



[@wildlifeconservationboard](#)



Wildlife
Conservation
Board



Social Media

Connect With Us



[@wildlifeconservationboard](#)



Linktree



Wildlife
Conservation
Board



**Wildlife Conservation Board
November 20, 2025 Board Meeting
MiraCosta College San Elijo Campus**

**Loyalton Ranch
Credit: Feather River Land Trust**



Item 1. Roll Call



Item 2. Approval of Agenda

Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1
Credit: WCB



Item 3. Executive Director's Report

Pickel Meadows
Credit: WCB



Item 4. Board Member Updates and Reports

Joshua Tree Ethnobotanical Study
Credit: Mojave Desert Land Trust





Item 5. Funding Status

Pellon Murrieta Acquisition (Section 6)
Credit: WCB

Wildlife Conservation Board PROPOSED PROJECTS

November 20, 2025



Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting November 20, 2025 Project Map



Consent Items 6 - 13

(Los Angeles River Habitat Enhancement, Augmentation
Credit: The Nature Conservancy)



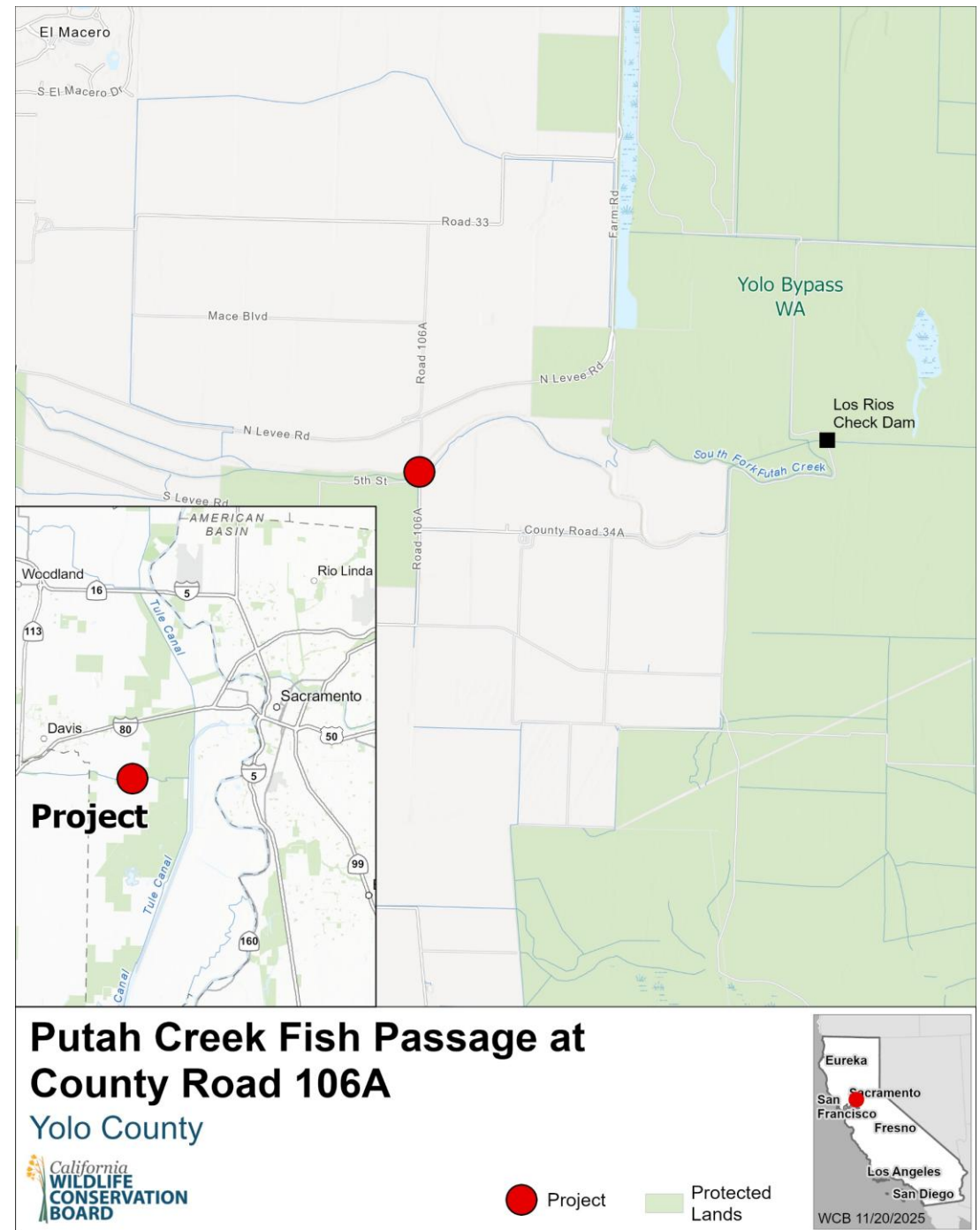
Item 6. Recovery of Funds

Fund Name	Amount
General Fund	\$85,425.95
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$412,392.13
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	\$0.00
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$221,230.03
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$0.00
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$1,449,105.80
<i>Total Recoveries for All Funds</i>	<i>\$2,168,153.91</i>

Putah Creek Fish Passage at County Road 106A

- Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) (applicant)
- WCB request \$1,210,000
- Planning effort to remediate a fish passage barrier on Putah Creek, 3 miles east of Davis
- Improve habitat and migratory passage for fall-run Chinook salmon and Pacific lamprey

Credit: WCB



Putah Creek Fish Passage at County Road 106A

Slide 2

- Seasonal crossing for farm equipment also functions as a check dam for irrigation
- Temporal barrier to fish migration
 - In place April – October
 - Breached November – March

Crossing partially breached in late October (left)
Credit: SCWA

Crossing under dry conditions (right) and truck using the crossing (bottom)
Credit: WCB





Putah Creek Fish Passage at County Road 106A

Slide 3

1,700 fall-run Chinook spawn near Winters annually:

- 20% of natal origin, suggesting emergent self-sustaining population
- Existing habitat upstream could support up to 5,000 spawning adults



Perched culverts on either side of the crossing
Credit: SCWA

Putah Creek Fish Passage at County Road 106A

Slide 4

Plan Development Includes:

- Technical advisory committee
- Surveys
- Alternatives analysis
- 30, 65, 90% design phases
- Permits and environmental compliance

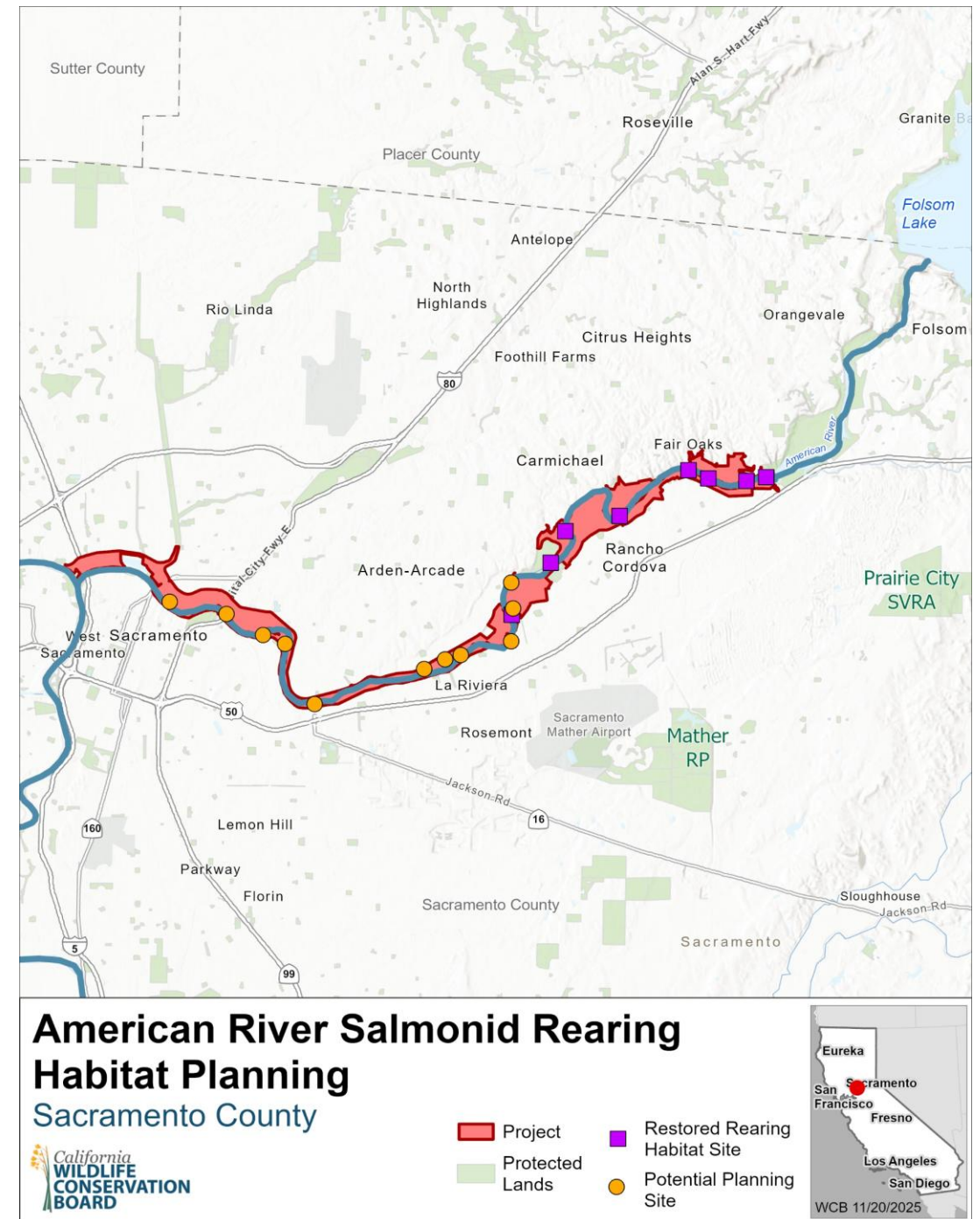
Putah Creek east of Mace Blvd
Credit: WCB



American River Salmonid Rearing Habitat Planning

- Water Forum - City of Sacramento (applicant)
- WCB request \$333,000
- Cost share \$1,000,000
- Planning, design, and environmental clearances for restoring approximately 30 acres of salmonid rearing habitat along the lower American River
- Entirely within the American River Parkway

Credit: WCB





American River Salmonid Rearing Habitat Planning

Slide 2

Project Need:

- American River disconnected from its floodplain
- Ecosystem processes and functions are missing
- Rearing habitat is limited for juvenile salmonids

Perched gravel bar within American River Parkway
Credit: Water Forum

American River Salmonid Rearing Habitat Planning

Slide 3

Project Goal:

- Increase quantity and quality of juvenile salmonid rearing habitat
- Develop shovel-ready projects for 10 rearing habitat sites

Degraded side channel within American River Parkway
Credit: Water Forum





American River Salmonid Rearing Habitat Planning

Slide 4

Project Tasks:

- Utilize EcoFIP toolkit to identify 15-20 sites
- Prepare conceptual designs & relative costs
- Host 3 landowner workshops and prioritize 10 sites
- Complete technical studies and stakeholder outreach
- Prepare 65% designs for selected sites
- Complete CEQA (SERP) and identify permitting pathway strategy

Rarely activated floodplain in the Parkway
Credit: Water Forum

American River Salmonid Rearing Habitat Planning

Slide 5

Project Outcomes:

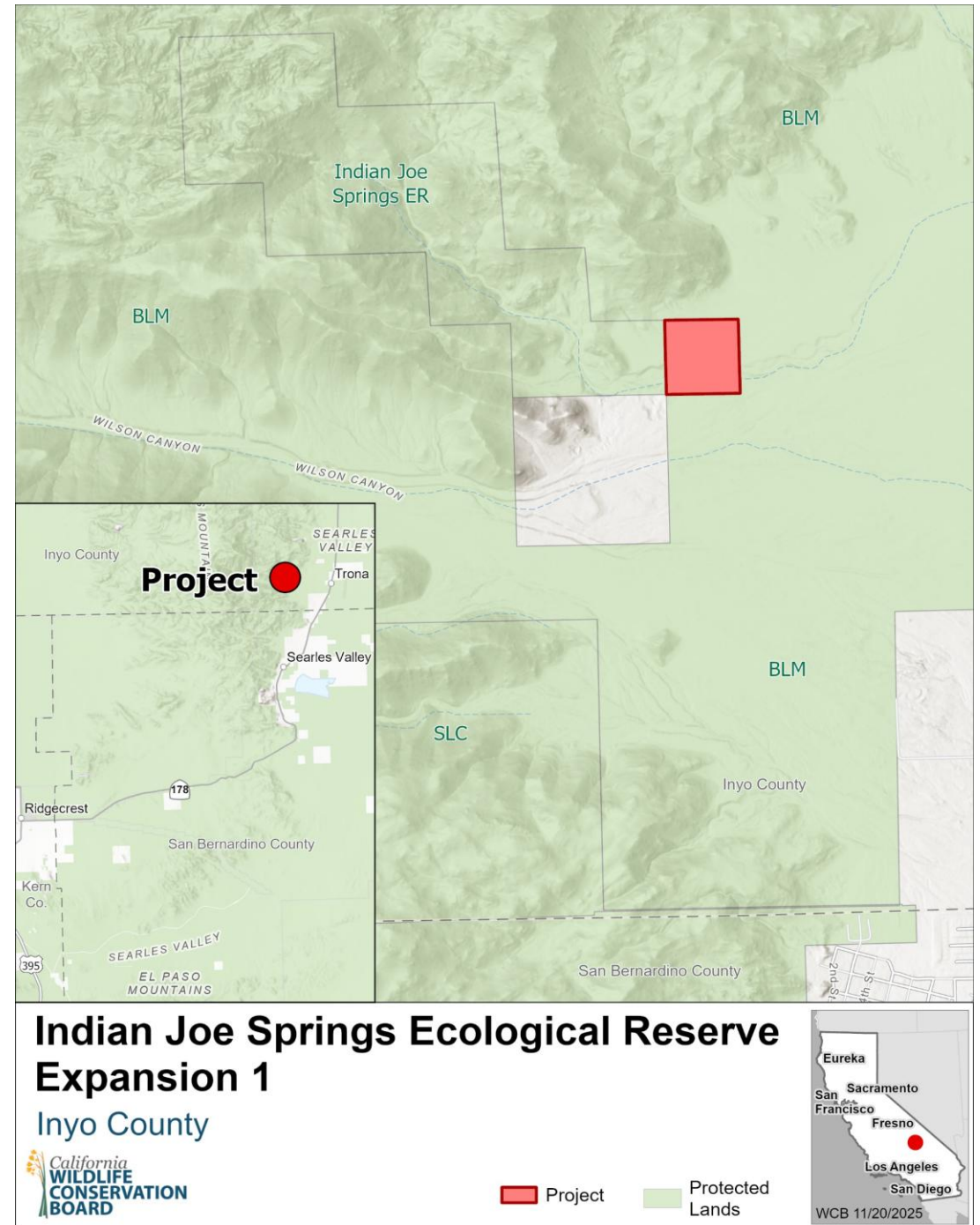
- Produce 10 shovel-ready restoration projects that:
 - Provide quality juvenile salmonid rearing habitat
 - Reactivate approximately 30 acres of floodplain
 - Restore ecosystem functions and important riverine habitat
- Increase the pace and scale of restoration in the Parkway
- Evaluate the management action of “lower floodplain” in the Parkway’s Natural Resource Management Plan



Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (applicant)
- Addition of 40± acre fee acquisition to Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve (IJSER)
- Purchase price \$36,000
- WCB request \$36,000
- 30 miles NE of Ridgecrest
- Severely Disadvantaged Community
- Public access

Credit: WCB





Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1

Slide 2

Protection of critical habitats and species:

- Habitats
 - Desert scrub, desert wash
 - Supports IJSER's rare Mojave Desert water sources
- Species
 - Inyo California towhee
 - Desert tortoise
 - Mohave ground squirrel



Top: Property (foreground) view facing east toward Searles Valley and the Slate Range
Credit: WCB

Bottom: Inyo California towhee
Credit: Chris McCreedy



Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve, Exp. 1

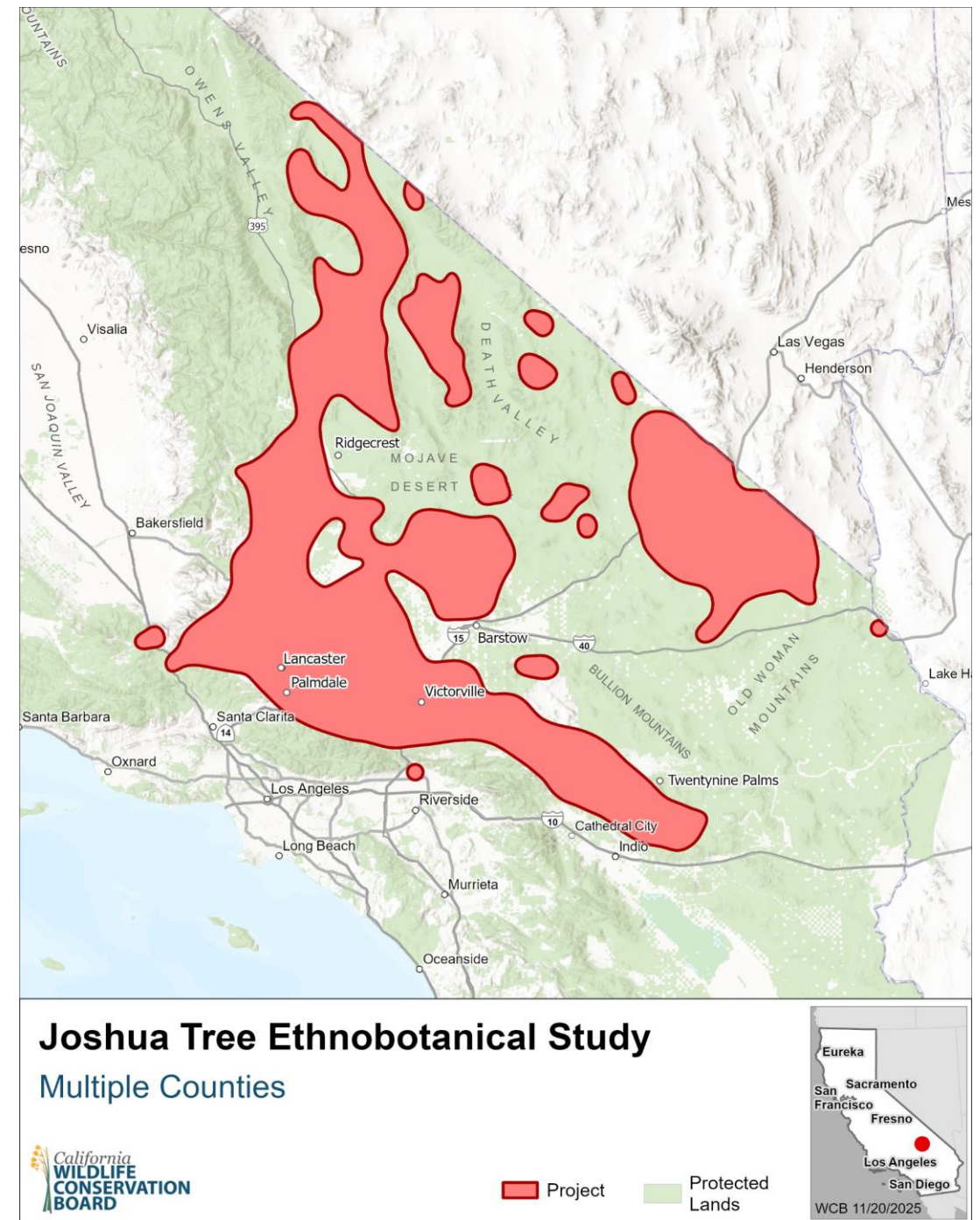
Slide 3

Desert scrub landscape
Credit: WCB

Joshua Tree Ethnobotanical Study

- Native American Land Conservancy (applicant)
- WCB request \$255,803
- Purpose is to research the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of western Joshua tree
- Research will occur across the range of the species

Credit: WCB



Joshua Tree Ethnobotanical Study

Slide 2

- Study was recommended in the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Plan (WJTCP)
- Goal 1: Anthropologist to research and provide the TEK of the western Joshua tree to CDFW for use in the WJTCP
- Goal 2: Assemble a Native Advisory Group and Traditional Practitioners to share TEK
- REAP process

Joshua trees in an open desert landscape
Credit: Ironwood Consulting





Spanish Ranch

Withdrawn from consideration at this time

Spanish Ranch
Credit: California Rangeland Trust

Los Angeles River Habitat Enhancement, Augmentation

- The Nature Conservancy (applicant)
- WCB augmentation request \$1,500,000
- WCB Funded planning in 2019 through Prop 68 Flyway
- WCB partially funded implementation in 2023
- 3-acre multi-benefit habitat enhancement, stormwater management, and public access project located on the 18-acre Bowtie Parcel, owned by California State Parks in Los Angeles County

Credit: WCB

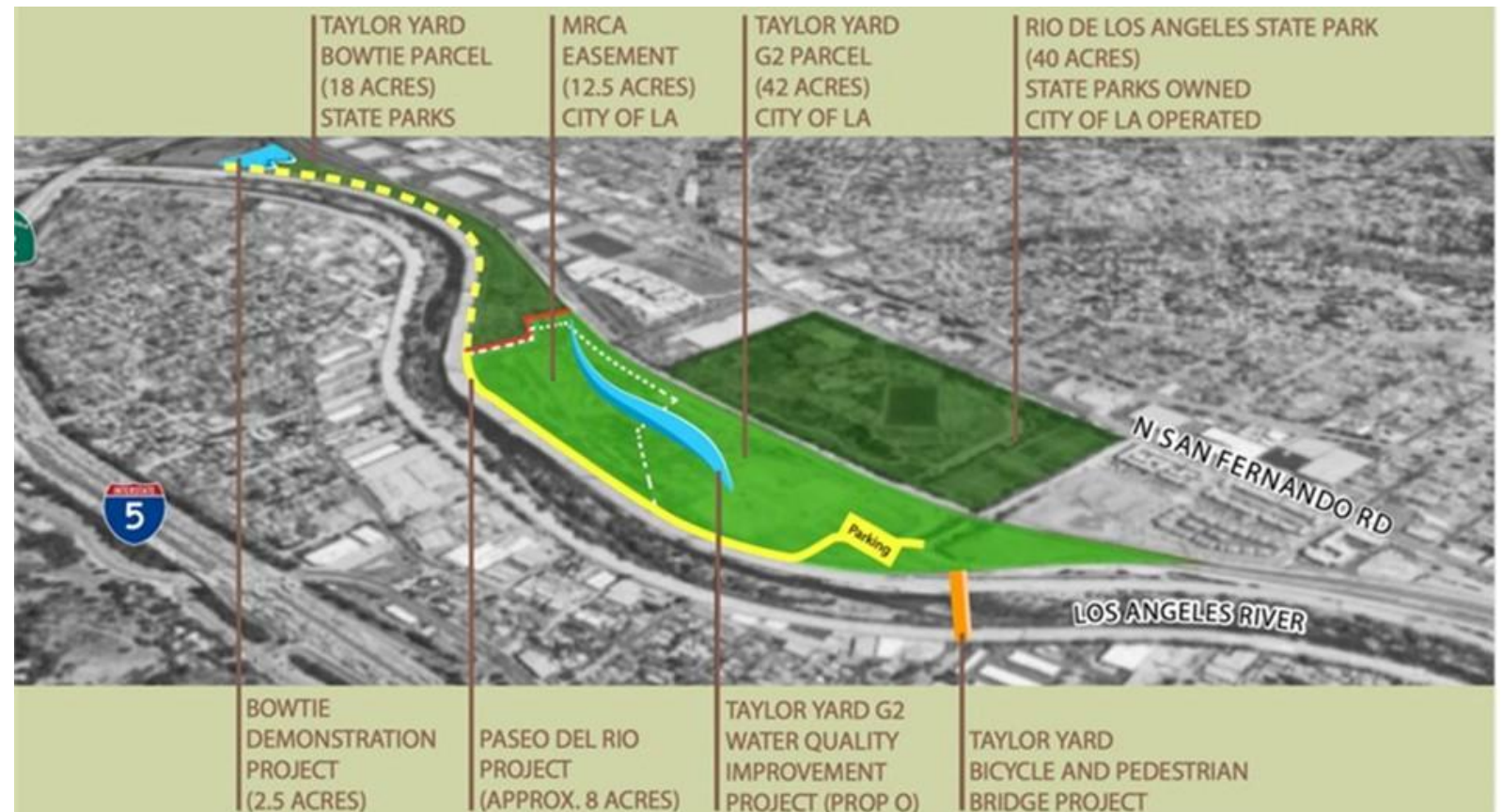


Los Angeles River Habitat Enhancement, Augmentation

Slide 2

- 100-Acre Partnership
- CA State Parks, City of Los Angeles, Mountain Recreation and Conservation Authority
- Past WCB efforts include:
 - Taylor Yard Easement
 - Fish Passage project
 - Paseo del Rio

Map of Bowtie Parcel & Taylor Yard
Credit: The Nature Conservancy





Los Angeles River Habitat Enhancement, Augmentation

Slide 3



Project cost increases due to:

- Project design changes
 - Irrigation changes
 - Electrical utility rerouting
- Permitting challenges
 - Two CEQA Addendums
 - USACE Section 408 (unforeseen)
- Construction cost overruns
 - Site soil remediation, removal, grading
 - Unexpected soil conditions

Credit: WCB

Los Angeles River Habitat Enhancement, Augmentation

Slide 4

Project Budget Overview:

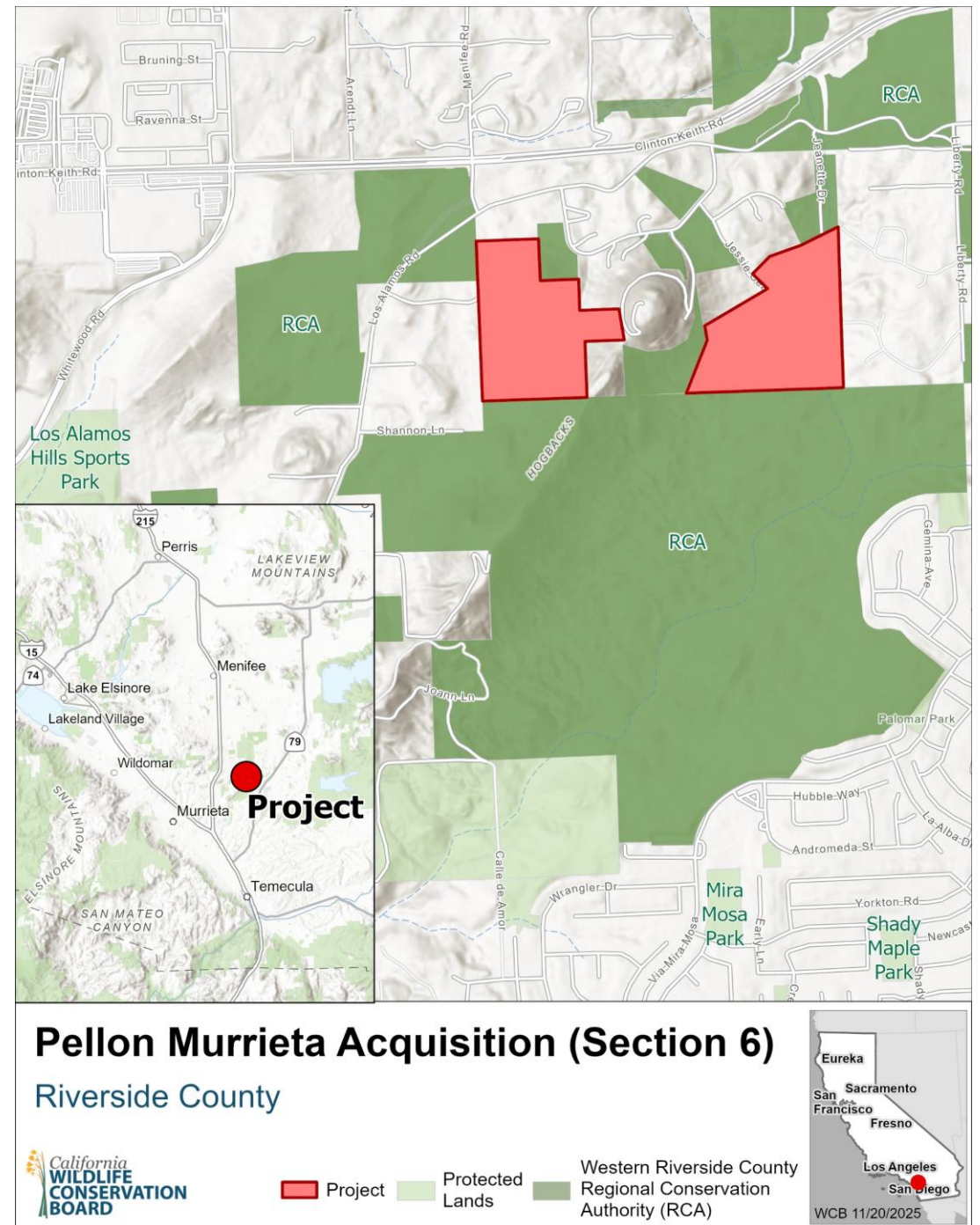
- Augmentation request
\$1,500,000
- Augmentation cost share
\$2,628,440

Project Task	WCB Original Allocation	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds*	Total Project Cost
Task 1. Project Management	\$492,000	---	\$1,128,209	\$1,620,209
Task 2. Construction	\$4,169,000	\$1,194,600	\$6,139,231	\$11,502,831
Indirect Costs	\$699,000	\$305,400	--	\$1,004,400
Contingency	\$536,000	--	--	\$536,000
TOTAL	\$5,896,000	\$1,500,000	\$7,267,440	\$14,663,440

Project budget table
Credit: WCB

Pellon Murrieta Acquisition (Section 6)

- Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (applicant)
- 91± acre fee acquisition
- Purchase price \$1,745,000
- WCB request \$610,750
- The project will protect upland and aquatic habitats including a portion of Warm Springs Creek
- The acquisition has the potential to contribute to the recovery of the federally endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*), which historically occupied the Warm Springs area, including several occurrences documented on existing MSHCP/NCCP conserved lands adjacent to the property



Pellon Murrieta Acquisition (Section 6)

Slide 2

Warm Springs Creek, dry

Credit: WCB



Pellon Murrieta Acquisition (Section 6)

Slide 3

Pellon west with chaparral

Credit: WCB





Consent Items 6-13, Excluding Item 11, Motion

Joshua Tree Ethnobotanical Study
Credit: WCB



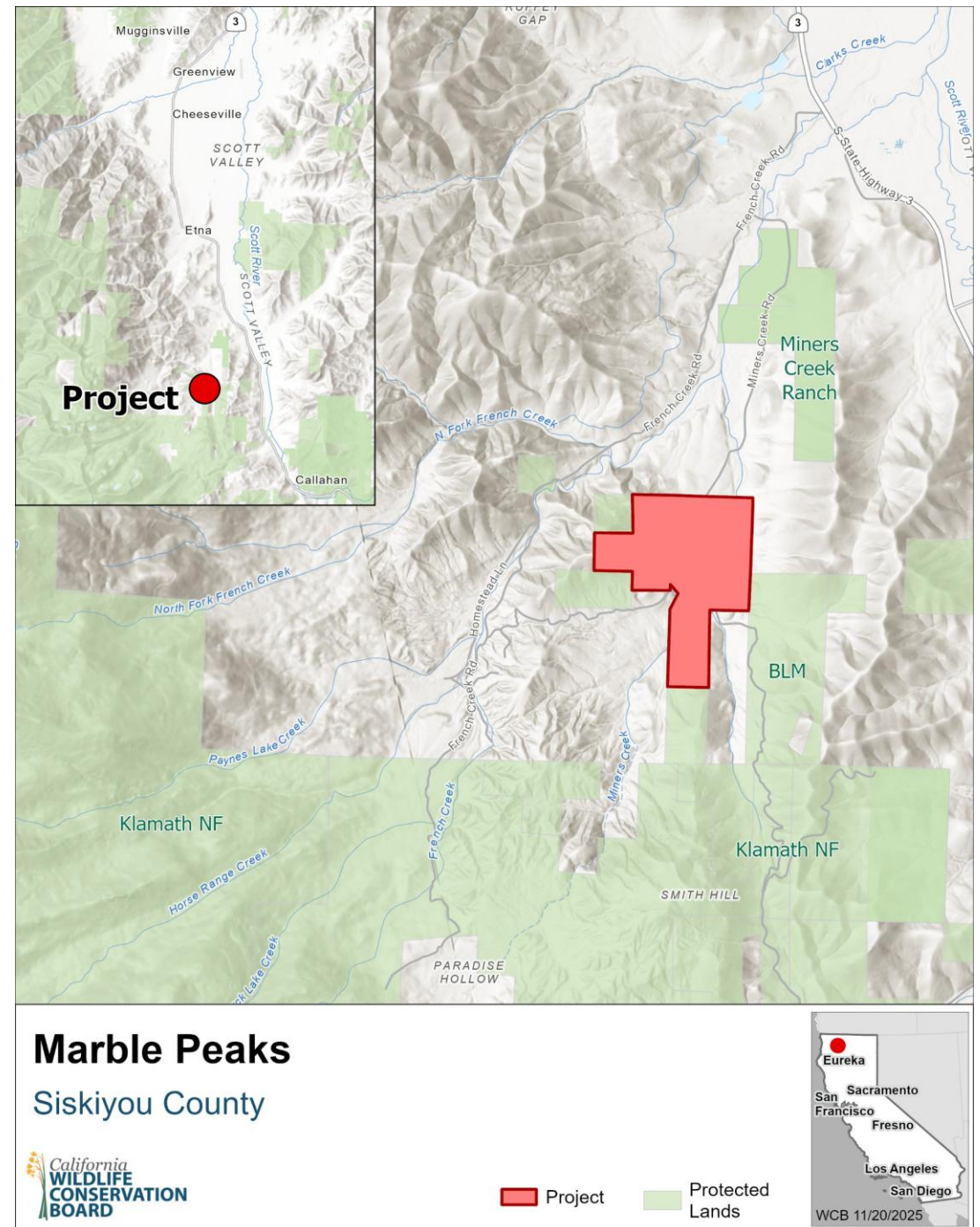
Presented Items 14-24

Spanish Ranch
Credit: WCB

Marble Peaks

- The Nature Conservancy (applicant)
- 455± acre fee acquisition
- Purchase price \$2,600,000
- WCB request \$800,000

Credit: WCB



Marble Peaks

Slide 2

Miners Creek

Credit: WCB

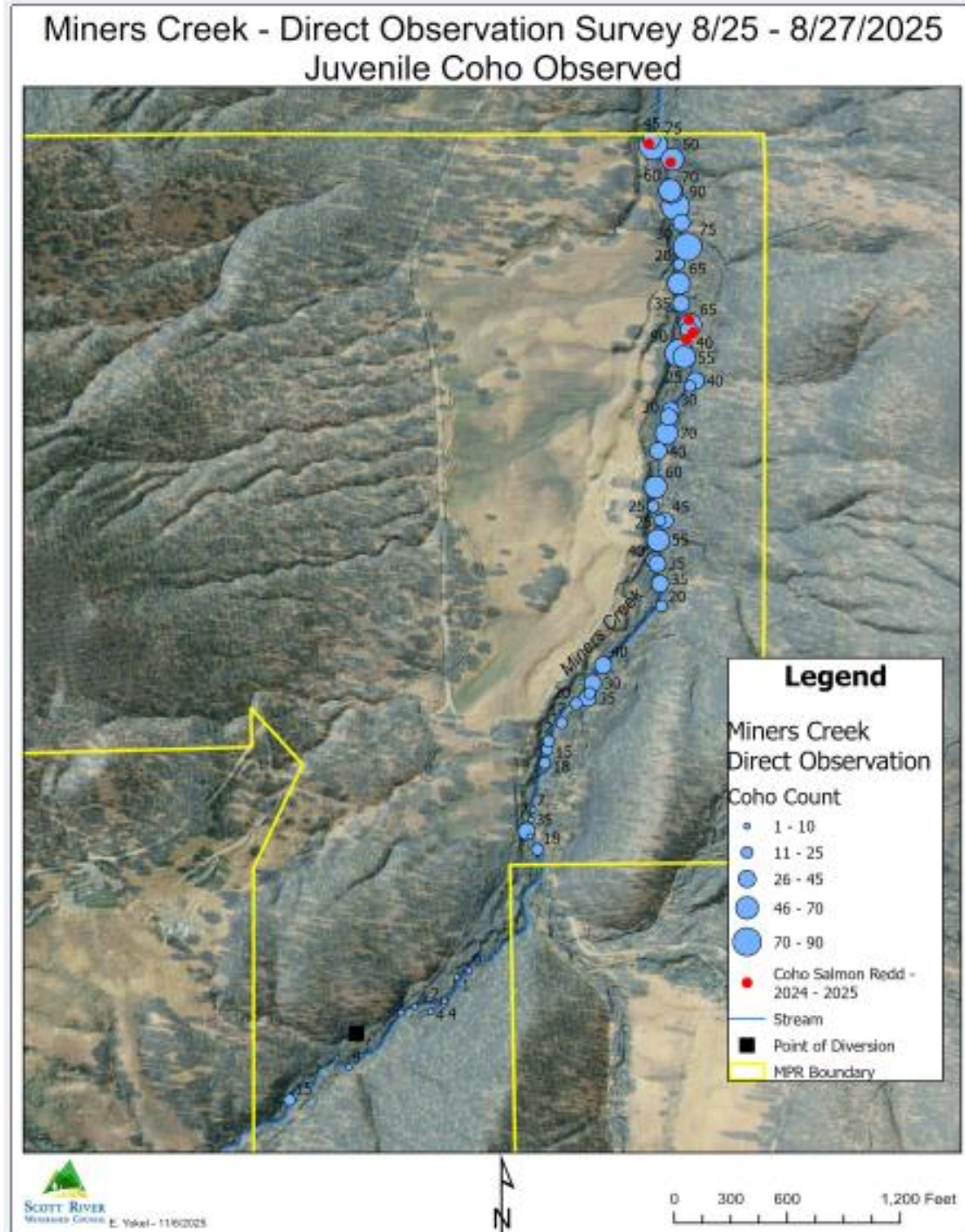


Marble Peaks

Slide 3

Juvenile Coho salmon in Miners Creek

Credit: Scott River Watershed Alliance



Marble Peaks

Slide 4

View of the property, facing west

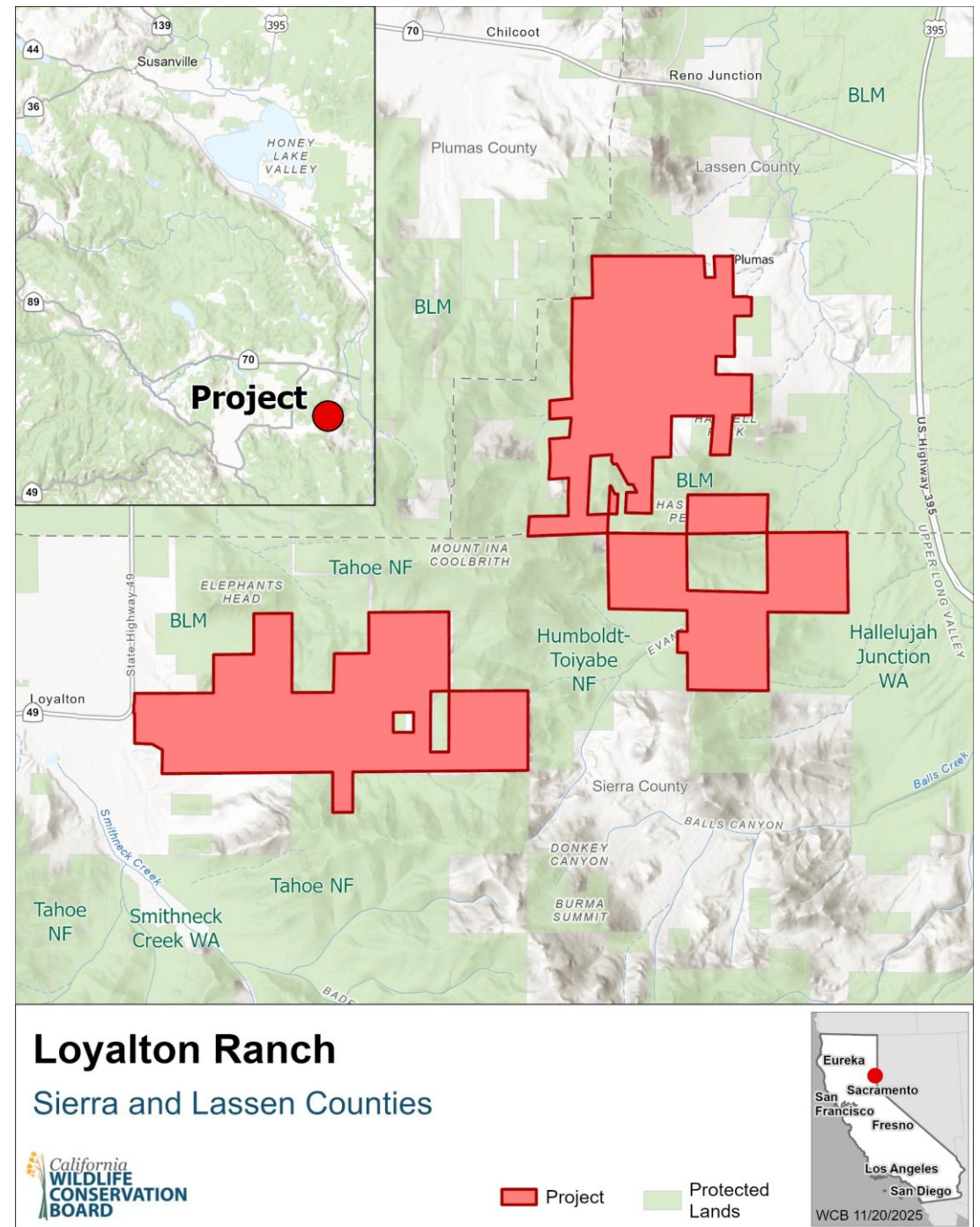
Credit: WCB



Loyalton Ranch

- Wášiw-šiw Land Trust (applicant), a new tribal land trust created by the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California to hold ancestral and conservation lands
- 10,274± acre fee acquisition
- Purchase price \$6,000,000
- WCB request \$5,500,000
- Key species include deer, elk, pronghorn, mountain lion, and golden eagle

Credit: WCB



Loyalton Ranch

Slide 2

Looking up at the Loyalton Ranch's southwest unit from the Sierra Valley

Credit: Feather River Land Trust





Loyalton Ranch

Slide 3

Sagebrush-bitterbrush (left), pinyon pine (middle), and ponderosa pine and grasslands (right) are examples of some of the plant communities found on the Loyalton Ranch.

Credit: Feather River Land Trust



Loyalton Ranch

Slide 4

At least 33 special status wildlife species are known to occur or likely to occur on the property.

Owl (left), golden eagle (right), and prairie falcon (bottom) all photographed on the property.

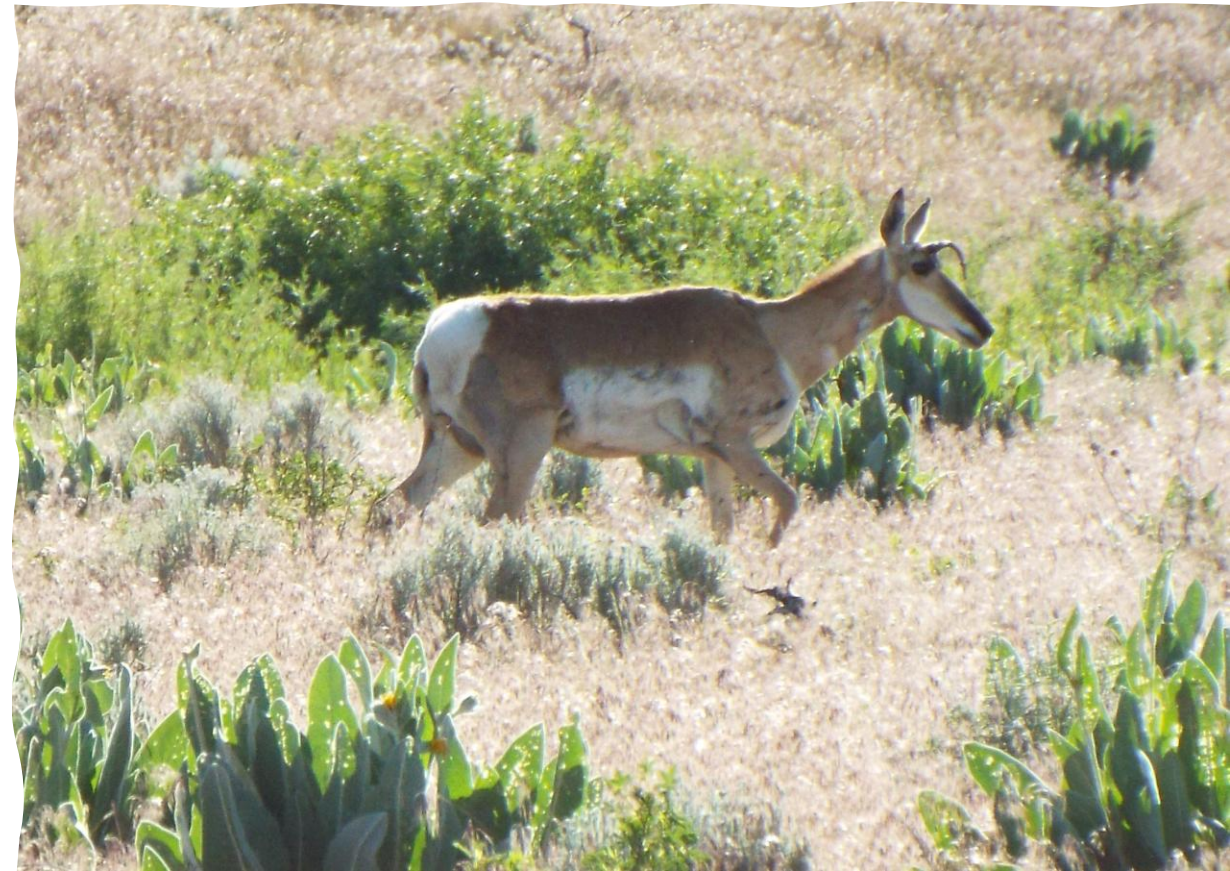


Credit: Feather River Land Trust (left) and Elizabeth Carmel (right and bottom)

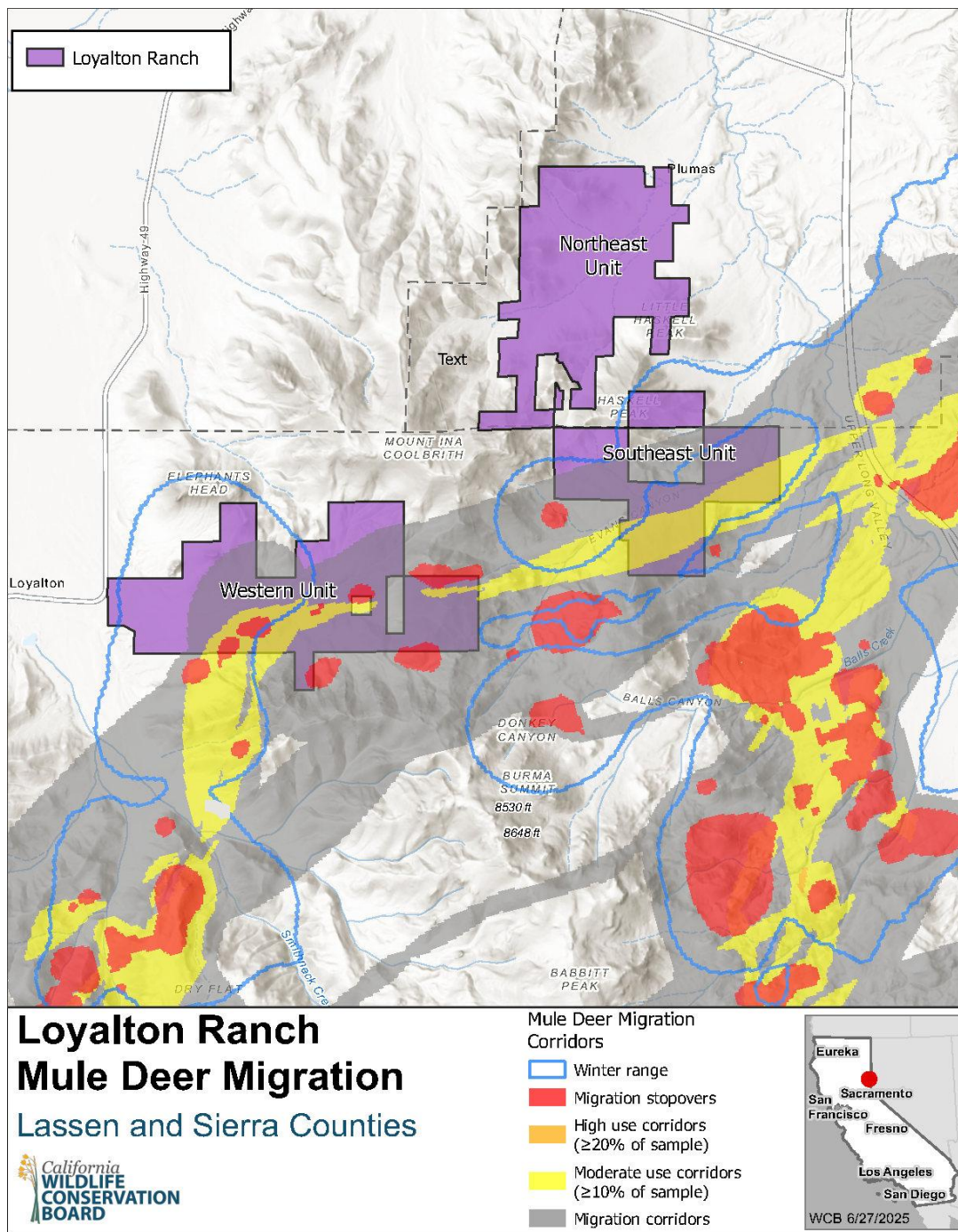
Loyalton Ranch

Slide 5

Loyalton Ranch is an important migratory corridor and winter range for deer, mountain lion (left), elk (right), and pronghorn (bottom).



Credit: Eveline Larrucea (left and right), Feather River Land Trust (bottom)



Loyalton Ranch

Slide 6

Map showing the migration corridors and winter range over the Bald Mountains

Credit: WCB

Loyalton Ranch

Slide 7

Field trips and visioning workshops with tribal members have documented Washoe ecological knowledge and cultural history of the area developing ideas for long-term management of the property.

Tribal members discussing priorities for the property
Credit: Feather River Land Trust



Loyalton Ranch

Slide 8

East side of the property
with light snow

Credit: Feather River Land Trust





Kopta Slough

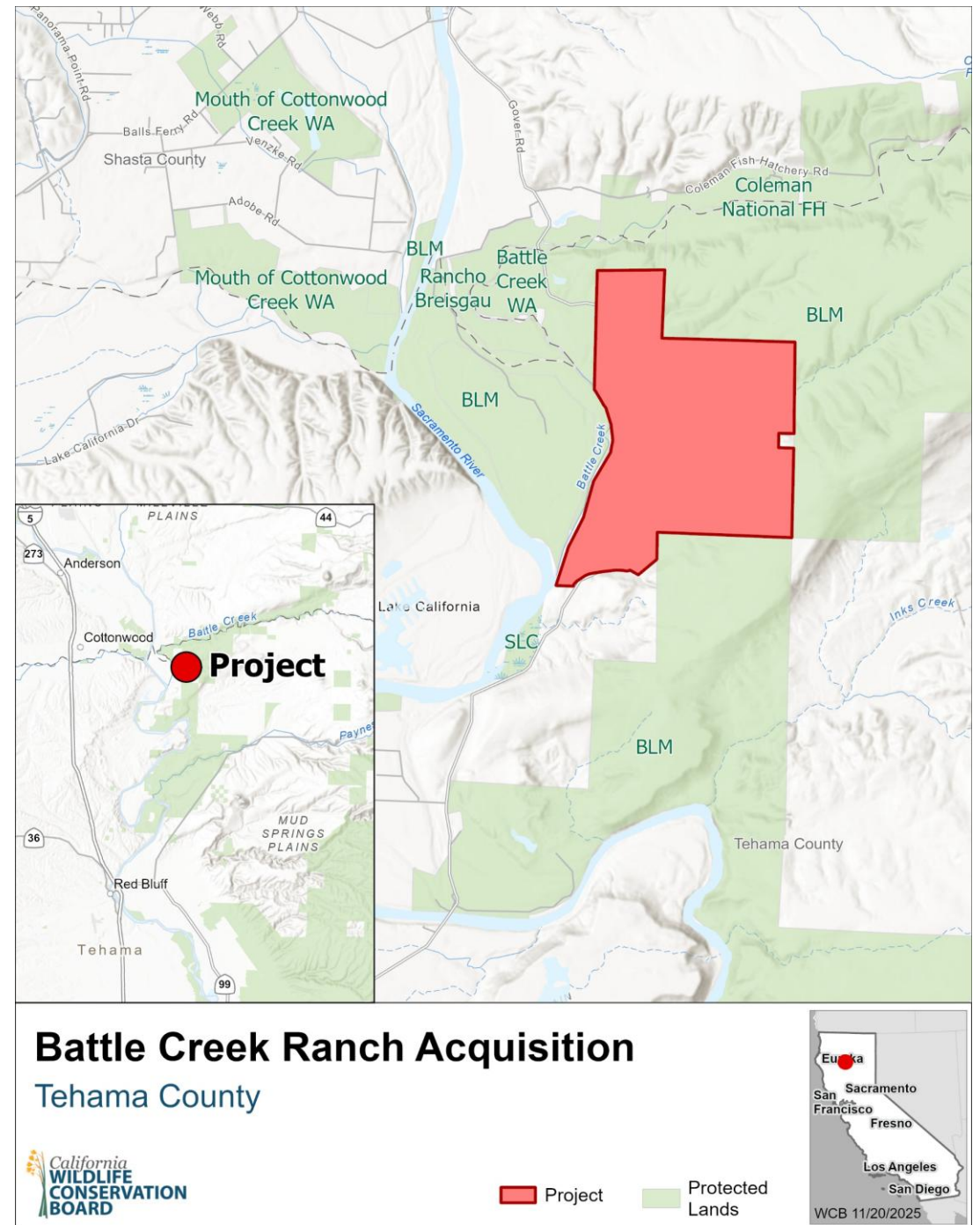
Withdrawn from consideration at this time

Kopta Slough
Credit: DWR

Battle Creek Ranch Acquisition

- River Partners (applicant)
- 1,715± acre fee acquisition
- Purchase price \$15,050,000
- WCB request \$15,050,000

Credit: WCB



Battle Creek Ranch Acquisition

Slide 2

Right. Coleman National Fish Hatchery
Credit: CDFW

Bottom. Jumping Chinook at Coleman
National Fish Hatchery
Credit: CDFW



Battle Creek Ranch Acquisition

Slide 3

View facing southwest toward the
floodplain

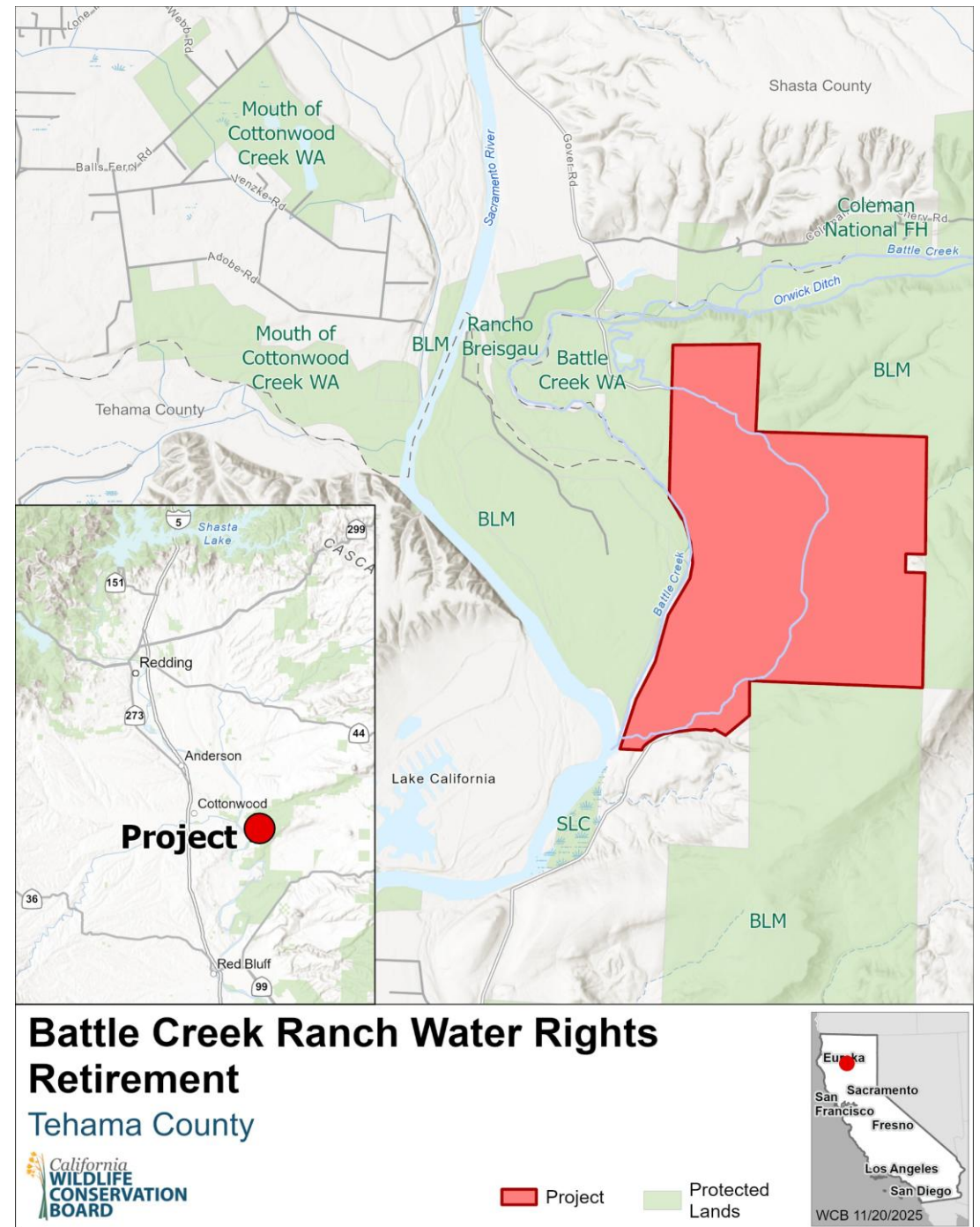
Credit: WCB



Battle Creek Ranch Water Rights Retirement

- River Partners (applicant and landowner)
- WCB request \$584,000

Credit: WCB



Battle Creek Ranch Water Rights Retirement

Slide 2



Background:

- Battle Creek is one of the most important salmonid streams in California
- Cold water supports steelhead trout, all four runs of Chinook salmon, and the Coleman National Fish Hatchery (largest fish hatchery in the state)
- The property includes an appropriative pre-1914 water right

Salmon spawning in creek
Credit: WCB

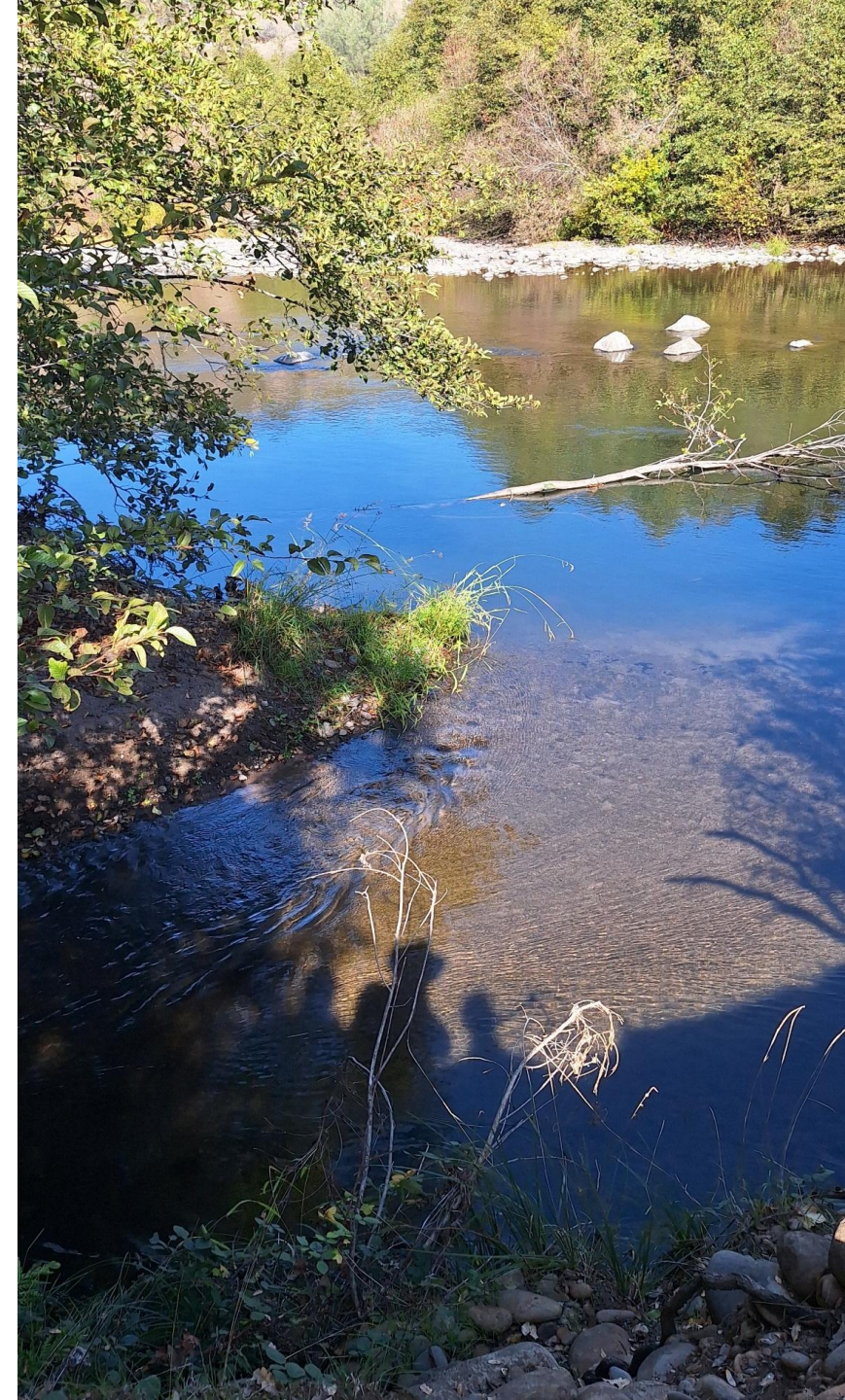
Battle Creek Ranch Water Rights Retirement

Slide 3

Purpose:

- Forbearance agreement to cease all surface water diversions
- Increase flow in Battle Creek by a minimum of 12,000 acre-feet per year
- Section 1707 change petition to add ecological benefits to the water right and permanently dedicate water instream
- Protect cold water of Battle Creek for salmonids in the face of climate change

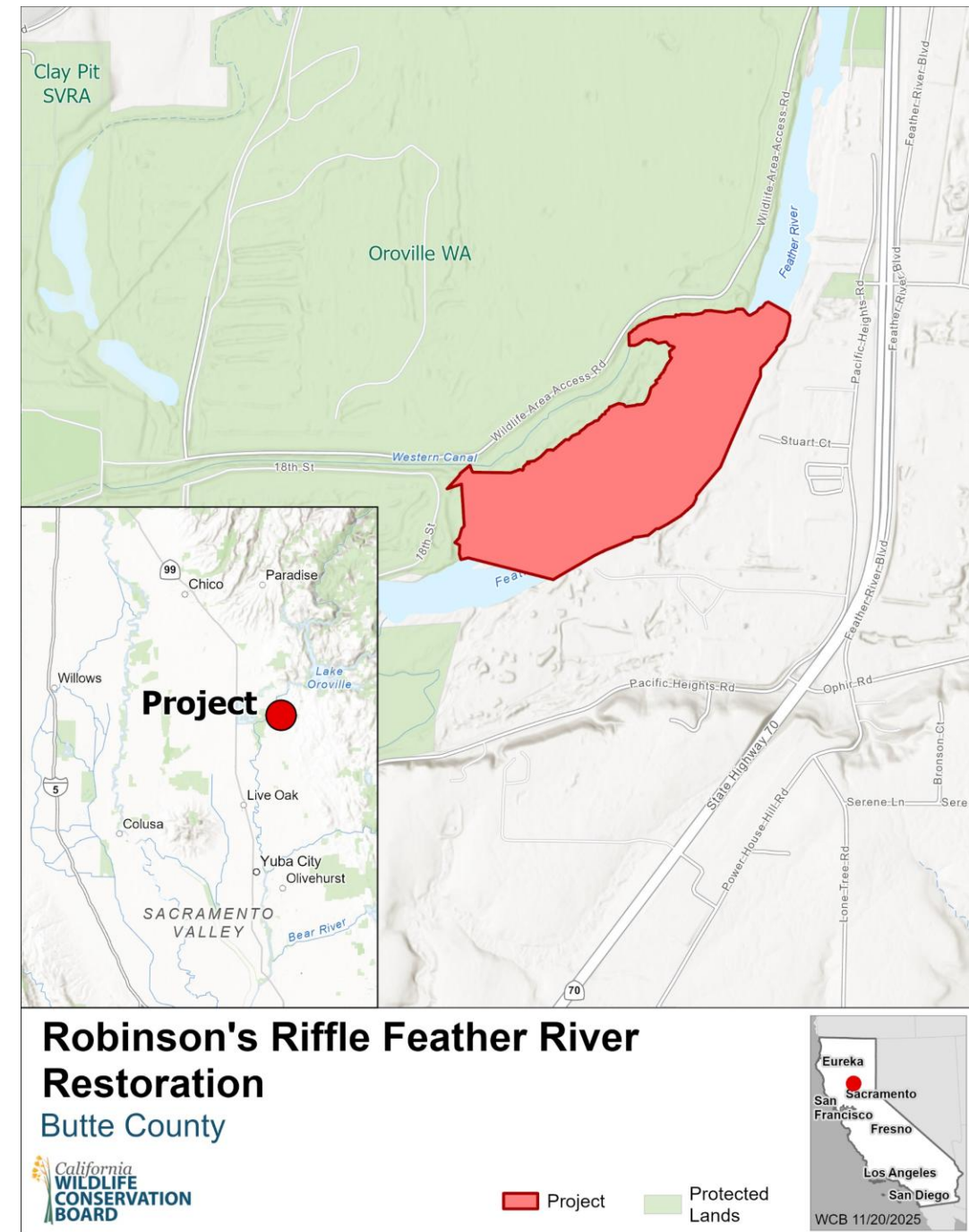
Head of Orwick Ditch
Credit: WCB



Robinson's Riffle Feather River Restoration

- Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency (applicant)
- Landowner - State of California (DWR and CDFW)
- WCB request \$31,917,000

Credit: WCB



Robinson's Riffle Feather River Restoration

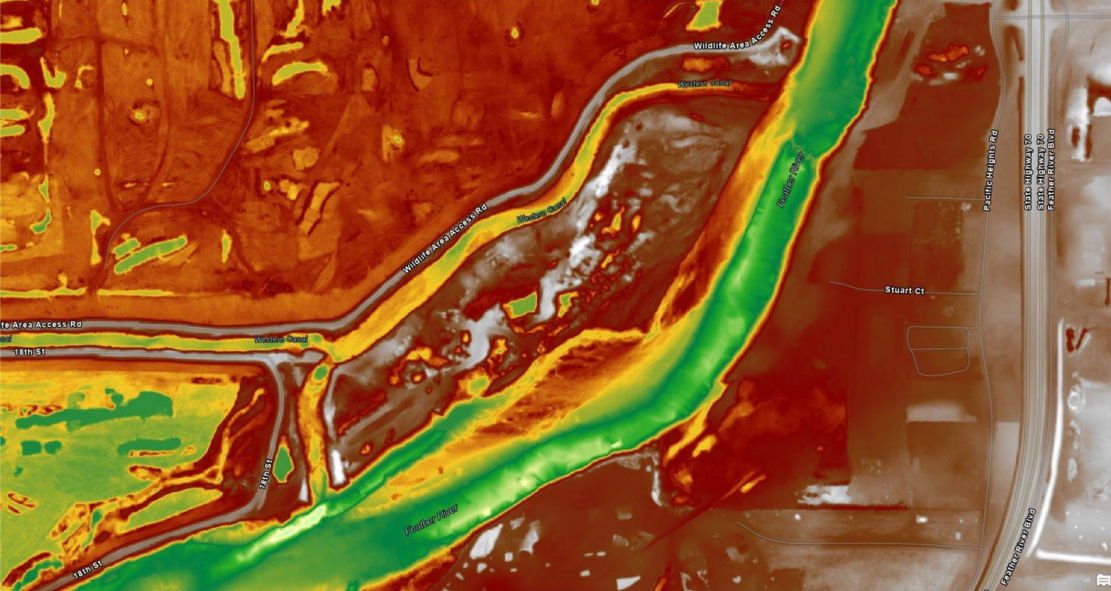
Slide 2



Background:

- Historically, this region of the Feather River supported fall-run Chinook salmon (spawning and rearing) and steelhead (rearing)
- Extensive gold mining and borrow extraction impacted river morphology
 - Overly deep and wide riverbed
 - Slow and warm water
 - Good habitat for invasive fish, and poor habitat for salmonids

Gravel tailings within the project area
Credit: WCB



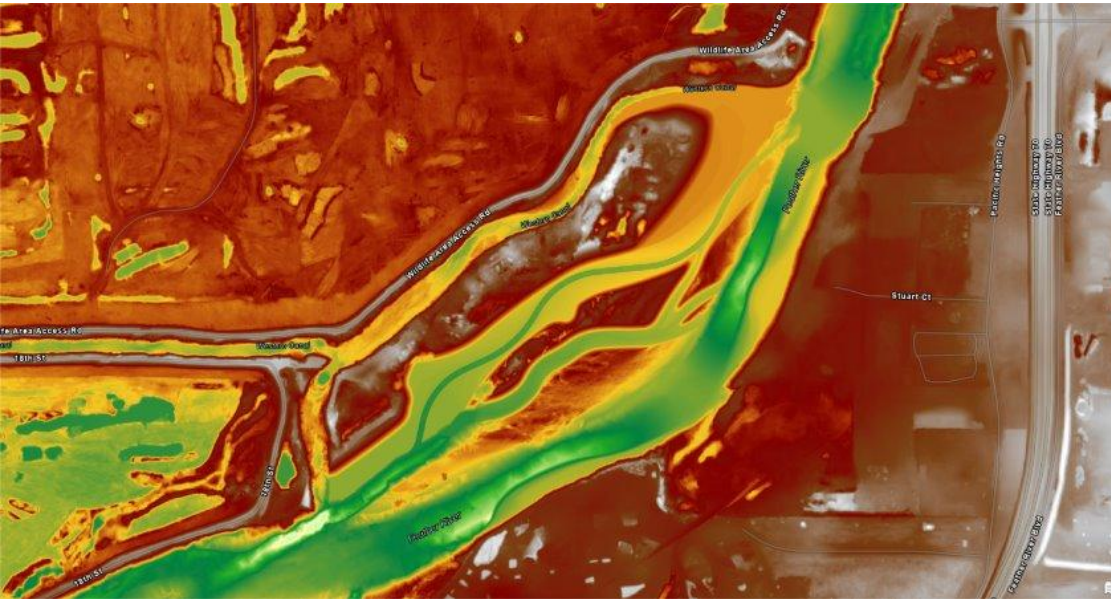
Robinson's Riffle Feather River Restoration

Slide 3



Purpose:

- Restore 51 acres along one mile of the Feather River
- Increase river morphology complexity (riffles, pools, gravel bars, side channels, and floodplain grading and reconnection)
- Features will be designed to meet the biological rearing needs of special status species: Fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead



Top: Feather River existing morphology, Bottom: Feather River proposed morphology

Credit: SBFCA

Robinson's Riffle Feather River Restoration

Slide 4

Purpose:

- Features will be designed to meet the biological rearing needs of special status species:
 - Fall-run Chinook salmon
 - Central Valley steelhead

Disconnected gravel bar and slow-moving water

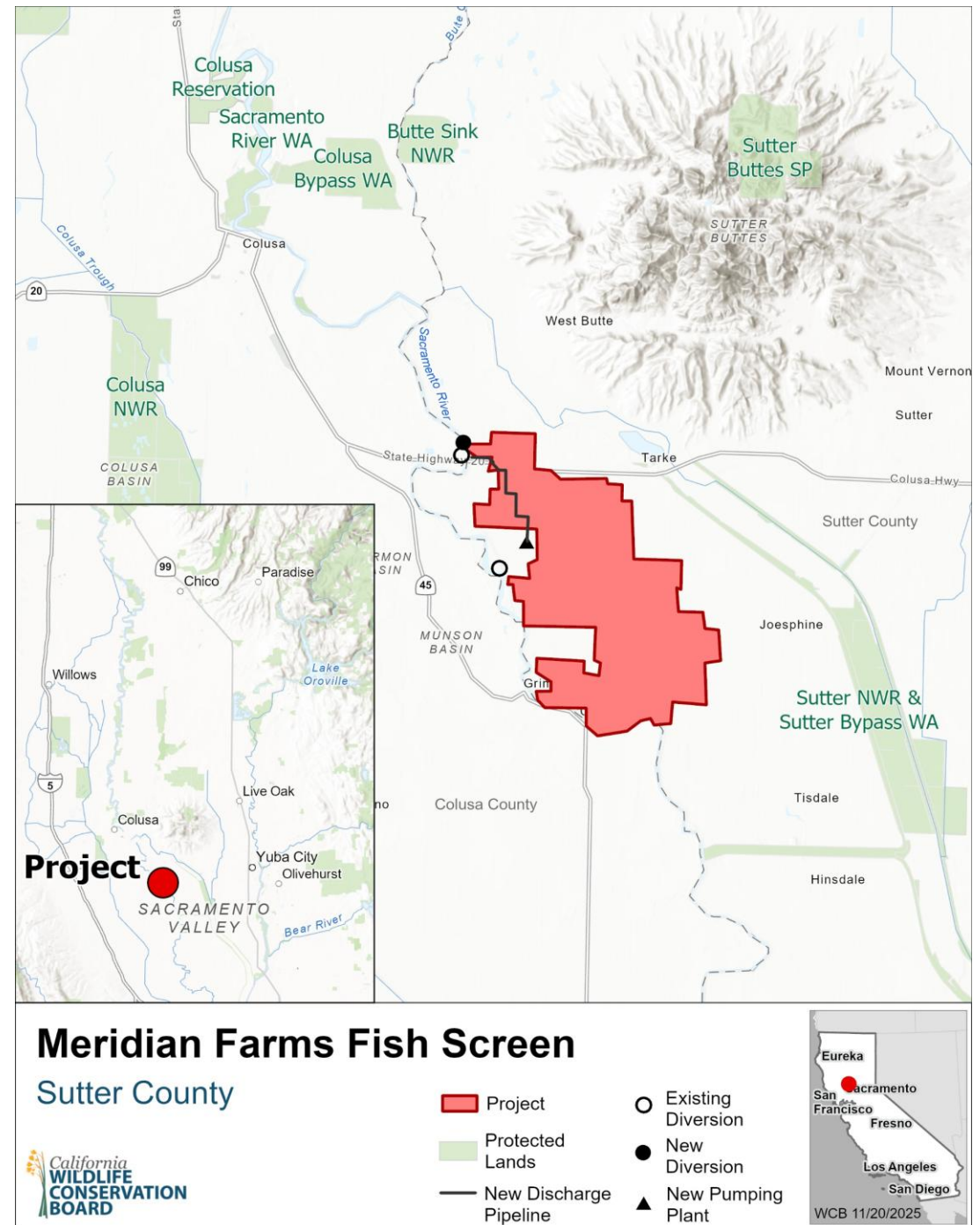
Credit: SBFCA



Meridian Farms Fish Screen

- Meridian Farms Water Company (applicant)
- Project cost \$46,445,000
- WCB request \$15,000,000
- Project will benefit anadromous fish:
 - Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon
 - Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon

Credit: WCB



Meridian Farms Fish Screen

Slide 2

Meridian Farms Water Company:

- Provides irrigation water to approximately 9,184 acres
 - Up to 4,000 acres of rice
 - 500 acres of winter flooded rice

Sacramento River
Credit: WCB





Meridian Farms Fish Screen

Slide 3

Existing unscreened Meridian diversion to be decommissioned

- New consolidated Meridian diversion
 - Positive barrier fish screen
 - New efficient variable speed pumps
 - Establishes reliable water supply

Chinook salmon (top)
Credit: CDFW

Meridian water diversion on the Sacramento River (bottom)
Credit: WCB





Meridian Farms Fish Screen

Slide 4

Existing Drexler diversion to be decommissioned

Drexler Pump Station with walkway
Credit: WCB

Meridian Farms Fish Screen

Slide 5

Water Delivery Improvements:

- Increase delivery capacity of main canal
 - Widening cross section
 - New canal lining
 - New water control structures
- Construct Drexler Relift Pump Station

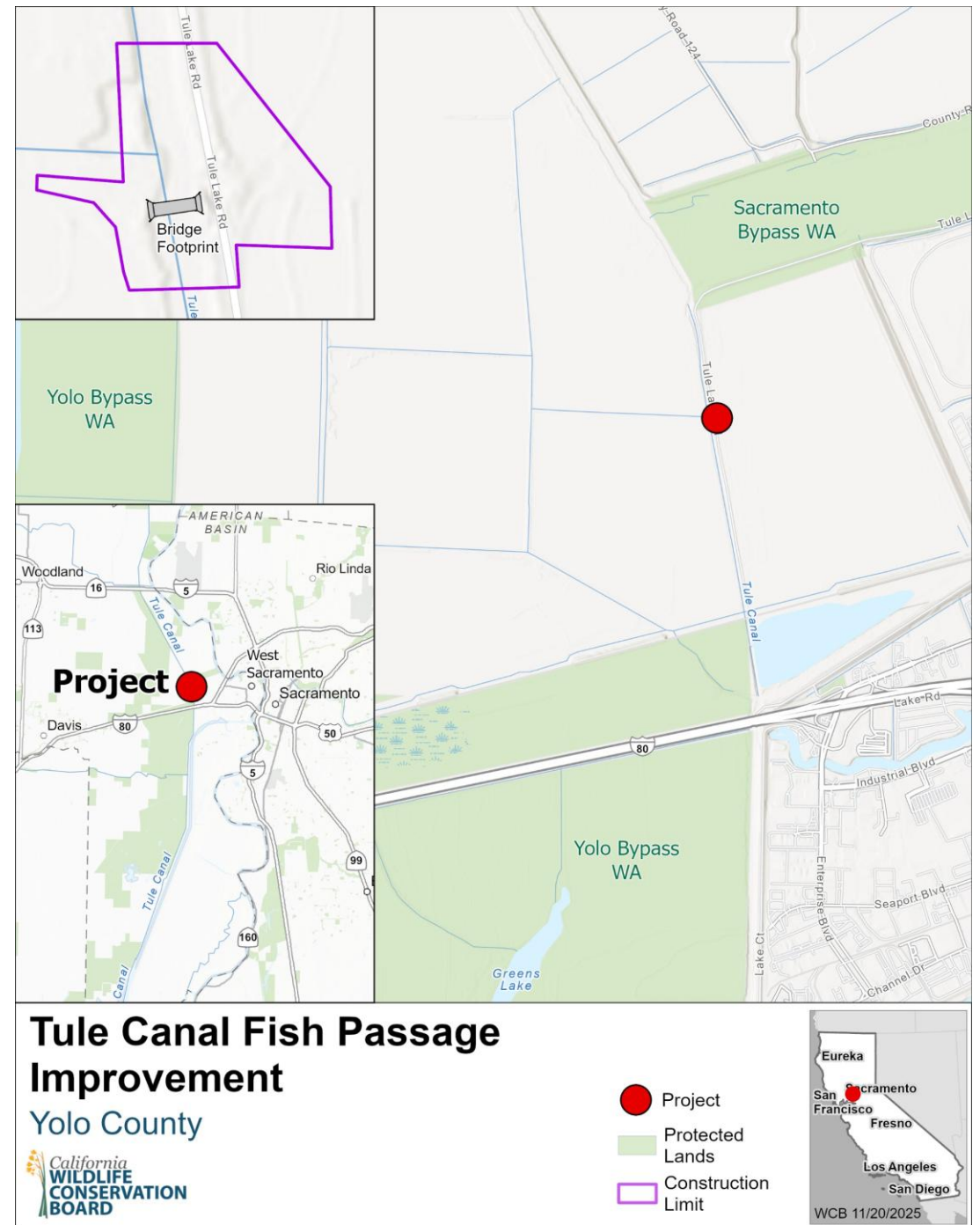
Main canal with Sutter Buttes in background
Credit: WCB



Tule Canal Fish Passage Improvement

- Department of Water Resources (applicant)
- Project cost \$7,932,633
- WCB request \$6,230,113
- Remove fish passage barrier

Credit: WCB



Tule Canal Fish Passage Improvement

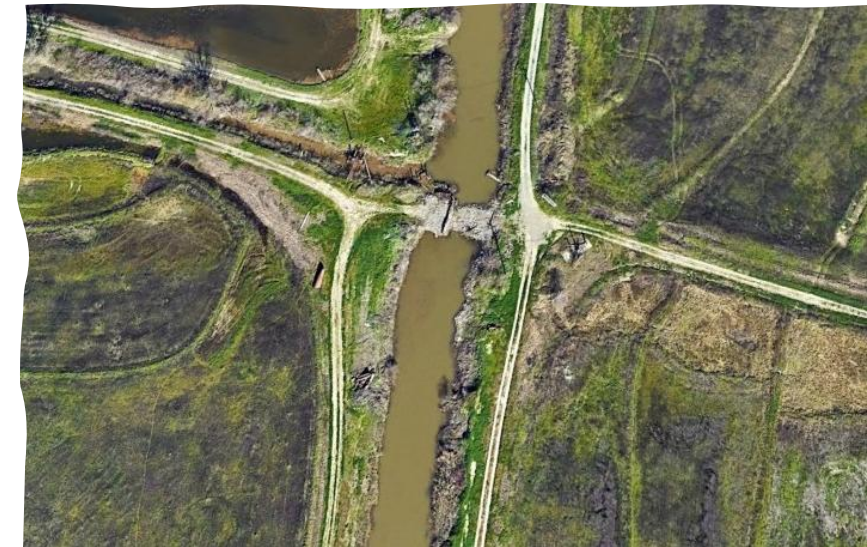
Slide 2

Project Elements:

- Remove low-water earthen crossing in Tule Canal
 - Interface between Yolo and Sacramento Bypasses
- Install new bridge over canal
- Monitor successful fish passage

Top: high flow conditions
Bottom: low flow conditions

Credit: Google Earth



Tule Canal Fish Passage Improvement

Slide 3

Project Benefits:

- Year-round fish passage and access to upstream spawning grounds
 - White sturgeon, green sturgeon, steelhead, Chinook salmon, and Pacific lamprey
- Decrease unsuccessful passage and time/energy spent going around barrier

Green sturgeon (left), Chinook salmon (right)

Credit: CDFW

Tule canal, downstream of the project area (below)

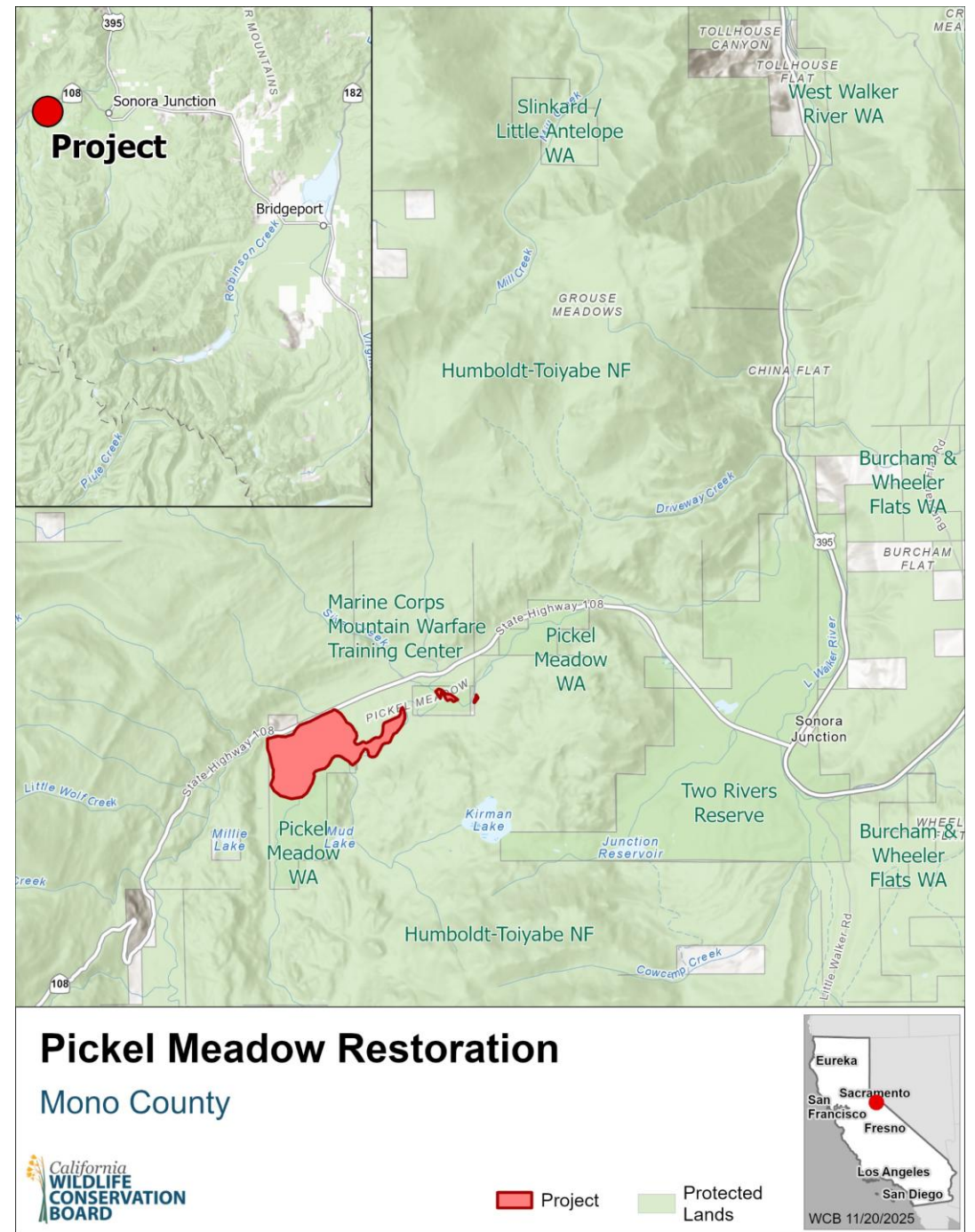
Credit: WCB



Pickel Meadow Restoration

- American Rivers, Inc. (applicant)
- Project cost \$5,173,729
- WCB request \$4,958,872
- 250 acres of mountain meadow habitat
- Enhances public lands
 - Pickel Meadow Wildlife Area
 - Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Credit: WCB



Pickel Meadow Restoration

Slide 2

- Disrupted natural hydrology
- Accelerated erosion
- Reduced habitat quality

Aerial image of Pickel Meadow
Credit: Google Earth





Pickel Meadow Restoration

Slide 3

- Channel incision lowering water table throughout the meadow
- West Walker River lacks deep pools, large wood, and riparian cover

West Walker River and Pickel Meadow, facing upstream
Credit: WCB



Pickel Meadow Restoration

Slide 4

Project Elements:

- Alluvial fan reconnection
- Aquatic habitat improvements
- Grazing improvements
- Diversion upgrades
- Recreational access improvements

Artificial berm along West Walker River, facing upstream
Credit: WCB

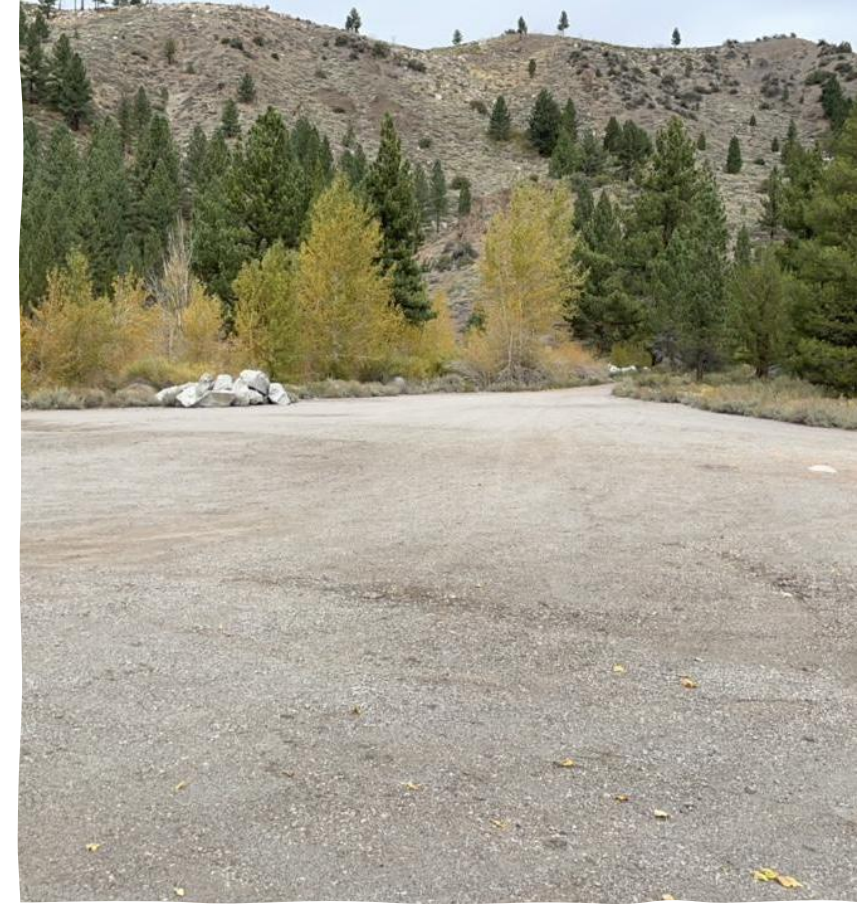
Pickel Meadow Restoration

Slide 5

- Project will enhance:
 - Terrestrial and aquatic habitats
 - Carbon sequestration
 - Groundwater recharge
 - Water quality
 - Climate and wildfire resilience
 - Land stewardship capacity
 - Sustainable recreation
- Builds on past investments



West Walker River, side channel below Silver Creek
confluence, facing downstream
Credit: WCB



Pickel Meadow Restoration

Slide 6

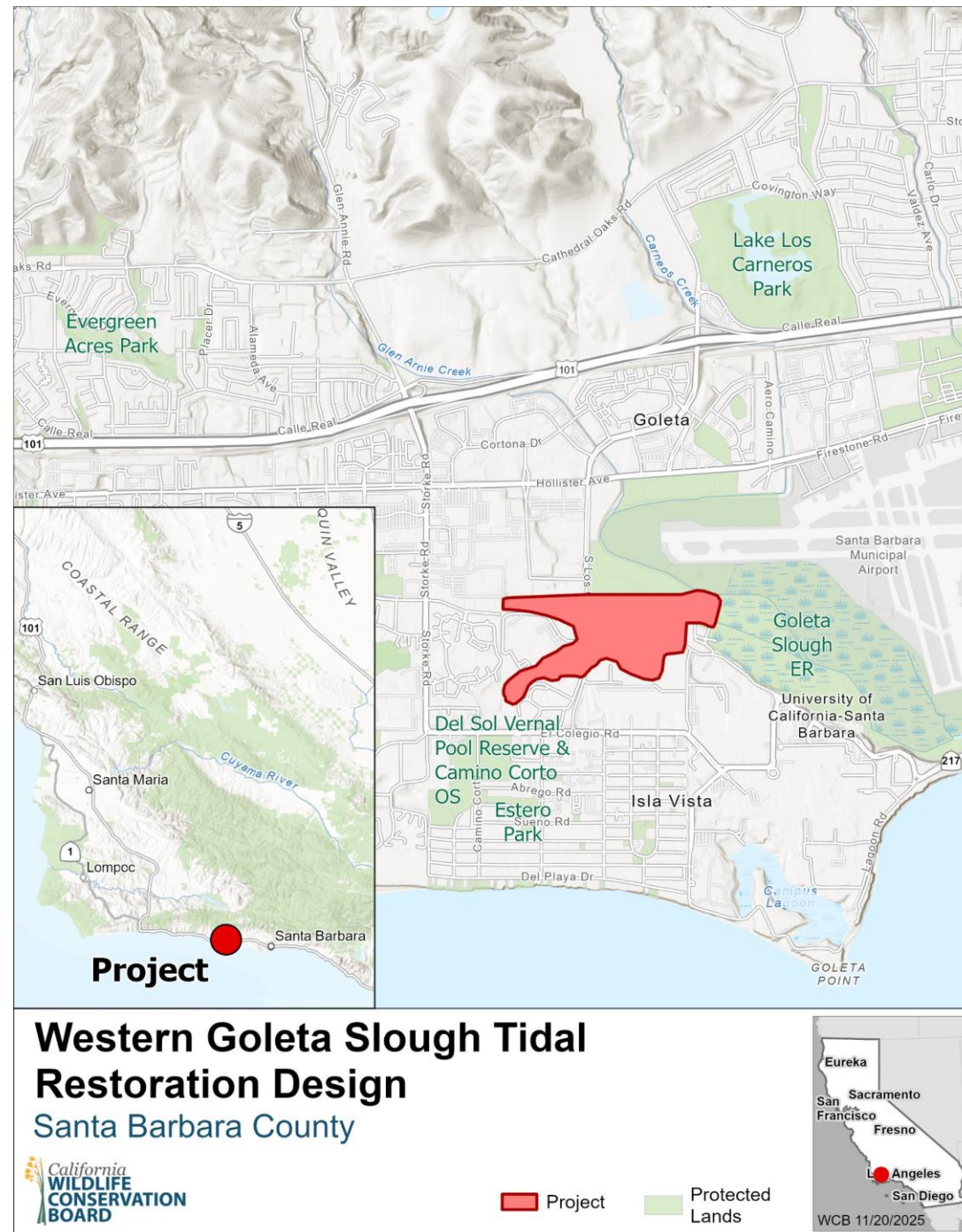
Artificial fill, elevated area on left side of photo, looking north (left), historic alluvial fan, portion in foreground has transitioned to dry upland vegetation (middle), and existing parking area (right)

Credit: WCB

Western Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Design

- University of California, Santa Barbara (applicant)
- WCB request \$1,540,000
- Studies to support reconnecting tidal influence on up to 18 acres of estuarine wetlands in western Goleta Slough
- Located on UCSB property and CDFW's Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve

Credit: WCB





Western Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Design

Slide 2

Historical aerial photo of project site



Western Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Design

Slide 3

Flood gates and channelization that have altered the site

Credit: WCB



Western Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Design

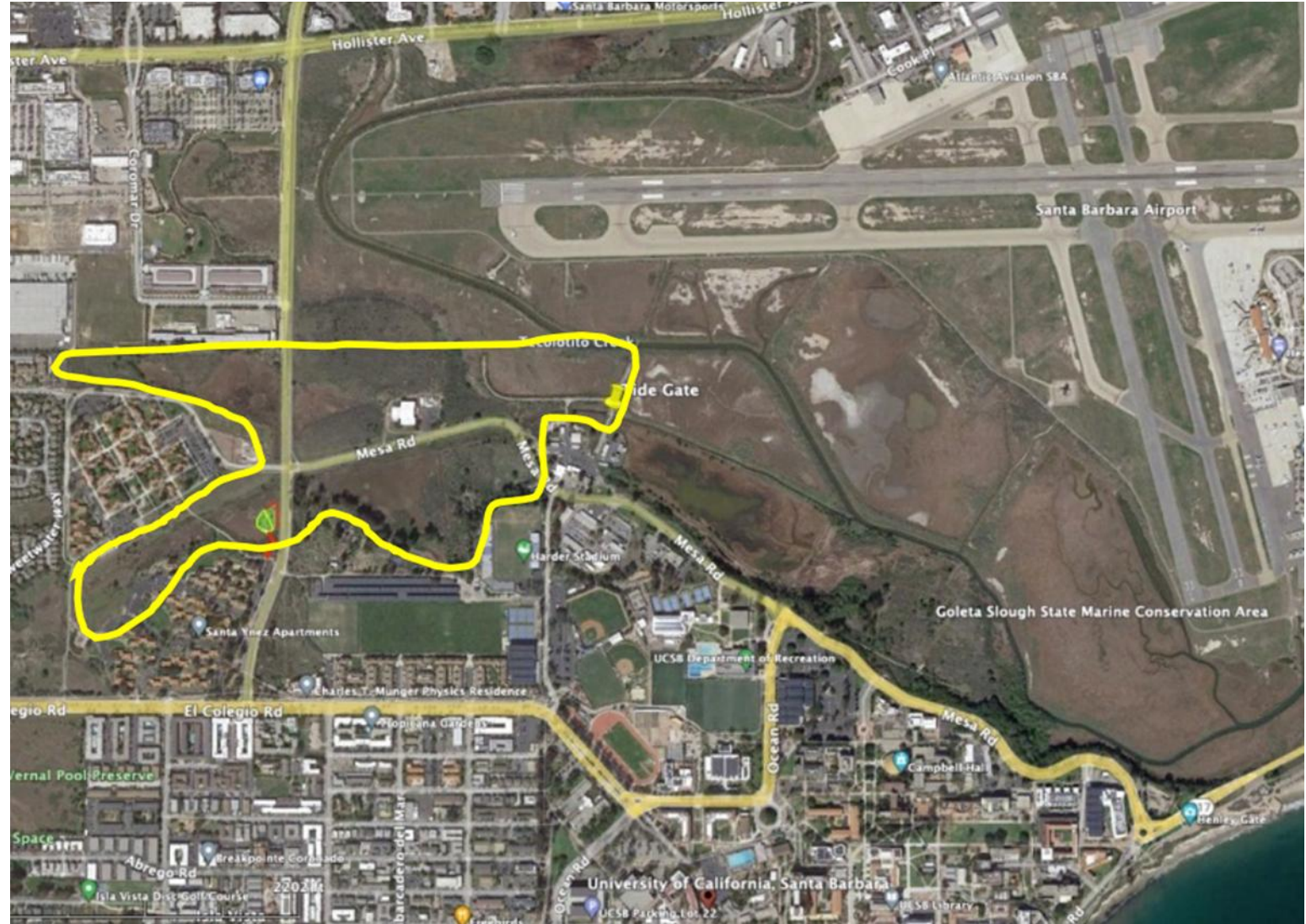
Slide 4

Invasive species dominating the site

Credit: WCB

Slide 5

- Habitat assessment
 - Vegetation mapping across 62 acres
- Hydrologic and hydraulic studies
- Engineering feasibility study and 65% design plans
- Environmental review and permitting





Western Goleta Slough Tidal Restoration Design

Slide 6

Project Benefits:

- Return of tidal function to 18 acres of historic tidal wetlands
- Restoration of 32 acres of upland coastal age scrub surrounding tidal wetlands
- Creation of migration pathway for tidal marsh in face of sea level rise
- Habitat for migratory waterfowl and several local threatened and endangered species



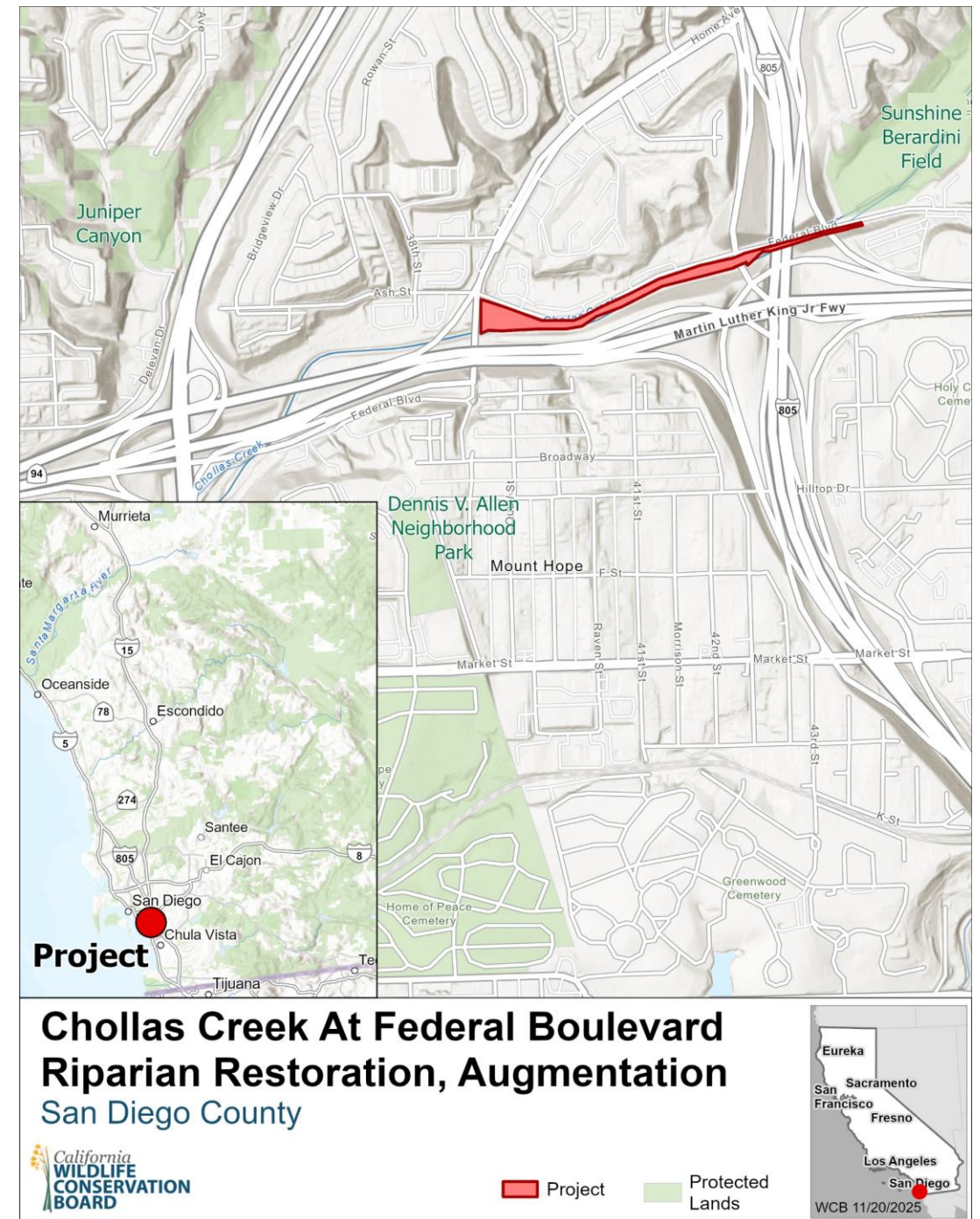
Top: Endangered Belding's Savannah sparrow
Credit: CDFW

Bottom: Endangered salt marsh bird's beak
Credit: United State Fish and Wildlife Service

Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration, Augmentation

- Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek (applicant)
- WCB augmentation request \$1,600,000
- Benefits justice communities
 - 86th percentile on Enviroscreen
 - Urban area that lacks greenspaces
 - Precursor to the development of a planned pedestrian trail

Credit: WCB



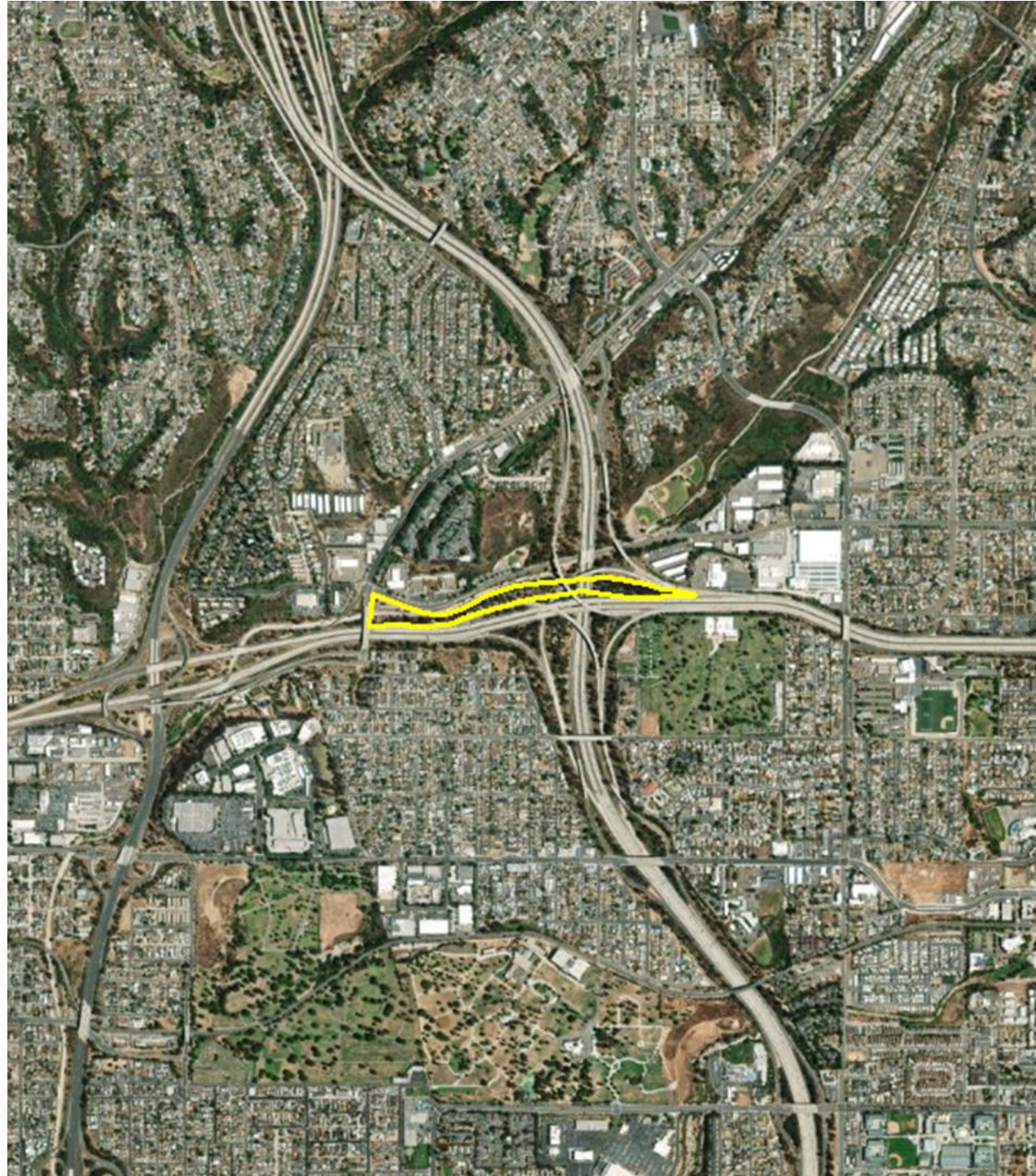
Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration, Augmentation

Slide 2

Hardened stream channel:

- No habitat value
- Concrete does not allow water to infiltrate
 - Contributes to local stormwater quality issues
 - Does not withstand a 100-year flood event
- Separates neighborhoods from recreational amenities

Credit: WCB





Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration, Augmentation

Slide 3

Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard

Credit: WCB

Chollas Creek at Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration, Augmentation

Slide 4

Project Elements:

- Concrete channel will be removed
- Channel depth and width will be expanded
- Installation of a soft cobble-lined bottom
- Banks will be planted with native plants and tree species

Credit: Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek



Chollas Creek At Federal Boulevard Riparian Restoration, Augmentation

Slide 5

Project Benefits:

- 2,000 linear feet de-channelization of Chollas Creek
- Restoration of five acres of native riparian habitat
- Improvements to water quality and flood control
- 3,100 linear feet of native trees planted along bank

Example of de-channelized stream in Southern California
Credit: County of Los Angeles





Item 25. Proposition 4 Emergency Regulations

Loyalton Ranch
Credit: Feather River Land Trust

Proposition 4 Emergency Regulations

WCB Grant Emergency Regulations:

- November 12: Regulations posted for public review
- November 20: Regulations presented to Board for approval
- November 24: Submitted to Office of Administrative Law
 - 10-day review under emergency process
- February 6: Finalize regulations

Requested Action:

- Approve regulations and delegate authority to Executive Director to make revisions as needed





Item 26. Public Forum for Items not on the Agenda

SANDAG San Elijo Lagoon Tour

DATE/TIME:

- **Thursday, November 20, 2025** (following the WCB meeting)

TOUR LOCATION:

- **San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and Nature Center**
2710 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff, CA 92007

PARK & RIDE OPTION (RECOMMENDED):

- **San Elijo Park and Ride (roughly one mile from Nature Center)**
2581 Via Poco and Ride; Cardiff, CA 92007
- SANDAG will provide rotating vehicle service between Park & Ride and Nature Center before & after event

LIMITED ON-SITE PARKING (FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED):

- **Nature Center:** 2710 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff, CA 92007
- **San Elijo Water Campus (across the street):** 2695 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff, CA 92007
- Best suited for guests attending a portion of the event or arriving via drop-off or rideshare from the Board meeting at MiraCosta College



Meeting Adjourned
Next Board Meeting, February 26, 2026

Pickel Meadow
Credit: WCB