riparian habitat
- Develop plans to install large woody debris in Redwood Creek to create habitat complexity
- Reduce further erosion

- Apply for all needed environmental permits
- Complete CEQA
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$130,140	\$51,507	\$181,647
Permitting and CEQA	\$274,499	\$69,570	\$344,069
Engineering and Final Designs	\$203,010	---	\$203,010
Indirect Costs	\$7,243	---	\$7,243
Contingency	\$59,108	---	\$59,108
Total	\$674,000	\$121,077	\$795,077

Non-WCB funders include:

- Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy - \$76,103
- California State Parks – Deferred Maintenance Funding - \$44,974

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Damon Connolly, District 12

Staff Recommendation

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

20. CAL FIRE Pacific Union College Forest, Expansion 1

Acquisition/CAL FIRE Conservation Easement

Fund Source(s): Not Applicable

County: Napa

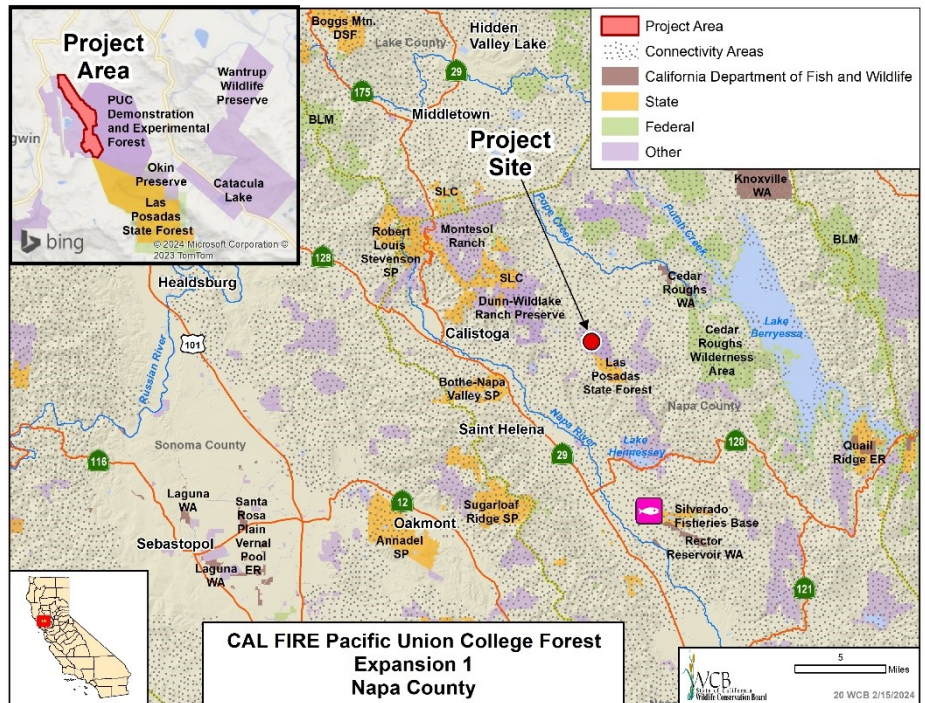
WCB Grant: \$0 (CAL FIRE Forest Legacy Program)

Location: Located off Howell Mountain Road, approximately 8 miles west of Lake Berryessa, 10 miles east of Calistoga, and just east of the community of Angwin

Acres: 246± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Project is an expansion and adjacent to a previous CAL FIRE acquisition, Pacific Union College Forest.
- Habitats represented: a mix of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine with tanoak, madrone, and black oak.
- Key species: northern spotted owl, California giant salamander, and special status plant species (Narrow-anthered Brodiaea, Nodding Harmonia, and Stream-side Daisy).
- Property drains into the Lake Hennessey watershed.
- Located in CDFW's Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP).
- Identified as a Critical Habitat Corridor in the Bay Area Open Space Linkages Program and the Land Trust of Napa County Biodiversity Priorities.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A.1 and Objectives 1.2
- Public Access: Yes, limited, with a proposed future educational classroom on a two-acre footprint to support Pacific Union College classes and occasional other educational or natural resource organizations.

Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Development rights are being purchased, protecting this Property in perpetuity.
- Property owner shall not divide, subdivide or *de facto* subdivide the Property.
- Timber harvesting will not exceed more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the net merchantable inventory of conifer species present at the beginning of any ten-year period.
- No surface mining activities are allowed.
- Approximately 246± acres (99.9%) of the Property will be managed as a working forest protecting this project in perpetuity for the purposes of preservation and enhancement of forestry and wildlife habitat. A 2-acre development area is being allowed for an unenclosed educational classroom that will not exceed 1,000 square foot footprint.
- Forestry and wildlife habitats will be maintained, restored, and enhanced in alignment with the Forest Management Plan and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Land Trust of Napa County, both approved by CAL FIRE.

CAL FIRE Program

- The proposed grant is being considered under the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007 (CFLPA). The CFLPA, adopted in 2000 and amended in 2007 (Public Resources Code Section 12200, et seq.), allows CAL FIRE to accept lands and interests in land to protect environmentally important forestlands that are threatened by present or future conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is to be given to lands that can be effectively protected and managed, and that have important scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural and environmental values. Under the CFLPA, WCB may acquire conservation easements on behalf of CAL FIRE (Public Resources Code Section 12240).
- Proposals under the CFLPA are evaluated and recommended for funding by CAL FIRE staff based on criteria established under CFLPA. Eligible properties may be working forests where forestland is managed for the production of forest products and traditional forest uses are maintained. These forest uses include both commodity outputs and non-commodity values. The purpose of these easements is to maintain these forests intact to provide such traditional forest benefits as timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and increased carbon sequestration through increased growth and inventory and long-term management of the timberlands.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

The conservation easement will be held by CAL FIRE. CAL FIRE and the Land Trust of Napa County have entered into an MOU in which the Land Trust of Napa County will conduct annual monitoring, pursuant to the terms of the easement, on behalf of CAL FIRE. The Land Trust of Napa County will also review aerial photographs of the Property every five years. CAL FIRE will review and approve all activities related to the

planning and implementation of forest management and timber harvesting activities on the Property, including the review and analysis of the documentation.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$5,285,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$4,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
CAL FIRE California Climate Investments Forest Health Grant	\$2,500,000
CAL FIRE Federal Forest Legacy Grant	\$1,000,000
Land Trust of Napa County	\$500,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$4,000,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Cecelia M. Aguiar-Curry, Assemblymember, Fourth District, California State Legislature
- Dan Winterson, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
- Chris Cahill, Acting General Manager, Napa Open Space District

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Bill Dodd, District 3
- Assembly: Cecelia M. Aguiar-Curry, District 4

Staff Recommendation

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

21. Bodega Marine Reserve Facilities Improvement

Infrastructure – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$263,420

Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(c)

Grantee: University of California, Davis (UC Davis)

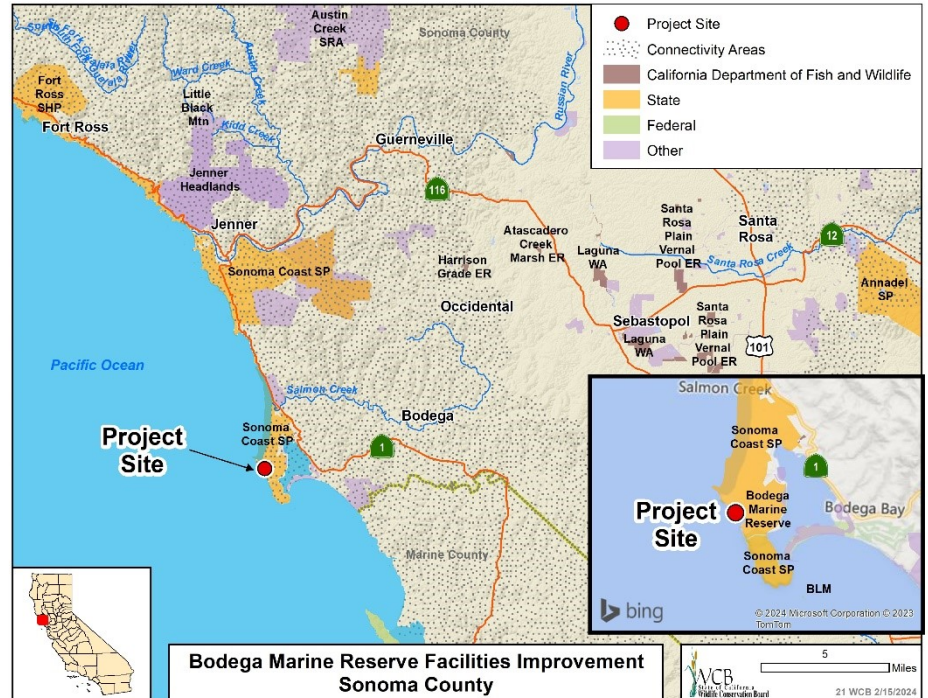
Landowner: UC Davis

County: Sonoma

Location: Bodega Bay

Project Highlights

- Located in UC Davis's Bodega Marine Reserve (BMR) and Laboratory.
- Project rehabilitates infrastructure at BMR to support research, education, and habitat conservation and restoration.
- Funds deployment of an oceanographic instrument buoy which will provide valuable data for researchers, the local community, and government agencies.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, this project will benefit surrounding justice communities (per the DWR mapping tool) by providing safe ingress and egress for free docent-led tours, as well as pre-arranged tours for schools.
- Tribal Partnerships: No.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3

Project Description

BMR supports education and research for resident and visiting scientists, students, support staff, and the public. Infrastructure within BMR has degraded over time from continual use. The project will improve functionality, security, and safety at the BMR by:

- Renovating the terrestrial greenhouse to continue coastal prairie, coastal bluff, dune, and marsh research and habitat restoration.
- Repairing broken and deteriorating fences surrounding the reserve to discourage trespassers and protect ongoing research projects and sensitive instruments.

- Pruning tree branches surrounding the entrance gate, which are a hazard to tall vehicles and during heavy rainstorm events.
- Deploying an oceanographic instrument buoy which will provide real-time data that will be used to track ocean conditions over prolonged periods of time, which is invaluable in understanding the changing climate.
- Herbicide: No.

Key Management Responsibilities

UC Davis has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the UC 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	Totals
Reserve Repairs	\$144,565	\$35,918	\$180,483
Ocean Instruments	\$118,855	\$29,932	\$148,787
Total	\$263,420	\$65,850	\$329,270

Non-WCB funders include:

- UC Davis - \$65,850

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Michael W. Kisgen, Associate Director, UC Natural Reserve System

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities, Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jim Wood, District 2

Staff Recommendation

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

22. Upper Rose Bar Restoration Construction Augmentation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$700,000

Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1), Water Code Section 79733

Grantee: South Yuba River Citizens League

Landowner: Yuba County Water Agency

County: Yuba

Location: Approximately 1.5 miles east of Smartsville

Project Highlights

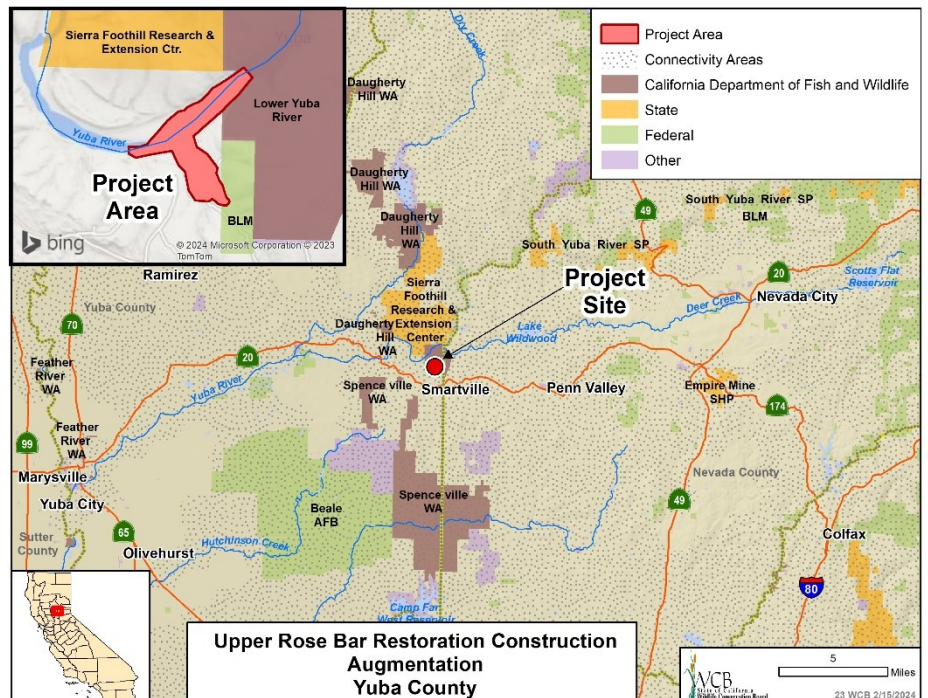
- Enhance existing riffles through gravel augmentation instream to create increased spawning habitat in the Yuba River.
- Create shallow rearing and feeding habitat.
- Plant native trees and vegetation along the access road.
- Key species: Chinook salmon, steelhead, other riparian species.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, Project is located within a Disadvantaged Community and is providing jobs to local community members
- Tribal Partnerships: The United Auburn Indian Community, a federally recognized tribe, toured the site and is contributing traditional ecological knowledge to the planting and monitoring plans
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3

Project Description

The project will add gravel to the Yuba River approximately 1.5 miles downstream of Englebright Dam. Lack of gravel has been identified as a significant limiting factor for salmonids. The gravel will be appropriately sized for Chinook salmon and steelhead spawning. High flows in the Yuba River in 2023 prevented the instream work from being completed in the single work season that was originally scheduled and budgeted for when this project was approved at the May 2023, Board meeting. As a result, the



instream work has been postponed to 2024 which extends the time needed to complete the project and increases the costs due to additional sorting, staging, and movement of gravel and additional mobilization of equipment. These unanticipated factors have necessitated this proposal to amend the grant agreement to extend the period for implementation, and an augmentation to increase the award amount. The project will result in:

- Additional spawning gravel for Chinook salmon and steelhead
- New rearing and feeding habitat for juvenile salmonids
- Planting of approximately 40 acres of native vegetation
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB Augmentation	Original WCB Funds	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$20,000	\$110,961	---	\$130,961
Construction Management	\$680,000	\$2,817,877	\$100,000	\$3,597,877
Post-Project Monitoring	---	\$297,310	---	\$297,310
Indirect Costs	---	\$483,852	---	\$483,852
Contingency	---	\$371,000	---	\$371,000
Total	\$700,000	\$4,081,000	\$100,000	\$4,881,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Willie Whittlesey, General Manager, Yuba County Water Agency

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The County of Yuba, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Jim Nielsen, District 4
- Assembly: Assemblymember James Gallagher, District 3

Staff Recommendation

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

23. Mountain Meadows Expansion 1 (101 Ranch)

Acquisition Conservation Easement

Fund Source(s): Nature Based Solutions AB179, Sec.83(3)(a), EY22

Grantee: Trust For Public Land/Feather River Land Trust

County: Lassen

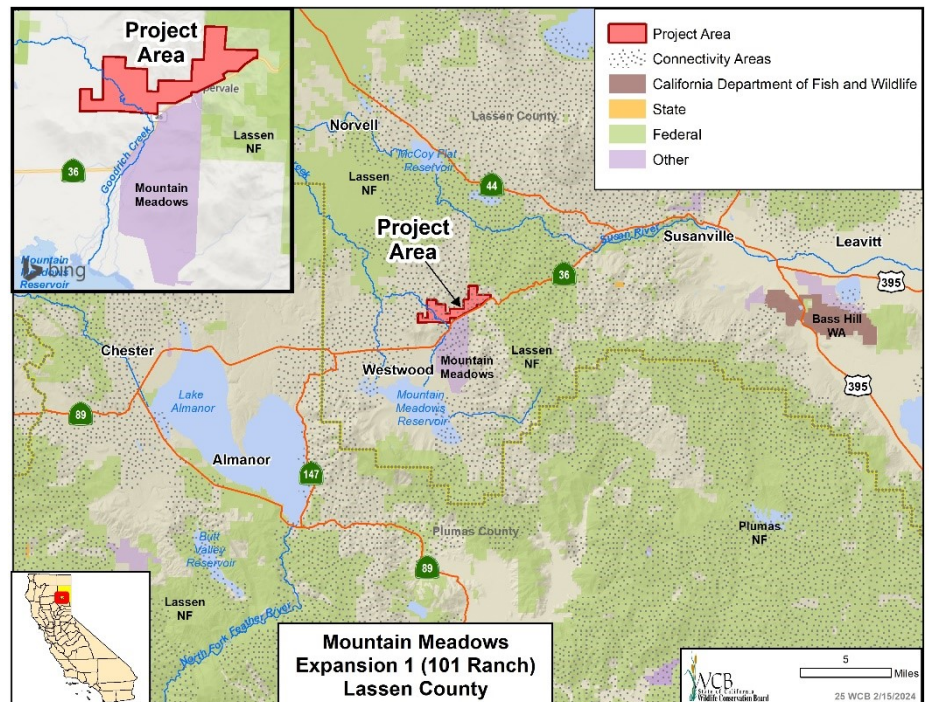
WCB Grant: \$950,000

Location: Approximately 5 miles west of Westwood

Acres: 1,827±

Property Highlights

- Collaborative project with CDFW to conserve 1,827± acres of the Mountain Meadow Complex, which is the second largest montane meadow on the west slope of the Sierra and the largest montane meadow in the North Fork of the Feather River watershed.
- Combined with Mountain Meadows phase 2 will protect the final piece of the remaining 4,300 acres within the complex.
- Habitats represented: Goodrich, McKenzie, and Fredonyer creeks; riparian wet meadow.
- Located on the headwaters of the North Fork of the Feather River.
- Located within the CDFW approved Mountain Meadows Watershed CAPP. The CAPP describes the importance of this ecosystem as "one of the largest remaining examples of montane meadow in the state" and states that "Due to the large size of the meadow complex, the relatively undisturbed condition of the upper watershed, and the lack of development in and around the meadows, the potential for large-scale habitat restoration is exceptional."
- Supports a diverse assemblage of plant and wildlife including a number of special status species such as: greater sandhill crane, gray wolf, yellow warbler, olive-sided flycatcher, yellow-headed blackbird, and southern long-toed salamander, as well as three special status plant species. The cold springs that feed Goodrich Creek provide for a cold-water trout fishery.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: None

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.2, B.1 and Objectives: 1.6, 2.1b, 2.1c
- Public Access: No

Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Creates approximately 230 acres of cattle exclusion area along riparian zones through the installation of wildlife friendly, exclusionary fencing.
- Restricts cattle grazing season, duration, and intensity to promote habitat conditions.
- Protects the property’s meadow, forested, open space character.
- Protects and enhance stream flows with cattle exclusions.
- Enhances carbon sequestration potential through managed grazing.
- Demonstrates the compatibility of agricultural productivity and ecological benefits.
- Restricts development to one acre area located next to highway.
- Acquisition has catalyzed meadow restoration efforts with first phase planning completed.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Feather River Land Trust will be responsible for monitoring and enforcement of the Conservation Easement. An annual easement monitoring report will be provided to WCB. The Landowner will make a financial contribution to the Feather River Land Trust to cover future endowment costs for long-term monitoring and enforcement.

The Landowner, Trust for Public Land, Feather River Land Trust, Point Blue Conservation Service, and Plumas Corp developed a multi-benefit focused conservation plan that outlines objectives, actions to take to meet them, and a robust monitoring strategy to evaluate progress. Thus, increasing the value of the conservation easement by catalyzing habitat enhancement not just protecting against future degradation. The Conservation Plan is a living document and will receive regular updates based on monitoring results and conditions on the ground.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,700,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$950,000
Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$750,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,700,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian D. Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

24. Van Arken Public Access Planning

Public Access – Planning

WCB Grant: \$202,000

Fund Source(s): The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 [Proposition 68, Public Resources Code Section 80132(a)]

Grantee: Sanctuary Forest, Inc. (SFI)

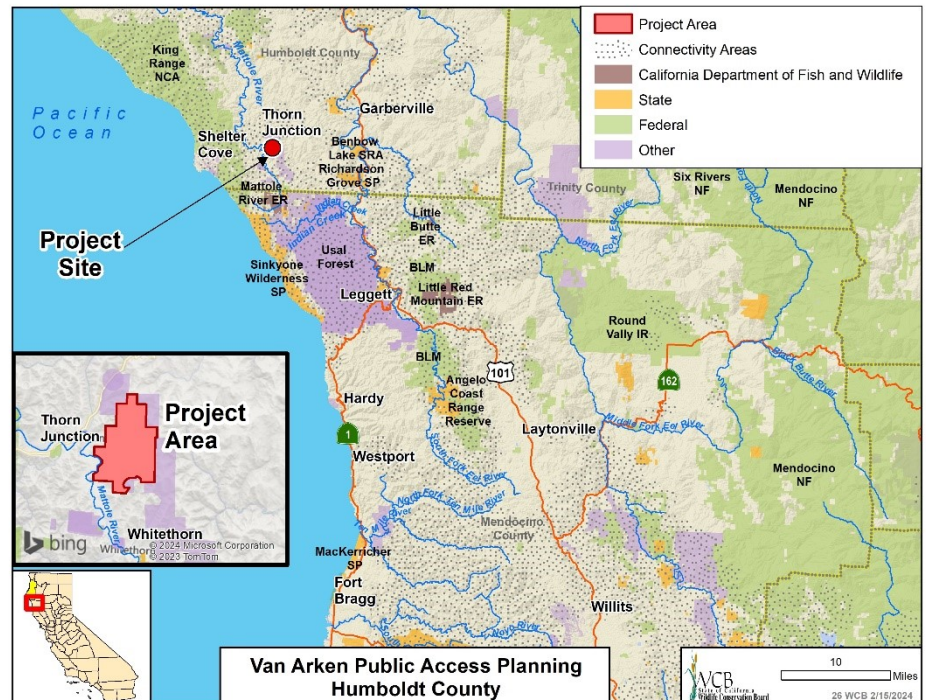
Landowner: Lost Coast Forestlands LLC

County: Humboldt

Location: Whitethorn

Project Highlights

- Located on a 1,320-acre conservation easement managed by SFI and funded by WCB.
- Vanauken Creek watershed is free from residential development and supports native coho, Chinook, and steelhead.
- Located about six miles from the highly visited King Range National Conservation Area (KRNCA) and the Lost Coast.
- Objectives: passive recreation, wildlife conservation, meadow restoration and forest thinning, community education and engagement.
- Project will design ADA-compliant amenities, including an ADA trail.
- Key habitats: old-growth redwoods, giant madrone and mixed hardwood forest, riparian.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: The Vanauken Creek watershed is not within a disadvantaged area; however, it is surrounded by the disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities of Whitethorn, Redway, and Garberville (DWR mapping tool) and will provide benefits to these communities. The project will provide ADA-accessible recreation opportunities to these scattered rural communities, whose residents have limited park access (Parks for All Californians mapping tool) due to the majority of land in this region being under private ownership. Trails in the nearby KRNCA are at a higher difficulty level due to the steep terrain. The gentle topography of the Vanauken Creek watershed will provide easier hiking opportunities for residents, many of whom are older.

- Tribal Partnerships: Discussions surrounding cultural education programs and interpretive signage have been underway with the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council. A line item is included in the budget for further consultation with a tribal representative, though that individual is still to be identified. Additionally, a provision in the conservation easement allows for California Native American Indians to undertake cultural management projects to protect, preserve, and use cultural resources on the property.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal C4 and Objective 3.4

Project Description

Van Arken Public Access Planning (Project) presents an opportunity to provide ADA-accessible, wildlife-oriented recreation in a historically underserved area. In April 2021, SFI acquired a 1,320-acre working forest conservation easement (Property) from Lost Coast Forestlands, LLC (LCF) in the Vanauken Creek watershed (locally known as Van Arken). The conservation easement grants SFI the affirmative rights to engage in stream flow and habitat restoration projects and develop a Public Access Program on the property. SFI maintains a guided hike program for the surrounding communities, but SFI-owned lands are not managed as public open spaces. In the Mattole River watershed, over 80% of the land is privately owned. The Property has historically been managed as private industrial timberland. Despite efforts, trespassing was difficult to prevent, leading to various unauthorized recreational activities on the Property. Local community residents, although accessing the land without authorization, have come to cherish their access to open space, utilizing it for its scenic and aesthetic values, hiking, mushroom gathering, salmon spotting, and more.

Funding for this Project will be used to develop the Public Access Program components, including:

- Development of a Recreation Management Plan identifying proposed open periods, potential usage, public access elements and capital improvements, management and enforcement responsibilities, and operational budget.
- Designs for trails and public access amenities (including an ADA trail and ADA-accessible parking, restrooms, and picnic area), wayfinding and interpretive signage (bilingual).
- Completion of environmental compliance that will lead to a shovel-ready implementation project.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$2,470	---	\$2,470
Recreation Management Plan	\$8,920	\$15,000	\$23,920
Assessments, Planning and Design	\$50,770	\$15,000	\$65,770
Environmental Compliance	\$97,490	\$6,870	\$104,360
Indirect Costs	\$23,948	---	\$23,948
Contingency	\$18,402	---	\$18,402
Total	\$202,000	\$36,870	\$238,870

Non-WCB funders include:

- Sanctuary Forest, Inc. - \$6,870
- Grace Us Foundation - \$30,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman, 2nd District
- Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Dana Stolzman, Executive Director, Salmonid Restoration Federation
- Richard Sykes, Executive Director, Mattole Salmon Group
- Sarah Vroom, Executive Director, Mattole Restoration Council
- Carol Vander Meer, Coordinator, Northern Region Council of California Land Trusts

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jim Wood, District 2

Staff Recommendation

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

25. Siskiyou I-5 Wildlife Overpass Planning

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$5,500,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022 Drought Package Provision (SB154)

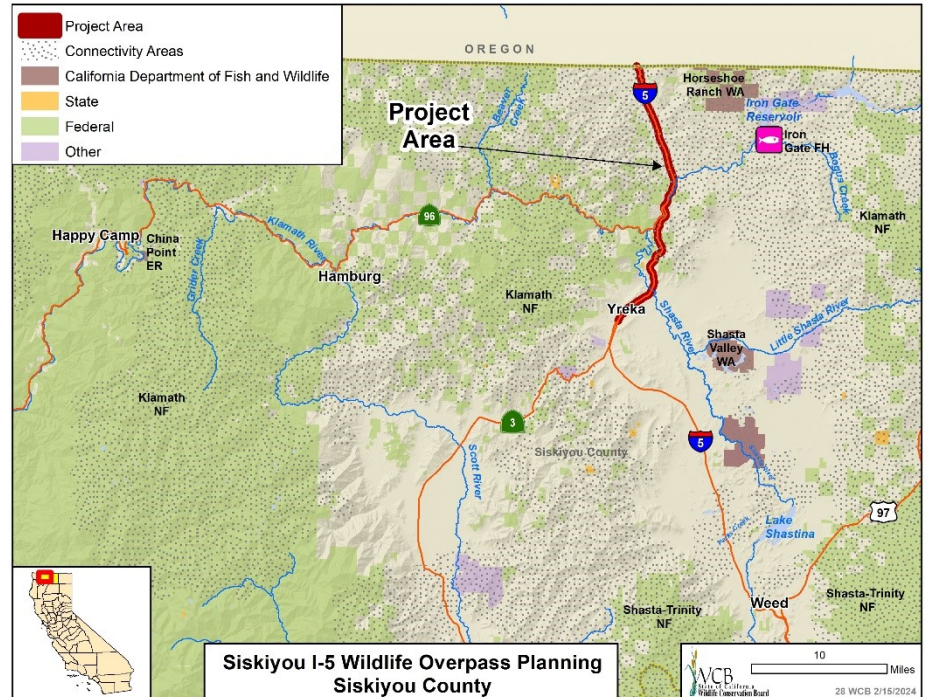
Grantee: Ore-Cal Resource Conservation and Development Council

County: Siskiyou

Location: North of Yreka

Project Highlights

- Located in the Siskiyou Mountains along the approximately 23-mile stretch of Interstate 5 (I-5) between the city of Yreka and the Oregon-California border.
- The Siskiyou I-5 Wildlife Overpass Planning project (Project) will develop plans to restore wildlife connectivity between the Klamath National Forest to the west and the Modoc National Forest to the east.
- Key species: Mule deer, mountain lion, and gray wolves.
- Regional or Species Plan: 2022 CDFW Wildlife Movement Barriers Priority List.
- The Karuk Tribe, Modoc Nation, and Shasta Indian Nation have been invited to participate in the planning process.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No. The Project is located in a severely disadvantaged community but will not directly provide community benefits.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.1,1.2, 1.3

Project Description

The Project area is located in a largely undeveloped region and home to several species of large native mammals as well as sensitive reptiles and amphibians. These otherwise intact habitats are bisected by several major and minor highways, most notably I-5, which has been determined to be one of the most extensive “hotspots” of

wildlife-vehicle collisions within California. The Project will identify suitable locations for wildlife crossing features and develop Caltrans documentation, environmental review, and designs for up to two wildlife crossing structures that will allow wildlife movement between the protected areas surrounding I-5 by:

- Coordinating with Caltrans, CDFW, tribes, and a group of local, non-governmental organization, and state organization stakeholders.
- Collecting and compiling new and existing roadkill data to select candidate locations for wildlife crossings where the construction of wildlife passage features would enhance permeability for wildlife in the Project area.
- Conducting constructability analysis and alternatives analysis for crossing structures at each candidate location and to determine wildlife overpass possibilities and constraints.
- Developing 35% and 65% level designs for at least two crossing structures.
- Determining the level of potential impacts and developing the appropriate environmental review necessary for both CEQA and NEPA.
- Developing a Caltrans Project Initiation Document and any other document or technical study necessary for construction.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Total
Project Management	\$945,250	\$945,250
Caltrans Documentation	\$1,104,150	\$1,104,150
Designs	\$2,089,550	\$2,089,550
Environmental Review	\$290,000	\$290,000
Feasibility Analysis	\$815,000	\$815,000
Outreach	\$150,000	\$150,000
Indirect Costs	\$106,050	\$106,050
Total	\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Pam Marsh, Oregon House Representative – HD 5, State of Oregon Legislature
- Ed Valenzuela, Chair, Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors
- Mike Ford, Chair, Siskiyou County Fish and Game Commission
- Russell Attebery, Chairman, Karuk Tribe
- Janice Crow, Chairwoman, Shasta Indian Nation

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 15, 2024

- Ken Sandusky, Homelands Director, Modoc Nation
- Joyce E. Jones, Eastern Regional Manager, Northern California Indian Development Council
- Michael Webb, District Director (Acting), Caltrans District 2
- Ben Ebner, South Central Oregon Area Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation
- Mari Galloway, California Program Director, Wildlands Network
- Elizabeth Ramsey, Conservation & Planning Director, Friends of Plumas Wilderness
- Sharon Negri, Executive Director, WildFutures
- Michael Dotson, Executive Director, Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center
- Kevin Starr, Stewardship Director, Truckee Donner Land Trust
- Spencer Lennard, KS Connectivity
- Kimberly Baker, Executive Director, Klamath Forest Alliance
- Tom Wheeler, Executive Director, Environmental Protection Information Center
- Beth Pratt, Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation
- Heidi Krolick, Conservation Director, Sierra Nevada and Central Valley Trust for Public Land
- Tanya Diamond, Co-Principal, Pathways for Wildlife
- Tiffany Yap, Senior Scientist, Center for Biological Diversity
- Steve Wise, Executive Director, Southern Oregon Lands Conservancy
- Amy Amrhein, Southern Oregon Wildlife Crossing Coalition
- Maia Black Executive Director, Selberg Institute
- Brent Lyles, Executive Director, Mountain Lion Foundation
- Ryan Bronson, Director of Government Affairs, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Don Martin, California Chapter President, Wild Sheep Foundation
- Lori Jacobs, President, California Houndsmen for Conservation
- Adam Chavez, President, California Hawking Club
- Steve Jarvis, Chief Executive Officer, California Deer Association
- Marc Engstrom, Director of Public Policy, California Ducks Unlimited
- Fred Harpster, President, Black Brant Group
- Mark Hennelly, Vice President of Government Relations, California Waterfowl Association
- Steve Miller, President, Tulare Basin Wetlands Association
- Gary F. Brennan, President, San Diego County Wildlife Federation
- Loyal Taylor, President, Cal-Ore Wetland and Waterfowl Council
- Chriss Bowles, President, California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association
- James Stone, President, Nor-Cal Guides & Sportsmen's Association
- Rick Travis, Legislative Director, California Rifle & Pistol Association
- Glennon T. Gingo, President, Mzuri Safari Club
- Wayne Wickham, President, Sacramento Safari Club

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 15, 2024

- Clark Smith, President, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter – Safari Club International
- Devin O’Dea, California Chapter Coordinator, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
- Dawnita Harwood, President, California State Chapter – National Wild Turkey Federation
- James Cole Beverly, N. California Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Cara Lacey, Wildlife Corridors Director, The Nature Conservancy
- Neal Sharma, California Wildlife Program Senior Manager, Wildlife Conservation Network
- John Kessler, Forest Program Manager, FWS Forestry Services

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

26. Studies Following Klamath Dam Removal Augmentation

Restoration – Study

WCB Grant: \$52,000

Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1), Water Code Section 79733

Grantee: Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation

County: Siskiyou

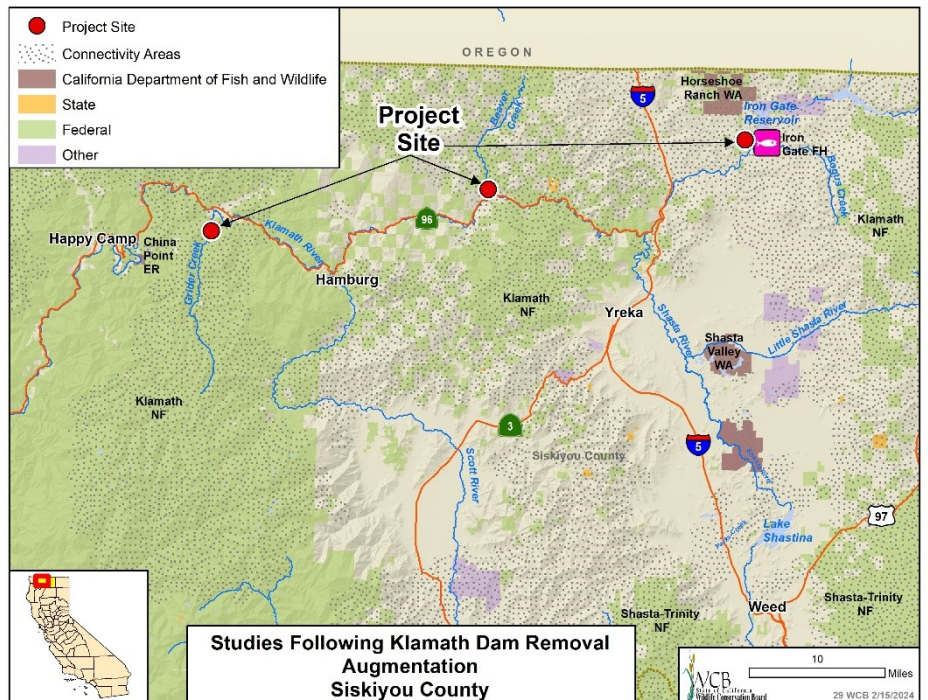
Location: Bogus Creek sites - 8± miles east of Hornbrook;

Beaver Creek sites - 23± miles northwest of Yreka;

Grider Creek sites - 24± miles northeast of Happy Camp

Project Highlights

- Located downstream of Iron Gate Dam which is scheduled to be removed in May 2024.
- Assess effects of dam removal on food webs in Klamath River.
- Strong tribal partnership with Karuk tribe.
- Key species: steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, southern Oregon/northern California coast coho salmon, Klamath-Trinity spring-run Chinook.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. Project boundary is within a severely disadvantaged community.
- Tribal Partnerships: The Karuk tribe is a subcontractor under this project and is a federally recognized tribe. This research will benefit a federally recognized indigenous community by evaluating the effects of dam removal on culturally important salmon.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 10, Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3

Project Description

The original project was approved by the Board on May 26, 2022. This project has completed two field seasons sampling salmonids and invertebrates and analyzing samples. The Karuk tribe, as a subcontractor, has been the driving force in collecting fin clips and stomach contents from salmonids for isotopic analysis. However, the work has

taken longer than expected and funds for the Karuk tribe under the original grant are running low. This augmentation would:

- Increase funding for salmonid fin clip and stomach content collection.
- Bolster working relationship with Karuk tribe.
- Ensure the project is completed as proposed.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Augmentation Funds	Totals
Invertebrate and Water Quality Sampling / Project Management	\$287,228	\$205,362	---	\$492,590
Fish Diet and Fin Clip Sampling	\$26,334	---	\$52,000	\$78,334
Stable Isotope Analysis	\$158,765	---	---	\$158,765
Indirect	\$57,445	\$78,987	---	\$136,432
Total	\$529,772	\$284,349	\$52,000	\$866,121

Non-WCB funders include:

- Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation - \$284,349

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306, Class 6, Information Collection, consisting of basic data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

27. Magoon and Gill Conservation Easement

Acquisition Conservation Easement

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Amendment to Budget Act of 2022, Nature Based Solutions Grant Program Provision AB179, Sec.83(3)(a)

Grantee: Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust

County: Sutter

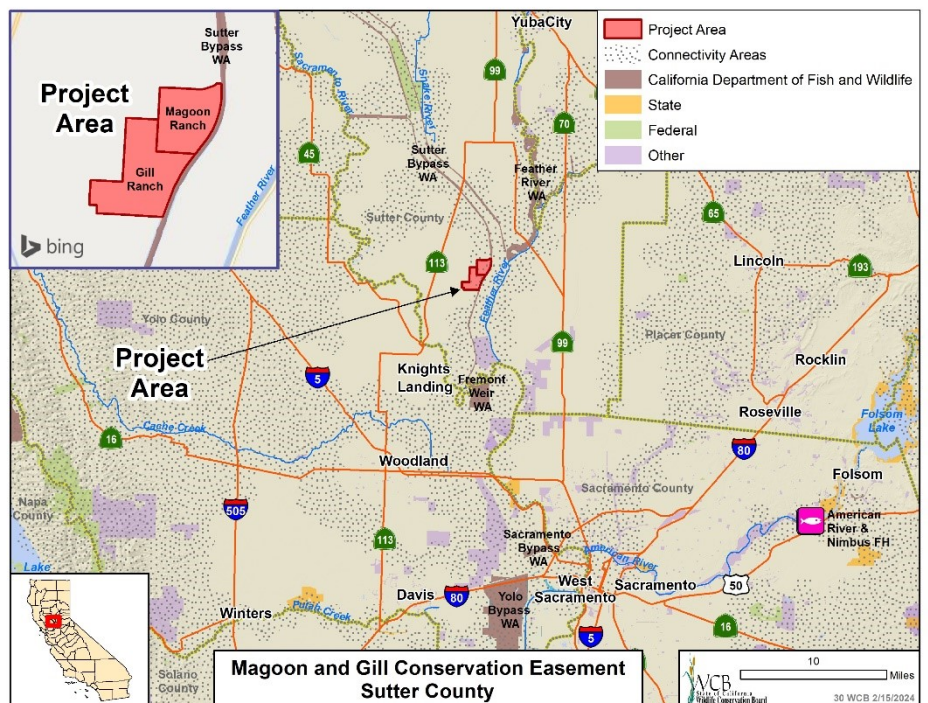
WCB Grant: \$1,858,250 (Gill Conservation Easement) and \$1,188,500 (Magoon Conservation Easement) for total of \$3,046,750

Location: 19 miles south of Yuba City and immediately east of unincorporated community of Robbins.

Acres: 1,447± total (Gill 876± acres and Magoon 571± acres)

Property Highlights

- Properties will be managed to provide the protection of nesting, roosting, stop-over and foraging habitat for native wildlife species, including waterfowl, shorebirds, wading migratory birds and raptors, through wildlife friendly agricultural operations including winter flooding.
- Habitats represented: Seasonal winter wetland via winter flooding that supports waterfowl habitat in the Pacific Flyway.
- Key species: Giant garter snake , western greater sandhill crane , white-faced ibis, long-billed curlew.
- Project supports landscape scale habitat conservation with more than 12,520 acres of protected land in the vicinity; parcels immediately adjacent to 1,234 acres of permanently protected lands held by USFWS and The Nature Conservancy.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 3, Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements; Pathway 9, Advance and Promote Complementary Conservation Measures

- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2
- Public Access: No

Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Open space character will be preserved in perpetuity.
- The easement will include an in-perpetuity, winter-flooding provision to provide seasonal wetland habitat associated with the Pacific Flyway.
- The easement will allow for the continuation of winter-flooding compatible agricultural practices such as rice production. Flooded agricultural lands are key for foraging and roosting and provide prime habitat for migratory birds as habitat is lost due to climate change and development. Other agricultural uses that are incompatible with winter-flooding, such as permanent crops will be prohibited.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices for providing seasonal flooded habitat and agricultural practices that promote the conservation purpose and values of the two easements.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value for the Gill property of \$3,545,000 and the Magoon property of \$2,300,000 for a total of \$5,845,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$3,046,750
NRCS	\$2,798,250
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$5,845,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- James Gallagher, Assemblymember, Third District, California State Legislature
- Todd N. Manley, Director of Governmental Affairs, Northern California Water Association
- Paul Buttner, Manager of Environmental Affairs, California Rice
- Rodd Kelsey, Ph.D., Associate Director, The Nature Conservancy
- Clint Holtzen, Planning Manager, Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- James Cogswell, CVJV Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Roger Nielo, District 6
- Assembly: Assemblymember James Gallagher, District 3

Staff Recommendation

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

Presentation

Restoration – Implementation

28. San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Vernal Pool Restoration

WCB Grant: \$1,646,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions [AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)]

Grantee: Friends of San Diego Wildlife Refuges

County: San Diego

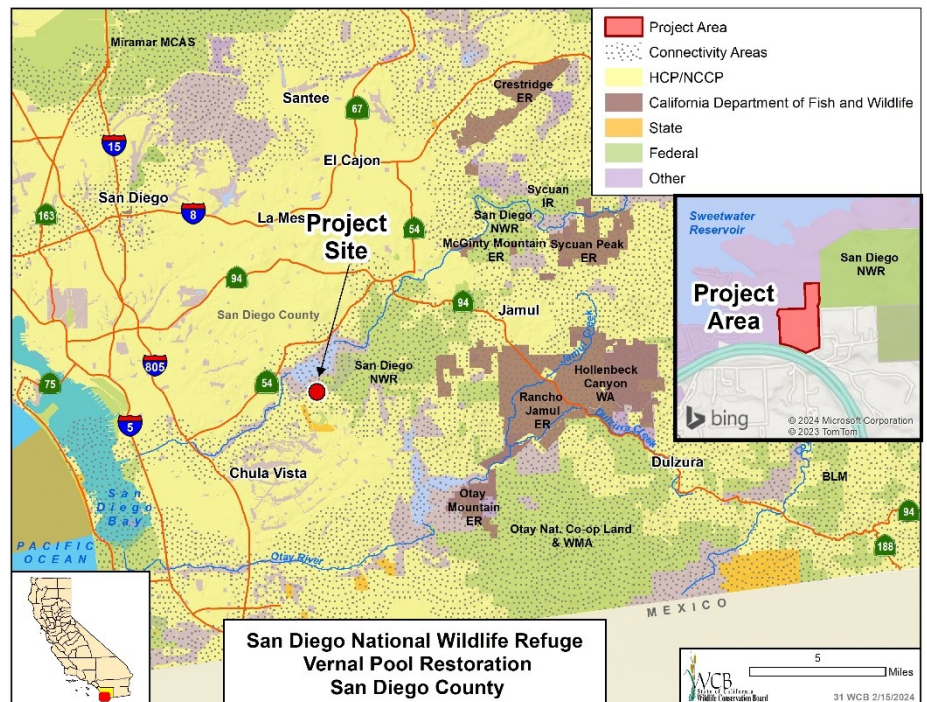
Landowner: United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Location: Eight miles northeast of Chula Vista

Project Highlights

- Located in the western portion of the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge.
- Habitats restored: 8.3 acres of coastal sage scrub, 7.4 acres of vernal pool basins and watersheds, and 4.3 acres of hedgerows.
- Key species: San Diego fairy shrimp, San Diego button-celery, Orcutt's grass, Otay mesa mint, spreading navarretia, and Otay tarplant.
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego Multiple

Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and Recovery Plan for Vernal Pools of Southern California (USFWS 1998).



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: The project is located in an economically disadvantaged community.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3, 2.1

Project Description

The San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Vernal Pool Restoration project (Project) includes the rehabilitation and enhancement of regionally important vernal pools and adjacent coastal sage scrub within the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge. The vernal

pool restoration site is an approximately 30-acre area (project site) that is currently dominated by nonnative plant species. The objective is to enhance or restore approximately 20-acres of habitat within the project site that includes vernal pool basins, vernal pool watersheds, hedgerows, and coastal sage scrub habitat in the upland areas surrounding the vernal pool complexes. The Project will restore habitat critical to the life cycles of several sensitive species by:

- Conducting weed control as part of the project site preparation that will support the establishment of native plant species.
- Installation of a temporary, aboveground irrigation system to water native container plants and seeds within the upland areas of the site.
- Collection of vernal pool seed from local vernal pool complexes to increase the supply of seed available for dispersal within the on-site vernal pool basins.
- Planting native container plantings within the uplands of the vernal pool complexes to improve the condition of the vernal pool watershed and provide competition for weeds.
- Seeding native clay-loving and herbaceous plant species within the upland areas between the vernal pool complexes to increase native species and structure.
- Planting a native hedgerow along the eastern site boundary to reduce intrusion of nonnative plants from the neighboring road and community.
- Herbicide: Yes. Glyphosate will be applied as a low volume foliar treatment, at a 2% concentration mixed per label recommendations with a colorant to identify treatment location and to avoid overspray.

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Totals
Project Management	\$24,750	\$24,750
Site Preparation	\$164,822	\$164,822
Irrigation	\$372,700	\$372,700
Planting	\$359,905	\$359,905

Project Task	WCB	Totals
Monitoring and Maintenance	\$574,245	\$574,245
Contingency	\$149,578	\$149,578
Total	\$1,646,000	\$1,646,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Andrew Yuen, Project Leader, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304 Class 4, as a minor alteration in land, water, and vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Marie Waldron, District 75

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Use Questionnaire

WCB endorses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to controlling invasive plants. IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention and control of pests and their damage through a combination of techniques. WCB appreciates you describing your decision-making process regarding the invasive plant control methods planned for your proposed project.

- 1) Please describe current vegetation conditions and composition at the project site, including rare or sensitive species. Estimate the percent cover and distribution of invasive plant species and indicate if they occur in monocultures or mixed communities with natives. Please describe the role of invasive plant control in meeting the project goals.

*The site is characterized by three vernal pool complexes which contain a mix of native and non-native vegetation, with the areas between the vernal pool complexes supporting heavy clay soils which support some native species but are largely dominated by non-native species. The native vegetation within the northern and southern vernal pool complexes consists primarily of native species indicative of coastal sage scrub habitat, although non-native species are intermixed and represent approximately 20 percent of the cover. Invasive species in the uplands of the northern and southern vernal pool complexes include primarily red brome (*Bromus madritensis rubens*), filaree (*Erodium spp.*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), black mustard (*Rhaphospermum nigrum*), and sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*). The uplands within the western vernal pool complex supports a similar assemblage of non-native species, but at a much higher coverage. The coverage of weed species within the western vernal pool complexes is approximately 75 percent with some interspersions of native species, depending on the time of year. The vernal pool basins within the northern and southern vernal pool complex support the threatened and endangered plant species Otoy mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), San Diego button-celery (*Eryngium aristulatum*), and California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*). The western vernal pool complex also supports limited numbers of San Diego button-celery. The presence of sensitive vernal pool plants is highest in the northern complex and lowest in the western complex. The areas between the vernal pool complexes also contain high coverage of weeds, with coverage as high as 75 percent dependent on weather conditions and season. These areas also support Federally threatened and State endangered Otoy tarplant (*Deinandra conjugens*).*

Various methods of invasive plant control will be crucial for meeting project goals, specifically grant objective 1) reduce non-native cover, objective 2) increase cover of sensitive vernal pool plant species, objective 3) deter the spread of non-natives into the project site, and objective 4) increase native species cover. Competition from invasive species for light, water, and nutrients is one of the greatest threats to the growth and establishment of native species and has been the dominant factor in preventing this site from supporting native plant communities with long-term viability. To meet project goals, it will be crucial to remove weed competition early in the growing season when native plants are actively trying to grow and establish.

- 2) Outline the rationale for each invasive plant control method proposed for the project, list alternative methods considered, and explain why each method was chosen. If herbicides will be used, describe the rationale for each herbicide selected, including alternative herbicides considered. Where applicable, identify selective herbicides that will be used to target certain plant species or life forms (grasses, broadleaf, annual, perennial, etc.). List which herbicide formulations and adjuvants will be used, including tank mix concentrations, application rates, application methods, and timing of application. If adjuvant(s) will be used in this project, were safer products that are labeled for use over water and do not contain nonylphenol (often listed as "alkylphenol ethoxylate" on labels) selected to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts?

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Invasive plant control methods proposed for use on this project include line trimming, hand pulling, and herbicide application, depending on the primary target weed species at the time of control. Due to the size of the site and the diverse plant species it supports, numerous weed control methods were considered and will be required to meet grant objectives. Line trimming will be used in the late spring months for large or flowering weeds, where cutting the stem will be successful in killing the plant and reducing weed biomass. Hand pulling will be used within the vernal pool basins and within 10 feet of instances of sensitive plant species to minimize accidental impacts to non-target species that could occur with herbicide application or line trimming. Herbicides will be used to control newly germinating weeds after adequate leaf areas for herbicide absorption have developed. While no herbicide will be applied in any vernal pool basins, only aquatic formulated herbicides will be used as an extra precaution. Two primary herbicide formulations are proposed for use, triclopyr and glyphosate. These two herbicides are useful for managing most vegetation targets, with broad activity and low risk to non-targets. Triclopyr is a selective, broadleaf-specific herbicide that can be used to effectively and efficiently control annual, broadleaved weeds such as filaree, Russian thistle, black mustard, and sow thistle. Triclopyr will be applied as a low volume foliar treatment, at a 1% concentration mixed per label recommendations with a colorant to identify treatment location and avoid over spray. Triclopyr will be the primary herbicide used for weed control throughout the uplands, after hand pulling or line trimming have been deemed ineffective or inefficient.

Because the site contains both non-native grasses and broadleaf weeds, intermixed in some areas, a glyphosate-based aquatic formulated herbicide is proposed for use, particularly in the early winter months when non-native grasses are prone to germinate and water in the vernal pools may be present. Aquatic formulated glyphosate is a non-selective systemic herbicide that is applied directly to plant foliage in environments with surface water. Glyphosate will be applied as a low volume foliar treatment, at a 2% concentration mixed per label recommendations with a colorant to identify treatment location and avoid over spray. In addition, herbicide will not be applied within 10' of vernal pool basins and no surfactants are being considered for use on this project to avoid negative impacts to arthropods and soil-dwelling microorganisms.

The timing and method of weed control will be adjusted based on seasonal weather patterns and effectiveness of other methods, but will primarily occur as follows:

- *Four weeks following first rainfall event of the wet season (likely December): glyphosate application to control first crop of germinating weeds*
- *Four weeks following the second rainfall event of the wet season (likely January/February): triclopyr application to control germinating broadleaf weeds*
- *Mid- to late-winter (approximately March): triclopyr application to control germinating broadleaf weeds*
- *Early spring (approximately April): line trimming around vernal pool edges, line trimming of weeds in the uplands*
- *Mid-spring to late spring (approximately May–June): line trimming of weeds in the uplands, hand pulling of vernal pool basins*
- *Late summer: triclopyr application to control late season thistles*

- a) Will glyphosate be used? If so, explain the rationale and alternatives considered. List which formulations and adjuvants will be used.

As stated above, glyphosate is proposed for use. Considered alternatives to glyphosate include triclopyr, which will be the primary herbicide used on the project. Triclopyr will be used to target broadleaf species that have the largest negative impact on the success of the vernal pool complex. Another herbicide considered in place of glyphosate was aquatically formulated imazapyr, but due to the long soil residuality (particularly in the heavy clay soils that are present on-site), affecting the germination of native seedlings and posing a threat to non-target plant species, this herbicide formulation was not selected. Aquatic formulated glyphosate will be applied as a low volume foliar treatment at a 2% concentration

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mixed per label recommendations with a colorant to identify treatment location and avoid over spray. No surfactant is recommended during this application to avoid negative impacts to arthropods and soil-dwelling microorganisms.

- b) Did you consider USDA approved organic herbicides? If not selected for use, explain why organic herbicides were not selected.

Organic herbicides were considered for this project; however, it was determined that they would not provide efficient or cost-effective weed control given the size of the site, the density of the infestation, and the types of weeds present. Most of the problematic weeds on-site are annual weeds which have deep tap roots. Organic herbicides are contact herbicides only, meaning they do not translocate to the root, only creating a burndown of the leaves. They do not control weeds with deep tap roots (e.g., cheeseweed and Russian thistle) that are present and particularly problematic at the site. Some species of annuals will still resprout depending on energy stores, resulting in the need for repeat applications that make organic herbicide cost prohibitive. The application of organic herbicides typically requires twice as many site visits to retreat regrowth compared to synthetic herbicides. Organic herbicides are also up to 5 times the cost of synthetic herbicides. When combined with the need for repeat weed control visits and the increased cost, the use of organic herbicides can make weed control cost 10 times as much compared to synthetic herbicides. Due to the large increase in cost, it was determined that organic herbicides were inappropriate for this project.

- 3) Would removal of invasive weeds within the project area be possible using only non-chemical methods (hand-pulling, mowing, grazing, burning, etc.)? If not, why? If so, please provide separate cost estimates for using chemical and non-chemical removal methods for the invasive species. Please estimate both the project cost and long-term management costs, including an estimate of any additional personnel or contracts required.

A large component of this project is revegetation, where areas that are currently dominated by non-native invasive weed species will be revegetated with native species. For successful revegetation, the project will use a wide variety of weed control methods to reduce competition from non-native species while native species are establishing. Successfully replacing non-native species with native species will reduce the site's need for herbicide in the long term and provide for long-term site viability. However, the project will require and utilize as many tools as possible, including herbicide, for success. Our current project cost estimate for weed control is approximately \$475,000. The cost estimate for using only non-chemical removal methods would almost double and is estimated at \$830,000. Long-term management costs would also likely increase without herbicide use, as herbicide allows for efficient control of weeds, limiting the flowering and setting of seed. If this project were unable to achieve sufficient depletion of the weed seed bank, additional annual contracting would be required by the USFWS to maintain the site in the long term.

- 4) Please describe the impacts that all proposed treatments (herbicide and non-chemical) might have on water quality, non-target plant species, pollinators, and other wildlife species. Describe the best management practices (BMPs) that the project will employ for all treatments and how these BMPs will avoid or minimize these impacts.

Weeds may be controlled with line trimmers, hand pulling, and herbicide application. Weeds will be controlled using these methods depending on time of year and location of weeds. Negative effects from line trimming include the use of gasoline and burning of fossil fuels, as well as the noise associated with line trimmer use. When not used carefully, line trimmers can also result in personal injury particularly from flying rocks. To avoid injury from line trimmer use, all personnel in the vicinity of operating line trimmer will use proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to avoid injury, particularly protective eyewear. For certain species, line trimming does not completely kill the plant and instead results in horizontal growth, where it is still able to flower, set seed, and contribute to the weed seed bank. Hand pulling in general has fewer negative consequences; however, it can disturb the soil surface which can result in negative impacts to developing soil crusts and can open the soil surface and result in increased weed germination. Herbicides are also

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formulated with petroleum products and other chemicals that can be hazardous when not used properly. All personnel responsible for applying herbicides will wear the proper PPE to avoid accidental exposure. To avoid impacts on non-target species and water quality, herbicides will not be applied within 10 feet of standing water. Additionally, herbicides that bind quickly with soil without residual soil effects will be used. Herbicide will only be applied by highly trained applicants with experience identifying native species from non-native species during all phases of growth to avoid unintended impacts on non-target plant species. Herbicide will not be applied within 10 feet of sensitive plants, including Otay tarplant and listed vernal pool plant species. Herbicides will not be applied during poor weather, including rainy and windy days. Only herbicides known to have no effect on vertebrates and invertebrates will be used. Herbicides will not be applied on non-target areas.

The following BMPs will be employed to avoid or minimize potential impacts:

- *Field personnel that are highly trained in the identification of native and non-native plants during all phases of growth will be solely responsible for herbicide application. All field personnel will be trained on the biological resources associated with this site, including the purpose of the project and a description of the vernal pool species and other sensitive resources on-site.*
 - *Protective flagging, fencing, or tarping will be used where weed control is required adjacent to instances of sensitive native species.*
 - *The site will be kept as clean of debris as possible. All food-related trash items shall be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from the site to avoid attracting wildlife to areas currently undergoing active restoration and regular use by humans.*
 - *All equipment and tool maintenance, staging, and dispensing of fuel, oil, or any other related activities will occur in designated areas. No fueling of equipment will take place within 100 feet of the vernal pools or their watersheds.*
 - *Aquatic formulations of the proposed herbicides will be used to avoid impacts on water quality.*
 - *Weeds will be controlled before they develop flowers to avoid removing pollinator sources.*
 - *Any cut weed material will be placed in dumpsters and removed from the site to eliminate potential non-native seed sources.*
- 5) Please describe the qualifications of anyone who has reviewed your proposed plan for invasive plant control for this project. What resources did you consult when evaluating and selecting control methods? Are there any permit-related requirements or restrictions?

Our proposed plan for invasive plant control was reviewed by experienced restoration practitioners, including licensed, qualified applicators and a Certified Ecological Restoration Professional (CERP), at RECON Environmental, Inc. RECON is based in southern California and has been providing ecological restoration and invasive plant management services throughout California for over 20 years. CON has extensive experience in weed control within a variety of habitats and using a variety of methods. RECON has also been one of several contractors providing weed control services at the project site over the past decade, providing weed control recommendations based on their experience working at this and other vernal pool restoration projects within San Diego County. There are no permit-related requirements or restrictions.

29. San Dieguito Riparian Habitat Restoration

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$1,538,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy

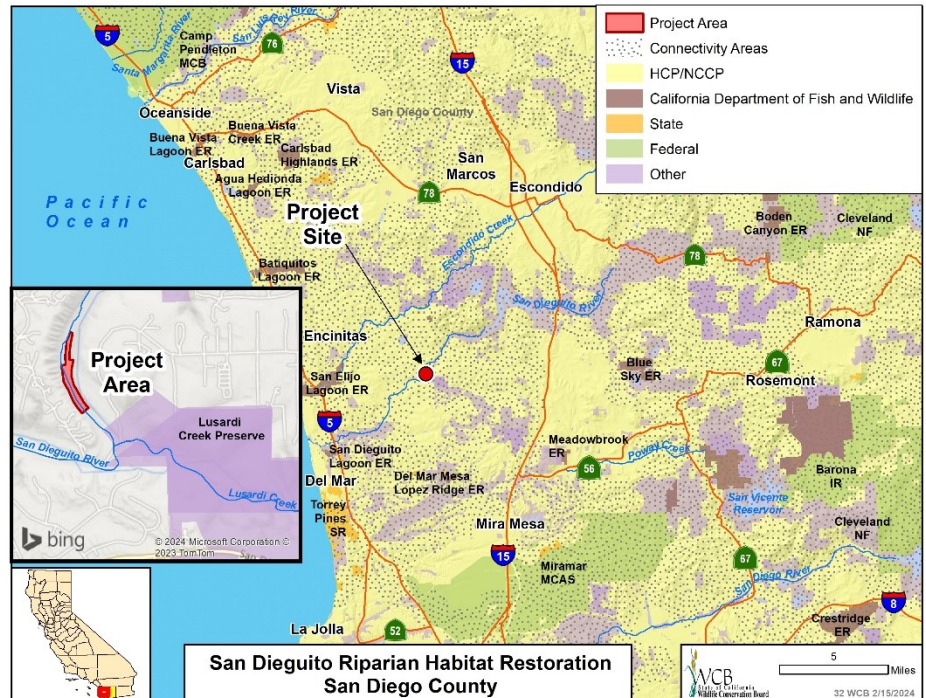
County: San Diego

Landowner: Private Landowner

Location: 0.5 miles north of San Diego

Project Highlights

- Will restore the final 12.5 acres of riparian corridor habitat, one of the last sections of a larger 181-acre regional restoration effort.
- Adjacent to Lusardi Creek Preserve (WCB funded acquisition) and Crosby Habitat Management Area.
- Key species: least Bell's vireo, light-footed Ridgeway's rail, southern California coast steelhead.
- Will reduce fire hazards and invasive species and plant native riparian vegetation.
- Urban Corps of San Diego to assist in invasive species removal and revegetation.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1, Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.5

Project Description

The project site has been heavily invaded by non-native species which escalate fire risk, increase water usage, and provide little habitat for native wildlife. The site has been subject to two high intensity burns in the last 20 years due to abundant flashy fuels from invasive plants and dry conditions. Invasive plants reduce the availability of in-stream water for salmonids and suitable nesting and foraging habitat for native birds. The project seeks to address these issues by:

- Controlling invasive plants with mechanical and chemical treatments throughout the entire project area. Species to be removed include Sydney golden wattle, Canary Island date palm, arundo, salt cedar, pampas grass, ice plant and Mexican fan palm.
- Planting drought-tolerant native species throughout the entire area.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of invasive plant treatments.
- Herbicide: Yes. Herbicides used will include Triclopyr and Imazapyr in accordance with advice from a California Department of Pesticide Regulation-licensed Pest Control Advisor (PCA). Applicant will mechanically remove tree species and treat stumps with the “cut and squirt” method to concentrate the herbicide to the plant’s vascular system to ensure translocation down to the roots and reducing direct contact with soil. Palm species will be removed by hand and will most likely not be treated with herbicide. If palm species require herbicide treatment, Triclopyr will be applied to the basal bark. Ice plant will be removed by hand or tarped to concentrate solar radiation and kill the plant. Non-woody species, including arundo and pampas grass, will be removed using chainsaws, mowing or hand cutting methods. Sprouts and leaves will be treated with herbicide to reduce the amount of chemical used compared to treating mature plants that can be over 5 feet tall.

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Site Preparation	\$100,000	---	\$100,000
Invasive Tree Removal and Herbicide Treatments	\$963,625	\$36,000	\$999,625
Revegetation	\$120,625	\$26,310	\$146,935
Monitoring and Project Management	\$60,788	\$25,000	\$85,788
Indirect	\$186,662	---	\$186,662
Contingency	\$106,300	---	\$106,300
Total	\$1,538,000	\$87,310	\$1,625,310

Non-WCB funders include:

- USDA-NRCS EQIP Funding - \$25,000
- Rancho Santa Fe Association - \$62,310

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Lauren Welch, Development Director, Urban Corps of San Diego County
- Sue Lichter, Board President, Rancho Santa Fe – Southwestern San Dieguito Fire Safe Council
- Justin Daniel, President, San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society
- Shawna Anderson, Executive Director, San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority
- Conor Lenehan, Deputy Fire Marshal, Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District
- Ann Baldridge, Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority, as lead agency, prepared a 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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Catherine Blakespear, District 38
- Assembly: Assemblymember Brian Maienschein, District 76

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Questionnaire

Please describe current vegetation conditions and composition at project site. Provide a description or list of the dominant native and invasive plant species, any rare or sensitive species, percent cover of invasive species, and if they occur in monocultures or mixed communities with natives.

Within the project site, the riparian corridor is dominated by invasive Red gum Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus camadulensis*) with codominant species including native black willow (*Salix gooddingii*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), and invasive Sydney wattle (*Acacia longifolia*). Subdominant vegetation includes patches of invasive giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and salt cedar (*Tamarisk ramosissima*). Also present are mature Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), invasive Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), and native mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) as well as a few scattered Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Saturated areas are primarily vegetated with narrowleaf cattail (*Typha domingensis*). Also present in large amounts is the rare shrub species San Diego marsh elder (*Iva hayesiana*).

Please describe which herbicides and adjuvants will be used, including tank mix concentrations, application rates, and timing of application. Where applicable, identify selective herbicides that will be used to target specific plant life forms (grasses, broadleaf, woody, etc.).

The Project team intends to use direct injection / stump injection for all target species except for *Arundo* and palm species. For Eucalyptus and Acacia (i.e., Sydney golden wattle) this would entail 50% concentration Triclopyr (Garlon IV) in a vegetable oil carrier, for salt cedar this would entail 50% concentration Imazapyr (Polaris) solution in water. *Arundo* resprouts will be sprayed with 10% concentration Imazapyr solution in water. A State of California-approved, compatible non-ionic surfactant and emulsifier (i.e., AgriDex) would be used as an adjuvant for applications to *Arundo donax*. No other adjuvants would be required for direct injection treatments. Only formulations of these products approved for aquatic application would be used.

Note: Palm species generally do not require herbicide if the apical meristem is removed. If resprouting is detected, a basal bark application of Triclopyr (Garlon IV) in a vegetable oil carrier will provide effective control of any resprouting palm stumps.

If your project will use glyphosate, have other herbicides been considered to eliminate glyphosate usage? If not, why was glyphosate chosen as the preferred herbicide?

As noted above, only non-glyphosate-based products would be used for invasive species control. Triclopyr is effective for broad-leafed species control and Imazapyr is effective against monocot species such as *Arundo donax*.

Other 'organic' herbicide alternatives were also considered but rejected. In general, due to their lack of systemic mode of action, organic herbicides provide little to no control of the invasive tree species or other tenacious perennial target species encountered in Southern California (e.g., *Arundo donax*).

If your project includes the use of a glyphosate product, have safer formulations (i.e. those registered for aquatic applications) or alternative herbicides been considered to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts? Please provide justification for the formulations and tank mixes selected as the preferred approach.

Not Applicable – project does not use a glyphosate product.

If adjuvant(s) will be used in this project, are safer products that do not contain nonylphenol (often listed as "alkylphenol ethoxylate" on labels) being used to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts?

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A State of California-approved, compatible non-ionic surfactant and emulsifier (i.e., AgriDex) would be used as an adjuvant for applications to *Arundo donax*. The active ingredients listed on the product label do not contain nonylphenol (alkylphenol ethoxylate). No other adjuvants would be required for direct injection treatments.

Please describe any non-chemical treatments that will be used to minimize the amount and/or concentration of herbicides used at the project site. What negative effects might these treatments have on the biological community?

Small specimens of some target species like Eucalyptus and Acacia will be removed by hand or using a hand operated tool like a weed wrench. Unfortunately, this technique can only be effective on very small seedlings. In addition, while not a major target, ice plant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) located onsite will be controlled by hand removal or tarping. Tarping can be an effective non-chemical control method, but requires the use of moderate quantities of plastic sheeting which can break down and enter the environment.

Please describe all herbicide application measures the project will employ to reduce negative impacts to water quality, non-target plant species, pollinators, and other wildlife species.

- All herbicide applications (including selection of products and formulations) will be conducted pursuant to the recommendations of a Department of Pesticide Regulation-licensed Pest Control Advisor (PCA)
- All applications will follow label requirements as required by law and will be conducted by DPR-licensed Qualified Applicator Licensees (QALs)
- All efforts will be made to minimize herbicide use as much as possible including:
 - Direct Injection / stump injection (Eucalyptus, Acacia, Tamarisk)
 - Use of lowest effective concentration
 - Routine equipment calibration
 - Observance of a mandatory 72 hour clear-weather forecast

Would removal of invasive weeds within the project area be possible using only non-chemical methods (hand-pulling, mowing, burning, etc.)? Please describe whether biocontrol has been considered and why or why not it was incorporated into the IPM approach for this project.

Non-chemical removal methods would not be possible or feasible for the proposed work activities. Perennial species like Eucalyptus, Acacia, Tamarisk, and *Arundo* can resprout from root structures indefinitely if a systemic herbicide is not used in the control process.

Non-chemical alternatives that have been considered but rejected include:

- Thermal / Flaming – Not effective against target species
- Grazing – Not permitted in jurisdictional waters
- Burning – Collateral damage, permitting, safety
- Equipment excavation – Excessive ground disturbance (vector for further invasion), potential impacts to water quality, impacts to stream courses / jurisdictional waters.

Biocontrol options do not exist for most if not all of the target species. Biocontrol was being explored for Tamarisk in the San Diego backcountry, but Federal support was reportedly withdrawn for these efforts and no other recent efforts have taken place in the County.

In addition, organic herbicide alternatives were also considered but rejected. In general, due to their lack of systemic mode of action, organic herbicides provide little to no control of the invasive tree species or other tenacious perennial target species encountered in Southern California (e.g. *Arundo donax*).

Please provide a total cost estimate for using only non-chemical removal methods for the invasive species where this approach would be possible. Please estimate both the project cost and long-term management costs, including an estimate of any additional personnel or contracts required.

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As described above non-chemical removal methods would not be technologically let alone financially feasible.

For California Department of Fish and Wildlife owned/managed properties only:

Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated pest management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project? – **Not**

Applicable

30. El Monte Preserve Cactus Scrub Restoration Augmentation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$579,330

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions [AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)]

Grantee: Earth Discovery Institute

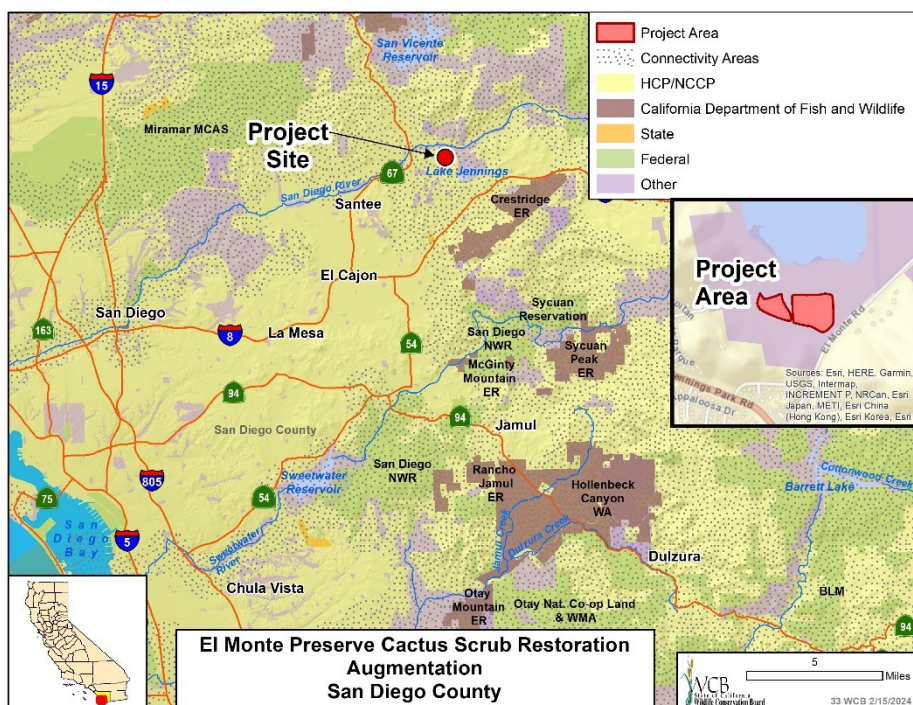
County: San Diego

Landowner: Endangered Habitats Conservancy

Location: Project is located along the upper San Diego River, north of the intersection of Lake Jennings Park and El Monte roads in Lakeside, an unincorporated community

Project Highlights

- Assures successful development of 15 acres of habitat critical for the coastal cactus wren, a species prioritized for conservation under the California State Wildlife Actin Plan (2015).
- Located within the El Monte Preserve.
- Provides habitat linkage between three existing genetic clusters of coastal cactus wren populations and preserves the long-term viability of these populations.
- Implements management of conserved lands under the San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 2.4

Project Description

The El Monte Preserve Cactus Scrub Restoration project (Project), previously approved for a \$484,007 grant by WCB in November 2021, supports and expands three existing genetic clusters of coastal cactus wren populations by restoring 15 acres of cactus scrub habitat strategically located near three existing preserve areas (Otay; San

Diego/El Cajon, and San Pasqual). The coastal cactus wren is considered a species at high risk of loss without immediate management action, due to its persistence in only a few areas and with the associated risks of further habitat fragmentation, and genetic isolation. Due to the Project location's proximity to nesting wrens, it is an ideal site for cactus scrub restoration, and would provide much needed connectivity between existing population areas. Despite significant efforts to date, unusually high precipitation was experienced during the spring of 2023, presenting significant challenges with controlling invasive weeds that are outcompeting the planted native vegetation. As a consequence, extensive weed control will be needed beyond the initial planned scope to ensure successful establishment of the native habitat.

The Project will ensure success for rare cactus scrub restoration by:

- Ensuring successful coastal scrub habitat restoration by installing an additional 3,000 coastal sage scrub plants and 1,000 cactus pads, which are crucial for establishing an ecologically resilient native habitat.
- Preventing the unexpected proliferation of invasive weeds from gaining a foothold and outcompeting existing planted native vegetation.
- Extending monitoring efforts to better assess Project success and identify where restoration efforts need to be adjusted for Project success.
- Herbicide: Yes. Glyphosate will be used to treat annual and herbaceous weeds, notably Sahara mustard, tree tobacco, castor bean, and chrysanthemum. Additionally, isoxaben will be utilized to address the preemergence of weeds, particularly effective against Saharan mustard and grasses, while fluazifop-P-butyl would be deployed for grass control. Each herbicide is carefully chosen based on its suitability for the target species and growth characteristics. Herbicide will be applied in small quantities, directed at the target species, thereby reducing drift and inadvertent spray on beneficial species.

Key Management Responsibilities

The Earth Discovery Institute has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Earth Discovery 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 Augmentation	Original WCB Funds	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$77,238	\$39,634	\$1,200	\$118,072
Project Coordination	\$53,096	\$16,780	---	\$69,876

Project Task	WCB Augmentation	Original WCB Funds	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Monitoring	\$5,900	\$15,248	---	\$21,148
Restoration Activities	\$341,943	\$375,692	\$186,614	\$904,249
Data Analysis and Reporting	\$36,441	\$17,664	---	\$54,105
Indirect Costs	\$64,712	\$18,989	---	\$83,701
Total	\$579,330	\$484,007	\$187,814	\$1,251,151

Non-WCB funders include:

- Earth Discovery Institute, in-kind services - \$187,814

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Steve C. Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Marie Waldron, District 75

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Use Questionnaire

WCB endorses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to controlling invasive plants. IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention and control of pests and their damage through a combination of techniques. WCB appreciates you describing your decision-making process regarding the invasive plant control methods planned for your proposed project.

- 1) Please describe current vegetation conditions and composition at the project site, including rare or sensitive species. Estimate the percent cover and distribution of invasive plant species, and indicate if they occur in monocultures or mixed communities with natives. Please describe the role of invasive plant control in meeting the project goals.

The 15-acre cactus scrub restoration project at El Monte Ecological Preserve has undergone a substantial transformation since restoration activities began in 2022, transitioning from 100% cover of invasive weeds to one that now consists of 30% cover of invasive species. The remaining area consists of approximately 20% prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia spp.*), 8% sage scrub species, 37% other native species (primarily comprised of naturally recruited dove weed (*Croton setiger*)), and 5% bare ground. Notably, many of the prickly pear cactus pads installed in 2022 have already reached the minimum 1 meter required by cactus wren for nesting- a benchmark we did not expect to achieve before year 5.

Despite this progress, the site requires ongoing intensive abatement effort to prevent complete encroachment by weeds that threaten the restored native vegetation. The principal invasive species are Sahara Mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), Tree Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*), Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*), and invasive grasses (*Brachypodium spp.*). These invasive species exhibit varying growth patterns, with monocultures and mixed communities observed, such as Saharan Mustard intermingling with Chrysanthemum, Tree Tobacco, and Castor Bean. Noteworthy is their tendency to proliferate near the sage shrub plants and the *Opuntia* cactus.

Maintaining a vigilant approach to weed control is essential to the ultimate success of the project, the primary goal of which is to create critical habitat for Coastal Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis*), which has been identified as the bird species of highest critical conservation need for the South Coast Province in the 2015 California State Wildlife Action Plan (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.5). The main objectives for coastal cactus wren listed in the State Wildlife Action Plan include “working towards the conservation goals of protecting and enhancing the remaining cactus wren habitat to increase connectivity and occurrence size throughout core populations, ... and keeping the coastal cactus wren from warranting protection by State or Federal Endangered Species Acts (ESA).” If continued weed abatement at El Monte Preserve is supported, this project will increase connectivity and occurrence size of a known core cactus wren population by creating additional live-in and stepping-stone linkage habitat within 250 meters of breeding individuals. Habitat expansion in this area could result in a 30 percent increase in this core population, which would help to achieve the goal of coastal cactus wren recovery such that protection under the ESA may not be warranted.

In the absence of ongoing, intensive weed abatement efforts over the next three years, unchecked weed growth will likely outcompete and smother the restored native vegetation already installed at the site before it can establish.

- 2) Outline the rationale for each invasive plant control method proposed for the project, list alternative methods considered, and explain why each method was chosen. If herbicides will be used, describe the rationale for each herbicide selected, including alternative herbicides considered. Where applicable, identify selective herbicides that will be used to target certain plant species or life forms (grasses,

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broadleaf, annual, perennial, etc.). List which herbicide formulations and adjuvants will be used, including tank mix concentrations, application rates, application methods, and timing of application. If adjuvant(s) will be used in this project, were safer products that are labeled for use over water and do not contain nonylphenol (often listed as “alkylphenol ethoxylate” on labels) selected to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts?

- a) Will glyphosate be used? If so, explain the rationale and alternatives considered. List which formulations and adjuvants will be used.
- b) Did you consider USDA approved organic herbicides? If not selected for use, explain why organic herbicides were not selected.

We consider the utilization of herbicides indispensable within the strategic framework of this restoration project, particularly given the prevalence of highly invasive perennial species at the project site, and funding limitations. Herbicides serve as a critical tool to curtail the growth of invasive shrubs and grasses that pose a potential impediment to the establishment of cactus scrub habitat. Earth Discovery Institute's Conservation Director and Technician meticulously consider the target species' characteristics, growth stage, and ecological context when selecting herbicides. All herbicide applications strictly adhere to label recommendations and state pesticide regulations, ensuring the judicious use of this tool in the pursuit of large-scale ecosystem restoration.

The project employs a Sustainable Pest Management (SPM) approach, incorporating various methods such as hand pulling and line trimming. While these methods find practical application within limited areas or for specific species, their scalability and cost-effectiveness diminish within the scope of a large-scale restoration endeavor. Manual removal methods and targeted herbicide applications offer a synergistic strategy. The judicious use of herbicides in minimal quantities, directly applied to the target species, mitigates the risk of drift and inadvertent impact on beneficial species.

a) Glyphosate, specifically in the form of Ranger Pro, is a primary herbicide employed at the project site. This formulation has demonstrated efficacy in treating annual and herbaceous weeds, notably Sahara Mustard, Tree Tobacco, Castor Bean, and Chrysanthemum. Additionally, Gallery (isoxaben) is utilized to address the preemergence of weeds, particularly effective against Saharan Mustard and grasses, while Fusilade (fluazifop-P-butyl) is deployed for grass control. Each herbicide is carefully chosen based on its suitability for the target species and growth characteristics.

b) The consideration of USDA-approved organic herbicides was contemplated in the decision-making process. However, these organic alternatives are contact herbicides, lacking systemic translocation to the root. Their efficacy is restricted to leaf burn-down, and more frequent site visits are necessary to address regrowth increases. Given that most weeds at El Monte Ecological Preserve are perennial, the limited effectiveness of organic herbicides coupled with a significant cost increase compared to synthetic herbicides, rendered them unsuitable for the project's goals. The selection of herbicide formulations aligns with our commitment to achieving project objectives while minimizing ecological impact and adhering to legal and safety regulations.

- 2) Would removal of invasive weeds within the project area be possible using only non-chemical methods (hand-pulling, mowing, grazing, burning, etc.)? If not, why? If so, please provide separate cost estimates for using chemical and non-chemical removal methods for the invasive species. Please estimate both the project cost and long-term management costs, including an estimate of any additional personnel or contracts required.

Exclusive reliance on non-chemical methods, such as hand-pulling and line trimming, is technically feasible for weed removal within the project area, but it is likely to be less effective. It is also imperative to acknowledge that manual weeding is significantly more labor-intensive than herbicides, substantially escalating the overall

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project cost. The labor-intensive nature of hand weeding requires hiring a subcontractor to manage the necessary workforce for the project.

For this 15-acre restoration project, opting for non-chemical weed abatement incurs an estimated budget increase of \$200,000 compared to herbicide utilization. Non-chemical methods demand a higher labor investment and pose challenges in achieving comprehensive coverage and sustained effectiveness.

- 3) Please describe the impacts that all proposed treatments (herbicide and non-chemical) might have on water quality, non-target plant species, pollinators, and other wildlife species. Describe the best management practices (BMPs) that the project will employ for all treatments and how these BMPs will avoid or minimize these impacts.

The potential impacts of all proposed treatments, including both herbicide and non-chemical methods, on water quality, non-target plant species, pollinators, and other wildlife species have been thoroughly considered for our restoration project. While acknowledging that vegetation removal may impact insects and pollinator species, this concern is mitigated by the overall effect of restoration activities at the site where native vegetation now present support a higher abundance of local wildlife species.

During insect monitoring conducted in 2022, before restoration efforts and herbicide application began, the species *richness* (number of species) recorded at the site was consistent with that which was recorded in 2023, which followed a year of herbicide use. However, the *composition* of species changed in 2023 to include more native species, including native bees, and Blainville's Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), a California Species of Special Concern. Perhaps most notably, insect *abundance* at the site increased by 86% between 2022 and 2023- again, following a year of herbicide application. In contrast, we recorded no significant difference between species richness, composition, or abundance along the two control transects, which are located adjacent to the restoration area but within the preserve. We attribute the observed changes in species composition and abundance within the treatment area to our restoration activities at the site, which include the careful and judicious application of herbicides.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) play a pivotal role in our project to avoid or minimize potential impacts. These include targeted and carefully timed herbicide applications, ensuring they are applied directly to the intended vegetation when they will be most effective, and careful manual removal methods that prioritize the protection of native flora and fauna. Continuous monitoring and adaptation of practices further ensure that the restoration efforts remain environmentally sound and contribute positively to the ecosystem of the project site.

- 4) Please describe the qualifications of anyone who has reviewed your proposed plan for invasive plant control for this project. What resources did you consult when evaluating and selecting control methods? Are there any permit-related requirements or restrictions?

Several experts, including EDI Executive Director, EDI Conservation Director, Endangered Habitats Conservancy, and Recon Environmental have meticulously reviewed this project's plan to control invasive plants. Recon Environmental is well known in San Diego County for its expertise in environmental restoration and mitigation projects, including removing invasive weeds. Furthermore, the original proposal underwent scrutiny by the WCB Board and received approval. There are no permit-related requirements or restrictions applicable to this project.

31. Los Angeles River Reach 8A Restoration

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$ 5,792,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions, DAC Provision [AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)]

Grantee: City of Los Angeles

County: Los Angeles

Landowner: City of Los Angeles

Location: Downtown Los Angeles

Project Highlights

- Located at Los Angeles River Reach 8A which runs from the Main Street crossing and extends 1300 feet downriver.
- Habitats restored: ¼ mile of riverbed and riparian corridor vegetation.
- Key species: Southern California steelhead trout.
- Regional or Species Plan: Southern California Steelhead Recovery Plan (NMFS 2012).
- The project will provide a visual greenspace and reduce blight in a heavily urbanized area.
- Project will include ADA-compliant educational signage in both English and Spanish.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. Located within a severely economically and environmentally disadvantaged community (SDAC and EnviroScreen criteria).
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 4.3

Project Description

The Los Angeles River Reach 8A Restoration project (Project) will develop habitat and a migratory corridor that will assist in the recovery of the federally listed Southern California steelhead. Once common in the Los Angeles River, steelhead trout are no longer able to pass through the channelized portion of the river to reach the quality spawning habitat that still exists in the river's headwaters. The Project will advance one

of the project alternatives of the WCB funded Los Angeles River Fish Passage and Habitat Structures Design planning project. The Project will not restore connectivity by itself but will be the first steelhead restoration project to be implemented on this portion of the river and will serve as a pilot for future projects that will modify the channelized riparian corridor and remove the fish passage barrier by:

- Finalizing 100% engineering, designs and permits for the quarter mile project.
- Installation of physical fish habitat features in the LA River that address limiting factors for fish passage by modifying flows, velocities and water depth to accommodate fish passage and provide fish habitat.
- Planting native riparian plant species that will add vegetation to an unsightly concrete river channel and restore some of the historical character of the river.
- Monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management of the Project that will be used to inform future restoration projects that will complete connectivity from the ocean to the river’s headwaters.
- Public engagement, outreach, and education on the importance of biodiversity and fish habitat features.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total
Project Management	\$410,832	---	\$410,832
Construction	\$1,840,088	\$2,000,000	\$3,840,088
Environmental Review and Permitting	\$333,236	---	\$333,236
Final Designs	\$1,093,523	\$75,000	\$1,168,895
Performance Monitoring	\$379,358	---	\$379,358
Public Outreach	\$235,397	---	\$235,397

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total
Technical Studies	\$973,071	---	\$973,071
Contingency	\$526,495	---	\$526,495
Total	\$5,792,000	\$2,075,000	\$7,867,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- City of Los Angeles - \$75,000
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy - \$2,000,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Maria Elena Durazo, District 26
- Assembly: Assemblymember Miguel Santiago, District 54

Staff Recommendation

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

32. Camatta Ranch Conservation Easement

Acquisition Conservation Easement

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154)

Grantee: The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (LCSLO)

County: San Luis Obispo

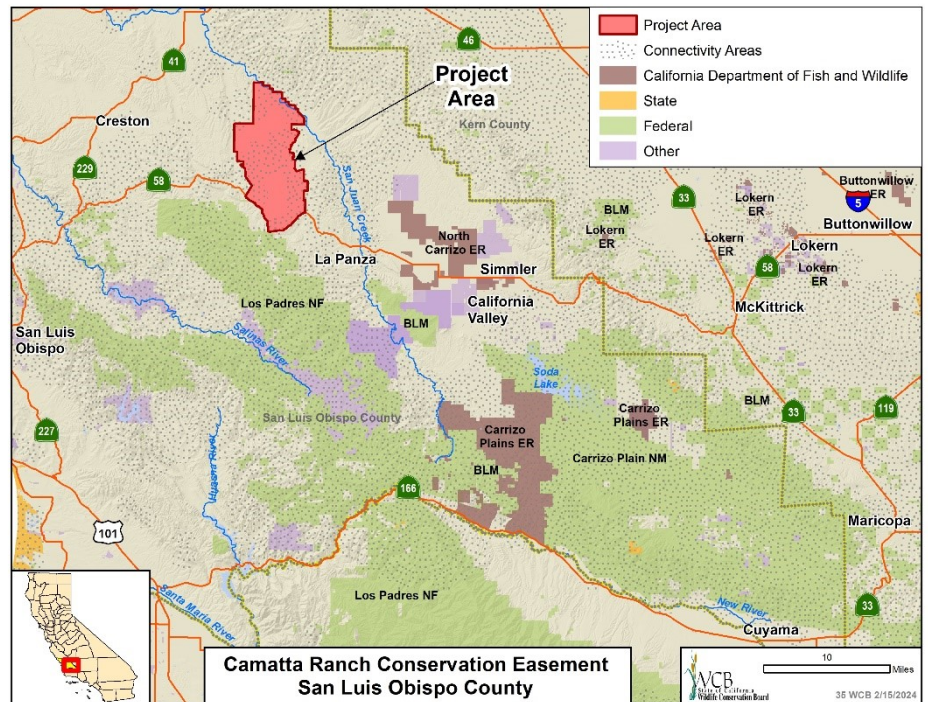
WCB Grant: \$10,372,600

Location: rural San Luis Obispo County, Shandon is 10 miles north

Acres: 27,513±

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: grassland, blue oak savannah, shrubland, and riparian corridors, dry farmed crops/cultivated agriculture, intensified agriculture.
- Protects habitat for 299 animal species and 250 native plant species.
- Key species: Camatta Canyon amole plant, San Joaquin kit fox, Bell's vireo, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, brush rabbit, giant kangaroo rat, loggerhead shrike, California condor, California towhee (all are federally and/or state endangered or threatened species).
- Protects habitat for 299 animal species and 250 native plant species. Protects approximately 90% of the Camatta Canyon amole plant range.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Property is located within a DWR disadvantaged community. The project's benefits to the community will be limited to viewshed and limited public access.
- Tribal Partnerships: None
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions; Pathway 8: Align Investments to Maximize Conservation Benefits
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.1, A.2, A.3 and Objectives: 1.2, 1.3, 2.1
- Public Access: Limited. Landowners have several cabins and lodges on the property available for rent. LCSLO is permitted to host a limited number of docent-led hikes per

year. Landowner hosts annual junior pheasant hunt and women’s pheasant hunt hosted by CDFW and events organized by Women in the Outdoors, Boy Scouts of America and many others.

Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Protects the property in its natural, scenic, agricultural, and open space condition.
- Prevents the conversion of rangeland, grazing land, farmland, woodland, and grassland to non-agricultural uses other than open space and prohibits use of the property that would impair the conservation values.
- Restricts intensified agricultural uses to 2,500 acres.
- Connectivity to protected land, open space and wildlife corridors extending from Carrizo Plain National Monument to the south and Big Sur to the north.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

The LCSLO has developed a baseline conditions report detailing the conditions at the time of the easement grant. It will be responsible for annually monitoring the property and assessing landowners’ compliance with the easement restrictions. Annual reports will be provided to the funding agencies who may also conduct periodic independent monitoring.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$ 17,520,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$10,372,600
State Coastal Conservancy	\$2,500,000
Department of Conservation	\$4,647,400
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$ 17,520,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Stephen Henry, Field Supervisor, Department of the Interior, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- Carl Palmer, Funder & Executive Director and G. Michael Sutton, Board Member, LegacyWorks Group
- Scott Morrison, Director, Conservation Programs & Science, The Nature Conservancy, California Chapter
- Bridget Fithian, Executive Director, Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Dawn Addis, District 30

Staff Recommendation

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

33. Rancho Cañada Floodplain Restoration

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$13,000,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

County: Monterey

Landowner: Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

Location: Approximately two miles east of Carmel-by-the-Sea

Project Highlights

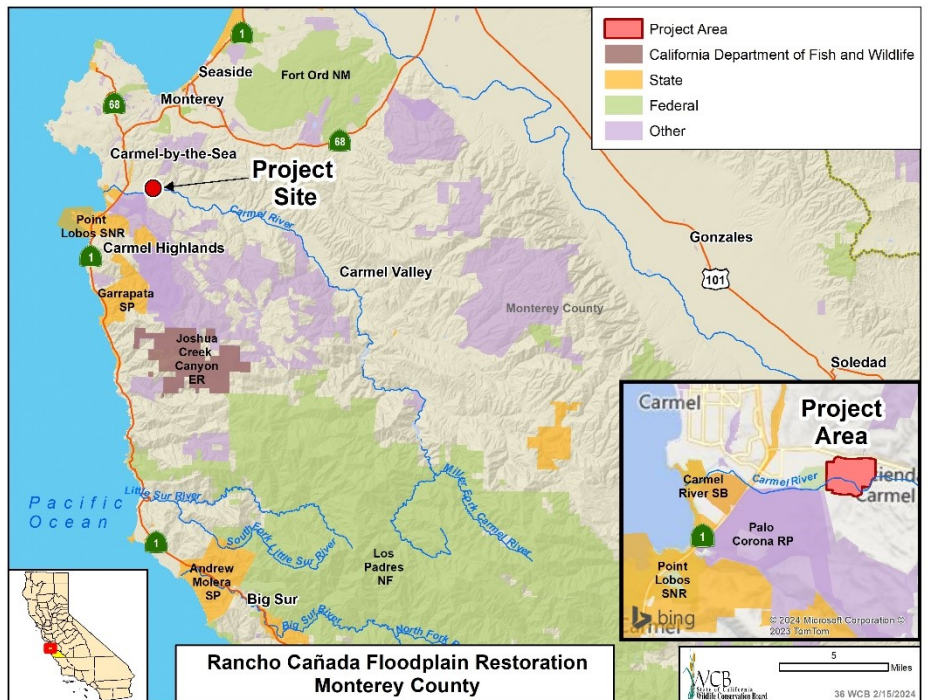
- Restore one mile of the Carmel River.
- Restore 40 acres of retired golf course into a mix of floodplain, transitional, and upland habitats.
- Reconnect the Carmel River to its historic floodplain.
- Improve flow conditions, channel complexity, and spawning and rearing habitat for the federally threatened steelhead.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: The Salinan Tribe of Monterey, the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County, and the Xolon Salinan Tribe have all contributed to the design of the project
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3

Project Description

Before European settlement, the Carmel River supported large braided/multi-channel floodplains and emergent marshes, as illustrated on Spanish mission-era maps, but these features were lost when ranchers and farmers began developing the land to maximize planting and grazing. Agriculture persisted at the project site until the 1960s, when a 36-hole golf course was constructed. The golf course was decommissioned in 2016 and the area is now owned and operated by the applicant, but habitat loss and modification from previous land use types are still evident. Management of the site during its tenure as a golf course (about 50 years in duration) included bank armoring, which prevented lateral migration of the river to preserve the course and its associated



infrastructure. These actions exacerbated the river’s incision and lowered the surrounding water table. This severe downcutting disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. Remnant golf course infrastructure, such as concrete cart paths and bathrooms, are still located throughout the project site. The project will implement the following stream flow and floodplain restoration activities increasing habitat value for many aquatic and riparian species:

- Remove 3,200 linear feet of riverbank armoring
- Excavate 40 acres of land to create newly connected floodplain and riparian habitat
- Restore and enhance floodplain and channel functions and natural processes
- Increase spawning and rearing habitat for adult and juvenile steelhead
- Revegetate 32 acres of habitat
- Remove three bridges over the Carmel River
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$1,351,106	---	\$1,351,106
Phase 1	\$4,121,687	\$12,767,694	\$16,889,381
Phase 2	\$7,384,596	\$4,759,690	\$12,144,286
Phase 3	---	\$1,618,321	\$1,618,321
Indirect Costs	\$142,611	---	\$142,611
Total	\$13,000,000	\$19,145,705	\$32,145,705

Non-WCB funders include:

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - \$10,000,000
- State Coastal Conservancy - \$6,000,000
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - \$3,145,705

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Linda Yamane, Rumsen Ohlone Tribal Community
- Thomas Christensen, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
- Tim Frahm, Trout Unlimited
- Steve Park, Carmel River Steelhead Association
- Rachel T. Saunders, Big Sur Land Trust
- Jamison Watts, Santa Lucia Conservancy
- R. Alan Williams, private landowner

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District, as lead agency, prepared an EIR (SCH#2019100230) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Dawn Addis, District 30

Staff Recommendation

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

34. Sweetwater Ridge

**Acquisition
Fee**

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, San Joaquin Valley Floodplain Restoration AB179, Sec. 19.58(b)(2)(A)

Grantee: River Partners

County: Merced

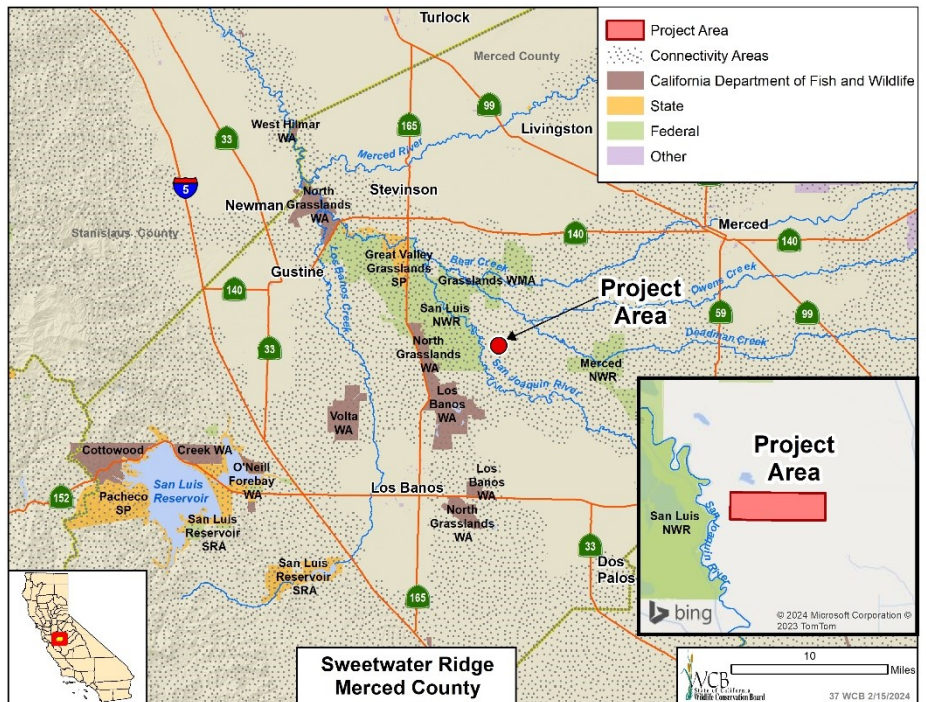
WCB Grant: \$7,280,000

Location: Two miles north of Sand Slough Road and on the south side of the Mariposa Bypass Levee, about 8.5 miles northeast of Los Banos

Acres: 560± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Property is immediately adjacent to the southern border of the 26,800-acre San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex and will improve habitat connectivity in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Agricultural uses on the property will be retired and River Partners will seek additional funding to restore the property to native riparian and upland habitats over a ten-year period.
- Applicants intend that ultimately, the property will be managed by USFWS as part of the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex.
- Habitats represented: Once restoration plan is implemented, the property will be comprised of upland, riparian, and floodplain habitat types that consist of wetlands, native grasslands, vernal pools, and riparian forests.
- Project is part of \$40 million earmark from State Budget for the purposes of acquiring and restoring floodplain lands in the San Joaquin and Tulare basins.



Priority Metrics

- Benefitting Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Executive Strategic Acquisitions; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3

- Public Access: No

Key Management Objectives and Needs

River Partners will develop and submit a Fish and Wildlife Management Memorandum that will identify a restoration and stream flow enhancement strategy with an anticipated timeframe for agricultural retirement phasing, restoration implementation and future property management objectives and needs during the restoration period. Restoration of the site is to be completed within a ten-year period following the close of escrow.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$7,280,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$7,280,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$7,280,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Anna M. Caballero, District 14
- Assembly: Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, District 27

Staff Recommendation

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

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Lunch Break

35. O’Connell Ranch

Acquisition Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature-Based Solutions Provision AB179, Sec. 83(3)(a)

Grantee: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency (SCVHA)

County: Santa Clara

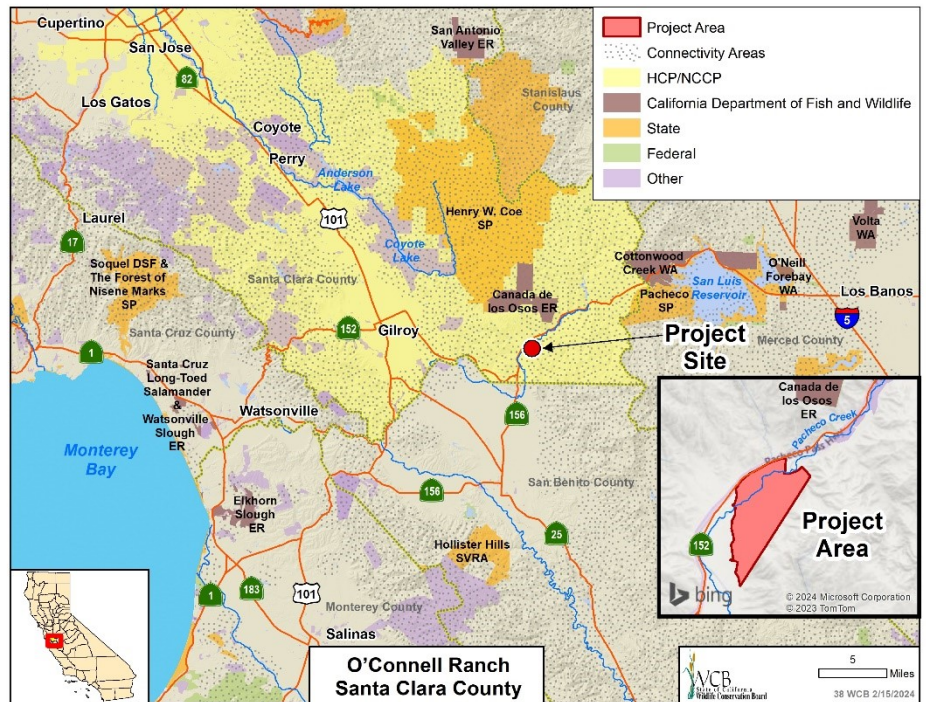
WCB Grant: \$6,110,000

Location: Thirteen miles east of the city of Gilroy

Acres: 1,073± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: California annual grassland and mixed oak woodland, mixed riparian forest and Central California sycamore alluvial woodland.
- Entire Property is designated as critical habitat for California red-legged frog.
- Contains an approximately one-mile portion of Pacheco Creek. Spawning South Central California Coast steelhead migrate through Pacheco Creek.
- Other key species: tricolored blackbird, San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander and least Bell’s vireo.
- Regional or Species Plan: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan (SCVHP).
- Connectivity: The Property will provide an east west wildlife corridor along Pacheco Creek which includes the existing Pacheco Creek Reserve and the pending (Agenda Item 14) Malech Ranch Conservation Easement.
- SCVHA currently has a 21.7% interest in ownership of the Property. This acquisition will give SCVHA total ownership of the Property.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A.3 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
- Public Access: No

Key Management Objectives and Needs

SCVHA will hold and monitor the Property which will be used primarily as an open space landscape supporting seasonal cattle grazing and wildlife habitat. The SCVHA requires long-term monitoring and management of all Reserve System lands. Reserve management is designed to maintain and enhance natural communities, habitat for covered and other native species, native biological diversity, and ecosystem function.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$7,141,000 for The Conservation Fund's (TCF) 78.3% interest in the Property and TCF has agreed to sell for \$6,110,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$6,110,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$6,110,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Ash Karla, District 25

Staff Recommendation

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

36. Lakeside Ranch

**Acquisition
Fee**

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency

County: Santa Clara

WCB Grant: \$10,000,000

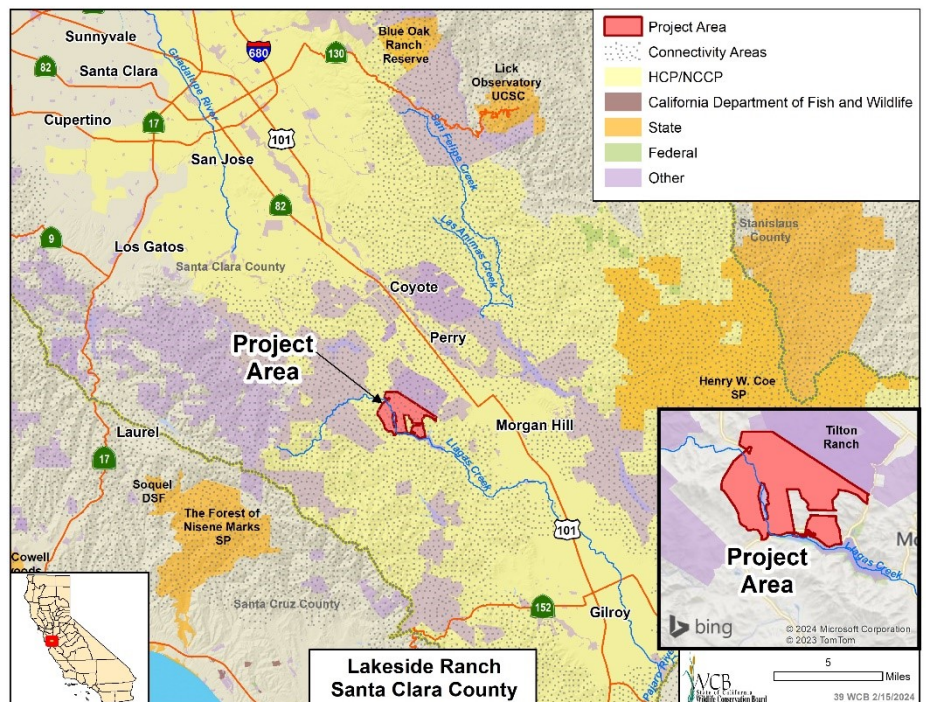
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$3,860,000

Location: Approximately two miles west of the city of Morgan Hill

Acres: 1,902± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: California annual grassland, mixed oak woodland, blue oak woodland, coast live oak forest, and serpentine grassland.
- Sensitive and rare habitat types include mixed riparian forest, sycamore alluvial woodland, wetlands, and over 300 acres of serpentine habitat.
- Provides suitable habitat for California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, and western burrowing owl.
- Other key species: Santa Clara Valley dudleya, smooth lessingia, western pond turtle, Bay checkerspot butterfly, and California tiger salamander.
- Regional or Species Plan: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan (SCVHP).
- Property contains a portion of Llagas Creek.
- Connectivity: The Property is adjacent to the 1,741-acre Tilton Ranch which SCVHA purchased in 2020 with funding from WCB. The eastern Property boundary borders the Coyote Valley Conservation Program Area.
- The Property is located immediately north of Chesbro Reservoir.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions

- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A.3 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
- Public Access: Yes

Key Management Objectives and Needs

SCVHA will hold and monitor the Property which will be used primarily as an open space landscape supporting wildlife habitat and public access. The SCVHP requires long-term monitoring and management of all Reserve System lands. Reserve management is designed to maintain and enhance natural communities, habitat for covered and other native species, native biological diversity, and ecosystem function.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$21,100,000 and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$13,860,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$10,000,000
USFWS	\$3,860,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$13,860,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Gail Pellerin, District 28

Staff Recommendation

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

37. One Tam Forest Conservation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$4,260,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions, [AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)]

Grantee: Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (Parks Conservancy)

County: Marin

Landowner: National Parks Service (NPS), California

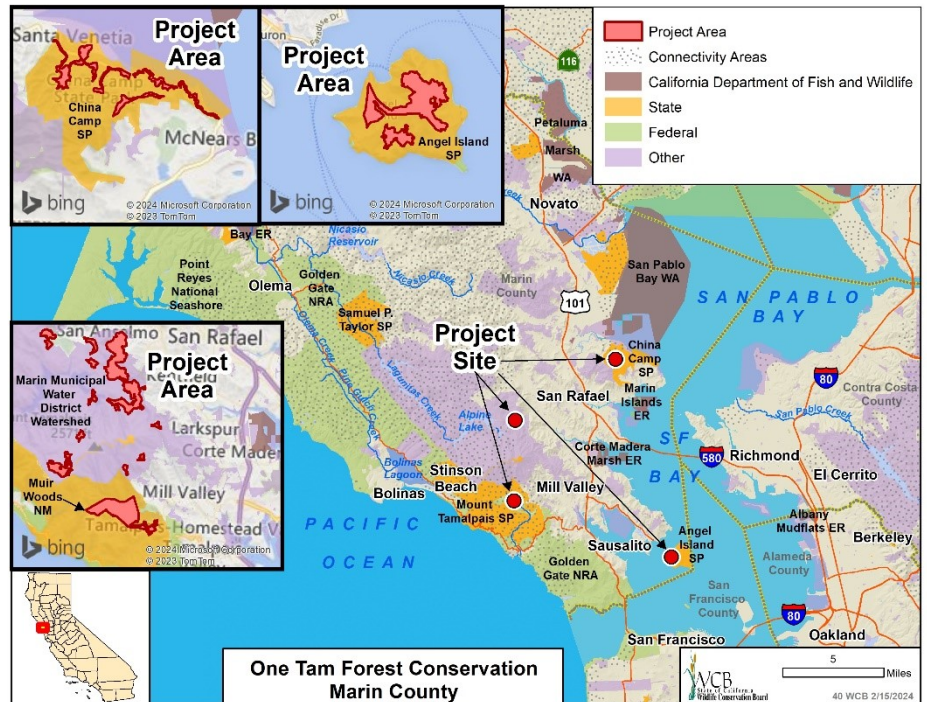
Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), Marin

Municipal Water District (Marin Water)

Location: Multiple public lands in Marin County

Project Highlights

- Approximately 1,100 acres of forest health treatments across multiple ownerships.
- Alignment with more than 15 local, regional, and state priority plans.
- The One Tam Forest Conservation project (Project) area hosts as many as three million visitors per year.
- Majority of the Project area ranked as 5 (High Species Biodiversity) in CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis model.
- Returning beneficial fire to National Park and State Park lands.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.4, 2.1, 2.2

Project Description

The One Tam partnership is a collaborative of land managers including Marin Water, State Parks and NPS. The Parks Conservancy serves as the non-profit support member of One Tam and provides coordination support to achieve cross-jurisdictional management goals and serves as Project lead. Collectively, One Tam partner agencies manage 60,000 acres of native forest and woodland habitat in Marin County. This Project includes 1,100 acres of forest

conservation treatments in priority forest and woodland areas. Treatments include forest thinning to reduce stand density, address fire exclusion and sudden oak death impacts on forest structure, hazardous fuel reduction in key areas, invasive plant removal, and prescribed fire. Project actions will occur in multiple treatment areas in coordination with three One Tam agencies: Marin Water, State Parks, and NPS. Individual project descriptions, budgets, management plans and CEQA are presented below for each of the three agencies.

National Park Service (NPS)

Dense fuel arrangements resulting from fire exclusion coupled with impacts from Sudden Oak Death (SOD) threaten the resilience of rare old-growth coast redwood forests in Muir Woods National Monument (Monument). Muir Woods is identified as an Irreplaceable and Essential Corridor in CDFW's Areas of Conservation Emphasis model. Analysis of coast redwood forest fire scar data in Marin showed a fire return interval for this forest type of 21.7 to 27.3 years, however most of the Monument has not experienced fire in more than 70 years. The Project will enhance old-growth redwood stands by applying ecologically appropriate prescribed fire.

- Returning beneficial fire to Muir Woods National Monument by implementing a broadcast burn on 70-120 acres.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

Project improvements at Muir Woods National Monument will be maintained by the National Park Service in accordance with the 2005 Fire Management Plan (FMP). If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, the Grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$156,901	---	\$156,901
Forest and Woodland Management	---	---	---
Prescribed Burning	\$40,000	\$750,000	\$790,000
Indirect Costs	\$28,099	---	\$28,099
Total	\$225,000	\$750,000	\$975,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- National Park Service- \$750,000

CEQA

The National Park Service, acting as Lead Agency, has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the provisions of NEPA. The Project is proposed as statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the provisions of Public Resources Code 4799.05 (d)(1) Division 13 (Commencing with Section 21000), which provides that CEQA does not apply to projects that include prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction actions undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA of 1969. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Parks

Project activities will occur within China Camp and Angel Island State Parks. China Camp State Park is heavily wooded, with nearly 70% (1,059 acres) of the land covered by hardwood forest, while Angel Island encompasses the largest natural island in the San Francisco Bay and includes grasslands, coastal shrublands, and hardwood forests. Forests on State Parks lands in Marin County have been impacted by drought, climate change, SOD, fire exclusion, and invasive species. The Project will improve forest health and ecological resilience by applying prescribed fire, manual thinning, ladder fuel treatment, and invasive plant removal. Project activities include:

- Vegetation management to increase forest health and biodiversity through manual thinning and invasive plant removal designed to emulate the effects of low to moderate intensity fire on 305 acres.
- Returning beneficial fire to State Parks lands by implementing a 21-acre broadcast burn in China Camp State Park.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

Project Improvements at China Camp State Park and Angel Island State Parks will be maintained by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in accordance with the General Plan for each park. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$156,901	---	\$156,901
Forest and Woodland Management	\$555,000	\$325,000	\$880,000
Prescribed Burning	\$45,000	---	\$45,000
Indirect Costs	\$28,099	---	\$28,099
Total	\$785,000	\$325,000	\$1,110,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- California Department of Parks and Recreation - \$325,000

CEQA

The Project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities, as a minor alteration of public topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, as a minor public alteration in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Marin Water

The Project will implement a variety of multi-benefit forest conservation treatments designed to improve forest conditions by addressing threats to forest health and resilience. Project forest treatment prescriptions are designed to emulate the beneficial effects of a low to moderate intensity fire such as lower stem density, increased stand vigor, reduced potential for stand replacing crown fire, protected carbon storage, landscape heterogeneity, and understory diversity. As a secondary benefit, Project actions on Marin Water lands will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire to critical water storage and delivery infrastructure for 191,000 recipients in Marin County. Project activities include:

- Standing and downed biomass reduction in areas impacted by SOD to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and habitat loss.
- Manual removal of invasive plants on 215 acres to increase biodiversity and decrease continuity of wildland fuels.
- Shaded fuel break construction along priority routes.
- Manual and mechanical vegetation treatments designed to emulate the effects of low to moderate intensity fire on 336 acres.

- Biomass disposal via piling & burning.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

Project improvements on Marin Water properties will be maintained by Marin Water in accordance with the 2019 Biodiversity, Fire and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP PEIR). If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$313,802	---	\$313,802
Forest and Woodland Management	\$2,880,000	\$1,112,687	\$3,992,687
Prescribed Burning	---	---	---
Indirect Costs	\$56,198	---	\$56,198
Total	\$3,250,000	\$1,112,687	\$4,362,687

Non-WCB funders include:

- Marin Municipal Water District - \$1,112,687

CEQA

The Marin Municipal Water District, acting as Lead Agency, has prepared a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the PEIR and have 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.

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jared Huffman, Representative, United States House of Representatives
- Mike McGuire, Senator, California State Senate
- Damon Connolly, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Dennis Rodoni, Supervisor, County of Marin
- Gregory Jones, Fire Management Officer, National Parks Service
- Amy Hutzler, Executive Officer, California State Coastal Conservancy

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, February 15, 2024

- Brian Newman-Lindsay, Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Manager, California Department of Conservation
- Cyndy Shafer, Natural Resource Program Manager Bay Area District, California State Parks
- Mark Brown, Executive Officer, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority
- Bennett Horenstein, General Manager, Marin Municipal Water District

Opposition:

- None received

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Damon Connolly, District 12

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this Project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this Project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

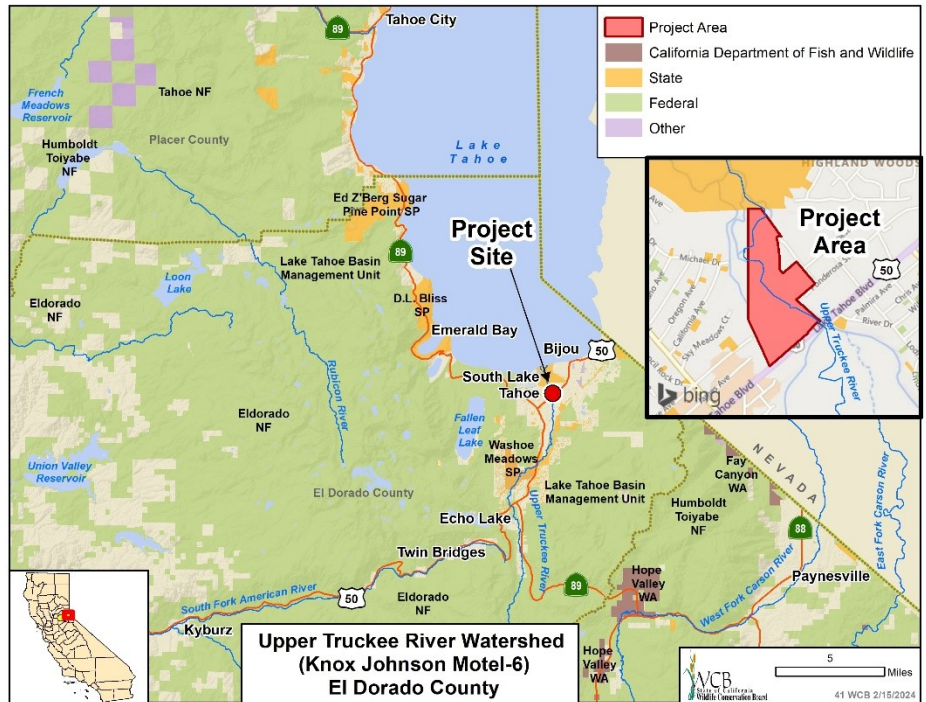
38. Upper Truckee River Watershed (Knox Johnson-Motel 6)

Acquisition Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature-Based Solutions Provision AB179, Sec. 83(3)(a)
 Grantee: California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC)
 County: El Dorado
 WCB Grant: \$6,000,000
 Location: South Lake Tahoe
 Acres: 31± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Adds 31 acres to CTC's Upper Truckee Marsh property (currently 500± acres). The vast expanse of wet meadow, willow scrubland, and lagoons provide habitat for songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, bats, amphibians, fish and bears.
- Preserves and protects 25 acres of wetland and mountain meadow next to the Upper Truckee River.
- Allows CTC to remove 45,000 cubic yards of fill in the floodplain to reclaim four acres of wetland.
- Once acquired, CTC will remove most existing structures from the Property.
- Property links continuous public ownership along the Upper Truckee River floodplain by connecting properties both upstream and downstream.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Community: Serving a SDAC (South Lake Tahoe)
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Executive Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes. CTC intends to retain a portion of the parking lot for public access to the Upper Truckee River.

Key Management Objectives and Needs

CTC will restore and maintain the Property as part of their land management program.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$15,400,000 The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$6,000,000
CDFW	\$1,500,000
California Tahoe Conservancy	\$4,400,000
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency	\$3,500,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$15,400,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and 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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

39. Coldstream Canyon Restoration - Augmentation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$1,446,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Truckee River Watershed Council

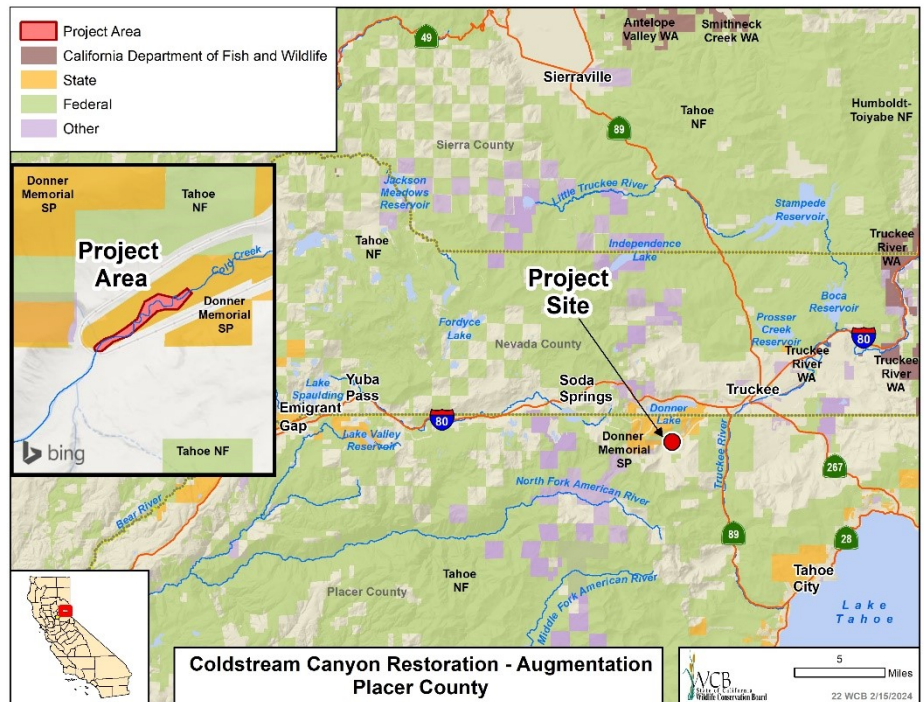
Landowner: California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

County: Placer

Location: Seven miles west of the town of Truckee in Placer

Project Highlights

- Restores hydrologic function to one mile of Cold Creek.
- Improves water quality by reducing sediment transport by up to 125 tons per year.
- Increases channel sinuosity.
- Increases inundation through reduced stream velocity.
- Extensive revegetation.
- 22 acres of floodplain reconnection.
- Augmentation supports a prior WCB grant approved by WCB at the May 2022 meeting.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, DPR has entered into a MOU with the Washoe Tribe for consultation to foster a shared stewardship approach in multiple state parks, including the project site.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 1.4

Project Description

Cold Creek, and by extension the surrounding Coldstream Canyon watershed, has been impacted by railroad development and logging practices that constricted and

simplified the creek channel resulting in heavy streambank erosion and channel degradation. Intensive restoration is needed to address these impacts. The project area was impacted by record snowfall during winter 2022/2023, causing significant erosion, delaying project implementation, and requiring de-watering of the work site. Funding augmentation will support the successful completion of the restoration after this extreme weather event. The project will implement restoration activities by:

- Constructing approximately 22 acres of floodplain terraces.
- Establishing riparian vegetation along approximately 6,000 linear feet of Cold Creek.
- Channel raising to facilitate sediment deposition and attain floodplain connectivity.
- Installation of large rock/wood complexes and boulder step pools for grade control.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$99,054	---	\$59,790	\$158,844
Restoration	\$1,262,048	\$1,426,000	\$729,705	\$3,417,753
Indirect Charges	\$18,898	\$20,000	---	\$38,898
Total	\$1,380,000	\$1,446,000	\$789,495	\$3,615,495

Non-WCB funders include:

- California State Water Quality Control Board - \$789,495

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Cynthia Walck, Engineering Geologist, Sierra District, California Department of Parks and Recreation
- N. Mo Loden, Environmental Scientist, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Eric Sweet, District Manager, Sierra Pacific Industries

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

DPR, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the Negative Declaration 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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

40. Tahoe Forest Gateway – Recreation Planning

Public Access – Planning

WCB Grant: \$4,295,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, 40 Acre Conservation League Provision AB179, Sec.19.56(b)(33), and the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d)

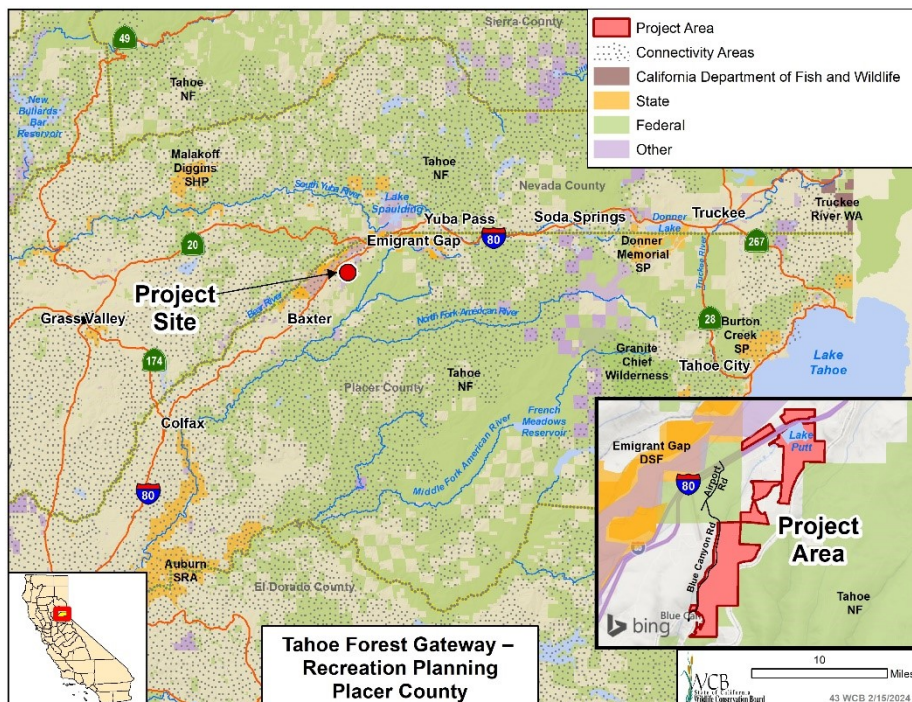
Grantee: 40 Acre Conservation League

Landowner: 40 Acre Conservation League

Location: Emigrant Gap, Placer County

Project Highlights

- Planning and design for public access amenities on a 650-acre property adjacent to Tahoe National Forest.
- Project Goal: Create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space that prepares the uninitiated for enjoying the outdoors.
- Property features a 30-acre reservoir (Lake Putt) and old timber roads which will be converted to hiking trails. Overnight accommodations and a visitor center are proposed.
- Key species: foothill yellow-legged frog, western bumblebee, Blue Canyon mule deer.
- Support previous investment made by WCB to acquire property.
- WCB will not enter into grant agreement until the previously approved project closes escrow for acquisition of 650± acres.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: The project site is not within a Disadvantaged Community as defined in the DWR mapping tool and CalEnviroScreen. However, the target visitor demographic for this new public access opportunity includes urban communities and people of color. 40 Acre Conservation League is striving for at least 30% of visitors being people of color within three years of the site becoming fully operational. The League's broader goal is to redefine subconscious biases and foster a sense of belonging in nature for people of color, with emphasis on Black Californians.
- Tribal Partnerships: No

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal C4 and Objectives 3.1, 3.4

Project Description

40 Acre Conservation League was formed to accomplish the dual goals of acquiring lands for conservation and facilitating meaningful, inclusive public access. Their vision is to redefine the relationship people of color have with nature and address cultural barriers that disincline communities of color from seeking out experiences in state and national recreation areas. This project will complete the necessary outreach, collaboration and site planning to achieve this vision by designing public access facilities that (1) welcome all to the Tahoe National Forest, (2) prepare visitors to recreate responsibly in nature, if uninitiated, (3) equip them to enjoy nature in turnkey fashion, and (4) provide a safe place in the event of an emergency. In addition to these public access goals, long-term stewardship goals for the project site include habitat restoration and non-commercial timber management, aimed at achieving a healthy and resilient forest ecosystem and mitigating fire risk. This planning project will:

- Complete necessary on-the-ground assessments to understand existing conditions and constraints on the property (Cultural and Tribal Resources, Water Resources, Topographic and Geotechnical surveys).
- Conduct extensive and meaningful outreach with the local community and target visitor communities, as well as other stakeholders, to solidify the vision for the property.
- Produce implementation-level designs for a Nature Center, trails and camping facilities.
- Produce an updated, long-term Forest Management Plan for the property.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$492,975	\$8,450	\$501,425
Cultural and Tribal Resources Analysis	\$24,800	---	\$24,800
Water Resources Evaluation	\$157,755	---	\$157,755
Forest Management Plan	\$237,000	---	\$237,000
Site Planning & Designs	\$2,093,335	---	\$2,093,335

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Public Engagement	\$290,000	---	\$290,000
Permitting & CEQA	\$608,675	---	\$608,675
Contingency	\$390,460	---	\$390,460
Total	\$4,295,000	\$8,450	\$4,303,450

Non-WCB funders include:

- 40 Acre Conservation League - \$8,450

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Marie Alvarado-Gil, Senator, California State Senate
- Russell Lowery, Executive Director, Environmental Justice League
- Darryl Lucien, Executive Director, California African American Water Education Foundation
- Simeon Gant, Board of Directors President, Green Technical Education and Employment
- Travis Hemmen, President & CEO, Westervelt Ecological Services, LLC
- 13 Black Business Associations:
 - Jay King, President, California Black Chamber of Commerce
 - Salena Pryor, President, Black Small Business Association of California
 - Sarah R. Harris, President & CEO, Black Business Association of Los Angeles
 - Armen Ross, President, Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce
 - Angela Gibson, President & CEO, Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce
 - Azziza Goines, President, Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce
 - M.C. Townsend, President, California Black Chamber of Commerce, San Fernando Valley
 - Pepi Jackson, President & CEO, Riverside Black Chamber of Commerce
 - Cathy Adams, President & CEO, Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce
 - Sam Washington, President & CEO, Silicon Valley Black Chambers of Commerce
 - Nick Hill, President & CEO, Kern County Black Chamber of Commerce
 - Richard Wallace, President & CEO, Southern California Black Chambers
 - Bridgett LeBanc, Vice Chair, San Francisco African American Chamber of Commerce

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

41. Tahoe Forest Gateway – Forest Health

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$2,410,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions [AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a)]

Grantee: 40 Acre Conservation League

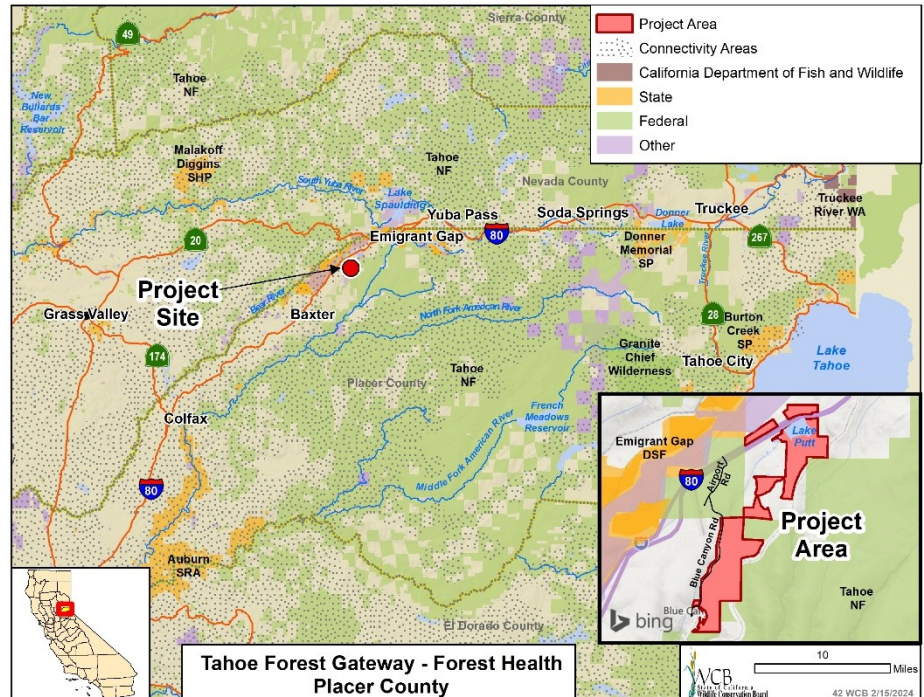
County: Placer

Landowner: 40 Acre Conservation League

Location: Two miles south of Emigrant Gap in Placer County

Project Highlights

- Restore 374 acres of forest to increase habitat quality and resilience.
- Reforest 60 acres through planting.
- Restore oak woodlands restoration.
- Reduce roadside fuels.
- Enhance pollinator habitat enhancement.
- Key species: Foothill yellow legged frog, western bumblebee, Blue Canyon mule deer.
- Support previous investment made by WCB to acquire property.
- WCB will not enter into grant agreement until the previously approved project closes escrow for acquisition of 650± acres.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and C and Objectives SI 1.4, 2.1, 2.1

Project Description

The Tahoe Forest Gateway – Forest Health project (Project) site has dense fuel loads driven by historic fire suppression and logging. Targeted thinning will produce tree densities which vary across the landscape and increases average canopy gap size to facilitate recruitment of species with early seral requirements while retaining key habitat features such as shaded riparian corridors, snags, and areas of brush cover. These treatments reduce the potential for, or severity of, disease and pest outbreaks as well as

high-intensity wildfire. The Project will implement forest management activities increasing forest health and climate resiliency by:

- Manual and mechanical variable density thinning in Sierran mixed conifer forest to enhance heterogeneity.
- Oak woodland restoration thinning to improve stand health in the absence of low intensity fire.
- Roadside ladder fuel reduction.
- Reforestation of approximately 60 acres of Sierran mixed conifer forest.
- Biomass disposal via a combination of pile burning, chipping and hauling or spreading onsite.
- Pollinator habitat enhancement pilot project via establishment of native grass, forb, and chaparral species in areas unsuitable for conifer growth and/or in the understory of thinned forest stands.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

The 40 Acre Conservation League has adopted an interim Forest Management Plan that guides forest management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$52,291	---	\$52,291
Forest Restoration	\$1,892,597	---	\$1,892,597
Pollinator Habitat Enhancement	\$221,320	---	\$221,320
Indirect Costs	\$25,000	---	\$25,000
Contingency	\$218,792	---	\$218,792
Total	\$2,410,000	---	\$2,410,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Brian Dahle, Senator, California State Senate
- Marie Alvarado-Gil, Senator, California State Senate

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- Mike A. Gipson, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Chris Holden, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Dr. Corey A. Jackson, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Lori Wilson, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Erik C. White, Air Pollution Control Officer, Placer Air Pollution
- Robert Haswell, Executive Director/CEO, Visit Placer
- Don Belden, Chairman, Placer Sierra Fire Safe
- Jeff Darlington, Executive Director, Placer Land Trust
- Russell Lowery, Environmental Justice League
- Arnold Sowell Jr., Executive Director, Next Gen California
- Multiple Signatories, Black Business Alliance
- Steve R. Frisch, President, Sierra Business Council
- Chris Norem, North State BIA
- Cherri Spriggs, Interim Executive Director, Placer Business Alliance

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

42. Clear Lake Hitch Habitat Planning

Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$2,730,970

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: County of Lake Watershed Protection District

Landowner: Multiple

County: Lake

Location: Scotts Creek is located two miles west of Lakeport; Highland Springs Reservoir is located six miles southwest of Lakeport

Project Highlights

- Develop a comprehensive approach to conserve and protect a biologically and culturally significant species on the brink of extinction.
- Key species: Clear Lake hitch (CLH)
- Regional or Species Plan: The project updates the Adobe Creek Conjunctive Use Feasibility Study (Lake County, 2002)
- The project will include outreach needed for restoration and stewardship in priority watersheds as well as others with historic presence of CLH.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Portions of the project area are located in Severely Disadvantaged communities according to the DWR Mapping Tool.
- Tribal Partnerships: Clear Lake hitch are culturally significant to the six Native American Tribes that surround Clear Lake. Three tribes (Scotts Valley, Big Valley, and Habematolel band of Pomo, all federally recognized) will be contributing their time and knowledge to the planning, monitoring, review, and outreach components of this project.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B; Objectives 1.3, 2.1, 2.4.

Project Description

The Clear Lake hitch is a large minnow endemic to Clear Lake and its tributaries, and culturally and biologically significant to the indigenous people of Clear Lake. This species is at high risk of extirpation if no immediate improvements are made to its habitat. The most recent USGS CLH survey indicated no juveniles as present in the lake. This precipitous population decline is primarily attributed to loss of access to spawning habitat through water diversions and in-stream barriers such as road crossings, undersized culverts, debris jams, sedimentation, and unmanaged vegetation. The project will generate the information needed to support restoration of functional flows and habitat to benefit the imperiled Clear Lake hitch, focusing on the two most productive spawning streams: Scotts Creek and Adobe Creek. Specific actions include:

- Analysis of surface flow and hydrology between Tule Lake and Scotts Creek, to locate and prioritize enhancement projects that directly impact available spawning and rearing habitat.
- Develop 60%-90% design plans for removal of at least two priority barriers along Scotts Creek.
- Assess and update the current conjunctive water use plan to modify the Highland Dam structure and operations to provide additional water storage for flow augmentation downstream along Highland and Adobe creeks when needed for CLH spawning, hatch, and migration.
- Develop shovel-ready plans for a prioritized fish passage barrier along Adobe Creek, at Bell Hill Road.
- Develop an education and outreach campaign to increase awareness and support for CLH habitat improvement projects both within the Adobe and Scotts Creek communities, as well as across the Clear Lake watershed.
- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$68,700	\$16,079	\$84,779
Tule Lake/Scotts Creek Fish Planning	\$1,055,050	\$160,000	\$1,215,050
Adobe Creek Planning	\$1,267,950	\$397,590	\$1,665,540
Outreach/Education	\$91,000	\$21,331	\$112,331
Contingency	\$248,270	---	\$248,270
Total	\$2,730,970	\$595,000	\$3,325,970

Non-WCB funders include:

- Lake County Watershed Protection District - \$190,000
- Westside Integrated Regional Water Management - \$5,000
- Mike Thompson Congressional Community Funds - \$300,000
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - \$20,000
- Blue Ribbon Committee for Restoration of Clear Lake - \$80,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- County of Lake Board of Supervisors
- Scotts Valley Advisory Council of Lake County
- Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecilia M. Aguilar-Curry, District 4

Staff Recommendation

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

43. Lower Bear Creek Habitat Enhancement Implementation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$4,636,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Mattole River Group

County: Humboldt

Landowner: Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, Humboldt County Department of Public Works, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Private Landowner

Location: Approximately 3.8 miles west of Portola

Project Highlights

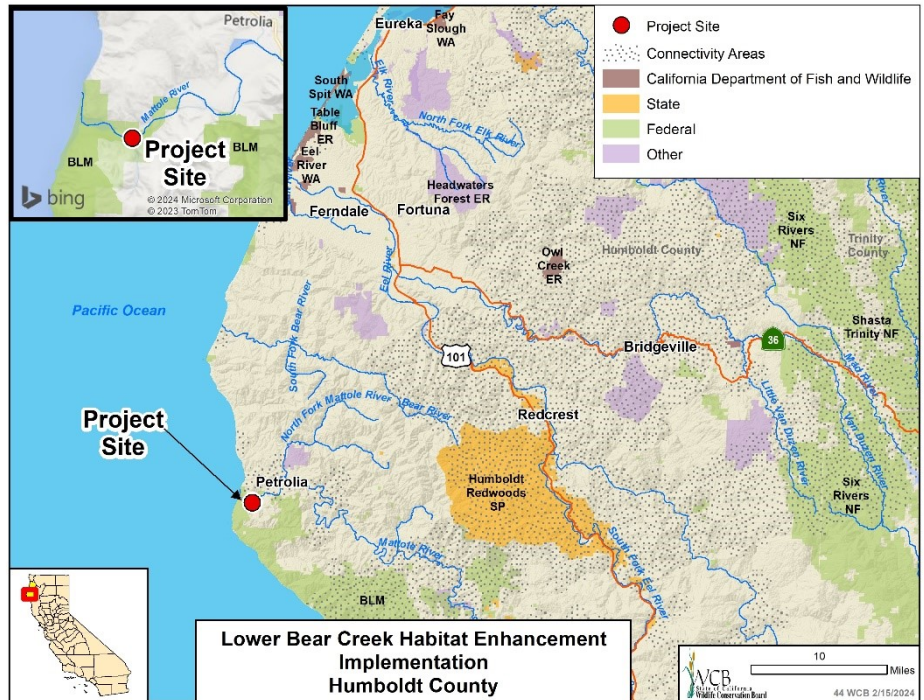
- Reconnects an important stream for Chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead.
- Provides cold water to the Mattole River Estuary.
- Improves habitat for many riparian species.
- Builds on previous WCB funded planning work.
- Connects with other habitat restoration projects on the Mattole River.
- Improves public safety and access.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria is one of the landowners and is a federally recognized tribe
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3

Project Description

Bear Creek was channelized when Lighthouse Road was established through this area. Currently, Lower Bear Creek is disconnected from the Mattole estuary, except at high flows when excess water skirts an obsolete culvert and flows over Lighthouse Road, spilling into the mainstem Mattole. In this current configuration Lower Bear Creek offers little to no habitat for salmonids. Additionally, winter flows from Lower Bear Creek have continuously eroded the north side of Lighthouse Road, posing a danger to the



residents and users of the road. To address these issues, this project will remove the undersized culvert that separates Lower Bear Creek from the Mattole River Estuary and replace it with a bridge. This will allow fish to freely move up Bear Creek to access historic habitat, reconnect Lower Bear Creek to its historic floodplain, allow the cold water of Bear Creek to flow into the Mattole River Estuary and prevent further erosion of Lighthouse Road. This project will also install large woody debris in Lower Bear Creek to increase channel complexity, provide salmonid habitat, and high flow refugia.

Removal of undersized culvert and replacement with a bridge which will:

- Allow cold water to move freely from Bear Creek into the Mattole River Estuary.
- Allow fish to access their historic habitat in the Bear Creek watershed.
- Improve habitat for numerous riparian species.
- Improve habitat for several federally listed species.
- Improve safety and access to and through the project area for the human population.
- Herbicide: No

Key Management Responsibilities

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management and Reporting	---	\$51,400	\$51,400
Pre-Construction Coordination	---	\$137,200	\$137,200
Contractor Selection	---	\$39,000	\$39,000
Construction Management	---	\$353,100	\$353,100
Construction and Revegetation	\$4,027,000	\$1,449,900	\$5,476,900
Pre- and Post-Project Monitoring	\$25,000	\$70,500	\$95,500
Indirect Costs	\$405,000	\$205,000	\$610,000

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Contingency	\$179,000	---	\$179,000
Total	\$4,636,000	\$2,306,100	\$6,942,100

Non-WCB funders include:

- California State Coastal Conservancy - \$2,255,000
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management - \$9,900
- Humboldt County Department of Public Works - \$41,200

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jared Huffman, 2nd District, U.S. House of Representatives
- Jim Wood, 2nd District, California State Assemblymember
- Rex Bohn, 1st District Supervisor, Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
- Edward “Gusto” Bowie, Tribal Council Member-at-Large, Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria
- Justin Crellin, Administrative Director, Friends of the Lost Coast
- Sarah Vroom, Executive Director, Mattole Restoration Council

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Humboldt County Department of Public Works, as lead agency, prepared a(n) MND (SCH#2022120036) 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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jim Wood, District 2

Staff Recommendation

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

44. Marshall Ranch Flow Enhancement Augmentation

Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$570,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB154)

Grantee: Salmonid Restoration Federation

Landowner: The Marshall Ranch, LLC

County: Humboldt

Location: Briceland

Project Highlights

- Marshall Ranch is adjacent to Redwood Creek, a tributary to the South Fork Eel River. It contains high-value habitat for coho salmon recovery but is severely impacted by low summer flows.
- The 2,942-acre ranch is protected by a conservation easement which is managed by the California Rangeland Trust.
- This project will help to implement: NOAA's Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho Salmon Recovery Plan; North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's Action Plan to Implement Water Quality Objectives for Temperature in the Mattole, Navarro, and Eel River Watersheds; California Water Action Plan.



Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: The property is owned by a Wailaki California Native still living on the documented ancestral land of their direct ancestors. The land is being managed as native ancestral land with direct support and partnership of the Wailaki Tribe, White Lily Clan. The project is being overseen by the general manager of the Ranch, who is also the Director of Natural Resources for the Wailaki Tribe.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B1 and Objective 2.3

Project Description

Marshall Ranch Flow Enhancement (Project) was approved by WCB in May of 2022 for \$4,198,589 and addresses the key limiting factor of low dry-season flows by capturing winter runoff during the wet season and strategically releasing the stored water to enhance flows in a critical reach of Redwood Creek during the dry season. The Project will construct a total of 10 million gallons of water storage, designed to fill with rainwater (3.5 million gallons) and water diverted from two Redwood Creek tributaries during the wet season (6.5 million gallons). The dry-season releases will provide increased flows of approximately 30 gallons per minute (gpm) along the 5.5-mile stream reach between Briceland and the confluence with the South Fork Eel River, resulting in significant and measurable habitat improvements for coho salmon and steelhead in Redwood Creek.

A majority of the Project has been completed, including the two off-stream ponds, 100,000 gallons in 20 storage tanks, road upgrades, gully stabilization, in-stream large wood habitat structures, all plumbing and electrical infrastructure, and grid intertie solar system. Work planned for 2024 includes an additional 90,000-gallon tank, security and livestock fencing, two super valves to automate flow releases, and topping with washed gravel to extend the life of the pond liners. While construction has generally proceeded as planned, several factors have caused overruns in the Project's original budget:

1. Approximately 5,000 cubic yards of additional earthwork was necessary to construct the western pond.
2. The construction budget was prepared in December 2020 and accounted for annual cost escalation of labor and fuel, but materials costs have risen significantly in the past three years.
3. After experimenting with the native gravel onsite for liner topping material, it was determined that imported rock will be needed.
4. The Project was originally designed with an off-grid solar system to operate the pumps and controls. However, during the pre-construction and final design phase, it was determined that a grid-intertie system would allow for higher operational flexibility and aeration of the ponds to maintain water quality.
5. The construction schedule was originally planned for one season, but for various reasons was extended to two seasons, which slightly increases the contractor's mobilization costs.

Therefore, an augmentation of \$570,000 is proposed to complete the Project in a manner that optimizes its functionality and longevity.

- Herbicide: No

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Augmentation Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$120,000	---	---	\$120,000
Technical Advisory Committee and Outreach	\$110,000	---	---	\$110,000
Pre-construction Preparation	\$115,000	---	---	\$115,000
Construction	\$3,252,480	\$100,000	\$570,000	\$3,922,480
Post-construction Monitoring, Operations and Adaptive Management	\$340,480	---	---	\$340,480
Indirect Costs	\$60,696	---	---	\$60,696
Contingency	\$199,933	---	---	\$199,933
Total	\$4,198,589	\$100,000	\$570,000	\$4,868,589

Non-WCB funders include:

- The Marshall Ranch LLC - \$100,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Representative Jared Huffman, U.S. House of Representatives
- Matthias St. John, Executive Officer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jim Wood, District 2

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this Project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this Project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

45. California Onward Capacity Building and Grant Program

**Acquisition – Planning
Block Grant**

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature-Based Solutions Provision (AB179, Sec. 83(3)(a); and General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature Based Solutions, DAC Provision (AB179, Sec. 83(3)(a)

Grantee: California Council of Land Trusts (CCLT)

WCB Grant: \$5,000,000

Location: Statewide

Project Highlights

- Launch of the California Onward Capacity Building and Grant Program for land trusts and their partners.
- Achieve goals to develop durable conservation projects that protect biodiversity.
- Increase climate change resiliency.
- Benefits DAC/SDACs in California.
- Helps to complete necessary due diligence for conservation easement and fee projects and increases technical capacity of smaller conservation organizations and California Native American Tribes to conserve lands.
- Build a pipeline of in-progress conservation projects, totaling over one million acres, that directly contribute to goals in Pathways to 30x30 and the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy (NWLCCS).

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities/Tribal Partnerships: Program will prioritize projects that engage and/or benefit California Native American Tribes, Native-led organizations, and DACs/SDACs.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1, Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation; Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions; Pathway 3, Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2
- Public Access: N/A

Project Description

The project, a collaboration between CCLT and the Land Trust Alliance (the Alliance), would launch the California Onward Capacity Building and Grant Program (California Onward) for land trusts and their partners. This program will engage, train, and equip California land trusts and their partners, with a focus on disadvantaged communities and California Native American Communities, to accelerate the pace, scale, diversity, and durability of conservation across California. California Onward will develop and implement a communications and outreach strategy and conduct a program evaluation with two goals in mind: 1) supporting participation of DAC/SDACs, California Native American Tribes, native led organizations, and small land trusts in the California Onward Grant Program, and 2) reporting on outcomes and activities of the grant

program and the technical assistance program in relation to the goals of 30x30 and the NWLCSS.

CCLT has studied land trust survey responses, referred to 30x30 and NWLCSS goals, and leveraged the team’s experience as leaders in the California land trust community in administering successful block land trust grant programs to develop two categories of grants:

- Transaction Grants for new conservation easement and fee-acquisition projects that result in strategic, permanent conservation and directly contribute to the goals of 30x30 and/or the NWLCSS. Eligible costs include legal fees, baseline surveys, contractor expenses, staff expenses, land appraisals, due diligence costs, and more. It is anticipated that most of the funding will be awarded in this category.
- Organizational Advancement Grants to build solid, sustainable organizations that are strong community institutions and authentic partners, leading to greater conservation impact. Eligible costs include strategic planning, expanding Indigenous stewardship of conserved lands, and more.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
California Onward Grant Program	\$3,904,683	\$1,050,000	\$4,954,683
Technical Assistance Program	\$376,000	---	\$376,000
Administration, Evaluation, and Communication	\$265,000	---	\$265,000
Indirect	\$454,317	---	\$454,317
Total	\$5,000,000	\$1,050,000	\$6,050,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Department of Conservation's Climate Smart Land Management Capacity Building Program - \$1,050,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Senator John Laird, Seventh Senate District, California State Senate
- Bridgette M. Fithian, Executive Director, Sierra Foothill Conservancy
- Mark Silberstein, Executive Director, Elkhorn Slough Foundation
- Jeannette Tuitele-Lewis, President and CEO, Big Sur Land Trust

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- Paul C. Ringgold, Chief Program Officer, Save the Redwoods League
- Kaila Dettman, Executive Director, The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the grant of funds to CCLT for a project to administer a block grant for the California Onward Capacity Building and Grant Program is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, as a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. Prior to commencement of any project funded by CCLT through the California Onward Capacity Building and Grant Program, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed.

State Government

- Senate: N/A, Statewide
- Assembly: N/A, Statewide

Staff Recommendation

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

46. Block Grant Update – In 2022, three block grants were approved and with a request that an update on progress be given after a year of implementation.

47. Delegation of Authority for Grant Agreement Augmentation Amendments

This proposal is to consider the delegation of authority to the Executive Director of WCB to execute amendments to existing Grant Agreements for budget augmentations up to a certain amount. Currently, WCB must take requests for budget augmentations to the Board for approval.

Background

Many projects inadvertently exceed an approved budget due to rising labor and materials costs, or other unforeseen circumstances. Currently, requests for budget augmentations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and, if recommended for funding, are brought to the Board for approval. Challenges with the current approach include:

1. Staff time to prepare augmentation requests take as much time as that required for a new project.
2. Grantees must wait until one of the four Board meetings per year for an augmentation approval, which can further delay the project.

Currently, to reduce the need for augmentation requests, projects are approved with a contingency of up to 10% of the total project cost. This obligates funding that could otherwise be allocated to other projects.

Analysis

The Boards of other granting agencies have delegated authority to the Executive Director to approve budget augmentations. For example, the State Coastal Conservancy allows its Executive Officer to approve augmentations up to 15% of the original award and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy allows its Executive Officer to approve augmentations up to 10%. WCB could adopt a similar authority; however, an analysis of WCB augmentations from the past few years showed that most (15 out of 19) were over 15% of the original award, which would result in most augmentations still requiring Board approval. The analysis also showed that the majority (13 out of 19) were at or under \$300,000, and the approved augmentations totaled, on average, approximately \$1 million per year. Staff notes that projects that use herbicides generally require Board discussion regardless of cost and should therefore be brought before the Board in all cases.

Recommendation

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends the Board:

- Approve the delegation of augmentation authorization to the Executive Director for augmentations up to \$300,00,
- Authorize a yearly augmentation fund of \$1 million to be set aside for this use,
- Exclude from the delegation, projects that include herbicide use, and

- Require an annual accounting of projects that use the delegated authority.

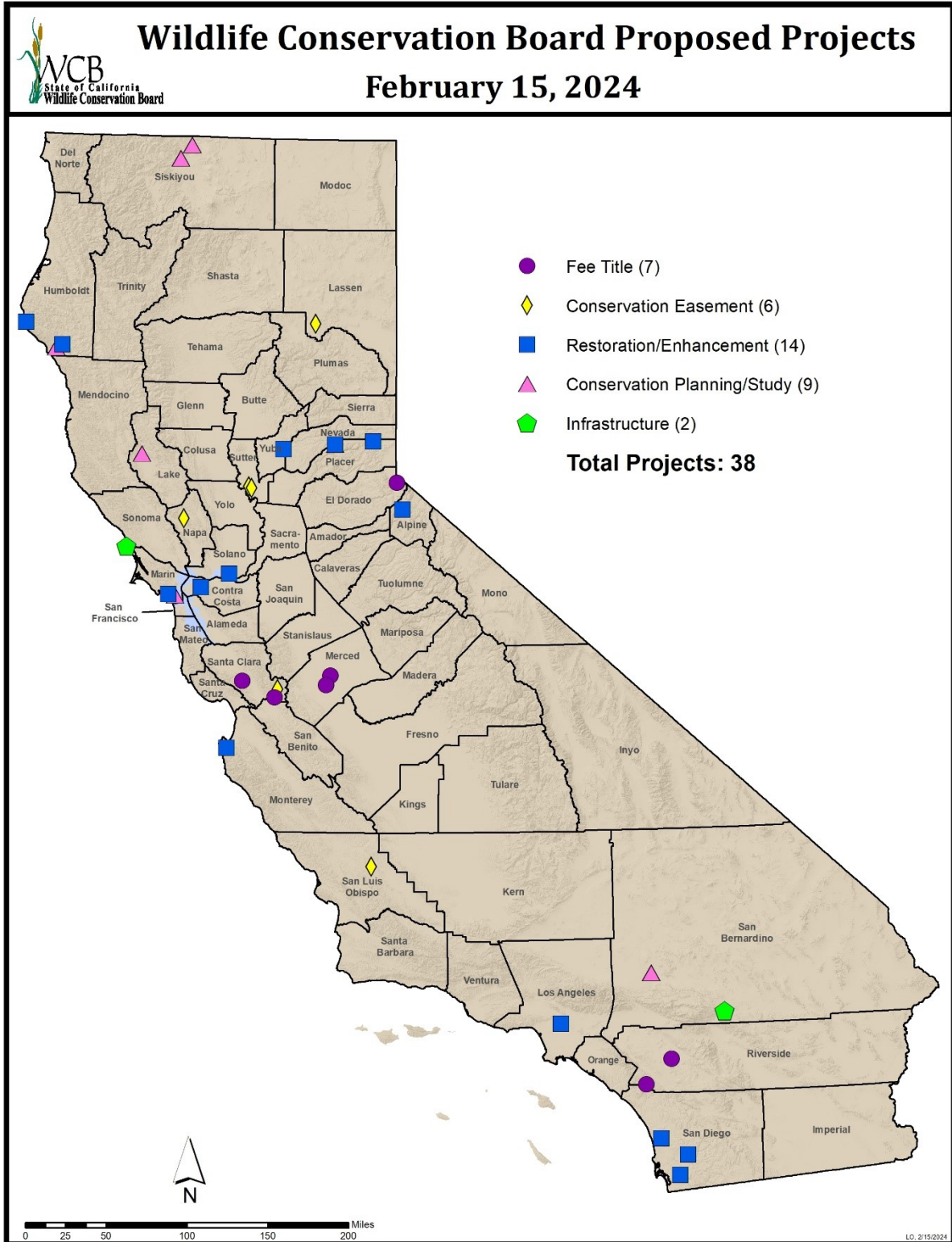
Once the original yearly augmentation fund has been depleted, the Executive Director may request Board approval for additional augmentation funding to be set aside.

48. 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)

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF FEBRUARY 15, 2024, PROJECTS



ATTACHMENT B – WCB DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

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

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

Justice Community(ies) – a community within census tracts that have the top 25% of the [CalEnviroScreen 4.0](#) overall score; a community within census tracts designated as severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC) according to the [Department of Water Resources' Disadvantaged Communities Mapping tool](#); or are a California Native American tribe or Native American-led nonprofit organization.

ACRONYMS

Americans with Disabilities Act	ADA
Bureau of Land Management	BLM
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	CDFW
California Department of Finance	DOF
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	CAL FIRE
California Department of General Services	DGS
California Department of Transportation	Caltrans
California Department of Water Resources	DWR
California Endangered Species Act	CESA
California Environmental Quality Act	CEQA
California Fish and Game Commission	FGC
California Natural Resources Agency	CNRA
Conceptual Area Protection Plan	CAPP
Disadvantaged Community	DAC
Enactment Year	EY
Habitat Conservation Plan	HCP
Land Acquisition Evaluation	LAE
Mitigated Negative Declaration	MND
National Environmental Policy Act	NEPA
National Marine Fisheries Service	NMFS
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA
Natural Community Conservation Plan	NCCP
Negative Declaration	ND
Notice of Determination	NOD
Notice of Exemption	NOE
Resource Conservation District	RCD
Resource Conservation Investment Strategy	RCIS
Severely Disadvantaged Community	SDAC
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	SNC
State Coastal Conservancy	SCC

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
Tahoe National Forest
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Wildlife Conservation Board

SGMA
TNF
USFWS
USFS
WCB

ATTACHMENT C – WCB STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL A. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GOAL B. ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

GOAL C. PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION

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

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

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

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

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

GOAL E. Fiscal and Organizational Effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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