



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

### WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

May 23, 2024, 9:30 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: 664759

\*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 [Eddie.Story@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Eddie.Story@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, May 23, 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](mailto: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  
Samantha Murray, 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:

<b>GENERAL FUND (0001)</b>	<b>\$381,943,901.70</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(112,501,441.00)
Total Project Development:	(57,327,333.26)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$212,115,127.44</b>
<b>HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)</b>	<b>\$55,699,641.31</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(4,692,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(801,150.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$50,206,491.31</b>
<b>GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)</b>	<b>\$1,477,104.95</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$1,477,104.95</b>
<b>CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)</b>	<b>\$307,744.01</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$307,744.01</b>
<b>WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)</b>	<b>\$7,088,323.43</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(5,231,066.74)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$1,857,256.69</b>
<b>SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)</b>	<b>\$6,833,764.36</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,520,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$4,313,764.36</b>

<b>WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)</b>	<b>\$49,302,587.81</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$49,302,587.81</b>
<b>THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)</b>	<b>\$70,384,574.57</b>
May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(2,383,420.00)
Total Project Development:	(8,322,400.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$59,678,754.57</b>
<b>TOTAL – ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$573,037,642.14</b>
Grand Total – May 2024 Board Meeting Allocation:	(119,576,861.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(74,201,950.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	<b>\$379,258,831.14</b>

## Consent Items

Items 7-34 are part of the Consent Calendar

**7. Recovery of Funds, Thursday, May 23, 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*

<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
General Fund	\$149,385.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund	\$0.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$209,732.48
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	\$98,099.44
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$178.48
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002	\$87,141.13
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$83,116.83
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$6,247.33
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$2,889,331.49
<b>Total Recoveries for All Funds</b>	<b>\$3,530,232.18</b>

*Table 2 - General Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Keithly Wetland Preserve	\$870,000.00	\$859,240.00	\$10,760.00
Lone Pine Ranch, Phase III	\$3,945,000.00	\$3,942,657.00	\$2,343.00
Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, Expansion 6	\$30,050,000.00	\$30,044,072.00	\$5,928.00
Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Section 6 (Schroeder)	\$111,000.00	\$1000,700.00	\$10,300.00
Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Section 6 (Sterling)	\$163,000.00	\$147,559.00	\$15,441.00
Shasta Timberlands Working Forest Conservation Easement	\$5,717,000.00	\$5,699,522.00	\$17,478.00
Snell Valley Ranch	\$1,850,000.00	\$1,834,000.00	\$46,600.00
Tahoe Forest Gateway (Leidesdorff)	\$2,270,000.00	\$2,259,465.00	\$10,535.00
Walt Ranch	\$7,030,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	\$30,000.00
<b>Total Recoveries to General Fund</b>			<b>\$149,385.00</b>

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

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project, Phase II	\$4,750,000.00	\$4,750,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

*Table 4- Habitat Conservation Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Chollas Creek Riparian Restoration - Planning	\$970,000.00	\$766,639.00	\$203,361.00
Garden Bar Preserve Riparian and Wetland Restoration	\$226,000.00	\$220,061.09	\$5,938.91
San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area Salt Cedar Eradication	552,000.00	\$551,567.43	\$432.57
<b>Total Recoveries Habitat Conservation Fund</b>			<b>\$209,732.48</b>

*Table 5- Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
North Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Planning	\$310,000.00	\$280,916.01	\$29,08.99
Sierra National Forest, Meadows Restoration Planning	\$430,100.00	\$361,084.55	\$69,015.45
Stonebridge Mesa and Santa Carina Terrace Climate Adaptation and Resilience Project Resilience Project	\$759,000.00	\$759,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund</b>			<b>\$98,099.44</b>

*Table 6 - California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Carr Lake Restoration Planning	\$776,000.00	\$775,821.52	\$178.48
Otay Mesa Habitat Restoration Project	\$384,600.00	\$384,600.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund</b>			<b>\$178.48</b>

*Table 7- Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Malibu Creek Rindge Dam Removal, Planning	\$610,000.00	\$605,236.23	\$4,763.77
Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project, Phase II	\$9,250,443.00	\$9,250,000.00	\$443.00
Santa Clara River Riparian Restoration	\$1,010,000.00	\$1,009,999.98	\$0.02
Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration, Phase II	\$450,000.00	\$400,224.80	\$49,775.20
Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration, Planning and Design	\$895,000.00	\$808,132.36	\$86,867.64
Upper Devereux Slough Restoration	\$3,820,000.00	\$3,819,999.56	\$0.44
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002</b>			<b>\$141,850.07</b>

*Table 8- Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Habitat Enhancement Project	\$218,660.00	\$135,543.17	\$83,116.83
<b>Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006</b>			<b>\$83,116.83</b>

*Table 9- Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Developing Efficiencies for Instream Dedication	\$131,744.00	\$126,944.67	\$4,799.33
Hart Ranch Instream Flow Enhancement	\$2,181,282.00	\$2,181,281.99	\$0.01
Lower Perazzo Meadow Restoration	\$1,980,504.00	\$1,979,056.01	\$1,447.99
Porter Creek Stream Flow Enhancement Project, Phase II	\$530,366.00	\$530,366.00	\$0.00
Redwood Creek Floodplain Restoration Design	\$497,779.00	\$497,779.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>			<b>\$6,247.33</b>

*Table 10- The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018*

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Balance</b>
American River Ranch Parking Lot	\$499,000.00	\$457,246.44	\$41,753.56
Ansel Adams Wilderness Restoration	\$836,337.00	\$427,372.15	\$408,964.85
Cactus Wren and Hermes Copper Butterfly Habitat Restoration Project	\$423,000.00	\$397,113.13	\$25,886.87
Camp Pollock Site Improvement	\$176,000.00	\$176,000.00	\$0.00
Del Valle Regional Park Restroom Renovation	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
Doolittle Boat Launch Facility Improvements	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$0.00
Jameson Creek Fish Passage Improvement and Restoration	\$998,000.00	\$867,980.62	\$130,019.38
Kings Canyon Restoration	\$933,000.00	\$172,633.69	\$760,366.31
Liberty Canyon Wildlife Underpass Project	\$390,000.00	\$389,999.99	\$0.01
Los Angeles River Fish Passage and Habitat Structures Design	\$1,356,000.00	\$1,355,968.84	\$31.16
Mad River Estuary Public Access Enhancement	\$367,745.00	\$367,744.37	\$0.63
Point Pinole Overwintering and Forage Enhancement	\$203,000.00	\$203,000.00	\$0.00
San Pedro Creek at Adobe Bridge Fish Passage Planning	\$171,000.00	\$170,061.44	\$938.56
Snell Valley Ranch	\$10,132.60	\$10,132.60	\$0.00
Upper Mokelumne Forest Restoration	\$1,932,000.00	\$483,000.00	\$1,449,000.00
Upper Truckee River Marsh Restoration	\$2,980,000.00	\$2,980,000.00	\$0.00
Western Spadefoot Habitat Restoration and Seasonal Pool Creation	\$750,000.00	\$687,762.44	\$69,237.56
<b>Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018</b>			<b>\$2,886,198.89</b>

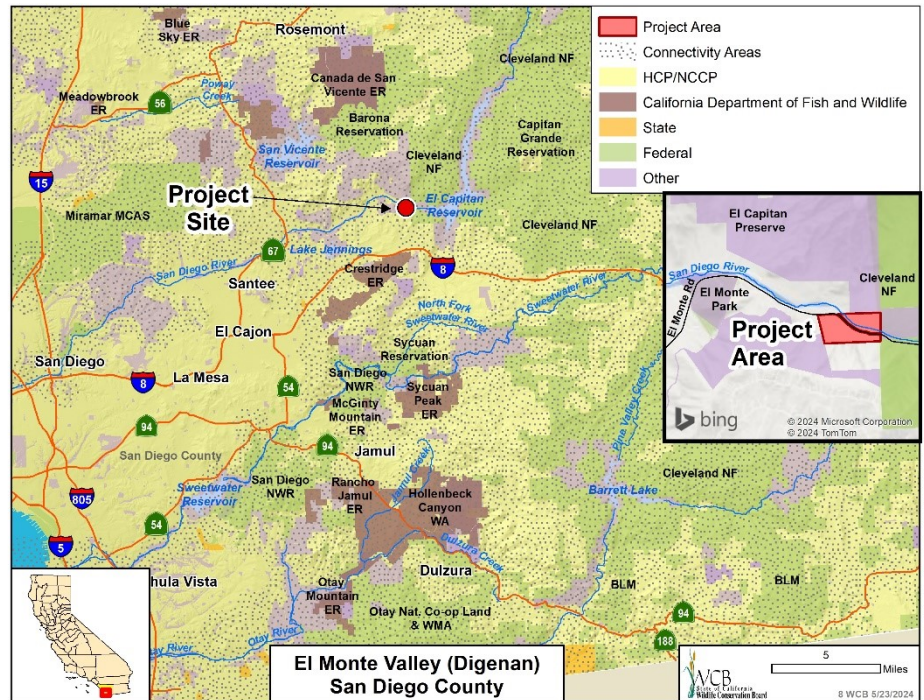
## 8. El Monte Valley (Digenan)

Fund Source: General Fund AB179, Sec.83(3)(a)  
 Grantee: Lakeside's River Park Conservancy (LRPC)  
 Successor Grantee: County of San Diego  
 County: San Diego  
 WCB Grant: \$810,000  
 Location: Eight miles east of the city of Santee  
 Acres: 75± (Property)

**Acquisition  
 Fee**

### Property Highlights

- Features the San Diego River, including its riparian corridor on the north side and steep hillsides of coastal sage scrub on its south side.
- Expands a wildlife corridor connection with other nearby local, state, and federal conserved lands, including El Capitan County Preserve, El Monte County Park, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, and Cleveland National Forest.
- Forms a critical linkage in the San Diego River Trail system connection to the regional Trans-County Trail by preserving the Property's flume trail. The Trans-County Trail runs from the Salton Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The Property is just south of the popular, yet strenuous, hiking destination of El Cajon Mountain, aka "El Capitan."
- Habitats represented: Diegan coastal sage scrub, coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral, southern live oak riparian forest, oak woodland, and southern willow forest.
- Key species: coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and quino checkerspot butterfly.
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Planning Area.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes, existing hiking trails will be preserved and, with CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) coordination, link other regional trails where there are no current connections.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

After acquisition, LRPC will transfer the land to the County of San Diego to be added to the County’s extensive preserve system. The Property connects the County’s El Monte County Park to the County’s 2,619-acre El Capitan Preserve, so staff and resources are available nearby to effectively manage the Property. The County plans to accept the Property transfer by summer 2024. WCB’s land use restrictions will remain in effect.

### Project Funding

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$1,500,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$810,000
California Natural Resources Agency	\$690,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,500,000

### 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 Brian Jones, District 40
- 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 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to proceed substantially as planned.

## 9. Santa Rosa Hills

Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117)

Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)

Grantee: Oswit Land Trust

County: Riverside

WCB Grant: \$347,000

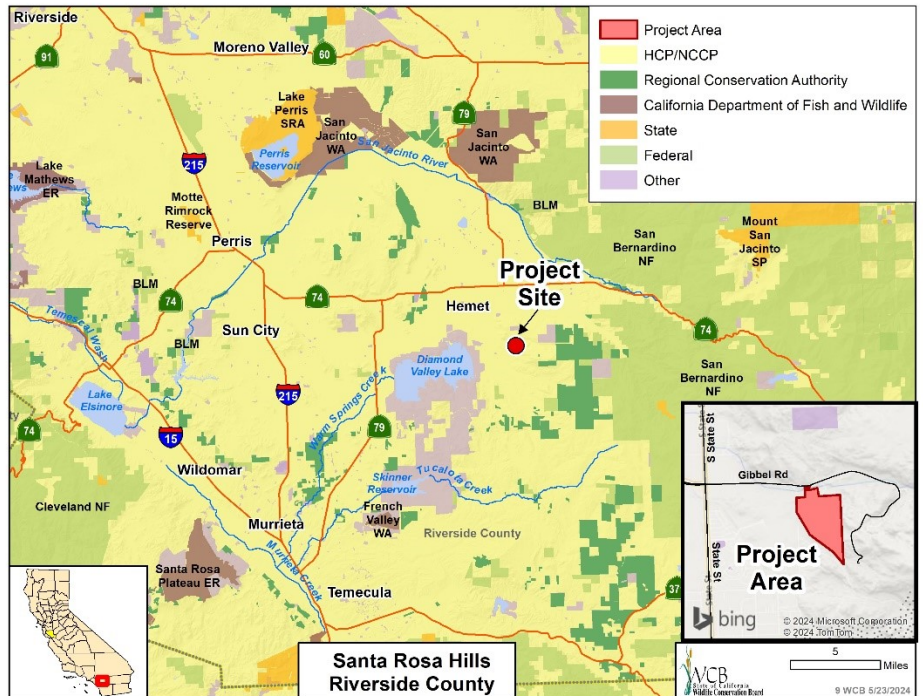
Location: One mile east of the city of Hemet

Acres: 165± (Property)

**Acquisition  
Fee**

### Property Highlights

- Protects critical habitat at a wildland-urban interface in the San Jacinto Mountain foothills.
- Strengthens wildlife corridor connectivity with other nearby local, state, and federal conserved lands, including the San Bernardino National Forest.
- Habitats represented: Riversidian sage scrub, Diegan coastal sage scrub, coast live oak woodland, and oak riparian woodland.
- Key species: coastal California gnatcatcher, San Bernardino kangaroo rat, and red-diamond rattlesnake.
- Regional or Species Plan: State Wildlife Action Plan - Southern California Mountain and Valley Ecoregion.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes, access to existing trails will be preserved.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

Oswit Land Trust, a member of the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), will permanently manage the Property upon acquisition, guided by LTA's recommended best management practices.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,347,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$347,000
California Natural Resources Agency	\$1,000,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,347,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Edwin Sauls, Chief Executive Officer, The California Land Conservancy
- Cinda Johansen, Co-founder, Palm Springs Wildlife Advocates
- Riana Fisher, Program Manager, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
- Tamara Hedges, Executive Director, UC Riverside Palm Desert Center

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 Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36

### 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.

### 10. Western Riverside MSHCP Johnson

**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: \$371,000

USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$689,000

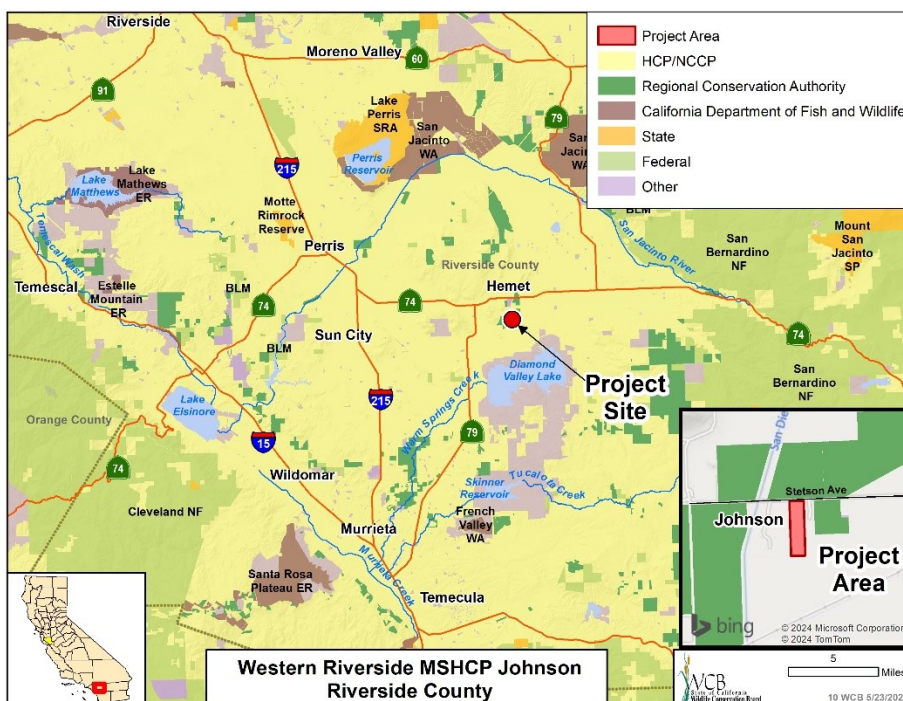
Location: In the city of Hemet

Acres: 10± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- Features rare vernal pools which will increase the expanse of the Hemet Vernal Pool Area.
- Protects vernal pool habitats, supports many native plant and animal species, and preserves an important connective part of California’s wetland ecosystems.
- Key species: San Jacinto Valley crowscale, spreading navarretia, and expected vernal pool fairy shrimp.
- Regional or Species

Plan: Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: No

#### 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 monitor, steward, and study its conserved lands. Local development mitigation fees and other local sources fund RCA’s endowment for long-term management. The Property and its environs historically supported playas and vernal

pools and RCA plans to restore the Property to foster the vernal pools' natural conditions.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,060,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$371,000
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	\$689,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,060,000

### 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 Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh, District 23
- Assembly: Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36

### 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. Eastern Coachella Valley Ecological Public Space

## Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$1,018,000

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

Grantee: Kounkuey Design Initiative, Inc.

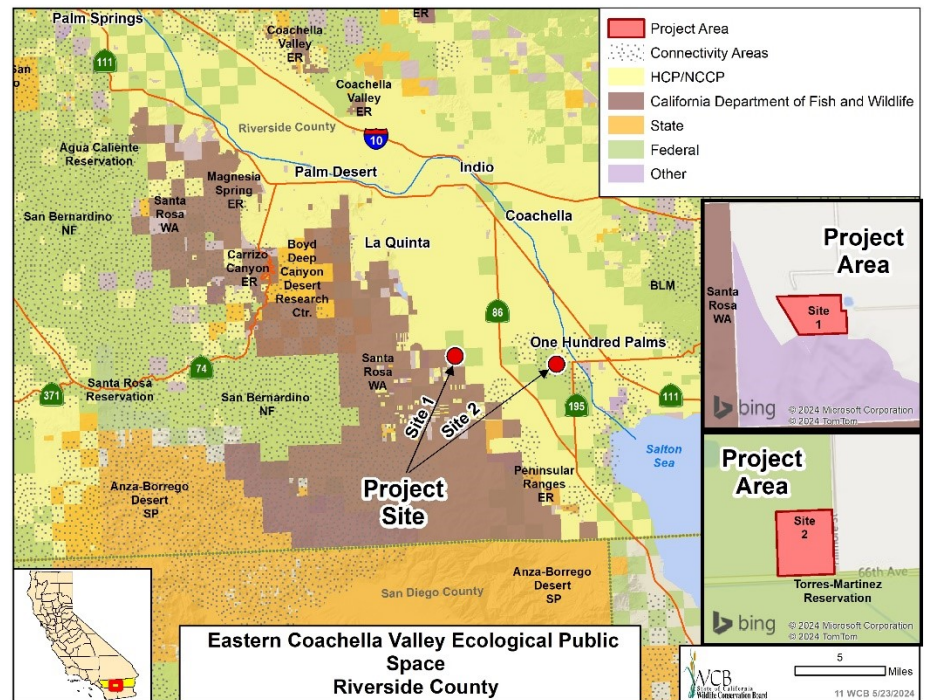
Landowner: Friends of the Desert Mountains and the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

Location: Site 1: located approximately nine miles west of the community of Thermal, Riverside County

Site 2: located within the community of Thermal, Riverside County

### Project Highlights

- Incredible opportunity to plan two open space areas that connect the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian tribe and local community to desert habitats and celebrate their cultural heritage.
- The planning process will include the participation of the Torres Martinez Youth Council and The Living Desert's Tribal Youth Environmental Ambassadors to imagine what a space that celebrates their culture, relationship to land, and traditional ecological practices could look like.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes  
Site 1: located within a DAC  
Site 2: located within a SDAC
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Tribe, a collaboration partner, and a federally recognized tribe
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B and C and Objectives 3.1, 3.4

### Project Description

The Eastern Coachella Valley Ecological Public Space planning (Project) proposes to design and produce shovel-ready documentation for two sites that hold immense potential to increase outdoor access, build traditional ecological knowledge, provide opportunities for indigenous and environmental education, and restore habitat through native planting design. The Project proposes the following for each site:

- Meetings with Youth Environmental Ambassadors
- Design workshops with community and tribal members
- Topographic survey, ecological survey/assessment, historical resource survey (if needed)
- 100% Design Development drawing set
- 75% Construction Documentation drawing set
- 100% Construction Documentation/Bid Set
- Cost Estimation for Construction
- Herbicide: N/A

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Outreach and Engagement	\$224,316	---	\$224,316
Design Development	\$358,512	---	\$358,512
Construction Documents	\$382,156	---	\$382,156
Bid Documents	\$53,016	---	\$53,016
Total	\$1,018,000	---	\$1,018,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Joseph DL Mirelez, Vice Chairman, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Oscar Ortiz, Director of Education, Friends of the Desert Mountains

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 Steve Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Louis Robidoux Nature Center Nursery and Restoration Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$1,265,826

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

Grantee: Southern California Mountains Foundation

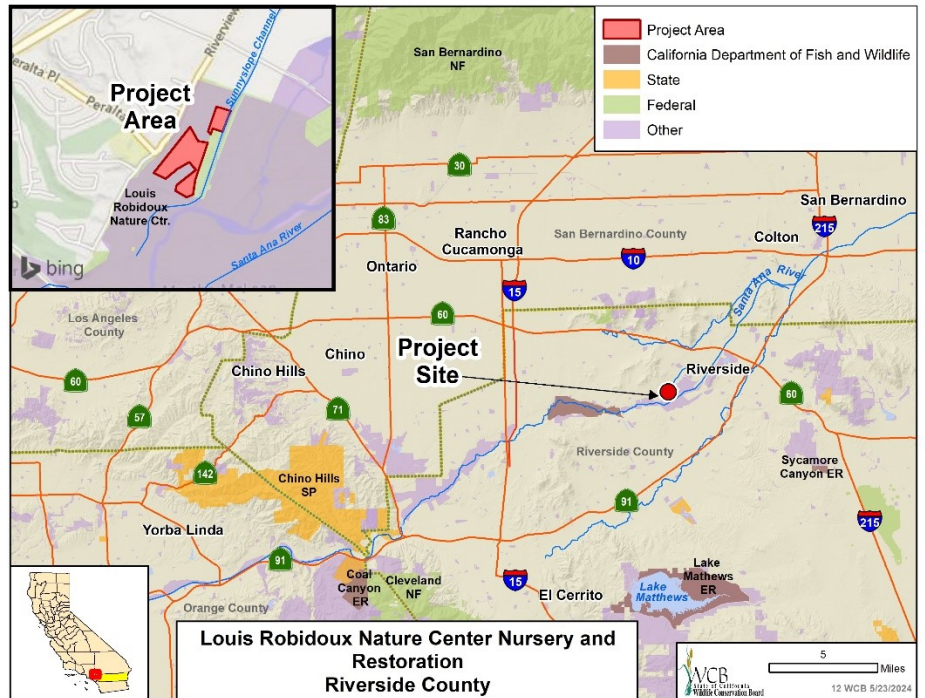
Landowner: Riverside County Park and Open Space District

Location: Project is located in Jurupa Valley, Riverside County

Located within a disadvantaged community.

### Project Highlights

- Building a much-needed native plant nursery to meet regional restoration needs.
- Training a workforce of young adults ages 18-26 from disadvantaged communities on how to do conservation work. Training will include erecting a nursery, collecting seed, cleaning seed, seed storage, propagation, invasive species removal, planting natives, and maintaining the habitat.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B and C and Objectives 1.3, 3.1

### Project Description

A critical need for locally sourced native plant materials and a trained restoration workforce was identified by the Louis Robidoux Nature Center Consortium, which consists of the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, Orange County Water District, Huerta del Valle (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization), and Sunshine Haven Wildlife Rehabilitation (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization). The Louis Robidoux Nature Center Nursery and Restoration (Project) proposes to construct a 1500-square-foot native plant nursery and train a

workforce of young adults on how to restore habitat. The Project consists of the following:

- Remove up to 40 acres of non-native invasive species by hand and without the use of herbicide.
- Construct a 1500-square-foot nursery, which will be free from *Phytophthora*, a fungus lethal to native plants.
- Grow and plant 800-1,000 native plants on 10 acres of currently disturbed habitat adjacent to Sunnyslope Creek.
- Train the Inland Empire Urban Conservation Corps in ecological restoration practices including such things as native plant identification, soil stabilization practices, seed collection, labeling and storage, native plant propagation, planting of native plants, restoration site monitoring and care, and construction of the nursery.
- Herbicide: No

### Key Management Responsibilities

The Consortium managing the nature center property has long-term management responsibilities and has adopted a Management Services Agreement 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	\$119,382	\$171,207	\$290,589
Native Nursery Buildout	\$203,450	---	\$203,450
Native Plant Restoration	\$358,666	---	\$358,666
Monitoring	\$55,896	---	\$55,896
Invasive Species Removal	\$363,324		\$363,324
Indirect Costs	\$165,108		\$165,108
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,265,826</b>	<b>\$171,207</b>	<b>\$1,437,033</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- Inland Empire Resource Conservation District - \$156,207
- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District - \$15,000

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- Mandy Parkes, District Manager, Inland Empire Resource Conservation District
- Heather Dyer, CEO/General Manager, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

### Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, consisting of minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

## State Government

- Senate: Senator Richard Roth, District 31
- Assembly: Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes, District 58

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

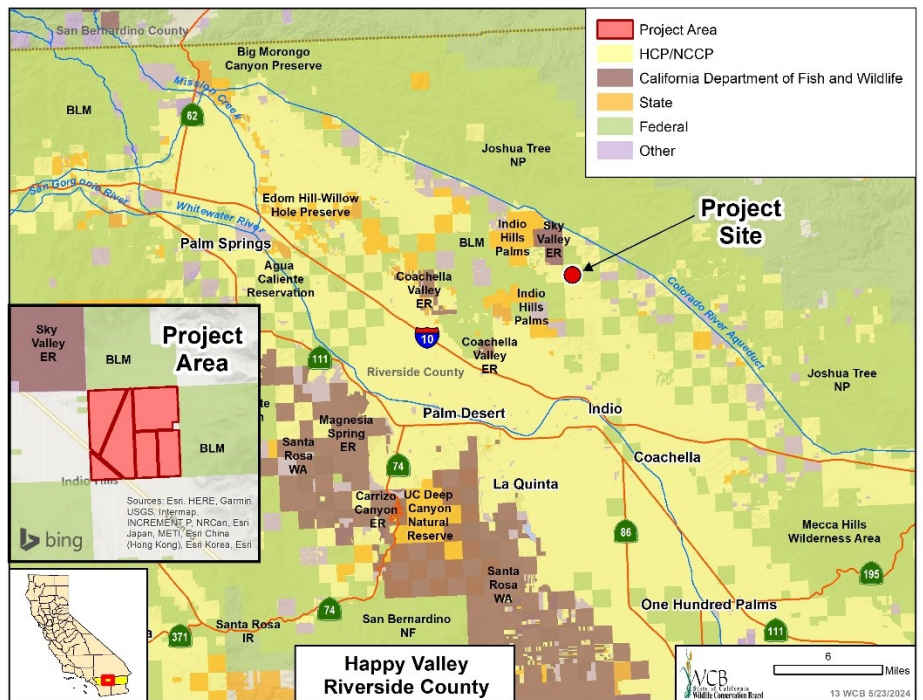
### 13. Happy Valley

**Acquisition  
Fee**

Fund Source: General Fund, Budget Act of 2022,  
Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154)  
Grantee: Oswit Land Trust (OST)  
County: Riverside  
WCB Grant: \$1,400,000  
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$2,600,000  
Location: Indio Hills  
Acres: 639± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: alluvial fan from the discharge of two drainages, the primary being Upper Pushawalla Canyon, and creosote scrub habitat
- Pristine, high value habitat with little disturbance
- Key species: federally and state threatened Mojave desert tortoise
- California Species of Special Concern include: burrowing owl, Le Conte's thrasher, Palm Springs (Coachella Valley) round-tailed squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and yellow warbler
- Regional or Species Plan: Coachella Valley MSHCP/NCCP, 2011 Revised Recovery Plan for the Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise
- Property is contiguous with two Coachella Valley MSHCP/NCCP conservation areas that provide core habitat for the desert tortoise: the 13,419-acre Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Area to the east and the 90,000-acre Desert Tortoise and Linkage Conservation Area to the north.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

OST will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices. The Property will be monitored weekly with biannual full site inspections in March and September. Work on the Property will be completed by OST's staff or volunteer work crew, and the costs for materials and staff time will be covered by active donors.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$4,775,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$4,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,400,000
FWS Section 6 funds	\$2,600,000
Landowner Bargain Sale	\$775,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$4,000,000

### 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 Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Angeles Linkage

Fund Source: Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117),  
Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)

Grantee: Trust for Public Land (TPL)

Successor Grantee: Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)

County: Los Angeles

WCB Grant: \$824,000

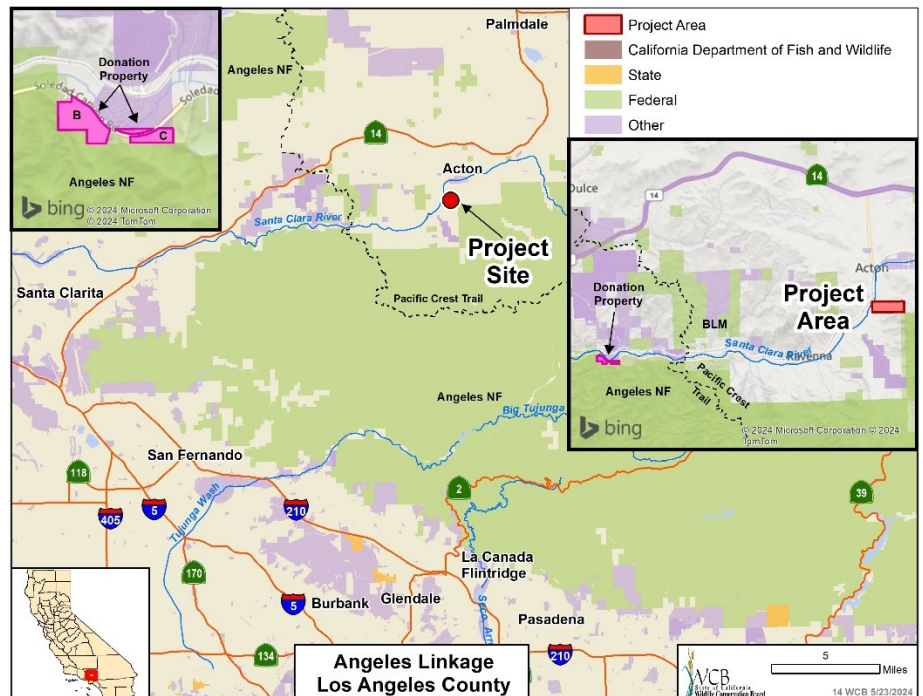
Location: Eight miles southwest of the city of Palmdale

Acres: 113± (Property)

**Acquisition  
Fee**

### Property Highlights

- Improves connectivity by filling in a portion of the five-mile linkage gap between the north and south blocks of the Angeles National Forest.
- Habitats represented: coastal sage scrub, desert montane, alluvial fan scrub, southern riparian scrub, mulefat scrub, and Great Basin sage scrub.
- Key species: yellow warbler and coast horned lizard.
- Regional or Species Plan: Los Angeles County Santa Clara River Significant Ecological Area.
- TPL secured the donation of three additional downstream parcels totaling 25 acres, contingent upon the Property's purchase, that will be donated to MRCA separately (shown on the map as "Donation Property").



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes, after the acquisition is completed and upon completion of a trail alignment study, MRCA plans to offer limited public access by formalizing some existing habitat-compatible trails on the Property to connect to the nearby trails network, including

the Pacific Crest Trail, in the Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

MRCA will receive the Property directly from the landowner upon close of escrow and will incorporate the Property into its extensive land holdings, currently over 80,000 acres. MRCA's rangers and natural resources staff will regularly monitor the Property. Upon acquisition, MRCA will evaluate the Property for its habitat restoration potential. A full-time restoration crew will maintain fencing and foster passive restoration.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$3,472,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$3,324,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$824,000
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	\$1,500,000
California Natural Resources Agency	\$1,000,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$3,324,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Kat Selm, Project Manager The Nature Conservancy, Santa Clara River and Coast,
- Kristeen Penrod, Director, SC Wildlands

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 Scott Wilk, District 21
- Assembly: Assemblymember Tom Lackey, District 34

### 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 CFDW to proceed substantially as planned.



## 15. South Los Angeles County Habitat Connectivity Masterplan

## Restoration - Planning

WCB Grant: \$1,200,000

Fund Source: General Fund, Budget Act of 2022 (SB154, Climate) \$241,460 and General Fund, Budget Act of 2022 (SB154, Drought) \$958,540

Grantee: Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

Location: The southern half of Los Angeles County

### Project Highlights

- The Los Angeles region lies within one of only 36 biodiversity hotspots in the world with more than 4,000 unique native plant and animal species recorded by scientific efforts to date.
- With over 10 million residents, Los Angeles County is the most densely inhabited county in the United States.
- High population density in the region has resulted in concrete channelized rivers, housing developments, agricultural conversion, and multi-lane freeways that fragment landscapes and threaten native biodiversity.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

### Project Description

Continued implementation of biodiversity restoration and connectivity initiatives in urban Los Angeles County are limited by the lack of an area-wide framework plan to link projects together, the low spatial resolution of existing connectivity datasets, and differing sociocultural context of existing analyses such as the California Essential Linkages Project which focuses mainly on large landscapes and excludes important

finer-scale habitat areas within and adjacent to urban areas. The South Los Angeles County Habitat Connectivity (Project) will create a Connectivity Master Plan that links and expands upon urban and wildland connectivity initiatives and plans that provide comprehensive statewide and regional strategies and priorities by developing the following:

- A set of high-resolution maps of existing conditions and connectivity priority locations for up to ten umbrella species/habitats, plus synthesis maps, to support outreach, planning, and design projects.
- A high-resolution physical plan covering up to six subregional planning units, including spatial prioritization and physical masterplan of application strategies.
- Best practices recommendations for zoning, infrastructure improvement, water quality projects, and housing development that protect and enhance wildlife connectivity.
- Conceptual designs for up to eight priority projects including key linkage infrastructure.
- Outreach to the Tongva, Gabrieleño, Kizh, and Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians that will offer opportunities for integration of tribal interests, cultural landscapes, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge into wildlife connectivity planning.
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$260,000	\$221,400	\$481,400
Technical Studies	\$165,000	\$390,000	\$555,000
Outreach	\$100,000	\$275,000	\$375,000
Connectivity Planning	\$375,000	\$275,000	\$650,000
Policy Tools and Best Management Practices	\$300,000	\$570,000	\$870,000
Total	\$1,200,000	\$1,731,400	\$2,931,400

Non-WCB funders include:

- CDFW - \$786,400
- Wildlife Conservation Network - \$500,000
- County of Los Angeles - \$220,000
- City of Los Angeles - \$225,000

## 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 Caroline Menjivar, District 20
  - Senator Benjamin Allen, District 24
  - Senator Anthony J. Portantino, District 25
  - Senator María Elena Durazo, District 26
  - Senator Henry I. Stern, District 27
  - Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, District 28
  - Senator Bob Archuleta, District 30
  - Senator Lena A. Gonzalez, District 33
  - Senator Janet Nguyen, District 36
- Assembly:
  - Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo, District 40
  - Assemblymember Chris R. Holden, District 41
  - Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, District 42
  - Assemblymember Luz M. Rivas, District 43
  - Assemblymember Laura Friedman, District 44
  - Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, District 46
  - Assemblymember Mike Fong, District 49
  - Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, District 51
  - Assemblymember Miguel Santiago, District 54
  - Assemblymember Tina S. McKinnor, District 61
  - Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, District 66
  - Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva, District 67
  - Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal, District 69

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

## 16. Follows Camp Ecological Design

## Restoration & Public Access – Planning

WCB Grant: \$2,080,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

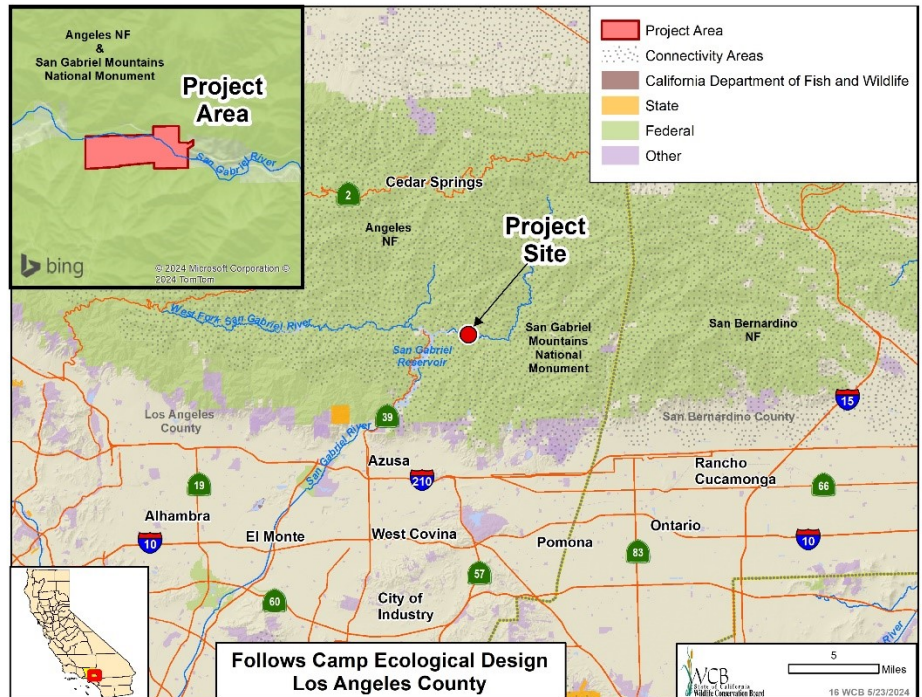
Grantee: City of Industry

Landowner: City of Industry

Location: 8 miles northeast of the City of Azusa, Los Angeles County

### Project Highlights

- Located within the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument portion of the Angeles National Forest
- Property contains 3,500 feet of the East Fork San Gabriel River
- Special-status species: Santa Ana sucker, arroyo chub, Santa Ana speckled dace, rainbow trout, western yellow-billed cuckoo, least Bell's vireo
- City of Industry will expand their existing stewardship and educational programs in partnership with the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Nathan and Kevin Nuñez (Japchivit lineal descendants, a historical San Gabriel Mountains village), are active members of the Project team and bring decades of experience addressing social and cultural issues in the San Gabriel Mountains. Kevin and Nathan Nuñez work closely with the Angeles National Forest Supervisor's office and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument on tribal and cultural matters.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B.1, C.1 and Objectives 2.4, 3.1

## Project Description

Follows Camp Ecological Design (Project) is located on 118 acres of land owned by the City of Industry and surrounded by the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. The site and surrounding canyon have been actively used by the Gabrieleño Native American people for millennia prior to European settlement. In the late 1800s, the site became a recreational camp and at times, a permanent residential community. By 2005, 200 residents lived at Follows Camp. A series of storms brought high flows that washed out the crossings and residents subsequently abandoned the property. Currently, the site is predominantly used for unauthorized recreation by the public. Heavy recreational use has resulted in degraded water quality and river morphology, litter and vandalism, soil compaction and erosion, and stream flow impacts where visitors build small dams to create swimming holes. While this level of use results in impacts, many users visit the site from communities of the nearby San Gabriel Valley, which are some of the most park poor, environmentally burdened, and disadvantaged communities in California. Sustainable access opportunities to high quality open space are needed.

The Project will activate the Follows Camp site and determine the best approach to discourage unauthorized access and promote site monitoring, stewardship, enforcement, and security. The planning process will produce implementation-ready restoration designs and a site Master Plan, including ecological program components. The Project's three main objectives are:

- 1) Restore aquatic, riparian, and upland habitat for special-status species and priority vegetation types, including critical habitat for the Santa Ana sucker;
- 2) Develop and initiate environmental education and cultural programs to serve disadvantaged and Native American communities from the San Gabriel Mountains and Valley and support the mission of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument; and
- 3) Convert commercially and residentially zoned parcels to permanent conservation.

It is anticipated that Follows Camp will serve as a model of environmental stewardship and a catalyst for regional programs that leaders are working to develop as part of the National Monument, 30x30, and related ecological resource protection policies.

- Herbicide: No

## Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$269,600	\$400,000	\$669,600
Site Activation & Master Planning	\$458,400	\$34,000	\$492,400
Design & Permitting	\$1,352,000	\$745,600	\$2,097,600
Conservation Easement Planning	---	\$51,300	\$51,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,080,000</b>	<b>\$1,230,900</b>	<b>\$3,310,900</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- City of Industry - \$1,230,900

## Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Mark Stanley, Executive Officer, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Nathan and Kevin Nuñez, Co-owners, Nuñez & Nuñez Consulting Services, Inc.

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 Anthony J. Portantino, District 25;  
Senator Susan Rubio, District 22
- Assembly: Assemblymember Chris Holden, District 41

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Simi Divide - Box Canyon Connector

Fund Source: Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117)

Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)

Grantee: Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)

County: Ventura

WCB Grant: \$850,000

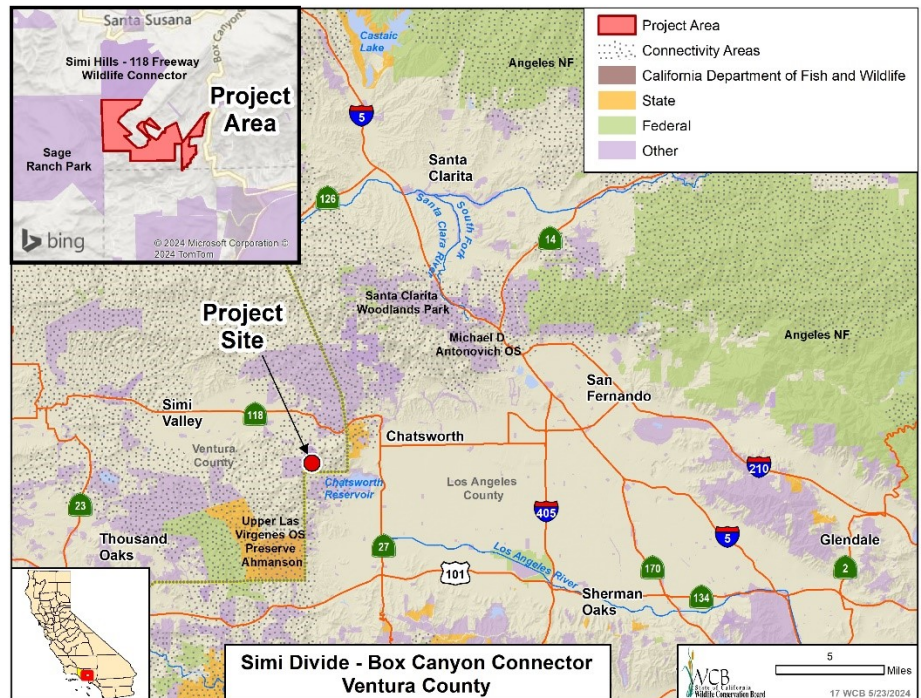
Location: Approximately 1 mile south of Simi Valley

Acres: 166± (Property)

**Acquisition  
Fee**

### Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: chaparral and coastal sage scrub with pockets of oak woodland and grassland.
- Key species: state listed Santa Susana tarplant, deer, and mountain lion.
- Regional or Species Plan: CDFW Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Mountains Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), Chatsworth-Simi Divide CAPP, South Coast Missing Linkages.
- Supports a critical movement corridor for wildlife between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills leading to the in-progress Wallis Annenberg 101 Freeway Wildlife Crossing and the in-design Rocky Peak 118 Freeway Wildlife Crossing Structure.
- Contains unique sandstone outcroppings exceeding 20 feet in height; several sandstone outcrops contain depressions that hold significant water during wet years and support fairy shrimp.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: Yes, access will include a multi-use trail using existing infrastructure.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

MRCA will own and manage the Property as part of the Rim of Valley Trail system. MRCA is a local government public entity established in 1985 by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), Conejo Recreation and Park District, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District pursuant to the Joint Powers Act. MRCA manages more than 80,000 acres that it owns or is owned by the SMMC.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,330,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$1,235,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$850,000
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	\$385,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,235,000

### 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 Henry Stern, District 27
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, District 42

### 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. San Joaquin and Tulare Basin Planning, Amendment Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$313,180

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

Grantee: River Partners

Landowner: N/A

Location: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa Counties

Future projects may be located within or adjacent to a justice community

### Project Highlights

- This project seeks to broaden the network of long-term land stewards by engaging with Tribes.
- This project aims to understand historical alignment of Tribes in the region, their historic land uses, and their desire to steward lands long term.
- Grantee will conduct outreach with Tribes and create content to be used by landowners to understand how to engage Tribes in long-term stewardship.

### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: Will provide direct assistance to tribal entities.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objective 5.2

### Project Description

As more land is acquired for conservation, identifying long-term stewards is critical. This project seeks to broaden the network of long-term land managers and approach entities that have not been traditionally pursued for land stewardship, namely, Tribes. This project will compensate San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin Tribes for their time to engage in this project. The goals are to better understand: 1) the historical alignment of Tribes in relation to San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin rivers and tributaries; 2) their historic uses of floodplain lands, riverways, and plants and animals native to these lands; and 3) the desire of Tribes for long-term land and water stewardship opportunities and any challenges associated with pursuing those opportunities. Specifically, the project will:



- Select a facilitator to lead tribal engagement
- Identify and execute an outreach strategy to regional Tribes
- Develop visual content resulting from outreach to aid in future engagement relating to tribal long-term land stewardship opportunities and challenges
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$29,181	\$0	\$29,181
Tribal Engagement	\$150,985	\$0	\$150,985
Content Generation	\$92,165	\$0	\$92,165
Indirect	\$40,849	\$0	\$40,849
Total	\$313,180	\$0	\$313,180

Non-WCB funders include:

- None

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

### State Government

- Senate: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4  
Senator Anna Caballero, District 14  
Senator Melissa Hurtado, District 16  
Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lori Wilson, District 11  
Assemblymember Heath Flora, District 9  
Assemblymember Carlos Villapudua, District 13

Assemblymember Juan Alanis, District 22  
Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, District 27  
Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula, District 31  
Assemblymember Devon Mathis, District 33  
Assemblymember Jasmeet Bains, District 35  
Assemblymember Vince Fong, District 32

### 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.

**19. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 19 Direct Acquisition**

WCB Grant: \$640,000

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

**Fee**

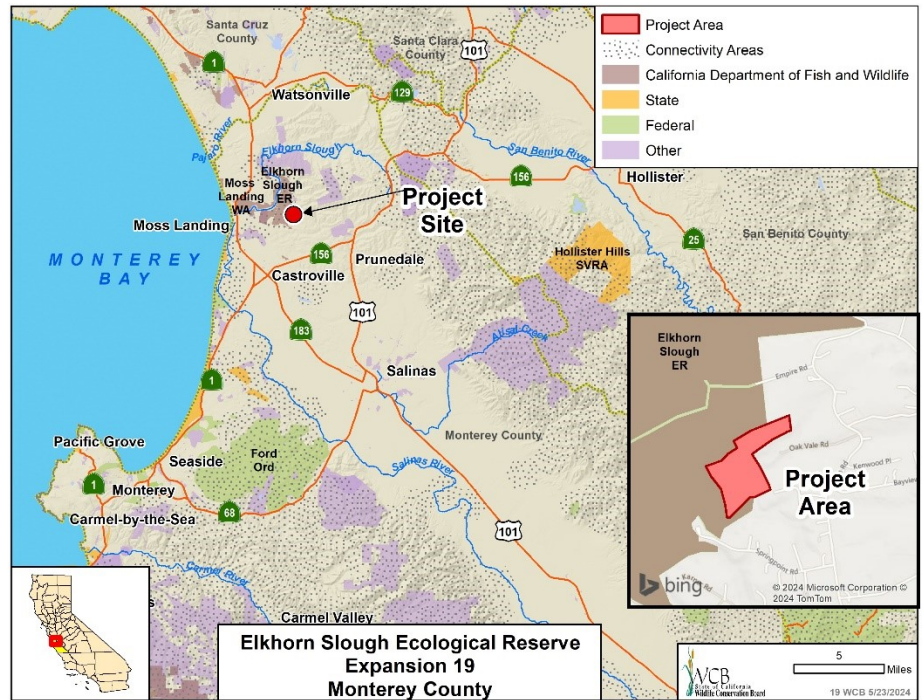
County: Monterey County

Location: 1966 Elkhorn Road, Castroville, Monterey County

Acres: 24± (Property)

**Property Highlights**

- The property is surrounded on three sides by the existing Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve.
- High priority within the approved Elkhorn Slough CAPP.
- The inclusion of this parcel into the ER will preserve a wildlife movement corridor through the uplands next to the Elkhorn Slough.
- Habitats represented: coast live oak woodland, coastal prairie, and wet meadow habitats.
- Key species: California quail, mule deer, bobcat, California tiger salamander (endangered and threatened), red-legged frog (threatened), western pond turtle (species of special concern), and the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (endangered).



**Priority Metrics**

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: None
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A.4 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

This 24-acre project will be included and managed as part of CDFW's existing Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve.

### Project Funding

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

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

### 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: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Robert Rivas, District 29

### 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. LI Livestock Ranch Conservation Easement**

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

Grantee: California Rangeland Trust (CRT)

County: San Benito

WCB Grant: \$1,056,124

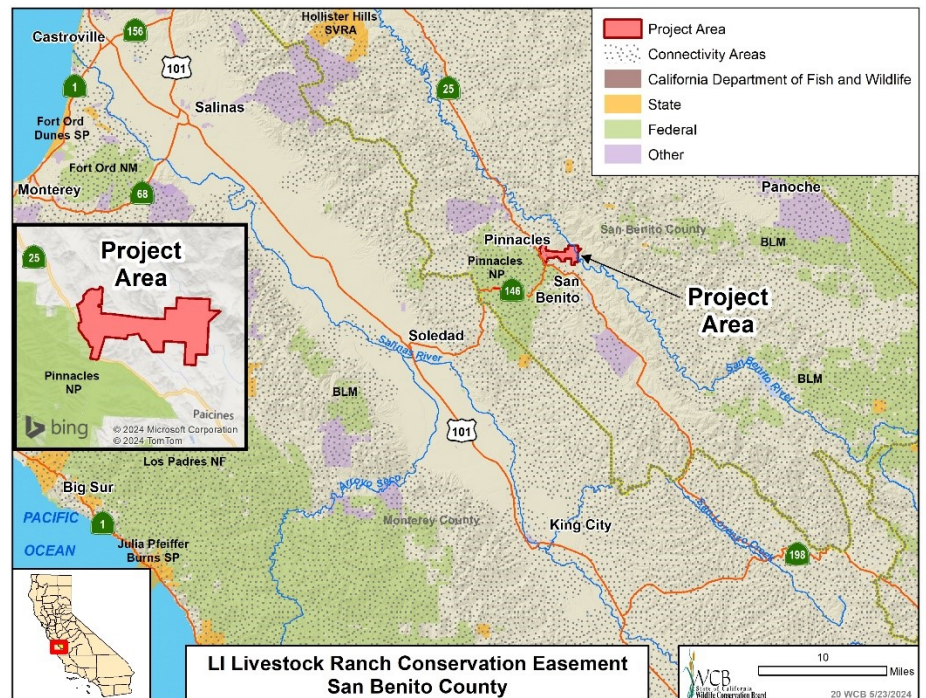
Location: Adjacent to northeastern portion of Pinnacles National Park, in the Gabilan Mountain Range

Acres: 1,631± (Property)

**Acquisition  
Conservation Easement**

**Property Highlights**

- Habitats represented: Annual grassland, coastal scrub, blue oak-foothill pine, blue oak, coastal oak woodland, mixed chaparral, valley oak woodland, and montane riparian woodland.
- Bordered directly to the west by Pinnacles National Park, which measures over 26,000 acres in size.
- Key species: California tiger salamander, western spadefoot, California condor, American badger, mountain lion (specially protected), and San Benito poppy (special-status plant species).
- Although the federally threatened California red-legged frog has not been documented on the Property, the species has been documented a few miles to the south within Pinnacles National Park, and the Property is within the designated federally threatened California red-Gabilan Range Core Recovery Area (critical habitat).
- Encompasses two riparian areas, several seasonal streams, and four spring-fed stock ponds, some of which could provide foraging and/or breeding habitat for additional special-status amphibians, including California red-legged frog, and other wildlife.



**Priority Metrics**

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.1, A.2, A.4, E.1 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1
- Public Access: No

### Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- No construction, reconstruction, removal, repair, enlargement or replacement of any building, structure or other facility shall be allowed to impair the Conservation Values.
- New stock pond construction shall require the consent of CRT and such new construction shall not impair the Conservation Values.
- With written notice to CRT, one new single-family residential dwelling, appurtenant structures and barn may be constructed within the one (1) acre Reserved Building Envelope. The residential dwelling may not exceed 3,000 square feet of finished living area and the barn may not exceed 20,000 square feet.
- Subdivision of the Property, whether by physical, legal or any other process, is prohibited.
- The production of crops (other than dryland haying), fruit trees, vineyards, or any other agricultural commodity that is inconsistent with maintaining grazing land is prohibited.
- Tilling, sodbusting, or other ground disturbance activities are not allowed on the Property.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

CRT will hold, monitor, and enforce the terms of the conservation easement, which provide that the Property will be used primarily as an open space working landscape supporting cattle ranching. CRT will be responsible for enforcing the easement through detailed baseline conditions documentation, planned annual compliance monitoring, recordkeeping, and regular communication with the landowners. A baseline conditions report and management plan will be provided to WCB prior to the close of escrow.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,035,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,056,124
Bureau of Reclamation	\$ 978,876
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,035,000

## 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 Caballero, District 14
- Assembly: Assemblymember Robert Rivas, District 29

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Santa Cruz County Stream Wood Program

## Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$500,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

Grantee: County of Santa Cruz

Landowner: Private Landowners

Location: Locations throughout Santa Cruz County

### Project Highlights

- Program responds to reports of large woody debris and leaves or modifies wood to create salmonid habitat.
- Addresses dramatic influx of wood into streams from 2023 winter storms by providing additional support to the 15-year Santa Cruz Stream Wood Program.
- Stakeholder & Public Outreach: complete meetings, workshops, and educational materials to educate landowners on the importance of woody debris.
- Broad-based institutional support: CDFW, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USFWS, the RCD of Santa Cruz County, and consulting experts in engineering, hydrology, and geomorphology.
- Key species: Central California coast coho salmon, Central California coast steelhead, South Central California coast steelhead, California red-legged frog, Western pond turtle.
- Species Plans: Coastal Multispecies Plan - Central California Coast Steelhead (NMFS 2016).



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Maybe. Sites to be determined.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.1, 2.3, 2.4

## Project Description

The Santa Cruz County Stream Wood Program (Project) has operated on a tight budget for the last 15 years, addressing instances of large woody debris in streams throughout Santa Cruz County. However, following the heavy rains of the 2023 winter, the program was flooded with requests to remove and/or reorient woody debris. Creeks and rivers in Santa Cruz County have had a marked lack of large woody debris, a key component in creating habitat for salmonids. Prior to the program, landowners often illegally removed large wood from streams, eliminating the habitat benefits it provides. The Project will increase the capacity of the Santa Cruz Stream Wood program to address reports of large woody debris and/or log jams in salmonid-bearing streams and their tributaries, with the primary goal of leaving wood in the channel where feasible for the habitat benefits it provides. This program is the only one of its kind in the state of California. The Project will implement the program, increasing in stream habitat by:

- Increased staff/contractor time spent cutting, trimming, and moving large woody materials.
- Onboarding of consulting geomorphologist to advise on problematic stream reaches.
- Assessing “challenge areas” and developing long-term solutions for these sites.
- Conducting stakeholder outreach, including creation and presentation of a short educational video on importance of stream wood for watershed and fisheries health.
- Developing a data management system to track and manage activities at stream wood sites.
- Herbicide: No

## Key Management Responsibilities

The County of Santa Cruz has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Project improvements. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, the County of Santa Cruz does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

## Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$26,000	\$18,000	\$44,000
Streamwood Program Coordination and Implementation	\$409,000	\$57,000	\$466,000
Challenge Area Assessment and Recommendations	\$40,000	---	\$40,000
Outreach & Stakeholder Engagement	\$15,000	\$6,000	\$21,000
Data Management	\$10,000	---	\$10,000
Indirect	---	\$119,460	\$119,460
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$200,460</b>	<b>\$700,460</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- County of Santa Cruz - \$200,460

## Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Amanda Ingham, Central Coast Branch Supervisor, North-Central Coastal Office, NOAA
- Zeke Bean, Water Resources Planner, City of Santa Cruz Water Department
- Lisa Lurie, Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- Donald Alley, Principal, D.W. ALLEY & Associates, Aquatic Biology

Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

The County of Santa Cruz as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration (ND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the ND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

## State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Gail Pellerin, District 28  
Assemblymember Robert Rivas, District 29  
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.

## 22. Kingfisher Flat Hatchery, Fire Recovery, Augmentation Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$528,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

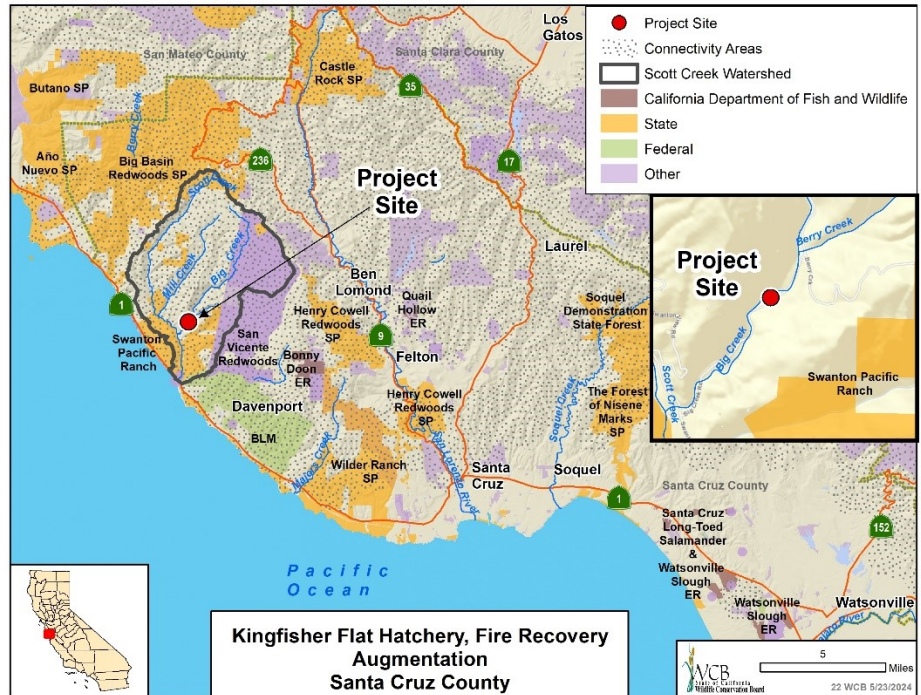
Grantee: Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project

Landowner: Private Landowner

Location: 4 miles south of Davenport, Santa Cruz County

### Project Highlights

- Supports listed salmonid conservation and recovery.
- Hatchery’s captive broodstock program is listed as a top priority in state and federal recovery plans for Central California Coast coho.
- Original grant funding has successfully restored rearing and spawning facilities and protected the facilities from flooding via naturalization of Big Creek bank.
- Bridge reconstruction will ensure safe and reliable access to hatchery.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 7, Strengthen Coordination Among Governments
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3

### Project Description

The Kingfisher Flat Hatchery, Fire Recovery, Augmentation (Project) site was hit by the 2020 CZU lightning complex wildfire that severely damaged the hatchery’s rearing infrastructure, outdoor facilities, Big Creek bank protection, and bridge access. At the August 2021 WCB meeting, the board approved funding for five components to restore the hatchery facilities including replacing two water intake components, stabilizing the bank of Big Creek, replacing all plumbing and electrical for the rearing and spawning

tanks, replacing four tanks and three handling tanks, rebuilding a bathroom and connecting it to an engineered septic system, and repairing the access bridge. Three of the five components have been successfully completed. The bathroom and septic system were found to be infeasible for the site and were not completed and the bridge repair has been delayed due to unanticipated regulatory processes. Immediately following the CZU fire, the local and state regulatory agencies indicated that the bridge repair could be completed under their emergency permits. Upon securing funds for the project, these agencies decided that the project proponent would need to obtain authorization under their standard permitting process which has led to more engineering and a more complicated reconstruction of the bridge to meet current standards. The Project will fund the additional cost to design and construct the bridge modifications in accordance with local and state standards, including:

- Additional permit compliance handled by the local RCD.
- Additional professional engineer time for designs, construction oversight, adjustments, inspections, and developing as-builts.
- Bridge reconstruction that includes eight poured-in-place deep concrete piers, wing walls, and retaining walls that are all steel-reinforced.
- Additional project management.
- Herbicide: No

### Key Management Responsibilities

The Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the hatchery. 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 Grant	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$2,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$37,000
Engineering, Designs & Permits	\$47,000	\$56,000	\$92,730	\$195,730
Bridge Reconstruction	\$479,000	\$276,900	\$18,500	\$774,400
Site Prep & New Tanks	---	\$147,015	\$148,580	\$295,595
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$528,000</b>	<b>\$494,915</b>	<b>279,810</b>	<b>\$1,302,725</b>

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- None received

### Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

The County of Santa Cruz, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate NOD 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 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.



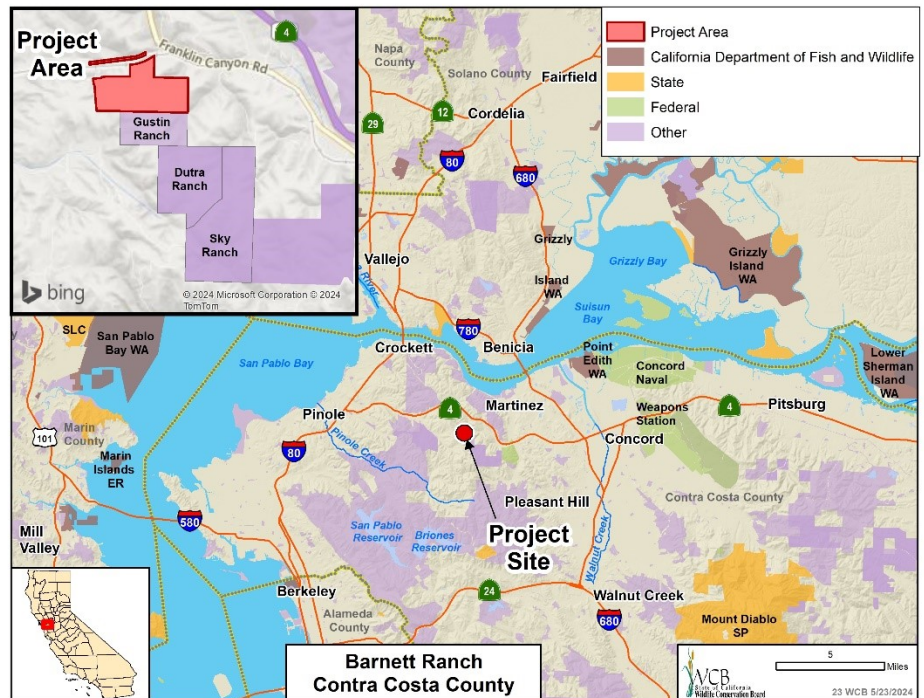
### 23. Barnett Ranch

**Acquisition  
Fee**

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature Based Solutions Provision (AB179, Sec. 83(3))  
 Grantee: John Muir Land Trust (JMLT)  
 County: Contra Costa County  
 WCB Grant: \$1,997,000  
 Location: McHarry Ranch Road near Martinez  
 Acres: 134± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- This acquisition will add to seven JMLT properties already protected on Franklin Ridge Wildlife and Trail Corridor and will further contribute to ensure a permanently protected habitat and wildlife corridor.
- The Property is made up of 65% grassland, 30% coast live oak woodland, 4% chaparral and scrub, and <1% of freshwater marsh and seasonal wetlands.
- Special status species include: the California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake; California species of special concern pallid and long-legged myotis bats; special status raptors including Cooper’s hawk, golden eagle, ferruginous hawk, northern harrier, and white-tailed kite; and land birds including California species of concern California horned lark, logger-head shrike, and yellow warbler. This continuous corridor is also essential for large ranging animals such as badger, mountain lion, bobcat, and deer.
- Waters from the Property are part of Contra Costa County’s Alhambra Watershed that flows into the Carquinez Strait.
- The Property contains one mile of existing maintained trails, with the proposal of an additional one mile of trail and signage to be added to protect habitat while creating safe access and connectivity to neighboring open space.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: None

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.3, C.1 and Objectives 1.3, 2.1c
- Public Access: Yes - Existing trails will be maintained with another mile of trail to be added for connectivity for safe year-round access from sunrise to sunset. Toilets, including ADA access, are already available at staging areas/parking lots on adjacent JMLT lands.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

JMLT will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices. JMLT will plan and implement the public access portion of this project and assume ownership to permanently steward and monitor the land.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,366,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$1,997,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,997,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,997,000

### 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 Nancy Skinner, District 9
- Assembly: Assemblymember Timothy Grayson, District 15

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Roy's Redwoods Restoration

## Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$1,239,000

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

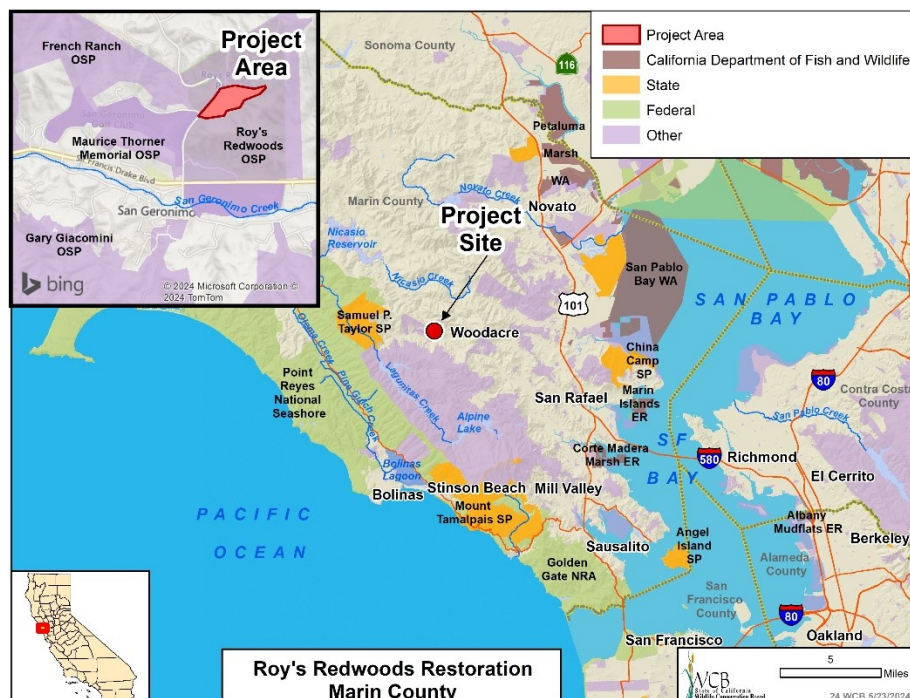
Grantee: Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

Landowner: Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD)

Location: 2 miles north of Woodacre, Marin County

### Project Highlights

- Site supports old growth redwood forest, part of the less than 5% remaining on the planet.
- Habitats restored: two acres of redwood forest with understory, reconnection of creek with floodplain and wetland habitat, and reversal of deep channel incision.
- Closure of 6,465 linear feet of social trails.
- Only publicly accessible “no-fee” grove in Marin County.
- Secured match to fund formal trail network and visitor education.
- Key Species: California giant salamander, coho salmon.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: 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; Pathway 7, Strengthen Coordination Among Governments; Pathway 10, Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.3, 1.6, 2.1, 2.3, 2.5

### Project Description

The Roy's Redwoods Restoration (Project) site has an extensive network of social trails which has led to extreme soil compaction, loss of understory vegetation, and erosion, especially near the creek and the largest and oldest trees. Larsen creek, which runs

through Roy’s Redwoods, is deeply incised, and runs largely in a straight single channel, unable to recharge groundwater, and providing poor water timing and quality for downstream riparian ecosystems and listed salmonids. The Project will implement management activities increasing forest health and hydrological functionality by:

- Placing redwood logs for in-stream large wood structures.
- Decommissioning, de-compacting and revegetating social trails.
- Mechanical removal of invasive Himalayan blackberry.
- Reestablishment of a multi-threaded wetland-channel complex to reconnect Larsen Creek to surrounding floodplain, doubling the number of flow paths.
- Herbicide: No

### Key Management Responsibilities

MCOSD 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, MCOSD 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	\$30,000	\$70,000	\$100,000
Construction	\$830,000	\$2,320,346	\$3,150,346
Revegetation and Site Stewardship	\$143,000	\$30,000	\$173,000
Monitoring	\$124,000	\$40,000	\$164,000
Indirect	\$112,000	---	\$112,000
Total	\$1,239,000	\$2,460,346	\$3,699,346

Non-WCB funders include:

- Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy - \$100,000
- California State Parks – \$1,530,346
- County of Marin Disability Access Program - \$500,000
- Marin County Parks - \$330,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Damon Connoly, Assemblymember, 12<sup>th</sup> District
- Dennis Rodoni, Supervisor, District 4, County of Marin

- Alison Forrestel, PhD, Chief of Natural Resources and Science, Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- Ben Horenstein, General Manager, Marin Water District
- Cyndy Shafer, Natural Resource Program Manager, Bay Area District, California State Parks
- Barbara Salzman, Co-chair, Conservation Committee, Marin Audubon Society
- Carolyn K. Longstreth, Director, Marin Chapter, California Native Plant Society
- Christy Fischer, Conservation Director, Coastal Northern California, Trust for Public Land
- Eric Morey, Chair, San Geronimo Valley Planning Group
- Nona Denis, Past Chair & Terri Thomas, President, Parks and Open Space Committee, Marin Conservation League
- Amory Willis, President, Marin Horse Council

Opposition:

- None received

### CEQA

The MCOSD, 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 the WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

### State Government

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

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.



**25. El Dorado and Daugherty Hill Land Management Plans Restoration – Planning**

WCB Grant: \$676,967

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

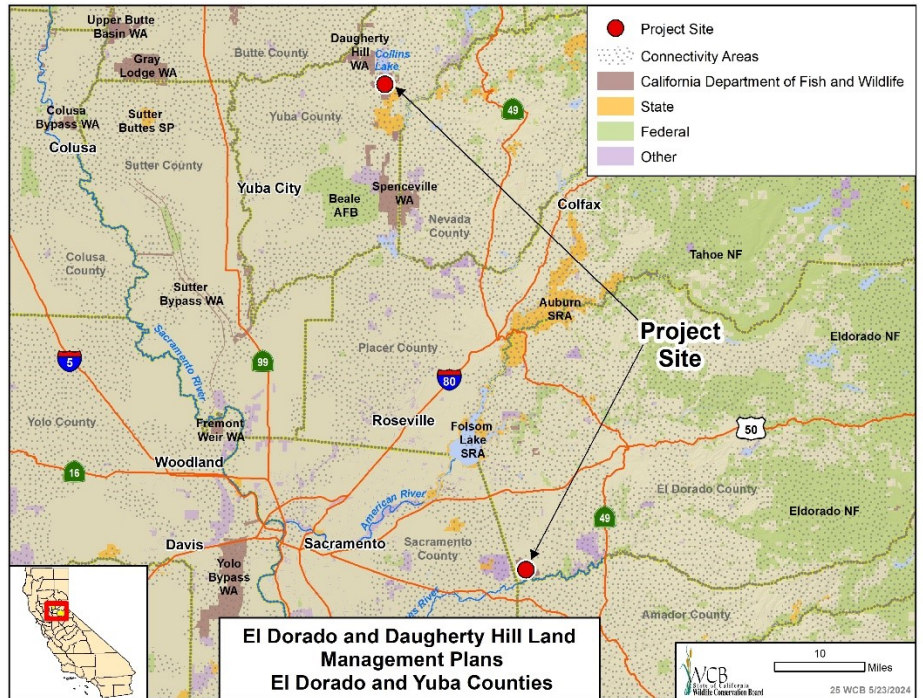
Grantee: CDFW

Landowner: CDFW and American River Conservancy

Location: 11 miles south of El Dorado Hills, El Dorado County and 15 miles northwest of Grass Valley, Yuba County

**Project Highlights**

- Support the transfer of the El Dorado Ranch Unit (3,157 acres) to CDFW.
- WCB partially funded the acquisition of the Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area and the El Dorado Wildlife Area.
- Improve land management on 12,200 acres of blue oak woodlands, blue oak savannahs, open grasslands, and riparian corridors.
- Increase public and stakeholder involvement throughout the planning process.



**Priority Metrics**

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes. Some portions adjacent to SDAC
- Tribal Partnerships: No, tribal partners will be established as a part of this planning project.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B, C and Objectives 2.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4

**Project Description**

The El Dorado and Daugherty Hill Land Management Plans (Project) will complete two land management plans for the Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area and the proposed El Dorado Wildlife Area. These land management plans will be used to understand existing habitats, set conservation targets, guide management activities, and provide CEQA

compliance for common management and maintenance tasks. This will be accomplished by:

- Conducting desktop reviews of the geographical settings, property boundaries, geological formations, and climate conditions and forecasts.
- Conducting field surveys and assessments of the wildlife areas including documenting hydrological features, flora, and fauna, and classifying natural vegetation communities.
- Using findings from the desktop reviews and fields surveys to write the land management plans. The completion of these plans will rely on a diverse group of stakeholders such as academic research institutions, California Native American tribes, fishing and hunting organizations, and CDFW experts.
- Developing CEQA compliance for management and maintenance activities identified in the land management plans.
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$110,472	\$36,824	\$147,296
Field Protocols, Desktop reviews, and Field Implementation	\$163,671	\$44,303	\$207,974
Cultural Resource Review	\$200,000	---	\$200,000
Report Writing and CEQA	\$114,524	\$36,824	\$151,348
Indirect Costs	\$88,300	---	\$88,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$676,967</b>	<b>\$117,951</b>	<b>\$794,918</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - \$117,951

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Elena DeLacy, Executive Director, American River Conservancy

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 Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4  
Senator Brian Dahle, District 1  
Senator Roger W. Niello, District 6
- Assembly: Assemblymember Joe Patterson, District 5  
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.

## 26. Morgan Valley Expansion 1

## Acquisition/Fee

Fund Source(s): Proposition 68, Public Resources Code Section 80111(d)

Grantee: The Regents of the University of California

County: Lake

WCB Grant: \$70,000

Location: North of the University of California McLaughlin Reserve

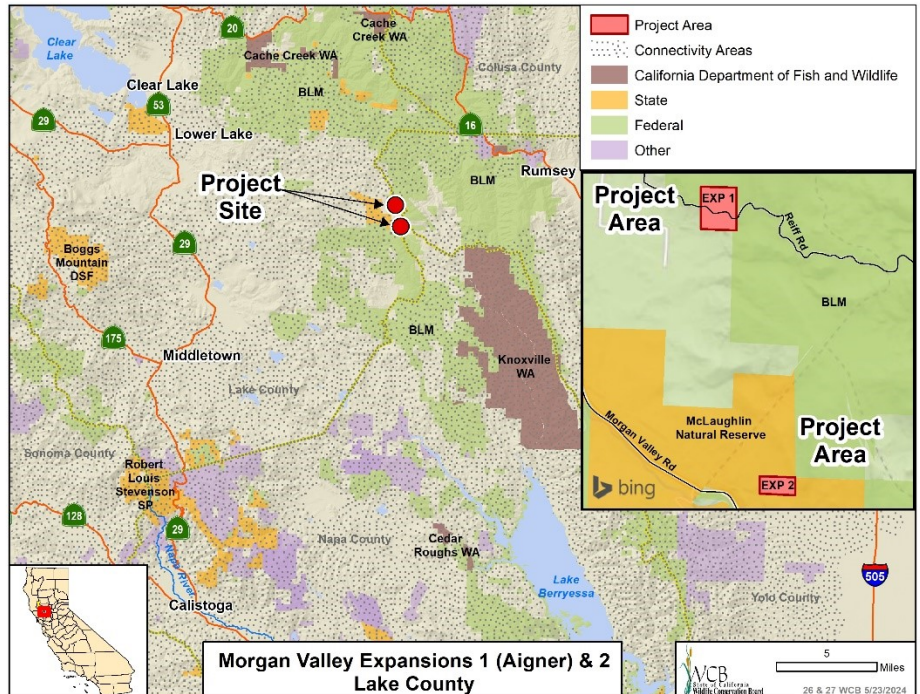
Acres: 12 ± (Property)

### Property Highlights

- Preservation and management of serpentine soil meadow habitat.
- Populations of rare plants include green jewelflower, and pink creamsacs.

### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objective 2.2
- Public Access: No



### Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Regents of the University of California will manage the Property as part of the McLaughlin Reserve to enhance and restore serpentine grasslands habitat and for research and education.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$70,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$70,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$70,000

### 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 Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecilia 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.

## 27. Morgan Valley Expansion 2

## Acquisition/Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Nature-Based Solutions Grant Program Provision, AB179, Sec.83(3)(a)

Grantee: The Regents of the University of California

County: Napa

WCB Grant: \$30,000

Location: University of California McLaughlin Reserve

Acres: 5± (Property)

### Property Highlights

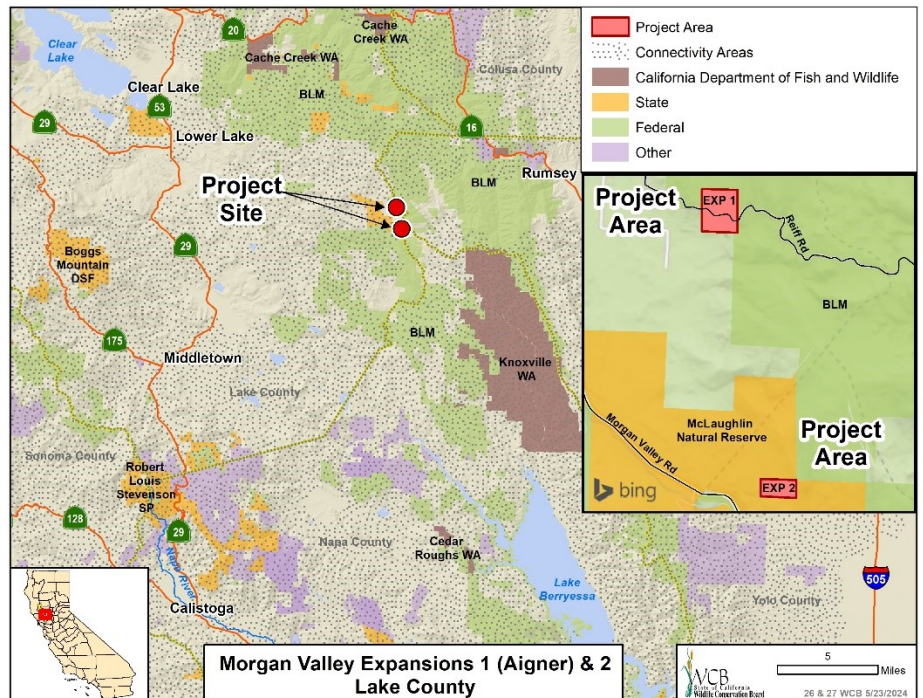
- Preservation and management of serpentine meadow habitat in the University of California McLaughlin Reserve.
- Populations of rare plants include green jewelflower, and pink creamsacs (*Castilleja rubicundula* var. *rubicundula*).

### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30:
  - Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objective 2.2
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Regents of the University of California will manage the Property as part of the McLaughlin Reserve to enhance and restore serpentine grasslands habitat and for research and education.



### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$30,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$30,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$30,000

### 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 Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecilia 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.



## 28. Bale Slough Restoration: Group C

## Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$1,600,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

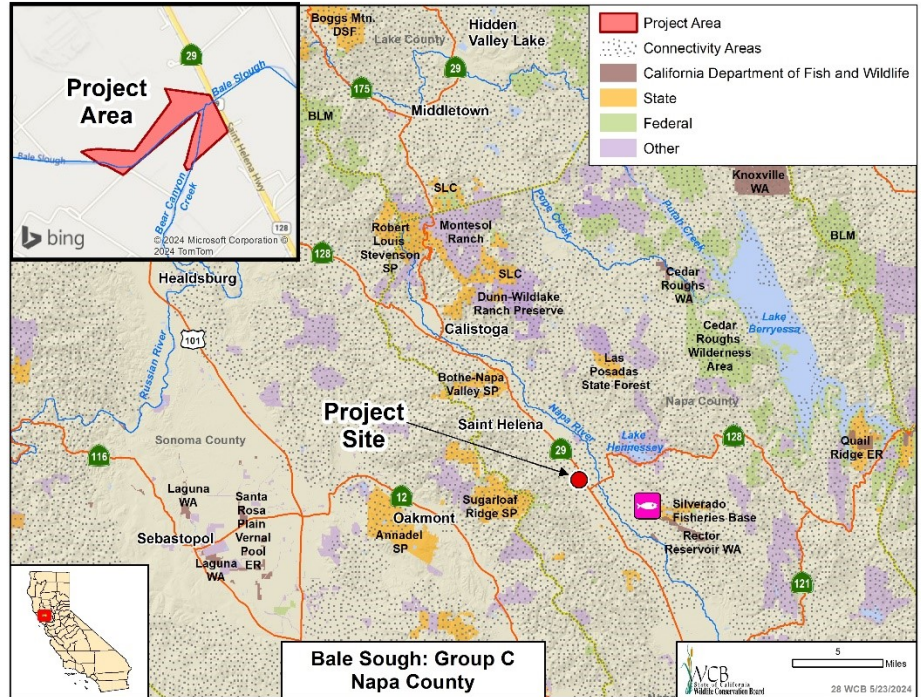
Grantee: Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Landowner: Private Landowner

Location: Approximately 3 miles south of St. Helena, Napa County

### Project Highlights

- Restore 1.3 miles of Bale Slough, a tributary of the Napa River
- Restore 21 acres of riparian and floodplain habitat
- Remove numerous invasive species including arundo and Himalayan blackberry
- Key species: Coho salmon, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, and river lamprey
- Adds to the Bale Slough - Group A sites that are currently being restored using WCB funds and are already demonstrating ecological benefits to salmonids



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 2.3

### Project Description

Bale Slough has been impacted by excessive streambank erosion, degraded water quality from fine sediment, incision in the main stem river and tributary creeks, reduced channel complexity, degraded spawning gravels for listed salmonids, altered steam flows, fish migration barriers, and elevated water temperature. The Bale Slough Restoration (Project) will implement restoration elements that will address all the above by:

- Streambank erosion and input of fine sediment will be addressed through channel widening, bank grading, and bank stabilization along approximately 1.3 miles of Bale Slough.
- Channel incision will be addressed through reconnecting the stream channel to approximately 2.1 acres of floodplain habitat that will include features to reduce flow velocities, induce gravel deposition, induce fine sediment deposition, and reduce bank and bed erosion.
- Stream channel complexity will be enhanced through creation of 4.8 acres of floodplain wetlands that will provide off-channel refugia and rearing habitat.
- Planting of over 2,300 riparian trees and 28,000 herbaceous plants.
- Stream habitat will be enhanced through the addition of large wood debris to increase habitat and geomorphic complexity.
- Water temperature and availability will be improved through riparian expansion and revegetation actions that create riparian canopy to shade the channel and extend wet season flows.
- Removal of over 27,000 square feet of Arundo and over 400 linear feet of Himalayan Blackberry.
- Herbicide: No.

### Key Management Responsibilities

The Grantee has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Project improvements. 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
Task 1 – Project Management, Administration, Design, and Monitoring	\$26,400	\$100,000	\$126,400
Task 2 – Construction and Revegetation	\$1,573,600	\$1,550,000	\$3,123,600
Total	\$1,600,000	\$1,650,000	\$3,250,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Applicant - \$250,000
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - \$1,400,000



## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- Mike Thompson, U.S. Congressperson, 5<sup>th</sup> District
- Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, California State Assemblymember, 4<sup>th</sup> District
- Bill Dodd, California State, 3rd District
- Diane Dillon, Chair, Napa County Board of Supervisors

### Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

The Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, as lead agency, prepared an MND for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

## State Government

- Senate: Senator Bill Dodd, District 3
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, District 4

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

## 29. 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)

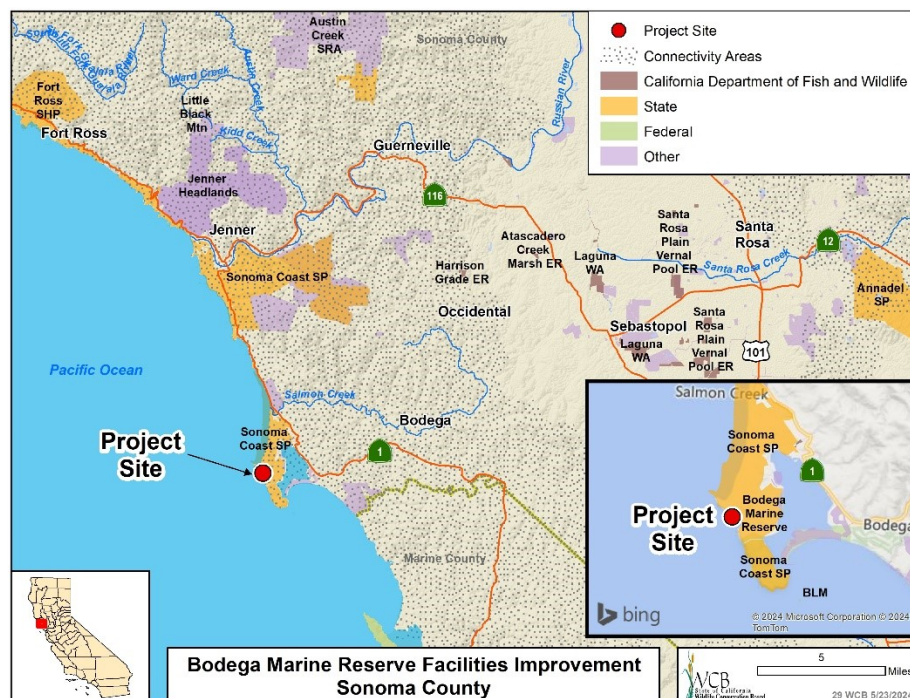
Landowner: UC Davis

Location: Bodega Bay, Sonoma County

Located adjacent to a justice community

### Project Highlights

- Located in UC Davis’s Bodega Marine Reserve (BMR) and Laboratory.
- Deployment of an oceanographic instrument buoy will provide valuable data for researchers, the local community, and government agencies.
- Project will support research, education, and habitat conservation and restoration within the BMR.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objective 1.3

### Project Description

The BMR supports education and research for resident and visiting scientists, students, support staff, and the public. Infrastructure within the BMR has degraded over time from continual use. The Bodega Marine Reserve Facilities Improvement (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

The University of California, 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, University of California, Davis does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	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.

### 30. Western Placer County HCP/NCCP (Redwing Ranch North) Acquisition/

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate

Fee

Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision, AB179, Sec.83(3)(a)

Grantee: Placer Conservation Authority

County: Placer

WCB Grant: \$1,106,037

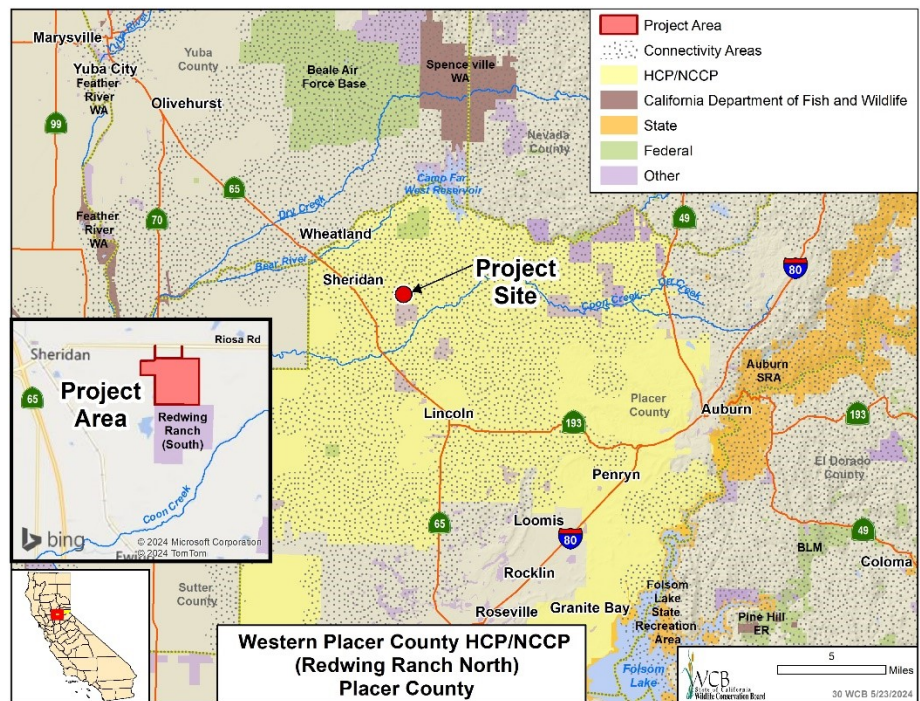
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$4,286,413

Location: Nine miles north of Lincoln

Acres: 430± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- Protection of habitat for federally and state listed species including California black rail, tricolored blackbird, and elderberry longhorn beetle.
- Protection of 40 acres of vernal pool complex aquatic resources containing large populations of vernal pool fairy shrimp.
- Protection of 64 acres of aquatic/wetland complex habitat with a large emergent freshwater marsh.
- This acquisition builds on a contiguous block of conserved land under the Western Placer County HCP/NCCP.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1, Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation; Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions; Pathway 8, Align Investments to Maximize Conservation Benefits
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.2
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

Placer Conservation Authority will manage this property under the same management plan developed to manage two adjacent conserved properties and specifically for conservation of vernal pool, state, and federally listed species.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$6,234,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$5,792,450. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,106,037
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant	\$4,286,413
Placer Legacy Program	\$400,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$5,792,450

### 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 Roger W. Nielo, District 06
- Assembly: Assemblymember James Gallegher, District 03

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.



### 31. C & P Conservation Easement

### Acquisition

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

### Conservation Easement

Section 80132(c) (Pacific Flyway Funding)

Grantee: Ducks Unlimited

Successor Grantee: Wetlands America Trust

County: Sutter

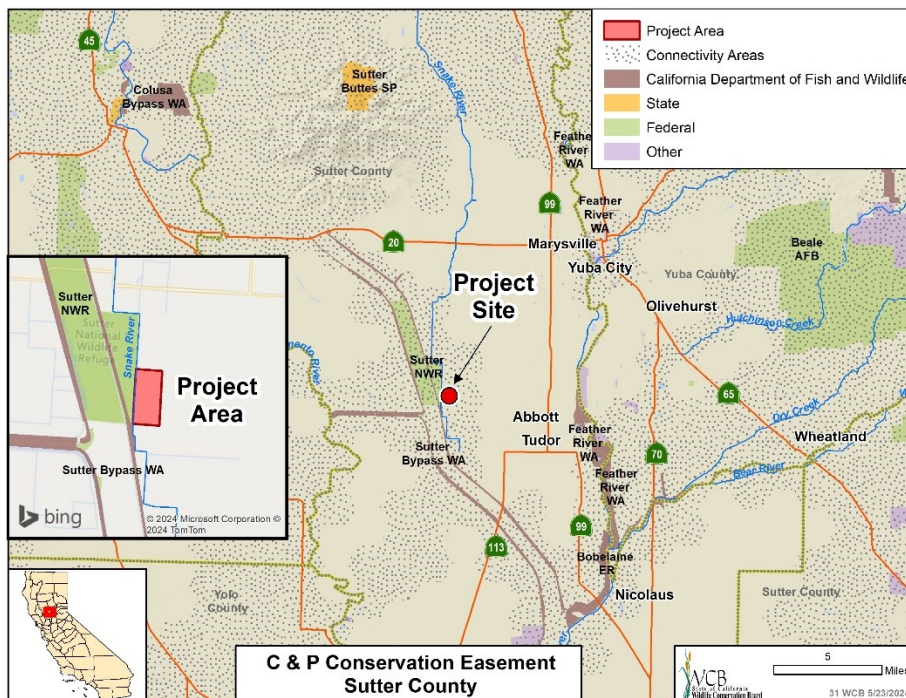
WCB Grant: \$1,410,000

Location: 12 miles south of Yuba City, Sutter County

Acres: 313± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: Flooded rice agricultural lands and associated wetlands.
- Contains 313± acres of wintering migratory bird habitat.
- Is part of a larger migratory bird protection area that includes Sutter NWR and protected agricultural lands buffering vital wetlands.
- Key species include: Ducks, geese, shorebirds, and the threatened giant garter snake.
- Regional or Species Plan: Central Valley Migratory Bird Joint Venture Plan.
- Limits subdivision, restricts crop type to small grains, and protects winter flooded rice.
- Connectivity: The Property will provide a north to south wildlife corridor along the Sutter bypass, buffer the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge from encroaching rural development, and provide feeding, loafing, and resting habitat for migratory birds.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1.1, Invest in regional conservation planning and implementation; Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions

- 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 off the Property.
- No movement of water off the Property and water rights cannot be separated from land.
- Will require winter flooding to meet the energetic needs of birds, while allowing for expanded wetland development in the future.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

Wetlands America Trust, Inc. 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 migratory birds and giant garter snake habitat. Wetlands America Trust 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 \$1,410,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$1,410,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,410,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Ruth Ostroff, Acting CVJV Coordinator

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 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.

### 32. Arcanum Ranch

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife, AB102, Sec. 84(1)

Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision

Grantee: Sanctuary Forest

County: Mendocino

WCB Grant: \$550,000

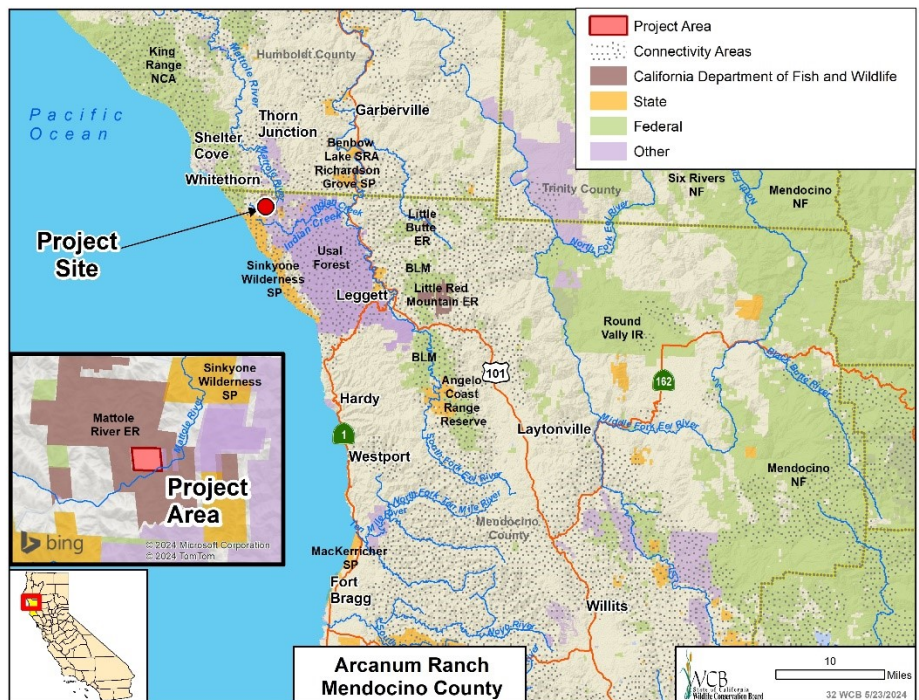
Location: Located 24 miles northwest of central Garberville

Acres: 50± (Property)

### Acquisition Fee

#### Property Highlights

- 50-acre inholding in the heart of the Mattole River Ecological Reserve.
- Connectivity to 140,000-acre matrix of conserved lands.
- Arcanum Creek, a year-round contributor of cold water to the mainstem Mattole.
- Critical coho refuge areas and salmonid habitat.
- Three federally threatened salmonid species; SONCC coho salmon, Chinook and steelhead: all of which use the area for spawning and rearing.
- Regional or Species Plan: Mattole Coho Recovery Strategy (MRRP 2011)  
Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon (CDFW 2004)  
Final SONCC Coho Recovery Plan (NOAA 2014)  
Mattole Watershed Plan (2005).
- Property is fully funded to install a Storage & Forbearance System on the property ensuring permanent water diversion protections in critical coho rearing grounds.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.3, 1.6
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Property includes a well-maintained 36-year-old home intended for use as employee housing or a rental to address the shortage of affordable housing in the area. Any revenue generated from the rental will be reinvested into the property to help offset ongoing stewardship costs. Long-term management and stewardship of the Project involve regular monitoring to ensure the Property’s conservation values are maintained. Sanctuary Forest will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$550,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$550,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$550,000

### 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 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.



### 33. Trinity Alps Forest Restoration - Augmentation

WCB Grant: \$450,000

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

Grantee: Trust for Public Land

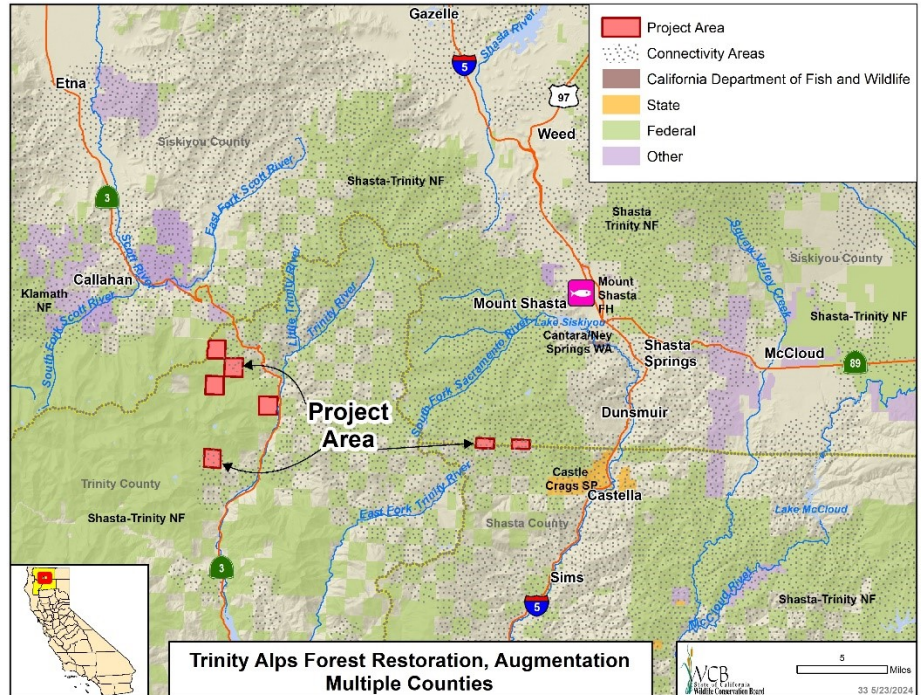
Landowner: Trust for Public Land

Location: 20 miles southwest of Weed in Siskiyou and Trinity counties.

### Restoration – Implementation

#### Project Highlights

- Project will restore sites to condition meeting Wilderness Area standards in preparation to transfer to U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- 2,954 acres have been restored with 371 acres in need of restoration
- Project site is adjacent to large federally designated wilderness areas
- Alpine fens and bogs in the Project area support significant native biodiversity, including over 40 sensitive species
- Project area is within the upper watershed of the Trinity River
- Key species: Coho and Chinook salmon, purple martin, fisher, northern s owl, Roosevelt elk, California pitcher plant



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.6, 2.1, 4.1

#### Project Description

The Project is for an augmentation of funding for the Trinity Alps Restoration (Project) approved by WCB in November 2022. The Project area has been used as commercial timberland, but due to the remote location and low productivity, it has been lightly harvested and many stands have never been harvested. However, many modifications to the site



including stream diversions, roads, culverts (many of which have failed), and stream crossings impact the hydrology, water quality, and wildlife habitat value in the Project area. The Trust for Public Land has completed over 2,900 acres of restoration and requires additional funding to complete the remaining 371 acres. A funding augmentation is necessary to address cost increases associated with requests from USFS (modifications to road decommissioning specifications and erosion control materials), increased monitoring costs to satisfy unforeseen permitting requirements, and increases in labor costs since project inception.

The Project will enhance biodiversity and complete an important linkage between two very large federal wilderness areas (Castle Crags and Trinity Alps). The Project will

- Reduce sediment by decommissioning roads, daylighting stream crossings, and securing unstable fill material.
- Recontour and replant stream crossings.
- Restore hydrologic function in riparian areas, wetlands and springs by re-establishing channel connection.
- Herbicide: No

### Key Management Responsibilities

The Trust for Public Land 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	Original WCB Award	Augmentation	Total Cost
Project Management	\$74,000	\$50,000	\$124,000
Restoration	\$1,580,000	\$388,600	\$1,968,600
Indirect Costs	\$14,000	\$11,400	\$25,400
Contingency	\$167,000	---	\$167,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,835,000</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>\$2,285,000</b>

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Megan Wargo, CEO, Pacific Crest Trail Association

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 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.

### 34. Knopki Forest Restoration

### Restoration – Implementation

WCB Grant: \$835,600

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

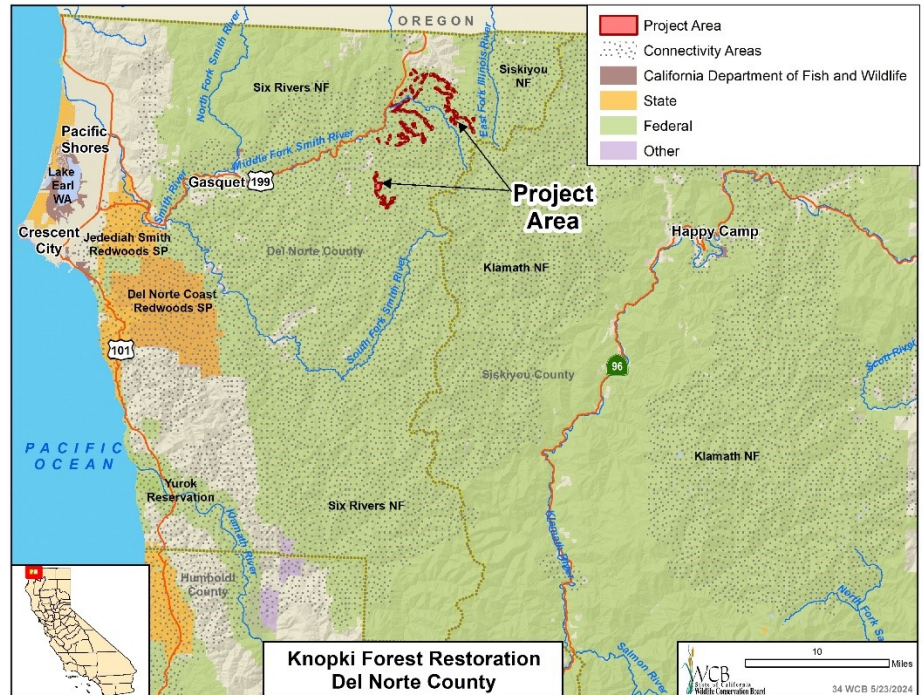
Grantee: National Wild Turkey Foundation

Landowner: USFS Six Rivers National Forest

Location: Ten miles east of Gasquet in Del Norte County, within an SDAC block group.

#### Project Highlights

- Enhances forest resilience by thinning conifers, restoring oak woodlands, and applying beneficial fire.
- Contributes to 1500-acre treatment area.
- Tribal planning participation has resulted in treatment units to restore Beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), a culturally significant basketry plant.
- Key species: Northern spotted owl, Pacific marten, coho and Chinook salmon.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Tolowa Dee-ni Nation and Elk Valley Rancheria are federally recognized tribes that contributed to project planning.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objectives 1.4, 2.1

#### Project Description

The Knopki Forest Restoration (Project) is located within the Six Rivers National Forest on the Smith River National Recreation Area. The Project area consists of conifer plantations that had been extensively logged from the late 1950s to early 1960s before transferring to the USFS in 1964. Current conditions include overstocked small diameter conifer plantations in need of thinning, wildfire impacted forests, encroached oak woodlands, and is located within the salmonid-bearing Smith River watershed. The current forest lacks late-seral characteristics necessary to provide quality habitat and the high fuel loads pose an imminent wildfire risk to adjacent high-quality habitat. WCB

funding will support implementation on 351 acres and will increase biodiversity, habitat function, and wildfire resilience by:

- Timber stand enhancement to increase heterogeneity
- Conifer and brush removal in oak woodlands to increase ecosystem function and acorn production
- Beargrass restoration utilizing traditional ecological knowledge
- Prescribed fire for habitat enhancement and fuel reduction
- Roadside shaded fuel breaks including critical strategic holding features

Herbicide: No

### Key Management Responsibilities

The Six Rivers National Forest 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	\$24,800	---	\$24,800
Forest Restoration	\$807,100	\$5,991,394	\$6,798,494
Indirect Costs	\$3,700	---	\$3,700
Total	\$835,600	\$5,991,394	\$6,826,994

Non-WCB funders include:

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - \$4,093,890
- USFS - \$1,897,504

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Ted McArthur, Forest Supervisor, Six Rivers National Forest
- Dale MacDougall, President, Patriot Restoration Ops

Opposition:

- None received.

## CEQA

Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 901, on September 21, 2018, which addressed a number of wildfire-related items including the creation 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 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and where the primary role of the state agency is providing funding. The USFS reviewed and issued a NEPA decision memos approving the North Knopki Project and the Knopki South Project, of which the Project funded by WCB is a part.

## 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.

## Presentation Items

### 35. Advancing Equity and Biodiversity in Southern California

WCB Grant: \$3,000,000

#### Restoration – Planning

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

Grantee: Resources Legacy Fund

Landowner: N/A

Location: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial, and San Diego Counties

Future projects will be located within or adjacent to a justice community

## Project Highlights

- Will create a pipeline of Southern California biodiversity projects within environmental equity organizations and tribal entities.
- Will prioritize projects in areas that are economically disadvantaged, lack accessible open space, and that will maximize climate, biodiversity, and community benefits.
- Will provide technical assistance, capacity building, and early project development support .

## Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes, will provide direct assistance to environmental equity organizations and plan for projects located in justice communities.
- Tribal Partnerships: Will provide direct assistance to tribal entities.
- Pathways to 30x30: 6. Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B and Objective 3.1

## Project Description

The Advancing Equity and Biodiversity in Southern California (Project) is a three-year pilot supporting local organizations to develop projects that deliver biodiversity, climate, and equity benefits to disadvantaged and tribal communities across Southern California. Specifically, the Project seeks to provide technical assistance, deliver authentic community engagement, and support project development and related implementation activities that advance California's Executive Order N-82-20, Pathways to 30X30, and the Outdoors for All Strategy. Specifically, the Project will:

- Facilitate a minimum of 20 community-led meetings or planning charettes





- Develop and implement a regional communications program that will include a minimum of 10 earned and social media products per year highlighting project progress and details in the respective project regions
- Engage a minimum of 6 community-based organizations in planning and scoping biodiversity, climate, and/or conservation projects
- Engage up to 5 technical consultants on the project
- Facilitate the submittal of 3 planning project applications by community-based organizations to public agencies for related conservation projects
- Administer a minimum of 18 grants to community-based organizations to engage on project planning or development
- If no CEQA lead agency is identified for a project, Resources Legacy Fund will seek prior WCB review and approval before committing funds to the project. WCB intends to act as CEQA lead agency for such projects, and WCB’s Executive Director will approve or disapprove such projects consistent with WCB’s authority as CEQA lead agency.
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$205,415	\$120,000	\$325,415
Due Diligence and Project Selection	\$136,943	\$0	\$136,943
Grantmaking and Technical Assistance	\$2,007,642	\$420,000	\$2,427,642
Communication and Outreach	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000
Indirect	\$450,000	\$160,000	\$610,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$700,000</b>	<b>\$3,700,000</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- Resources Legacy Fund - \$600,000
- In-kind from other Project partners - \$100,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Stephen C. Padilla, California State Senate
- Mike Fong, California State Assembly, 49<sup>th</sup> District

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- David A. Alvarez, California State Assembly, 80<sup>th</sup> District
- Eduardo Garcia, California State Assembly, 36<sup>th</sup> District
- Miguel Angel Luna, Director, Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- Guillermo Rodriguez, California State Director, Trust for Public Land
- Kimberly Morales Johnson, Executive Director, Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy
- David Diaz, Executive Director, Active SGV

### Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the approval of a block grant to Resources Legacy Fund for potential funding of potential future projects to restore or enhance habitat located on public and privately-owned lands in various counties is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, because it is 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. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

## State Government

- Senate: Senator Stephen C. Padilla, District 18  
Senator Susan Rubio, District 22  
Senator Anthony J. Portantino, District 25  
Senator Josh Newman, District 29  
Senator Richard D. Roth, District 31  
Senator Toni G. Atkins, District 39  
Senator Brian W. Jones, District 40
- Assembly: Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36  
Assemblymember James Ramos, District 45  
Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47  
Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, District 48  
Assemblymember Mike Fong, District 49  
Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes, District 50  
Assemblymember Lisa Calderon, District 56  
Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson, District 60  
Assemblymember Marie Waldron, District 75  
Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D., District 79  
Assemblymember David A. Alvarez, District 80

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed,

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authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

### 36. Palo Verde Ecological Reserve (PVER), Expansion 5

Fund Source: AB 179, Sec. 83(3)(a) DAC

CDFW Fee Acquisition

County: Imperial

WCB Grant: \$8,000,000

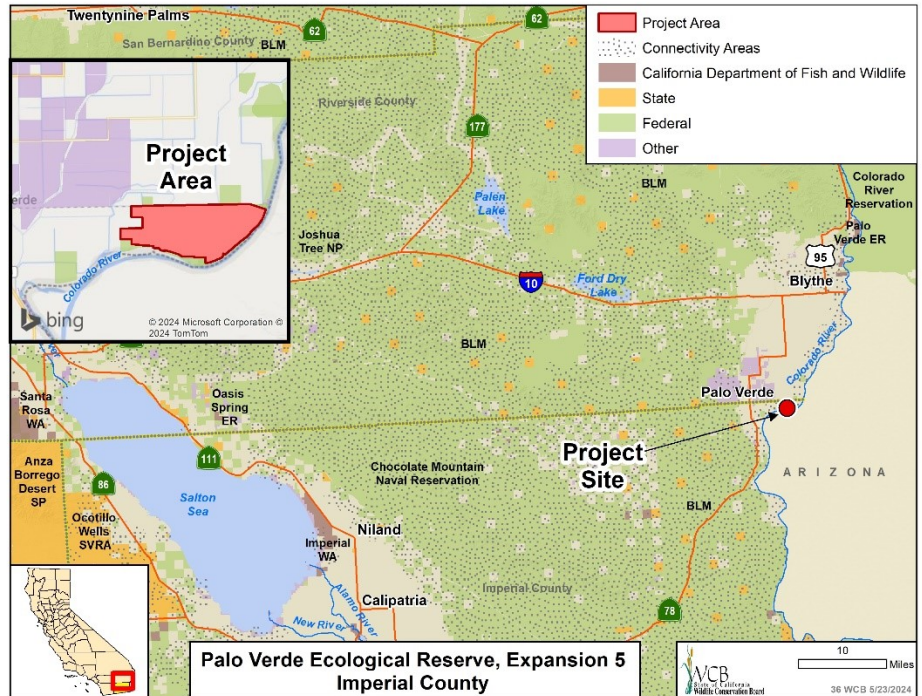
Location: 13 miles south of Blythe

Acres: 1,931± (Property)

**Acquisition  
CDFW Fee**

#### Property Highlights

- Palo Verde Valley is in a low desert region, characterized by an arid climate, broad valleys, and low elevations.
- PVER provides restored habitat for several rare, threatened and endangered species such as southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, Gila woodpecker, California black rail, and the desert tortoise.
- Property designated as a Tier 1 status in CDFW's Colorado River Conceptual Area Project Plan.
- Once acquired, the property will be incorporated into the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP). The Bureau of Reclamation is the Program Manager for the LCR MSCP.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A, C and Objectives A.2, A.4, C.1
- Public Access: Yes, the PVER provides recreational public opportunities in the form of hunting, wildlife viewing, and nature studies.

#### Key Management Objectives and Needs

CDFW will manage and monitor the Property as part of the PVER. CDFW intends to transition the Property from its current agriculture use to multiple and various wildlife habitats. Potential future restoration project types are waterfowl ponds, upland game

feed plots, and mesquite, cottonwood, and willow establishment. In addition, backwater and marsh habitats will be created. The LCR MSCP will bear the long-term costs for restoration, management, and maintenance, a financial obligation estimated by LCR MSCP to be more than \$80,000,000. This commitment ensures that experienced natural resource practitioners dedicated to preserving the unique riparian ecosystem along the lower Colorado River will oversee the Property.

Water use charges administered by Palo Verde Irrigation District are based on a per acre toll rather than the normal standard of acre-feet. An annual water toll fee is paid per acre for an unlimited amount of water. The inclusion of first priority water rights safeguards the sustained protection of the restored habitat.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$35,500,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$8,000,000
DWR	\$2,000,000
Lower Colorado MSCP Consortium	\$25,500,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$35,500,000

\*The Department of Water Resources' (DWR) funding might come to WCB by way of grant or Interagency Agreement. Staff's recommendation is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director and staff to execute appropriate agreements to receive and/or spend DWR funding.

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Terence Murphy, Program Manager, Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
- Tina Anderholt Shields, PE, Water Department Manager, Imperial Irrigation District
- Jessica Neuwerth, Deputy Director, and JB Hamby, Chairman, Colorado River Board of California
- Clint Chandler, Deputy Director, Arizona Department of Water Resources
- Sara Price, Senior Assistant Director, Colorado River Commission of Nevada
- Colby Pellegrino, Deputy General Manager, Resources, Southern Nevada Water Authority
- Taylor Hawes, Colorado River Program Director, The Nature Conservancy

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- Kevin Moran, Associate Vice President, Regional Affairs, Environmental Defense Fund
- Frank Ruiz, Salton Sea Program Director, State Office of National Audubon Society, Audubon California
- Christy Plumer, Chief Conservation Officer, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- Matt Rice, Director, Colorado River Basin Program, American Rivers
- Adel Hagekhalil, General Manager, Metropolitan Water District of So California

### 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: Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, District 36

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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, including executing appropriate agreements with DWR related to the project.



### 37. 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))

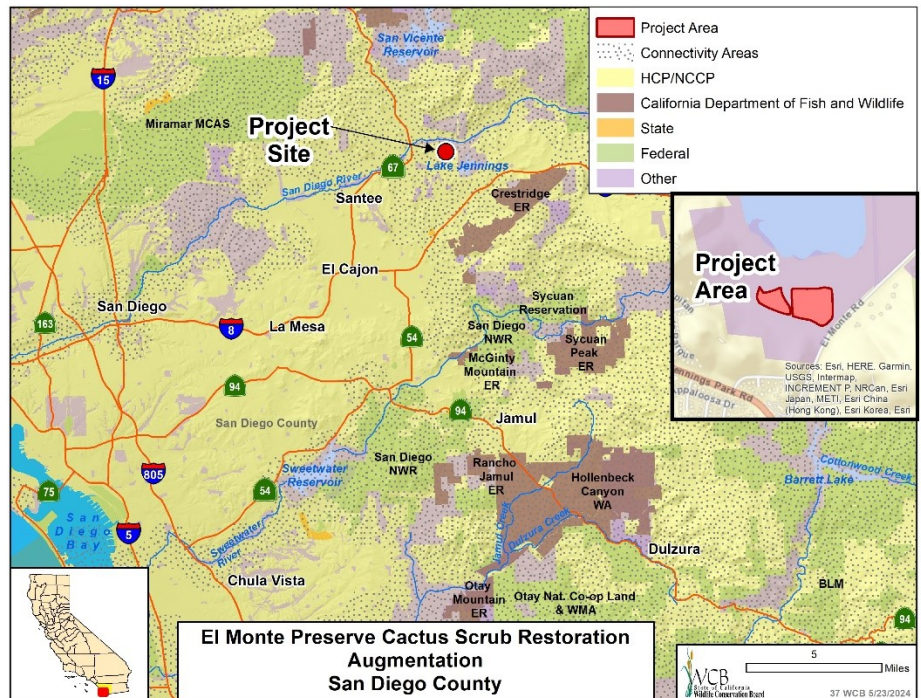
Grantee: Earth Discovery Institute

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 in San Diego County.

#### 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 Action 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

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 2.4

#### Project Description

The project, previously approved for a \$484,007 grant by WCB in November 2021, is to support and expand three existing genetic clusters of coastal cactus wren populations by restoring 15 acres of cactus scrub habitat strategically located near the 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. Herbicides used will include fluazifop-P-butyl (e.g. Fusilade) to treat grasses, and triclopyr (e.g. Garlon 4 Ultra, Vastlan) to treat broadleaf and woody weeds. Additionally, isoxaben (e.g. Gallery) will be utilized to address the preemergence of weeds, particularly effective against Saharan Mustard and other broadleaf weeds. Chlorsulfuron (e.g. Telar XP) may also be used to treat broadleaf weeds that have already emerged and is particularly effective on mustards for season long control. The project employs a Sustainable Pest Management 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.

### 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
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$579,330</b>	<b>\$484,007</b>	<b>\$187,814</b>	<b>\$1,251,151</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

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

## Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- Kian Schulman, Director, Poison Free Malibu

## CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from the 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 Brian Jones, District 40
- 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.

## WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

### 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 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, 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. Herbicides used will include fluzifop-P-butyl (e.g., Fusilade) to treat grasses, and triclopyr (e.g. Garlon 4 Ultra, Vastlan) to treat broadleaf and woody weeds. Additionally, isoxaben (e.g. Gallery) will be utilized to address the preemergence of weeds, particularly effective against Saharan Mustard and other broadleaf weeds. Chlorsulfuron (e.g. Telar XP) may also be used to treat broadleaf weeds that have already emerged and is particularly effective on mustards for season long control.

a) Glyphosate will not be used.

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 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.

### 38. Chollas Creek Segment 5 Restoration Planning

### Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: \$2,300,000

Fund Source: Habitat Conservation Fund, Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f)

Grantee: Groundwork San Diego Chollas Creek

Location: Southeastern San Diego approximately six miles east of downtown San Diego.

#### Project Highlights

- Will provide a diverse array of benefits for the underserved community of Southeastern San Diego
- Builds off past WCB projects and is integrated into larger, watershed wide planning efforts along Chollas Creek
- Habitats restored: Plans will contemplate restoration of approximately 1,300-foot-long riparian corridor with a border of coastal sage scrub along the western and northern edge of the Project site
- Regional or Species Plan: Chollas Creek Watershed Regional Park Masterplan



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and Objectives 1.3, 2.1, 3.1

#### Project Description

The Chollas Creek Segment 5 Restoration Planning (Project) site is a degraded 0.25-mile segment of Chollas Creek (known as Segment 5) that enters the northeastern end of the site through box culverts under I-805, curves 90 degrees to the south, and exits the site through an undersized culvert under Imperial Avenue. The creek segment's existing conditions include a concrete-lined southeastern bank, severely eroded northwestern bank, a narrow earthen and cobble bottom, a concrete utility Arizona

crossing, transient encampments, and extensive stands of giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and other non-native invasive plant species.

Planning for part of the future Chollas Creek Watershed Regional Park, the Project will be an initial step to potentially contribute numerous benefits to wildlife and the local community including: habitat restoration, wildlife corridor enhancement, flood protection, carbon capture, reduction in vehicle miles traveled, reduction in urban heat islands, recreation, and beautification. The Project builds on a former WCB-funded planning project, and leverages relationships and lessons learned from another Chollas Creek WCB-funded creek restoration and trail project (Federal Blvd De-channelization and Trail project) that will be constructed in 2024. The Project will complete the planning process and move the restoration of Segment 5 and construction of an adjacent pedestrian trail to construction ready status by:

- Conducting technical studies and developing final designs
- Soliciting input from neighborhood residents through public outreach
- Finalizing and certifying a CEQA addendum
- Submitting applications for City of San Diego and other regulatory agency permits
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Totals
Project Management	\$309,000	\$309,000
Public Outreach	\$28,000	\$28,000
Designs	\$1,068,000	\$1,068,000
Environmental Review	\$479,000	\$479,000
Permitting	\$395,000	\$395,000
Indirect Costs	\$21,000	\$21,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,300,000</b>	<b>\$2,300,000</b>

### 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 Steve C. Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Akilah Weber, District 79

## 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. Prescott Preserve Ecological Restoration**  
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

**Restoration –  
Implementation**

## 40. Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning, Phase II

WCB Grant: \$10,054,000

Fund Source: General Fund, Section AB179, Sec.19.56(e)(7)

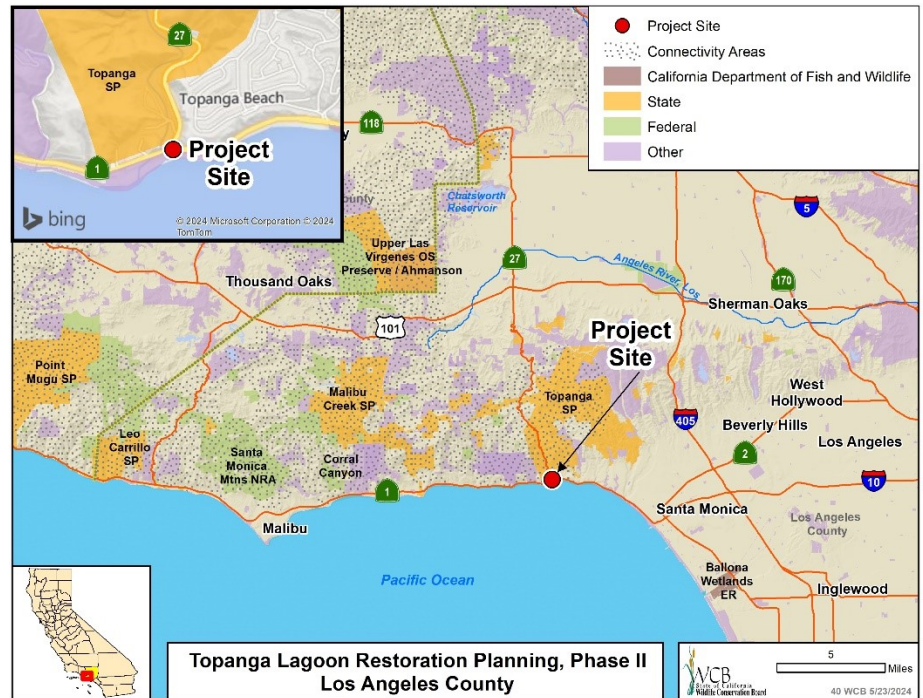
Grantee: Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

Location: The Pacific Coast Highway bridge over Topanga Lagoon ten miles west of Santa Monica

## Restoration – Planning

### Project Highlights

- The bar-built estuary at Topanga Lagoon is at the mouth of the third largest watershed that drains into Santa Monica Bay.
- Topanga Creek still has a population of endangered tidewater goby and is the only watershed left in the Santa Monica Bay that supports endangered southern steelhead.
- The Lagoon contains coastal wetlands which have faced intense development pressure.
- Key species: Endangered tidewater goby and endangered southern steelhead trout.
- Project is part of \$15 million earmark from the State Budget for \$15,000,000 to the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains to assist in the recovery of the federally endangered southern steelhead trout found in the Santa Monica Mountains with habitat restoration, genetic preservation, and hatcheries.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal B.1 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 4.3

### Project Description

Southern steelhead trout is a federally endangered species whose management is governed by the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southern California Steelhead



Recovery Plan (Plan). The Plan has designated the steelhead in the Topanga system as a Core 1 population, which means it has the highest potential to contribute to the recovery of the species. The Plan also identifies restoration of Topanga Lagoon as a critical element of improving the resiliency of Topanga steelhead because it will provide additional opportunities for anadromous adults to access up to four miles of good to excellent habitat upstream.

The Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning, Phase II (Project) will provide road and bridge replacement designs to the 90% level, engineering reports and technical studies, and public outreach necessary to begin the restoration of the lagoon that will achieve measurable benefits for federally listed endangered southern steelhead trout and tidewater goby by:

- Expanding the lagoon from 0.56 acres to between 7-10 acres by replacing the 79 ft long Pacific Coast Highway culvert bridge with a 200 ft main span, plus 130 ft side spans (total 460 ft) and removing legacy fill placed in the Lagoon.
- Restoring and enlarging the floodplain/beach area from 29 degraded acres to 35-36 restored acres to increase diversity, quantity, and quality of beach, wetland, fish, and upland habitat.
- Improving water quality by reducing wastewater impacts.
- Increasing community and ecosystem resiliency to sea level rise.
- Improving visitor and emergency services.
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management and Coordination	\$1,242,225	---	\$1,242,225
Designs and Caltrans Documentation	\$5,840,199	\$1,000,000	\$6,840,199
Technical Studies	\$2,524,106	---	\$2,524,106
Outreach	\$105,725	---	\$105,725
Indirect Costs	\$341,745	---	\$341,745
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,054,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$11,054,000</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- Caltrans - \$1,000,000

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- Ben Allen, California State Senator, 24<sup>th</sup> District
- Jacqui Irwin, California State Assemblymember, 42<sup>nd</sup> District
- Lindsey P. Horvath, Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Third District
- Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Cultural Resource Administrator, Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California
- Steve Hudson, District Director, California Coastal Commission
- Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director, Environmental Planning, Caltrans Dist. 7
- Snowy Dodson, Chapter Vice President, California Native Plant Society
- Trout Unlimited South Coast

### 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 Ben Allen, District 24
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, District 42

## 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. Puente Hills Regional Park Habitat Restoration

WCB Grant: \$12,500,000

Fund Source: General Fund, Section AB179, Sec.83(3)(a), DAC

Grantee: County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation

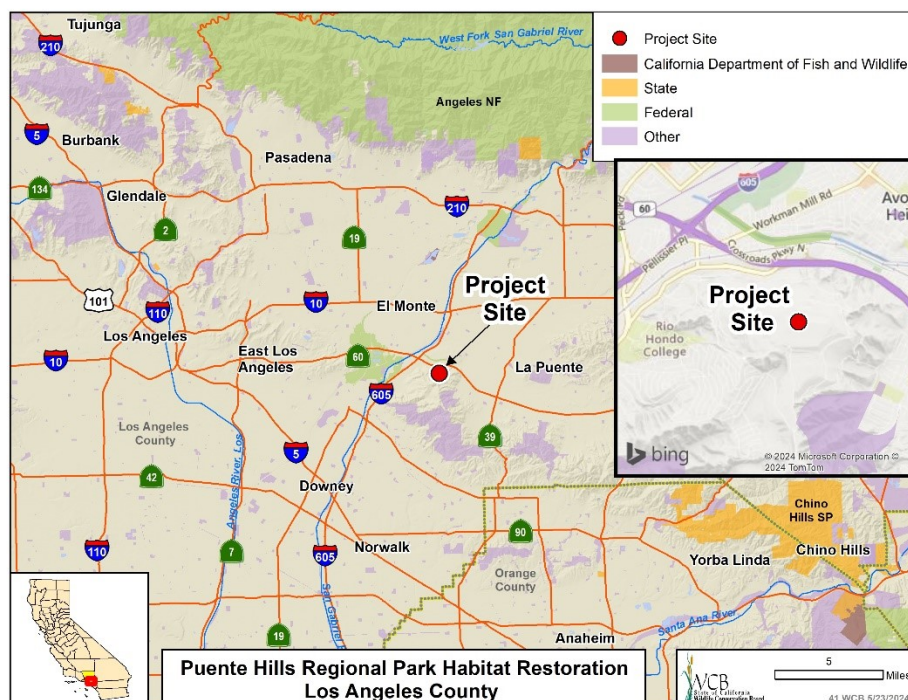
Landowners County of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

Location: The City of Industry in Los Angeles County.

## Restoration – Implementation

### Project Highlights

- Project is located at the site of the former Puente Hills Landfill within the San Gabriel Valley region.
- The project site sits at the tip of a chain of native hills and canyons referred to as the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor which extends from the Puente Hills to the Cleveland National Forest.
- Habitats to be restored: 3.6 acres of native grassland, 19 acres of coastal sage scrub, 1 acre of white sage scrub, 8 acres of cactus sage scrub, and 8 acres of chaparral.
- Project will include ADA-compliant educational signage in both English and Spanish



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B.1, C.4 and Objectives 1.3

### Project Description

The Puente Hills Regional Park Habitat Restoration (Project) is located at the site of the former Puente Hills Landfill, which at one point during its nearly 60 years of operations was considered the second largest landfill in the country. The former landfill is in the process of being converted into the Puente Hills Regional Park which will be Los Angeles County's first new regional park in three decades. The park will serve residents of the Inland Empire and Los Angeles County. The design will restore the Project site to

an approximation of the historical habitat of Puente Hills and will create a space for environmental stewardship, interpretation, and place-based education.

Prior to the landfill’s operation, the Project site once supported a thriving ecological system of oak-woodland, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral habitats. The currently degraded Project site now provides little to no habitat value. The Project will begin the restoration of the site through the establishment of native plant communities which will address the critical issues of habitat degradation, loss of biodiversity, disrupted habitat connectivity, and the unmet needs of nearby residents for accessible open space.

Specific measures to be implemented include:

- Importation of soil and grading the Project site to make the former landfill suitable for planting native species.
- Planting up to 200 large oak trees to assist with soil stabilization and to provide shade to future park visitors.
- Restoring 40 acres of native grassland, coastal sage scrub, white sage scrub, cactus sage scrub, and chaparral habitats that will approximate the ecosystem that was present at the site before being converted to a landfill.
- Installing educational signage that will educate and foster stewardship in visitors to the future park.
- Herbicide: No

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	---	\$100,000	\$100,000
Site Preparation and Grading	\$4,843,000	\$4,496,361	\$9,339,361
Oak Tree Installation	\$1,797,000	\$1,314,714	\$3,111,714
Habitat Restoration	\$5,610,000	\$575,243	\$6,185,243
Outreach and Education	\$250,000	\$310,000	\$560,000
Monitoring and Maintenance	---	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,500,000</b>	<b>\$6,801,318</b>	<b>\$19,301,318</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation - \$6,801,318

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- Bob Archuleta, California State Senator, 30<sup>th</sup> District
- Lisa Calderon, California State Assemblymember, 56<sup>th</sup> District
- Luz Rivas, California State Assemblymember, 43<sup>rd</sup> District

### Opposition:

- None received

## CEQA

The County of Los Angeles, as lead agency, prepared an EIR 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 Bob Archuleta, District 30
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lisa Calderon, District 56

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.



## 42. Desert Tortoise Recovery Through Head-Starting Restoration – Study

WCB Grant: \$1,371,377

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (AB102, Sec. 84(1))

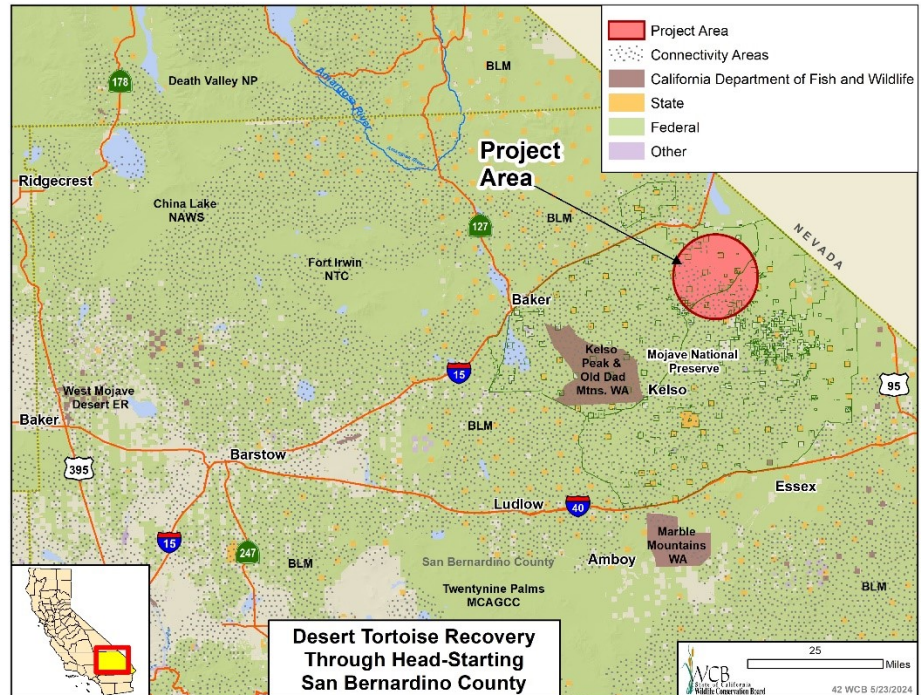
Grantee: The Regents of the University of California, Davis

Landowner: Mojave National Preserve

Location: 38 miles west of Baker, San Bernardino County

### Project Highlights

- Allows for the population augmentation of desert tortoise into a key region linking populations from the eastern and western parts of the desert tortoise's range per USFWS's 2011 Revised Recovery Plan
- Project would study the ability of using head start tortoises (tortoises raised in captivity until they reach a larger size with greater survival upon release) to recover a listed species through implementation of recovery actions within USFWS's Recovery Plan.
- Allows researchers to study the adaptiveness of head-started desert tortoise that have been released at various study sites to see if these habitats can provide climate refugia as compared to control sites.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: 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, 2.4

### Project Description

Desert tortoise populations are continuing to decline despite its listing as threatened under state and federal law. One challenge for the tortoise is its slow life history, specifically its survival during its juvenile period. The slow growth and maturation of the species precludes a quick response by their populations to management interventions



despite significant efforts to ameliorate conservation threats. The Desert Tortoise Recovery Through Head-Starting (Project) proposes to (1) release head-started tortoises at sites on protected federal land identified for population augmentation to increase tortoise populations in the short-term and increase the viability of populations for growth and continued recruitment of individuals over the long-term, and (2) to evaluate the effectiveness of these actions at implementation sites relative to a control site where ongoing research and additional releases of head-started tortoises can provide a strong baseline for comparison. These actions are aligned with the recovery goals in the USFWS 2011 Revised Recovery Plan. The expected benefit of this project is that at least one or more of the augmentation sites will have improved population size and viability resulting in an increased resilience to climate change and other stressors.

### Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	\$99,445	\$19,036	\$118,481
Head-starting	\$277,059	\$5,000	\$282,059
Release at Control Sites	\$274,379	\$5,000	\$279,379
Release at Study Sites	\$541,618	\$5,000	\$546,618
Indirect Costs	\$178,876	\$488,722	\$667,598
Total	\$1,371,377	\$522,758	\$1,894,135

Non-WCB funders include:

- University of California, Davis (in-kind) - \$522,758

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Debra Hughson, Deputy Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve
- Kristina Drake, PhD, Desert Tortoise Recovery Coordinator, USFWS
- Roy C. Averill-Murray, Retired Desert Tortoise Recovery Coordinator, USFWS

Opposition:

- None received

### CEQA

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

Section 15301, Existing Facilities, consisting of maintenance or minor alteration of topographical features, and Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, consisting of minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

### State Government

- Senate: Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
- Assembly: Assemblymember Tom Lackey, District 34

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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. Beach Ranch

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023,  
 Nature Based Solutions Provision (AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a))  
 Grantee: The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County  
 County: Santa Cruz  
 WCB Grant: \$5,000,000  
 Location: Approximately 2.5 miles west of Watsonville  
 Acres: 247± (Property)

**Acquisition  
 Fee**

#### Property Highlights

- 2.1 miles of the Pajaro River Estuary shoreline, adjacent to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
- Nature based sea-level rise adaptation featuring:
  - 22 acres of existing high-quality coastal habitat and estuarine wetlands.
  - 65 additional acres to be restored to estuarine wetlands.
- Special status species found in the vicinity of the Property include the federally endangered tidewater goby and federally threatened South-Central California Coast steelhead.
- Notable bird species utilizing the existing wetland habitat include double-crested cormorant, osprey (nest adjacent to the Property), bald eagle (nest within 2 miles of the Property), northern harrier, and merlin.
- Near other public lands including Zmudowski State Beach, Sunset State Beach, and the Pajaro River Mouth Reserve.
- The Property includes 0.9 miles of levee that could be used for a future trail or coastal access project.
- This project will facilitate the expansion of coastal wetlands at the Pajaro River mouth, which will function as a 'sponge' to better protect the upstream communities of Watsonville and Pajaro from future storm events. This region was heavily damaged by a levee breach in January 2023, and this acquisition project is aligned with the critical levee repair and setback project managed by the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in coordination with DWR and the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency.



## Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Upon acquisition, the Land Trust plans to facilitate property access to Amah Mutsun Tribal Band members and other local tribe members.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.1, A.2, B.1, and Objectives 1.3, 2.1 ,4.3
- Public Access: Potential. Future access via expanded Watsonville to Sea/Pajaro River Levee trail system is being discussed with USACE and subject to levee improvement projects being planned.

## Key Management Objectives and Needs

Once acquired, a restoration planning and implementation project will commence that will restore estuarine wetland habitat, retire agricultural land, improve water quality, and potentially provide public access. In addition to the current 22 acres of wetland habitat, 65 additional acres of farmland have been identified for retirement and habitat restoration, as a condition of the WCB grant, because they are unproductive and flood prone. Remaining farm acres will maintain organic certification.

The planned 65-acre restoration will improve water quality. The region suffers from poor surface water quality. Watsonville Slough and the Pajaro River are listed as impaired by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding nitrate, and the Pajaro River Estuary is also listed as impaired for low levels of dissolved oxygen, which may impact steelhead rearing habitat. The planned installation of woodchip bioreactors will remove nitrate from agricultural drainage coming from the Property and adjacent farmland. These systems, proven effective at a pilot project site at another Land Trust property nearby, are projected to remove over 10 metric tons of nitrogen from agricultural drainage water, preventing its discharge to the estuary. This will improve water quality of tributaries to Monterey Bay. Anticipated partners in addition to The Conservation Fund include The Nature Conservancy, Central Coast Wetlands Group, Watsonville Wetlands Watch, the Pajaro River Flood Management Agency, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band (and Amah Mutsun Land Trust), Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, and the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency.

Acquisition of the Property will allow opportunities for tribal access and public access. The Land Trust's acquisition of Beach Ranch is a high priority for the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band due to the opportunity to return their indigenous traditions to the land. In addition, although there are no public access facilities currently open on the Property, the Land Trust is interested in a Watsonville-to-the-Sea/Pajaro River Levee trail that would connect the city of Watsonville to the coast. Beach Ranch includes 0.9 miles of levee for a potential trail and can play a key role as a destination. A planning process will be required to develop the trail, including working with stakeholders.

The Land Trust and partners will leverage farm lease revenues and secure grant funds to execute future restoration and access projects.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$15,490,000 and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of \$13,900,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$5,000,000
State Coastal Conservancy	\$8,000,000
Land Trust of Santa Cruz Funds/Fund Raising	\$900,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$13,900,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Senator John Laird, Seventeenth Senate District
- Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
- Assembly Member Dawn Addis, Assembly Member Thirteenth District
- Chair Val Lopez, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Markley Bavinger, The Nature Conservancy of California

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. Note, this only applies to acquisition. Any future restoration will require a separate analysis to determine how to comply with CEQA.

### State Government

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

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.



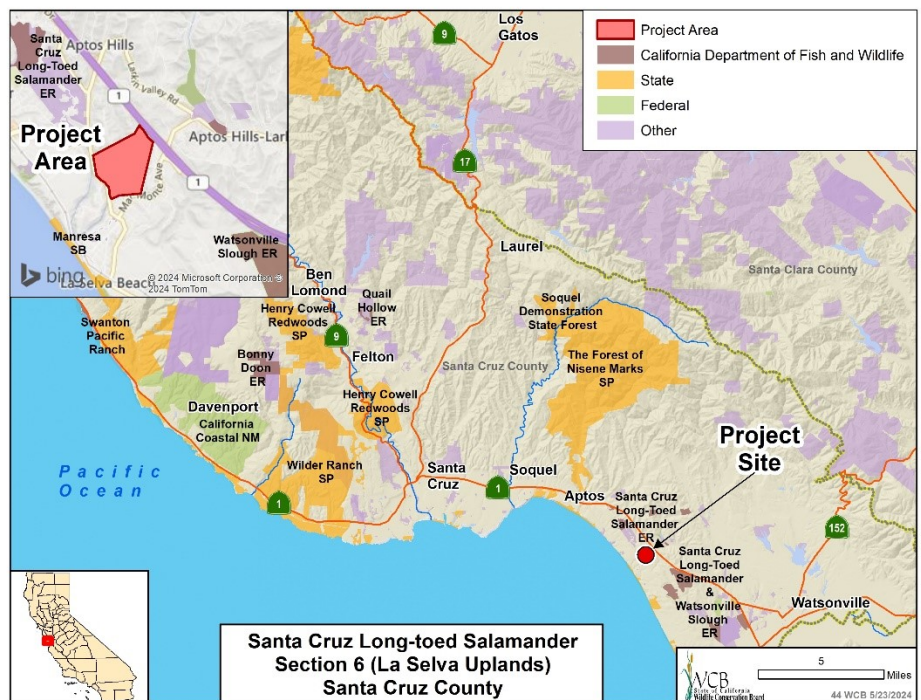
**44. Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Section 6 (La Selva Uplands)**

**Acquisition Fee**

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, (AB179, Sec. 83(3)(a))  
 Grantee: The Trust for Public Land  
 Successor Grantee: Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC)  
 County: Santa Cruz  
 WCB Grant: \$6,096,000  
 USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: \$3,034,000  
 Location: 4 miles northwest of Watsonville  
 Acres: 144± (Property)

**Property Highlights**

- Key species: state-listed and federally endangered Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (SCLTS).
- Habitats represented: oak woodland, SCLTS upland and dispersal habitat consisting of grasslands and scrub, and several acres of wetlands and ponds, a portion of which provides valuable breeding habitat.
- Regional or Species Plan: SCLTS Recovery Plan (USFWS 1999), Draft SCLTS Conceptual Area Protection Plan, Santa Cruz RCIS, Update to Strategic Plan for Recovery of the SCLTS and California red-legged frog in the Larkin Valley area.
- Four known breeding locations for SCLTS are within approximately one mile of the property within the Valencia-Seascape metapopulation. Property is also near six known breeding locations to the south (Ellicott-Buena Vista metapopulation) within the Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander Ecological Reserve and Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Area.
- An existing 36” culvert under Highway 1 adjacent to the northeastern corner of the property provides a potential linkage between the Valencia-Seascape and Larkin Valley SCLTS metapopulations.
- A wildlife highway undercrossing currently in the “Initiation” phase of the Caltrans State Highway Operation and Protection Program is located approximately two miles





south of the property along Highway 1. That crossing will connect the Larkin Valley and Ellicott-Buena Vista SCLTS metapopulations and is on track for construction in the 2028-2029 project calendar. Caltrans may fund an additional crossing adjacent to the La Selva Uplands property to support SCLTS population connectivity if the lands across Highway 1 are protected.

### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A and Objectives 1.2, 1.3
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

LTSCC will receive the Property immediately upon close of escrow and will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices. The Property does not require a large investment in active management to continue to provide high quality habitat for the SCLTS. Any future remediation of the property or restoration of its habitats to benefit SCLTS will be planned and fundraised for separately and will be informed by recommendations in the biological assessment for the property as well as recent recovery plans for the species. A major future potential restoration project could address the wetland area and stream corridors. Restoration of wetland areas to maximize benefits for SCLTS will likely be the highest priority action resulting from an assessment and management plan.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$9,130,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$6,096,000
FWS Section 6 funds	\$3,034,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$9,130,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Lisa Lurie, Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County

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 Robert Rivas, District 29

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

## 45. Island Dairy

## Acquisition

Fund Source(s): Fund Name General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Nature Based Solutions, San Joaquin Valley Floodplain Provision (A179, Sec.19.58(b)(2)(A)) **Fee**

Grantee: River Partners

County: Stanislaus

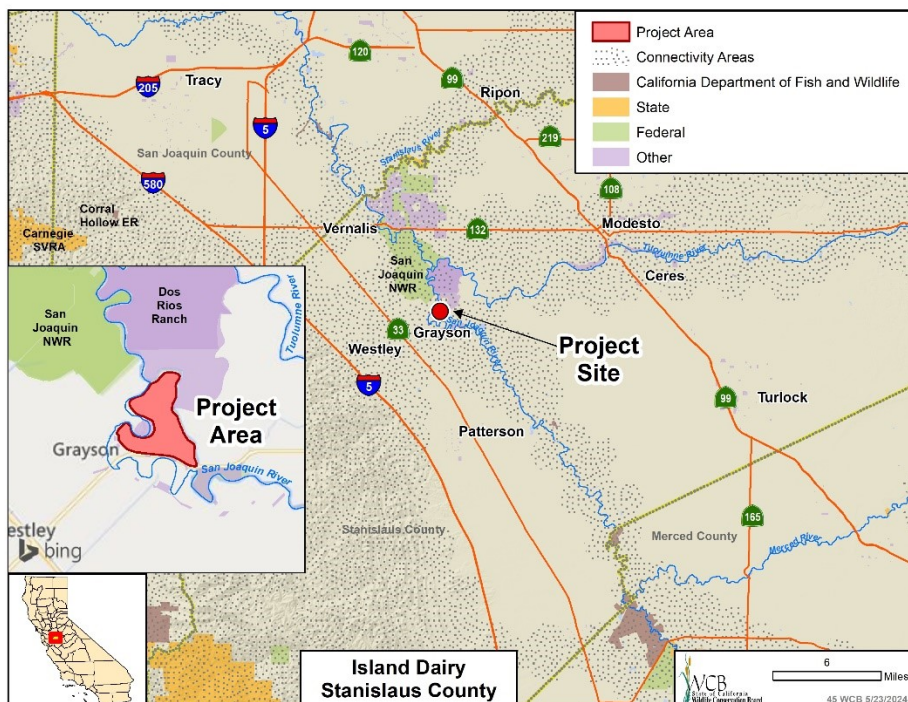
WCB Grant: \$11,100,000

Location: Property is located between the historic San Joaquin River channel and Laird Slough immediately adjacent to the unincorporated community of Grayson

Acres: 482± (Property)

### Property Highlights

- The property is located at the nexus of over 10,000 acres of conserved lands, including the San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuge and WCB funded Dos Rios Ranch at the confluence of the Tuolumne and San Joaquin rivers.
- Agricultural uses on the Property will be retired and River Partners will seek additional funding to restore the Property to native riparian and wetland habitat over a ten-year period.
- Restoration will target fish and wildlife species that include Chinook salmon, green sturgeon, Sacramento splittail, riparian brush rabbit, riparian woodrat, western blue pond turtle, valley longhorn elderberry beetle, least Bell's vireo, Swainson's hawk, tricolor blackbird, and migratory bird species.
- 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, and riparian forests.
- The 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

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No

- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land 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 has acquired funding to develop a restoration plan and secure permits for restoration implementation on the Property. The plan will include an anticipated timeframe for agricultural retirement phasing, restoration implementation, and future property management objectives and needs during the restoration period. The grant agreement will require the restoration of the site to be completed within a ten-year period following the close of escrow.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$11,100,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$11,100,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$11,100,000

### 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. Note, this only applies to acquisition. Any future restoration will require a separate analysis to determine how to comply with CEQA.

### State Government

- Senate: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 04
- Assembly: Assemblymember Juan Alanis, District 22

### 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. Tiburon Ridge (Martha)

#### Acquisition

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2022, Fish & Wildlife Resources – Fee

Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision (SB154, Climate)

Grantee: The Trust for Public Land (TPL)

Successor Grantee: Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD)

County: Marin County

WCB Grant: \$5,500,000

Location: Town of Tiburon

Acres: 110± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- In conjunction with the surrounding protected properties (122-acre Old St. Hilary's Open Space and the 24-acre Tiburon Uplands Preserve) conservation of this Property will create 256 acres of contiguous, protected open space that provides movement options for wildlife.
- The Property will be connected via trails to MCOSD's 389-acre Ring Mountain Open Space Preserve (Ring Mountain Preserve) at the upper end of the peninsula.
- Habitats represented: oak woodland, serpentine prairie, coastal scrub, open grassland, and wetland habitats.
- Property supports rare and special status species, including the Marin dwarf flax, a federally threatened plant with fewer than two dozen extant populations, and serpentine reed grass, a rare species. The Property also provides habitat for special status animals such as the California red-legged frog, the loggerhead shrike and the Northern harrier.
- Property will protect the existing carbon sequestration in the Property's grasslands, woodlands, and wetlands; provide species resilience to climate change by creating a larger block of protected habitat that offers 350 feet of elevation differential, a variety of habitat niches, and a refuge from rising sea levels; and prevent increased traffic congestion and associated carbon emissions from new development in an already highly congested urban area.





- Regional or Species Plan: CDFW’s State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP 2015), Recovery Plan for the California Red-Legged Frog (2002), Recovery Plan for Serpentine Soil Species of the San Francisco Bay Area (1998), Marin Countywide Plan, 2007 (CWP), Town of Tiburon General Plan, and Open Space & Conservation Element (2020).

**Priority Metrics**

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: None
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B.5, C.1 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1
- Public Access: Yes. The project protects public access to trails and views. These trails are largely orderly and include four main trails: Spanish Trail, which parallels Paradise Drive and is the only trail with an official name; Ridge Trail (the extension of Tiburon Ridge Trail), and North and South connector trails (which connect Spanish and Ridge Trails). There are also a number of pathways to “Founder’s Rock,” a rock landmark onsite.

**Key Management Objectives and Needs**

The Property ownership will be transferred to MCOSD for management as a public open space preserve, pursuant to a separate purchase and sale agreement between MCOSD and TPL. MCOSD will develop and implement a comprehensive management plan with recommended best management practices.

**Project Funding**

The DGS approved fair market value is \$42,100,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$5,500,000
Marin County Open Space District	\$29,172,085
Town of Tiburon	\$1,072,915
City of Belvedere	\$125,000
California Natural Resources Agency (EEMP Grant)	\$1,500,000
Moore Foundation	\$1,500,000
Philanthropic Funds	\$3,230,000
<b>TOTAL Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$42,100,000</b>

\*If Philanthropic Funds increase the Town of Tiburon's contribution will decrease proportionately.

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- Stephanie Moulton-Peters, Marin County Board of Supervisors, 3<sup>rd</sup> District
- Max Korten, Marin County Parks
- Jack Ryan, Mayor, Town of Tiburon
- Jerry Riessen, President, Tiburon Open Space
- Dr. Katharyn Boyer, Interim Executive Director and Professor of Biology, San Francisco State University

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

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

## 47. Lower Colgan Creek Riparian Restoration

WCB Grant: \$2,010,000

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2023, Nature Based Solutions

(AB102, Sec. 85(3)(a))

Grantee: City of Santa Rosa

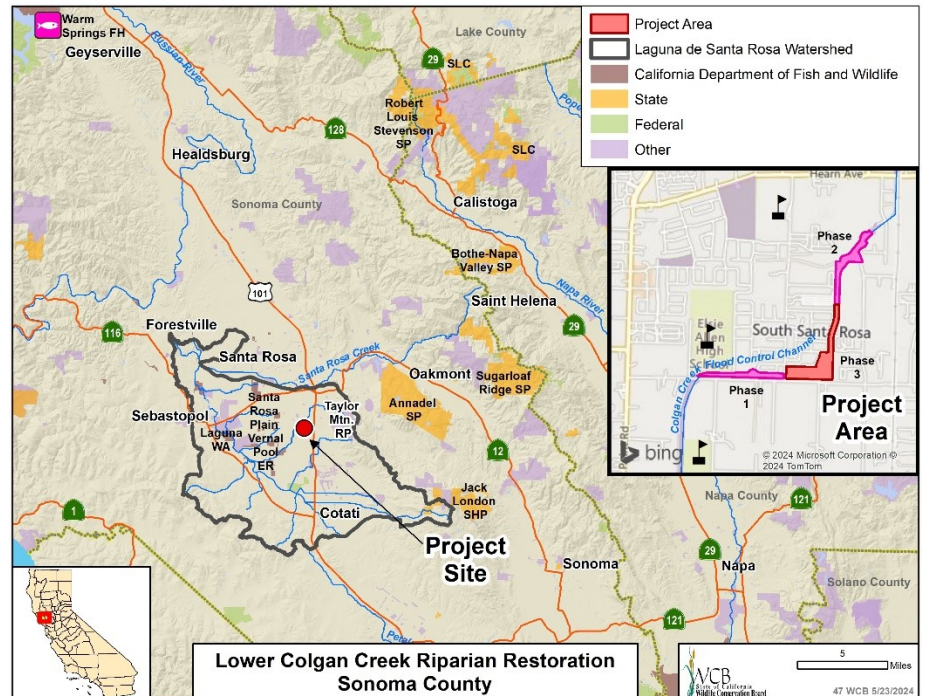
Landowner: City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma Water Agency

Location: 2.5 miles south of downtown Santa Rosa, Sonoma County

## Restoration – Implementation

### Project Highlights

- Restores natural ecosystem services to Lower Colgan Creek for wildlife and water quality.
- Provides climate change resilience by increasing the creek's hydraulic capacity and shade trees.
- Restores over seven acres of fish, wildlife, and pollinator habitat.
- Partners with local tribes for basketry plants and wildlife-themed art.
- Improves habitat for listed salmonids, western pond turtle, beaver, and pollinators.
- Constructs ADA-compliant creek pathway with pedestrian bridge and educational signage in both English and Spanish.
- Involves community through scientific education and volunteer days.
- Employs youth conservation corps for basketry plantings and habitat maintenance.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes, a local tribe member will be a subrecipient of grant funds for the wildlife-oriented mural.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria for cultural resources survey, cultural monitoring during construction, selection of basketry plantings, which will be publicly available for tribal members to harvest after establishment, and public artwork.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1: Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation; Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship; Pathway 8: Align Investments to Maximize Conservation Benefits

- WCB Strategic Plan Goals B, C and Objectives 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 4.3

## Project Description

The Lower Colgan Creek Riparian Restoration (Project) site was stripped of its ecosystem functions when Colgan Creek was informally channelized for agriculture drainage prior to 1942, and more formally channelized in the early 1970s for urban drainage. Its straightened and confined linear trapezoidal channel quickly conveys storm water away from the urban core, preventing stream and ecosystem functions from developing wildlife habitat and improving water quality. Furthermore, the modified channel is undersized for the large storm events that are already becoming more common with a changing climate and the creek corridor does not provide valuable open space for the community to appreciate and enjoy. The Project will implement stream and riparian habitat restoration increasing flood capacity and climate resiliency, slowing, and naturally filtering storm water and pollutants, building structural diversity and a healthy riparian corridor, providing wildlife-oriented education and recreation, and building partnerships by:

- Recontouring 2,450 linear feet of channelized creek to its historic alignment with meanders, stepped floodplain, pools, riffles, and large woody debris.
- Laying back 4,900 linear feet of stream bank to increase the creek's flood capacity from a 25-year to 100-year flood event.
- Manually removing invasive plants and planting over 2,000 native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous perennials.
- Planting sedges and rushes along flood terraces to stabilize banks, provide wildlife cover, and provide basketry materials for local tribes.
- Creating two acres of monarch meadows using innovative technologies to seed milkweed and nectar for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Constructing 2,270 feet of accessible creek pathway with a pedestrian bridge that will safely connect communities and schools on either side of the creek.
- Installing 2-3 wildlife viewing areas along the creek pathway along with three interpretive natural history signs and 4-6 community art pieces that are wildlife themed and interactive.
- Hosting at least 8 educational events with local schools and hiring various youth conservation corps for restoration plantings and annual maintenance and monitoring activities.
- Commissioning micro murals by students from Conservation Works Youth Action Group as part of a self-guided art scavenger hunt along the creek trail.
- Commissioning tribal member mural depicting Native people with wildlife.
- Herbicide: No

## Key Management Responsibilities

The City of Santa Rosa (City) and Sonoma Water Agency (Sonoma Water) have adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including

management of the restored Colgan Creek Property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, the City and Sonoma Water do not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires the Grantee to 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	\$50,416	\$8,186	\$58,602
Final Design & Permitting	\$70,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,470,000
Construction, Maintenance, & Monitoring	\$1,833,584	\$3,848,360	\$5,681,944
Outreach & Education	\$56,000	\$30,000	\$86,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,010,000</b>	<b>\$5,286,546</b>	<b>\$7,296,546</b>

Non-WCB funders include:

- City of Santa Rosa - \$918,480
- DWR - \$4,368,066

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Senator Mike McGuire, Second District, State Senate
- Chris Coursey, Third District, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Grant Davis, General Manager, Sonoma Water
- Bert Whitaker, Director, Sonoma County Regional Parks
- Gabriel Albavera, Principal, Elsie Allen High School
- Andy Rodgers, Executive Director, Russian River Watershed Association

Opposition:

- None received

### CEQA

The City of Santa Rosa, as lead agency, prepared an MND for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the 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 conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.



## 48. Trinity Headwaters

## Acquisition

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Nature-Based Solutions Grant Program Provision Fee

AB 179, Sec. 83(3)(a)

Grantee: The Pacific Forest Trust, Inc.

County: Trinity County

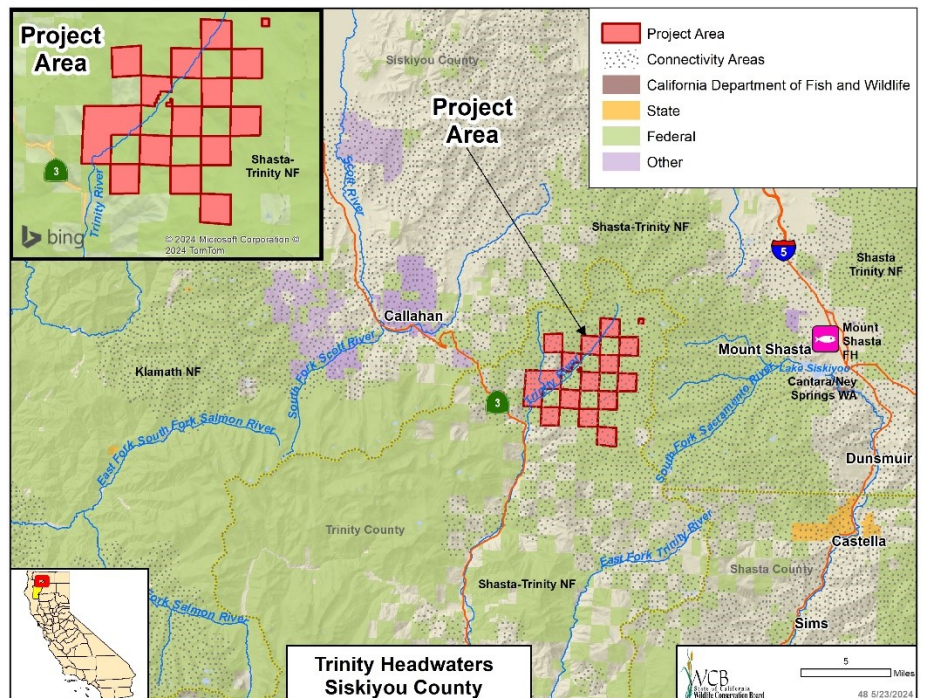
WCB Grant: \$12,100,000

Location: Approximately 10-15 miles west of interstate 5 and the City of Mount Shasta, and 8 miles southeast of the community of Callahan

Acres: 10,700± (Property)

### Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: Klamath mixed and subalpine conifer forest, white and red fir, Jeffrey and lodgepole pine, mixed chaparral, riparian woodlands, riverine, perennial grassland, and wet meadows.
- Property supports an estimated 233 terrestrial wildlife species and 9 aquatic fish and amphibian species, including 44 special status species that are rare or threatened, such as the Pacific marten, fisher, California wolverine, Cascade frog, and the Sierra Nevada red fox.
- Property is in the center of a hot spot for botanical diversity due to extensive serpentine soils that are home to numerous rare plants including: California pitcher plant and Trinity buckwheat.
- Property is in the Upper Trinity River Hydrologic Area and contains portions of Little Trinity River, Picayune Creek, and Sherer Creek watersheds. These streams flow into the Trinity River, then the Trinity Reservoir. The Property's cold-water flows also support Chinook salmon downstream in the Trinity and Sacramento rivers.
- Project will increase wildlife resiliency to climate change by protecting a wildlife corridor between the Cascade and Klamath ranges.
- Pacific Forest Trust will take fee title to the Property at closing before transferring title to Watershed Training and Research Center (WTRC) subject to a Working Forest Conservation Easement held by Pacific Forest Trust.



- WTRC intends to maintain the Property as a working forest, managing the Property for its biodiversity, habitat, and watershed benefits, as well as climate and wildfire resiliency, durable carbon storage, and public access for recreation. Additionally, WTRC intends to use the Property as a core landscape for its local workforce development and delivery of youth programs for local communities and tribes, including cultural and ancestral ecological practices.

### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A1, A2 and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, , 3.1, 4.1
- Public Access: Yes. Property will provide public access and outdoor workforce and educational opportunities as provided by WTRC.

### Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Permanently protects the Property's natural character, open space, scenic beauty, and public benefits in perpetuity.
- Provides for both consumptive and non-consumptive uses.
- Eliminates the Property's vulnerability to fragmentation by merging all legal parcels, outside of two (2) identified Development Zones. Prohibits mining and mineral extraction and prohibits non-residential or commercial development and agricultural uses.
- Protects forest health through strict management guidelines.
- Protects the Property's biodiversity, native fish and critical wildlife habitats; especially aquatic and wetland communities, riparian woodlands, meadows, and diverse forest and chaparral communities that provide habitats for endangered, threatened, and rare species and other species of concern.
- Protects the significant water resources of the Property and water quality.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

The conservation easement will ensure the Property will be managed for its Conservation Values, including biodiversity, habitat, and watershed benefits, as well as climate and fire resiliency, and durable carbon storage.

## Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$15,500,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$12,100,000
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	\$1,400,000
Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development Program	\$2,000,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$15,500,000

## Letters of Support or Opposition

### Support:

- State Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Dan Fraiser, Chairman, Trinity County Board of Supervisors
- Paul Hauser, General Manager, Trinity Public Utilities District
- Mike Rourke, Board of Director, Chair, Trinity County Resource Conservation District
- Megan Wargo, Deputy Director, Pacific Crest Trail Association
- Will Harling, Director, Mid Klamath Watershed Council
- Ryan Henson, Senior Policy Director, California Wilderness Coalition
- Cyndie Childress, Nor Rel Muk Wintu Nation, Tribal Secretary

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

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

## 49. Miner's Creek

## Acquisition/Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Fish & Wildlife Resources - Climate Change Impacts on Wildlife Provision, AB102, Sec.85(3)(a)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

County: Siskiyou

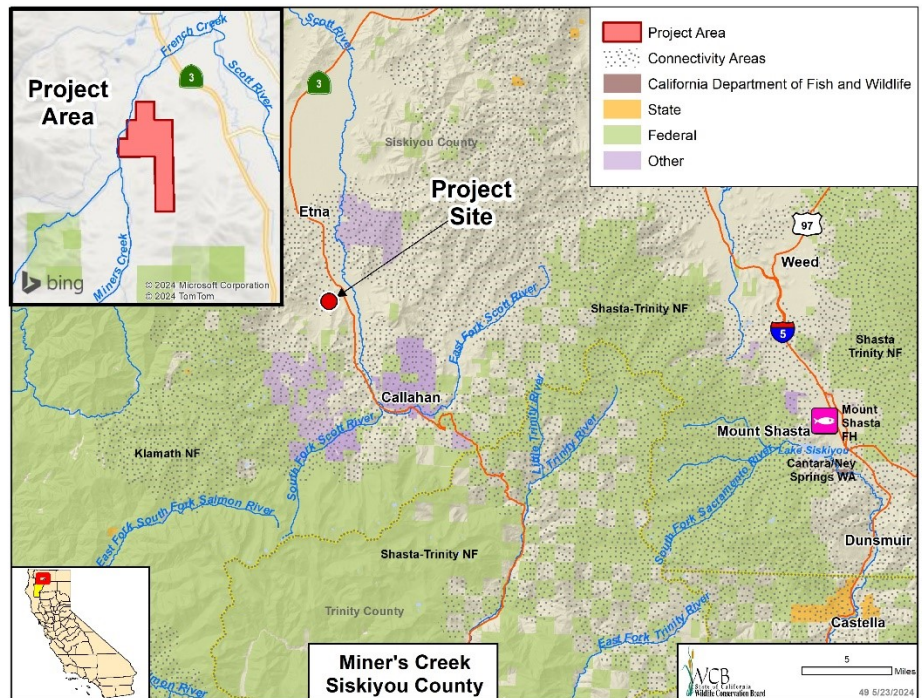
WCB Grant: \$2,750,000

Location: Approximately six miles outside Etna, CA

Acres: 389± (Property)

### Property Highlights

- Instream flow dedication of 1.66 cubic feet per second to enhance rearing and spawning habitat for the state and federally listed as threatened coho salmon in the Scott River watershed, ranked as one of the highest priority coho streams by the National Marine Fisheries Service in northern California.
- Coho salmon habitat restoration in French Creek.
- Upland conservation values include a migratory corridor for deer, elk, and wolf and habitat for numerous species such as beaver, mink, pine martin, and pacific fisher.



### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation is a lead partner on restoration of Miner's Creek; Quartz Valley, Yurok, and Karuk tribes are on the technical advisory committee for the Miners Creek restoration
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Goal A; and Objectives S1 2.1, S1 2.3
- Public Access: No

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

TNC will permanently dedicate the Property's 1.66 cubic feet per second of appropriative water rights from French Creek to instream flow per California Water Code



Section 1707 and perform riparian and floodplain restoration on ~1 mile of French Creek. After restoration and instream flow dedication are complete, TNC may sell the Property subject to a retained conservation easement. Sale of the Property would be subject to the prior written approval of WCB which may include additional conditions such as return of funds to WCB.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,750,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$2,750,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,750,000

\*TNC purchased the Property in 2023. WCB grant funds are being used to reimburse TNC the purchase price to ensure permanent conservation of the Property.

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Charnna Gilmore, Executive Director, Scott River Watershed Council
- Russell A. Attebery, Chairman, Karuk Tribe
- Sarah Schaefer, Environmental Director, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation
- Shari Witmore, Fisheries Biologist, NOAA

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 Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed,



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authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

## 50. Upper Bear Creek Meadows Conservation Easement Acquisition

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

Grantee: Siskiyou Land Trust

County: Siskiyou

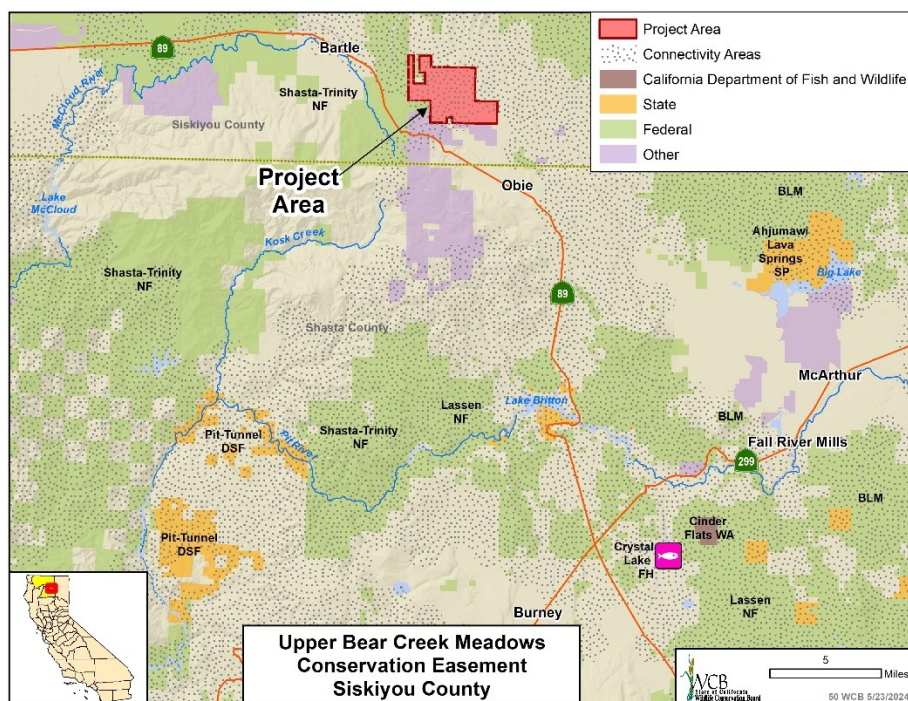
WCB Grant: \$4,485,000

Location: 19 miles east of McCloud, north of State Highway 89

Acres: 4,768± (Property)

### Property Highlights

- Contains approximately 19 miles of streams flowing through the Property, including the North and Middle Forks of Bear Creek, which feed into the Upper Sacramento River.
- Further expands conservation of the Fall River watershed, which is a major tributary to the Upper Sacramento River providing cold water for downstream fisheries, drinking water, and agriculture uses.
- Key species: gray wolves, Roosevelt elk, southern long-toed salamander, Cascades frog, black-backed woodpecker, American goshawk, bald eagle, sandhill crane, fisher, northern spotted owl, Klamath fawn lily, and long-haired star-tulip.
- Will be managed for a diverse age structure to sustain a forest that is resistant to drought, fire, insects, and disease.
- Hardwoods with characteristics beneficial to wildlife such as broken tops, basal hollows, multiple forks, etc. will be retained.
- Adjacent to the multimillion-acre Shasta-Trinity National Forest.
- Near several WCB =funded acquisitions, including the 9,200-acre McCloud Conservation Easement (2006), the 8,230-acre Bear Creek Conservation Easement (2012), the 3,587-acre Butte Creek Meadows Conservation Easement (2015), the 1,346-acre McCloud Soda Springs Working Forest Conservation Easement (2018) and the 7,589-acre Shasta Timberlands Working Forest Conservation Easement (2023).



## Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: Yes
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements
- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A, B and Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.4, 4.1
- Public Access: No

## Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- Assure that the Property will be perpetually retained predominantly as a working forest managed under applicable law and the terms of the conservation easement.
- Protect the conservation values of the Property by restricting or prohibiting specific uses of the Property that would impair the conservation values.
- Protect significant open, undeveloped, and relatively natural forest and meadow ecosystems located on the Property.
- Protect the scenic characteristics of the Property, which is visible from roads through the property used by the public to access the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The Property is also visible from the town of Bartle, the Great Shasta Rail-Trail, and a designated Wilderness Area.
- Three Special Management Zones (SMZs) have been mapped in the Forest Management Plan. Each zone supports distinct uses with specific restrictions.
- Approximately 210 acres of the Property will be established as riparian habitat corridors (“Riparian Management Area”) for the purpose of developing and protecting stream habitats on the Property.
- The Riparian Management Area includes designated Class I, Class II, and Class III watercourses and associated buffers that occur alongside streams, which exceed the protection measures in the California Forest Practice Rule.
- Approximately 416 acres of the Property will be established as forest reserves (“Mature Forest Reserve”) for the purpose of developing and protecting late-seral forest attributes and features (such as large trees, snags, nesting sites for sensitive species), and structural diversity.
- Approximately 149 acres of the Property will be established as meadow (“Meadow SMZ”) for the purpose of protecting meadows and aspen groves, which provide critical elk habitat. The landowner and CDFW are collaboratively managing this habitat via a Public Lands Management Agreement.
- Timberland Zone: Approximately 2,300 acres of the property will be managed to provide early and mid-seral wildlife habitat opportunities via even-aged silviculture. The minimum rotation period for even-age stands is 60-70 years, with 230 acres of permanent Habitat Retention Areas. Approximately 1,677 acres of the Property will be managed via uneven-aged silviculture to include important late seral characteristics, including the retention and recruitment of wildlife trees and volumes per acre that considerably exceed the norm in the area.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

The Property will be protected according to the terms and conditions of the conservation easement. The Property will continue to be owned and managed by the landowner for sustainable timber harvesting and enhancement of watershed, wildlife, fisheries and plant resources, subject to the provisions of the conservation easement. SLT will be responsible for the long-term monitoring and enforcement of the conservation easement according to the terms and conditions of the WCB grant agreement. Prior to closing, SLT will be required to provide the WCB with a baseline conditions report documenting the current conditions of the Property and a monitoring protocol describing how monitoring will occur.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$5,735,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$4,485,000
CAL FIRE	\$1,250,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$5,735,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors
- Siskiyou Fish and Game Commission
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Trust for Public Land

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 Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Megan Dahle, District 1

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

### 51. Parks Creek Ranch

### Acquisition Fee

Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2021, Water Supply for Environmental Flows, Stream Flow Enhancement Program Provision (SB170, Sec. 54)

Grantee: TNC

County: Siskiyou

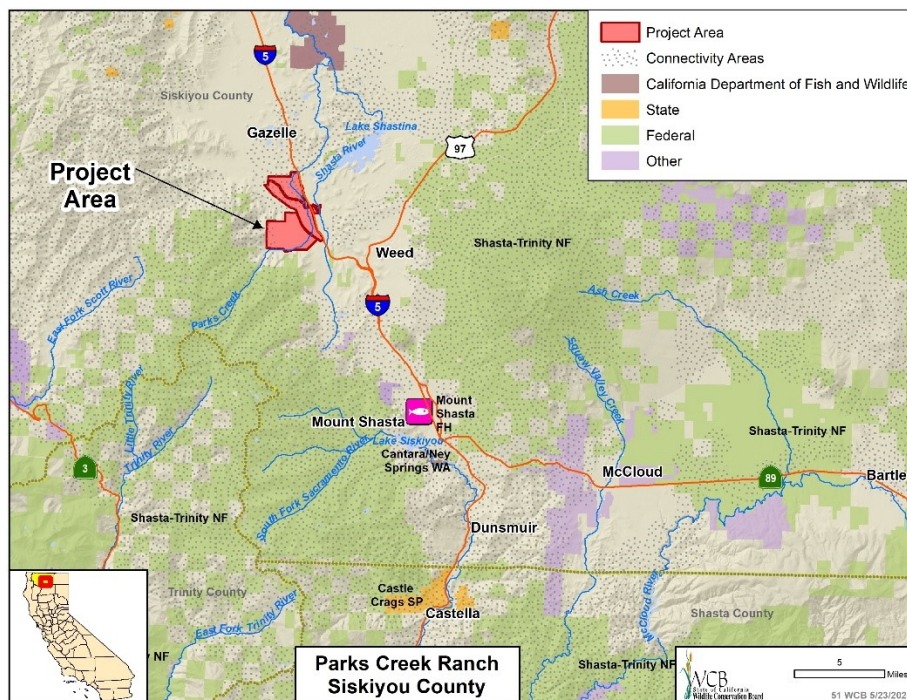
WCB Grant: \$9,300,000

Location: five miles northwest of Weed

Acres: 5,277± (Property)

#### Property Highlights

- Allow for the protection and restoration of approximately seven miles of Parks Creek, a tributary of the Shasta River.
- Habitats include: 3,000 acres of irrigated pasture and annual grassland; 800 acres of conifer and hardwood forest; and 600 acres of shrubland.
- Upon restoration, TNC will dedicate up to 18 cfs of water in Parks Creek for the benefit of wildlife, and improved cold-water flows which benefits juvenile salmon.
- Key species: Shasta River for fall Chinook salmon and coho salmon, which are federally and state listed as threatened; deer; elk; bear; mountain lion; fox; coyote; beaver; potentially willow fly catcher; yellow warblers; sand hill cranes; bald eagles; and raptors.
- Regional or Species Plan: National Marine Fisheries Service Southern Oregon Northern California Coho Recovery Plan identifies acquiring water rights, increasing cold water in the Upper Shasta basin, and reducing tailwater inputs as high priority recovery actions. Parks Creek is ranked one of the highest priority tributaries for coho rearing.



#### Priority Metrics

- Located in a Justice Community: No
- Tribal Partnerships: The Karuk Tribe has been engaged in providing input to early planning for habitat restoration on the Property.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions



- WCB Strategic Plan Goals A.1, A.2, and Objectives 1.3, 2.1.
- Public Access: No.

### Key Management Objectives and Needs

Upon acquisition, TNC will begin a long-term planning and restoration process that will dedicate the Property’s water rights, estimated to be 18 cfs, to instream flow for the benefit of wildlife and water quality and quantity. For more than 100 years the Parks Ranch has been managed for irrigated pasture and cattle ranching. The Shasta River flows into the Klamath River, below the dams that are in the process of being removed along the mainstem Klamath River. The Shasta River is considered an important component to the restoration and reintroduction of salmonids back into over 200+ miles of habitat above the dams (Abrams, CalMatters, 2023). The acquisition, protection, and restoration of the Property is important for providing adequate habitat for coho salmon and other salmonids that will eventually be reintroduced into the upper basin (above the dams scheduled for removal). Upon acquisition, TNC will plan for restoration and prove up the pre-1914 and adjudicated water rights. TNC will work with partners, such as California Trout, CDFW, NOAA, the Karuk Tribe and others, to identify, plan, design, and begin implementation of riparian and floodplain restoration projects. After restoration and instream flow dedication are complete, TNC may sell the Property subject to a retained conservation easement. Sale of the Property would be subject to the prior written approval of WCB which include additional conditions such as return of funds to WCB.

### Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value is \$9,300,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$9,300,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$9,300,000

### Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Shari Witmore, Klamath Branch Fish Biologist, U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA
- Russell Atlebery, Karuk Tribal Chairman, Karuk Tribe
- Curtis Knight, Executive Director, California Trout, Inc.
- Valerie Quinto, Executive Officer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Matt Clifford, California Director, Trout Unlimited

- Nick Joslin, President, Friends of the Shasta River  
Nick Joslin, Forest and Watershed Water Program Manager, Mount Shasta  
Bioregional Ecology Center

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. Note, this only applies to acquisition. Any future restoration will require a separate analysis to determine how to comply with CEQA.

## State Government

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

## Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends conditional approval of this item based upon funding availability as of the 2024 Budget Act. 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.

**52. Public Forum for Items not on the 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 MAY 23, 2024, PROJECTS**

