Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, California 94244-2090https://wcb.ca.gov
(916) 445-8448

Final Meeting Agenda

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

February 26, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

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

The Board meeting will also be available via Zoom. A recording will be posted after the meeting. Please note: *WCB offers a video link but cannot guarantee remote access. Please attend in person if you believe your participation is essential.*

Please click the link below to join the webinar.

Join the webinar

Phone one-tap:
+1408-961-3929, 86160005443# US
+1408-961-3927, 86160005443# US

Join via audio:
+1 408-961-3929 US
+1 408-961-3927 US
+1 408-961-3928 US
1 855-758-1310 US Toll Free
Webinar ID: 861 6000 5443
International numbers available: https://wildlife-ca-gov.zoom.us/u/kIeGzD0Mr

Notice: We no longer require Speaker Cards. If you wish to comment on an agenda item, you will be provided with the opportunity to do so during the meeting. In person speakers will be asked to line up at the podium during the specified item. Similarly, on-line speakers will be asked to raise hands to enter the queue.

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

Attachments

Attachment A – Map of February 2026 Projects

Attachment B – WCB Acronyms

Attachment C – WCB Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

PERSONS WITH DISABILITES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department's EEO Office at EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. Please make any such requests at the earliest possible time to help ensure that accommodations can be in place at the time of the meeting. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the EEO Officer immediately.

1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members
- Damon Nagami, Vice Chair, Public Member
- Karyn Gear, Public Member
- Meghan Hertel, Member
  Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Fran Pavley, Public Member
- Michele Perrault, Member
  Legislative Director, Department of Finance
- Tina Thomas, Public Member
- Erika Zavaleta Member
  President, Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee
- Senator Catherine Blakespear
- Senator John Laird
- Senator Henry Stern
- Assemblymember Steve Bennett
- Assemblymember Diane Papan
- Assemblymember Rick Zbur

Executive Director
- Jennifer M. Norris, PhD

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Discussion and Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

4. Executive Director's Report

Easement Transfers Informational

At the February 24, 1998, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB or Board) meeting, WCB authorized the Executive Director to transfer less-than-fee interests (easements, right of ways, etc.) in California Department of Fish and Wildlife controlled land, where the value of the interest is less than $50,000.00. This action was taken to improve service to the public and reduce the cost of processing these transfers.

The Board placed two conditions on its delegation of authority. First, the grant of less-than-fee interest must be made at the request or with the recommendation of CDFW to assure adequate consideration of impacts on habitat and programs. Second, any grant made under this authority must be reported to the Board as an informational item.

Pursuant to the above-described process, the following easement transfers have been completed by staff.

Project Title	Transfer Type	Grantee	Size	Consideration
Hunniecutt Easement	Access Easement Recorded: 12/10/14	Hunniecutt	1± acre	$0
PG&E Easement Yolo WA	Utility Easement Recorded: 9/2/16	PG&E	4± acres	$0
Plaisted Creek ER SDG&E Powerline Replacement	Utility Easement Recorded: 3/29/18	PG&E	2± acres	$6,000
Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery Overhead Powerline Easement	Utility Easement Recorded 4/6/18	Pacifi-Corp	1± acre	$0
Turlock Irrigation District Surface Water Supply System Easement	Water transmission pipeline Recorded: 5/21/18	Turlock Irrigation District	1± acre	$4,307
Mojave Fish Hatchery Gas Line	Gas pipeline Recorded: 7/27/18	South-west Gas	1± acre	$0
Otay Water District Easement Adjustment	Access Easement Recorded: 8/14/18	Otay Water District	1± acre	$3,900

Project Title	Transfer Type	Grantee	Size	Consideration
Levee Easement Rights for Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency	Levee Easement Recorded: 9/6/18	SBFCA	34± acres	$19,600
Bayview Heights Drainage Easement	Four Utility and R/W Easements Recorded: 10/29/18	City of Newport Beach	1± acre	$2,500
Suisun Marsh-Hill Slough Wildlife Area Right of Way Easement	Access Easement Recorded: 11/14/19	County of Solano	2± acres	$0
Yolo Bypass Easement Amendment	Utility Easement Recorded: 11/25/19	PG&E	1± acre	$0
Levee Easement Rights for Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency	Levee Easement Recorded: 4/16/20	SBFCA	4± acres	$2,300
Cardoza Easement	Pipeline Easement Recorded: 9/3/20	Cardoza	1± acre	$0
Crocker Meadows AT&T Easement	Utility & Access Easement Recorded: 12/3/20	AT&T	2± acres	$0
Crestridge ER Grant of Emergency Access Easement	Emergency Access Easement Recorded: 6/2/22	County of San Diego	2± acres	$0
Sweeney Access Easement	Access Easement Recorded: 6/10/22	Bridwell & Durham	1± acre	$0
Rancho Jamul ER Easement Modification	Soil Nail Easement Recorded: 3/1/23	Jamul Indian Village of California	1± acre	$3,000
Napa Sonoma Marsh Easement Modification	Utility Easement Recorded: 3/15/23	PG&E	1± acre	$1,800
San Dieguito Lagoon ER Grant of Utility	Utility and Access Easement	SDG&E	1± acre	$10,300

Project Title	Transfer Type	Grantee	Size	Consideration
Easement	Recorded: 11/1/23			
Levee and Utility Easement Rights for Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency, Exp. 2	Levee Easement Recorded: 8/12/24	SBFCA	3± acres	$1,650
Watsonville Slough Grant of Easement for Recreational Trail	Access Easement Recorded: 11/20/24	City of Watsonville	2± acres	$31,661
Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet Access Easement	Access Easement Recorded: 2/14/25	Maritime Admin.	2± acres	$1,850
Warner Valley WA – Perfecting an Access Easement (Multiple)	Utility Easement Access Easement Recorded: 10/6/25	Tolan Judd & Davidge	1± acre	$0

5. Board Member Updates and Reports

6. Funding Status

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

GENERAL FUND (0001)	**$7,293,128.00**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$7,293,128.00**
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	**$46,180,102.68**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(3,997,254.00)
Total Project Development:	(19,040,733.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$23,142,115.68**
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	**$31,108,887.00**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,847,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(25,369,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$3,892,887.00**
CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	**$0.00**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$0.00**

WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	**$3,552,000.00**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$3,552,000.00**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	**$3,537,130.35**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$3,537,130.35**
WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	**$31,974,011.85**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(9,194,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(1,600,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$21,180,011.85**
THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	**$41,301,760.05**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(14,945,272.00)
Total Project Development:	(20,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$26,336,488.05**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024 (Proposition 4) (6093)	**$313,000,000.00**
February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(32,328,570.00)
Total Project Development:	(6,339,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$270,332,430.00**
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	**$477,947,019.93**
Grand Total – February 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(62,312,096.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(52,368,733.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$363,266,190.93**

Consent Items

Items 7-23 are part of the Consent Calendar.

7. Recovery of Funds, Thursday, February 26, 2026

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

Table 1 - Recoveries by Fund

Fund Name	Amount
General Fund	$90,413.57
Habitat Conservation Fund	$0.00
Wildlife Restoration Fund	$0.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	$637,453.28
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	$26,076.35
Total Recoveries for All Funds	***$753,943.20***

Table 2 - General Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Antelope Lake Conservation Easement	$20,000.00	$16,492.00	$3,508.00
Butte County Meadowfoam (Eshoo)	$20,000.00	$0.00	$20,000.00
Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area Expansion #18 (Soper) CE	$55,000.00	$54,548.25	$451.75
Elfin Acres	$20,000.00	$8,246.00	$11,754.00
Joshua Creek Canyon Ecological Reserve, Expansion 3 (Garrapata Ridge)	$74,488.00	$56,363.00	$18,125.00
Online Water Availability Tool - Augmentation	$63,665.00	$63,665.00	$0.00
Tomato Stand Fish Passage Planning	$180,000.00	$179,103.18	$896.82
Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 6	$30,000.00	$6,293.00	$23,707.00
White Atterbury	$20,000.00	$8,029.00	$11,971.00
Total Recoveries to General Fund			***$90,413.57***

Table 3 - Habitat Conservation Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Antelope Lake Conservation Easement	$42,900.00	$42,900.00	$0.00
Butte County Meadowfoam (Eshoo)	$2,124,200.00	$2,124,200.00	$0.00
Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area Expansion #18 (Soper) CE	$790,200.00	$790,200.00	$0.00
Elfin Acres	$1,045,000.00	$1,045,000.00	$0.00
Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 6	$2,330,000.00	$2,330,000.00	$0.00

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
White Atterbury	$2,400,000.00	$2,400,000.00	$0.00
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			***$0.00***

Table 4- Wildlife Restoration Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Contra Loma Regional Park Fishing Access	$250,000.00	$250,000.00	$0.00
Total Recoveries Wildlife Restoration Fund			***$0.00***

Table 5 - Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Escuela Ranch Water Resilience and Flow Enhancement Planning	$150,154,00	$150,154.00	$0.00
Online Water Availability Tool	$551,255.00	$551,255.00	$0.00
San Gregorio Creek Flow Enhancement, Marchi and Son Farm	$95,392.00	$0.00	$95,392.00
San Gregorio Creek, Marchi and Son Farm Forbearance Agreement	$483,000.00	$6,000.00	$477,000.00
Scott River Flow Enhancement and Fish Passage Planning	$234,180.00	$187,272.52	$46,907.48
Sonoma Creek Flow Enhancement Design	$520,039.00	$501,885.20	$18,153.80
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			***$637,453.28***

Table 6- The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Carlson Park Improvement and Mad River Access	$691,000.00	$691,000.00	$0.00
Effie Yeaw Nature Center Facilities Improvement Planning	$112,000.00	$85,938.10	$26,061.90
Effie Yeaw Nature Center Facilities Improvement Planning, Augmentation	$35,000.00	$35,000.00	$0.00
Public Access for a Renewed Klamath River	$3,500,000.00	$3,500,000.00	$0.00
San Joaquin Basin Regional Conservation Investment Strategy	$761,000.00	$760,985.55	$14.45
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018			***$26,076.35***

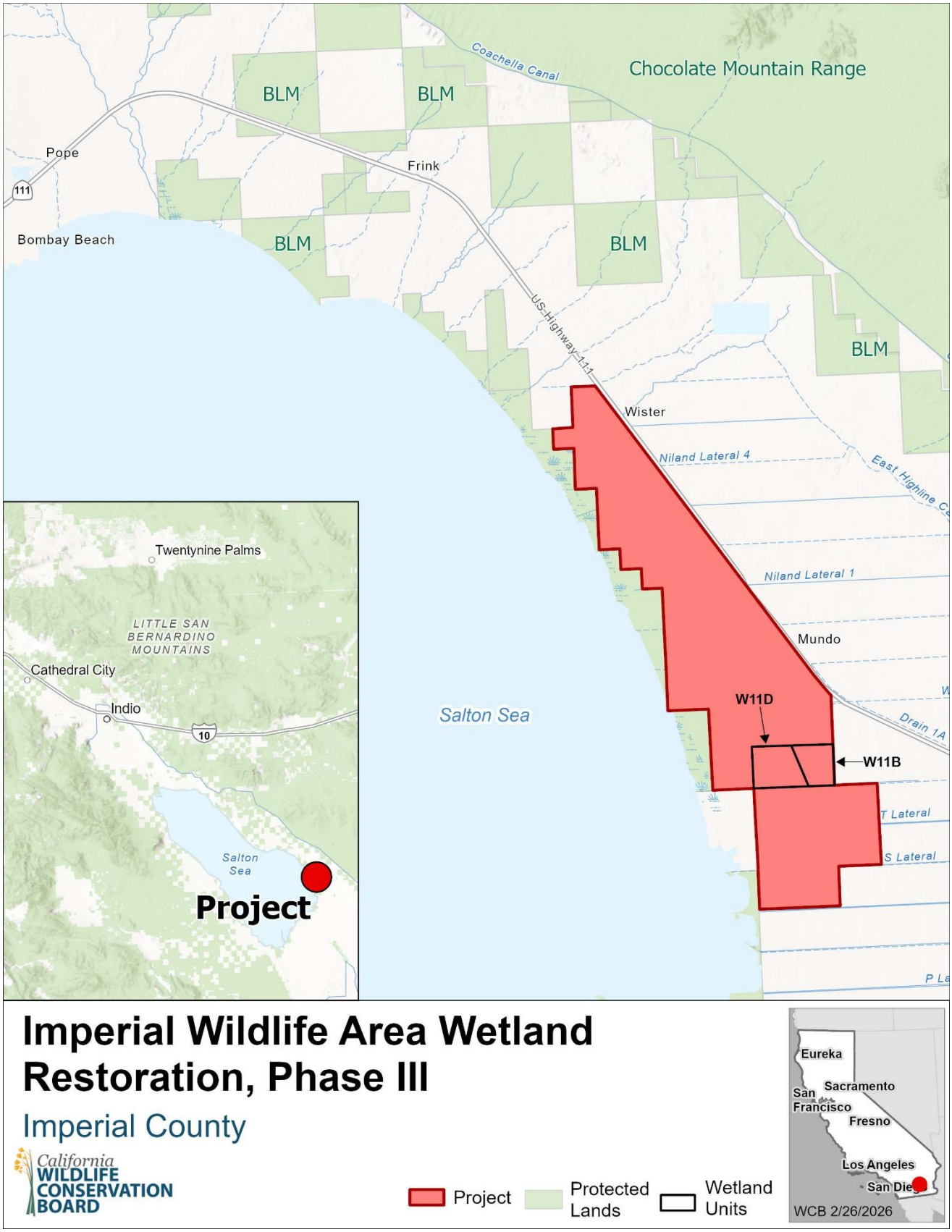
8. Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Phase III **Restoration – Implementation**
(Change of Scope)
WCB Grant: $0
Fund Source(s): N/A
Grantee: California Waterfowl Association
Landowner: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Location: 5 miles north of Niland
County: Imperial

Project Highlights

- Project located at the Imperial Wildlife Area, adjacent to the Salton Sea.
- Imperial Wildlife Area provides almost 8,000 acres of migratory bird habitat.
- Project will enhance an additional 245 acres of seasonal wetlands and 45 acres of irrigable upland habitat at no additional cost.
- Project includes mechanical removal of invasive salt cedar (no herbicide use).
- Supports Sonoran Joint Venture conservation priorities.
- Key species: Yuma ridgeway's rail, multiple waterfowl and shorebird species.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the project is located within a severely disadvantaged community (SDAC), and the Imperial Wildlife Area provides public access and recreation.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3


Coachella Canal
Chocolate Mountain Range
BLM
BLM
Pope
Frink
111
Bombay Beach
BLM
BLM
US Highway 111
BLM
Wister
Niland Lateral 4
East Highline Ca
Niland Lateral 1
Mundo
W11D
W11B
Drain 1A
T Lateral
S Lateral
P La
Salton Sea
Twentynine Palms
LITTLE SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS
Cathedral City
Indio
10
Salton Sea
Project
Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Phase III
Imperial County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Wetland Units
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Phase III (Project), approved by the Board in May 2023, is located on the southeastern shoreline of the Salton Sea, north of the city of Niland, in Imperial County. The Imperial Wildlife Area (IWA) was established in 1954 and provides almost 8,000 acres of safe haven for migratory birds that visit the region every winter. Over the years, many seasonal and permanent wetland units were developed to provide habitat for wildlife, and a place for public recreational activities to take place.

Conditions within the Project area's habitat units are extremely poor and the wetland units have reduced management capabilities. Levees around the units are in various stages of failure and have extremely steep slopes, which prevent access of maintenance equipment. Open water delivery ditches that supply water to the units grow significant amounts of non-native salt cedar and phragmites which choke off water flow and spread invasive seeds.

The Project will create high quality wetland and upland habitat by:

- Removing invasive salt cedar shrubs that grow within water delivery ditches, and on levees within the Project area.
- Installing water delivery pipelines to replace open ditches. Pipelines guarantee no ditch loss, no annual maintenance costs, reduced invasive seed source, and improved water delivery capabilities.
- Enhancing wetland units through regrading, leveling, and construction of new levees, islands, and swales.
- Replacing derelict water control structures to provide enhanced water management capabilities, while maximizing natural feed production.

Cost savings realized during project implementation have presented an opportunity to complete additional wetland and upland habitat restoration at the IWA at no additional cost. This proposal will create a new task within the existing grant and project budget which will fund an additional 245 acres of seasonal wetland restoration and 45 acres of irrigable upland restoration on units W11B and W11D. This work will provide additional high-quality wetland and upland habitat for migratory birds at a critically important location along the Pacific Flyway.

Long-Term Management

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has adopted the Imperial Wildlife Area, Wister Unit Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including the Project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, the California Waterfowl Association 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 Budget	New WCB Budget	Total
Project Management	$682,600	$682,600	$682,600
Construction Units 115ABC	$1,884,500	$1,646,428	$1,646,428
Construction Unit 312B	$1,108,000	$1,168,000	$1,168,000
Construction Units 114ABC	$1,169,000	$1,334,387	$1,334,387
Construction Units 513ABC	$1,088,000	$897,819	$897,819
Construction Unit W11BD	---	$827,864	$827,864
Indirect Costs	$593,210	$593,212	$593,212
Contingency	$652,690	$27,690	$27,690
TOTAL	$7,178,000	$7,178,000	$7,178,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jennifer N. Duberstein, Ph.D., Coordinator, Sonoran Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, consisting of replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities located on the same site and having substantially the same purpose, Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion, consisting of construction and location of limited numbers of new structures or facilities, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, consisting of minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian W. Jones, District 40
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lisa Calderon, District 56

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.

9. I-15 Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning **Restoration - Planning**

WCB Grant: $3,988,000
Fund Source: Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4- Habitat Connectivity), Public Resources Code Section 93030 (SB 105, Sec. 95)
Grantee: Temecula-Anza-Elsinore-Murrieta Resource Conservation District
Landowner: N/A
Location: 1.5 miles south of the city of Temecula
County: Riverside County

Project Highlights

- Project will develop plans and designs to create a wildlife crossing structure that will link the Santa Ana Mountains, via the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve, to the Palomar Mountains
- Addresses a CDFW “Top Priority” wildlife barrier
- Builds upon a previous WCB planning grant for this proposed crossing
- Will enhance the long-term ecological value of several prior WCB land conservation investments within the wildlife corridor
- Key species: Mountain lions and other mammals

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B1.2, C2.2


Temecula
Pauba Rd
Ynez Rd
Santiago Rd
John Warner Rd
Pujol St
Via Peregrino
Via Horca
Via Santa Rosa
Via Tornado
Via Vaquero
Via Gorrion
E Vallejo Ave
Jedediah Smith Rd
De Portola Rd
Cupeno Ln
Pechanga Pkwy
Camino Estribo
Santa Margarita ER
Pechanga Reservation
Rainbow Canyon
Rainbow Canyon Rd
BLM
US Highway 395
Riverside
Banning
Corona
Perris
Hemet
Menifee
Mission Viejo
Murrieta
San Clemente
Project
Oceanside
Escondido
Santee
I-15 Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning
Riverside County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The I-15 Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning (Project) is located on Interstate 15 (I-15) at the Riverside-San Diego County line. The roadway there is an almost impenetrable barrier to wildlife movement, severing the Santa Ana-Palomar Mountains linkage that is essential for the long-term viability of wide-ranging species, particularly mountain lions. Despite roughly 150,000 hectares of largely contiguous habitat in the Santa Ana Mountains, roads and rapid urban growth have fragmented the landscape and isolated its wildlife populations from the larger Palomar Mountains and eastern Peninsular Ranges. Findings of recent mountain lion genetic analysis indicate significant genetic restriction and minimal evidence of migration into the Santa Ana Mountains population in the past decade. This has led to the conclusion that if east-west connectivity across I-15 is not restored, the mountain lion population of the Santa Ana Mountains may be extirpated within 50 years, and possibly as early as 12 years if inbreeding depression sets in. The Project will create “shovel ready” plans and designs for the construction of a wildlife crossing structure that will allow wide-ranging species to safely cross I-15 by developing:

- Outreach to wildlife, land use, and transportation agencies, landowners and managers, Tribes, and conservation organizations in the region
- CEQA and NEPA environmental review
- 65% designs for a wildlife crossing structure
- Caltrans documentation
- Monitoring and management plans

Long-Term Management

Not applicable to this Project

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$433,275	$160,000	$593,275
Environmental Review and Permitting	$1,056,500	---	$1,056,500
Designs	$2,100,000	----	$2,100,000
Monitoring and Management Plan	---	$250,000	$250,000
Indirect Costs	$398,225		$398,225
Total	$3,988,000	$410,000	$4,398,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- The Nature Conservancy - $210,000
- Temecula-Anza-Elsinore-Murrieta Resource Conservation District - $200,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Pam Passow, Director, Orange County Parks
- Aaron Hake, Executive Director, Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
- Ivan Sulic, Chair of the Board of Directors, Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority
- Tiffany Yap, Senior Scientist and Wildlife Corridor Advocate, Center for Biological Diversity
- Claire Schlotterbeck, Executive Director, Hills For Everyone
- Nathan Gregory, Senior Vice President and Chief Programs Officer, Irvine Ranch Conservancy
- James M. Sulentich, Executive Director, Natural Communities Coalition
- Kristeen Penrod, Director, SC Wildlands
- Kristine Preston, Ecologist, San Diego Management and Monitoring Program
- David Lipson, Director, San Diego State University Field Stations Program
- Pam Nelson, Chair, Santa Margarita Group/San Gorgonio Chapter, Sierra Club
- Zachary Kantor-Anaya, South Coast Regional Director, The Wildlands Conservancy
- Fernando Nájera, Director, UC Davis Wildlife Health Center California Carnivores Program
- Karla Ibarra, Executive Director, Fallbrook Land 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. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

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

Staff Recommendation

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

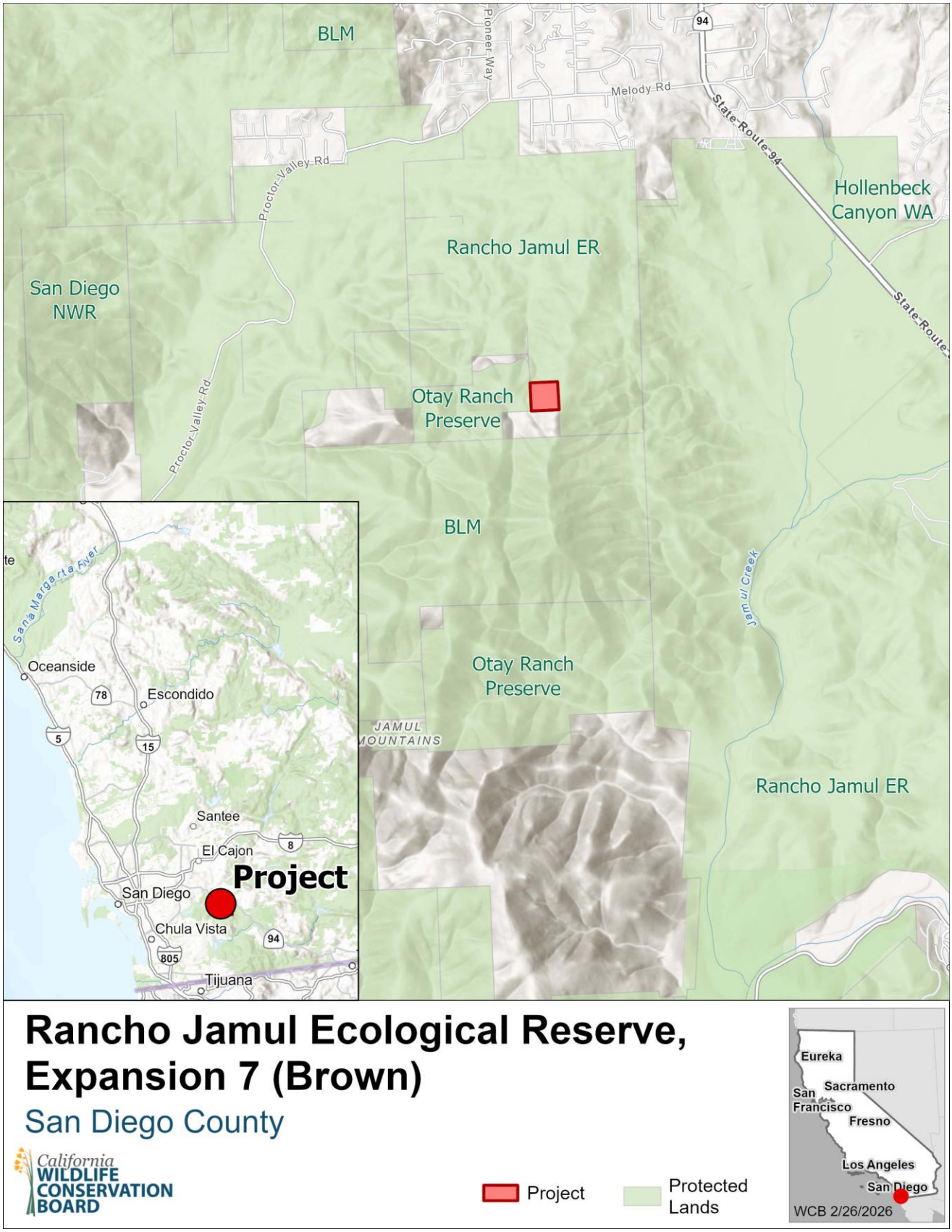
10. Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, Expansion 7 (Brown) **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $230,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 1 mile south of Jamul
County: San Diego
Acres: 10± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Addition to CDFW's Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve (RJER)
- Habitats represented: Coastal sage scrub and chaparral
- Key species: Quino checkerspot butterfly
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego MSCP
- Project is adjacent to the RJER, Expansion 6 property (acquired November 2023) and is surrounded by conserved land

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1
- Public Access: Yes, but limited to special events


BLM
Pioneer Way
94
Melody Rd
State Route 94
Proctor Valley Rd
Hollenbeck Canyon WA
Rancho Jamul ER
San Diego NWR
Otay Ranch Preserve
Proctor Valley Rd
BLM
Jamul Creek
Otay Ranch Preserve
JAMUL MOUNTAINS
Rancho Jamul ER
Santa Margarita River
Oceanside
78
Escondido
5
15
Santee
8
El Cajon
Project
San Diego
Chula Vista
94
805
Tijuana
Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, Expansion 7 (Brown)
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Long-Term Management

The Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of the Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is $230,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$230,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$230,000

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, 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 C. Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, 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.

11. Rancho Jamul Land Exchange — Acquisition

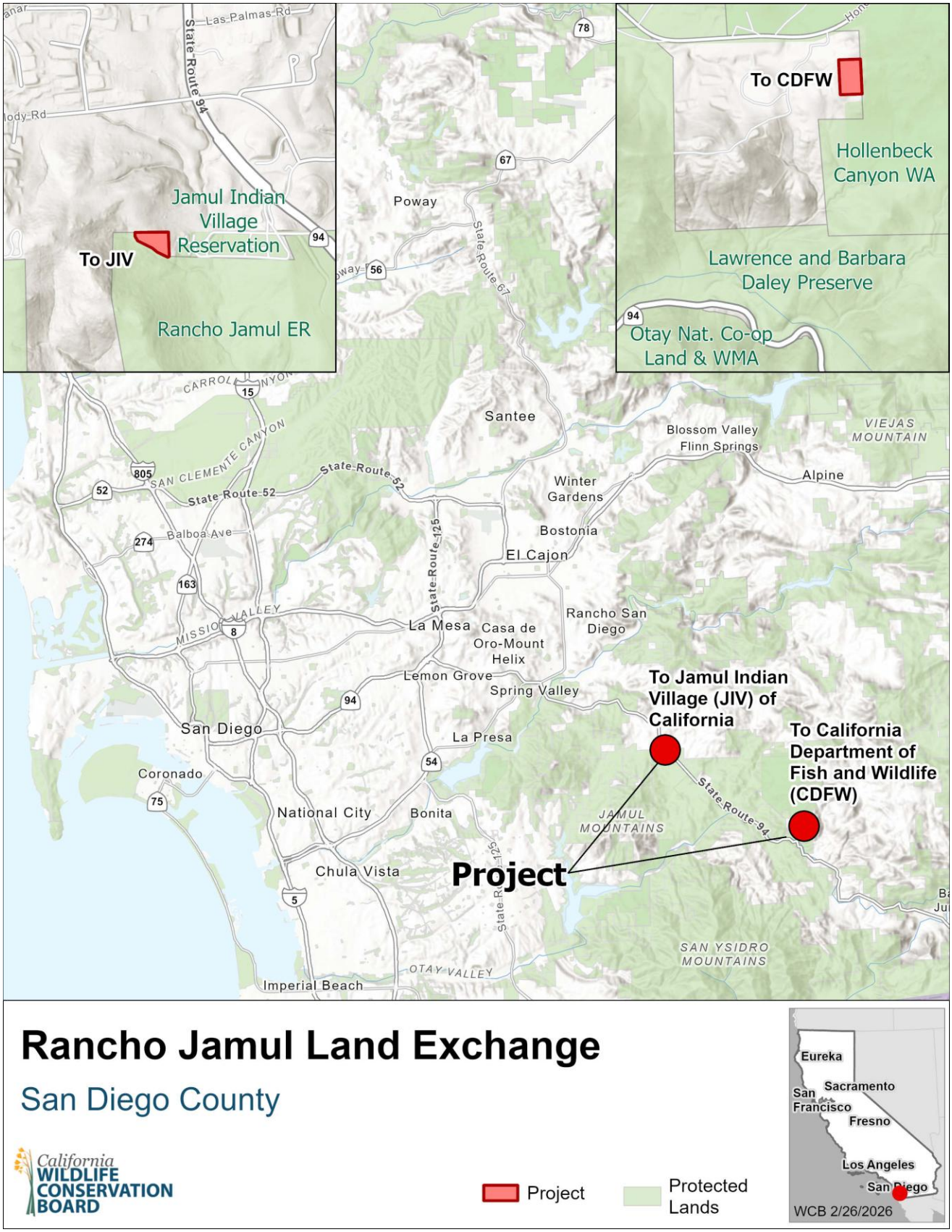
Purchase Price: $0 — **CDFW Transaction**
Location: Exchange properties are located near the community of Jamul
County: San Diego
Acres: 1± (Disposal Property) and 4± (Exchange Property)

Property Highlights

- CDFW proposes to dispose of and transfer the Disposal Property located at CDFW's Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve (RJER) to the Jamul Indian Village of California (JIV) in exchange for the Exchange Property located adjacent to CDFW's Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (HCWA).
- CDFW approved a Land Conservation Evaluation (LCE) through the standard review and approval process. The purpose of the LCE is to allow for the expansion of the existing JIV cemetery into the Disposal Property.
- The existing cemetery is located on the JIV reservation immediately east of RJER and is reaching its capacity.
- Because the Disposal Property is located on the northern boundary of RJER, the impacts to reserve design or management are limited.
- CDFW justified the proposed conversion of the Disposal Property under Executive Order N-15-19 which promotes seeking opportunities to support California tribes' access to natural lands under the ownership of the State of California.
- RJER was originally part of JIV's tribal lands, including its ancestral village.
- Both the Disposal and Exchange Properties support chamise chaparral and coastal sage scrub as well as non-native grasses.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. JIV requested from CDFW that 1± acre of RJER be exchanged for similar property owned by the JIV, thereby enabling JIV to expand its adjacent cemetery.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B3.1
- Public Access: The Exchange Property will become an expansion of the HCWA which is open to the public for wildlife viewing, hiking, and hunting.


Las Palmas Rd
State Route 94
Jamul Indian Village Reservation
To JIV
Rancho Jamul ER
To CDFW
Hollenbeck Canyon WA
Lawrence and Barbara Daley Preserve
Otay Nat. Co-op Land & WMA
Poway
State Route 67
Santee
Blossom Valley
Flinn Springs
VIEJAS MOUNTAIN
Alpine
Winter Gardens
Bostonia
El Cajon
State Route 52
SAN CLEMENTE CANYON
Balboa Ave
State Route 125
La Mesa
Casa de Oro-Mount Helix
Rancho San Diego
MISSION VALLEY
Lemon Grove
Spring Valley
San Diego
La Presa
Coronado
National City
Bonita
Chula Vista
Project
To Jamul Indian Village (JIV) of California
To California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
JAMUL MOUNTAINS
SAN YSIDRO MOUNTAINS
OTAY VALLEY
Imperial Beach
Rancho Jamul Land Exchange
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Long-Term Management
The Exchange Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of HCWA.

Project Funding
The DGS approved fair market value is $90,000 for the Disposal Property and $190,000 for the Exchange Property. The parties acknowledge the difference in value between the Disposal Property and the Exchange Property and find such difference acceptable and consistent with the negotiations and purposes of the land exchange. There will be no cash payment by State to JIV or JIV to State associated with the exchange.

Letters of Support or Opposition
Support:
- None received

Opposition:
- None received

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

State Government
- Senate: Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

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.

12. San Diego Cactus Scrub Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

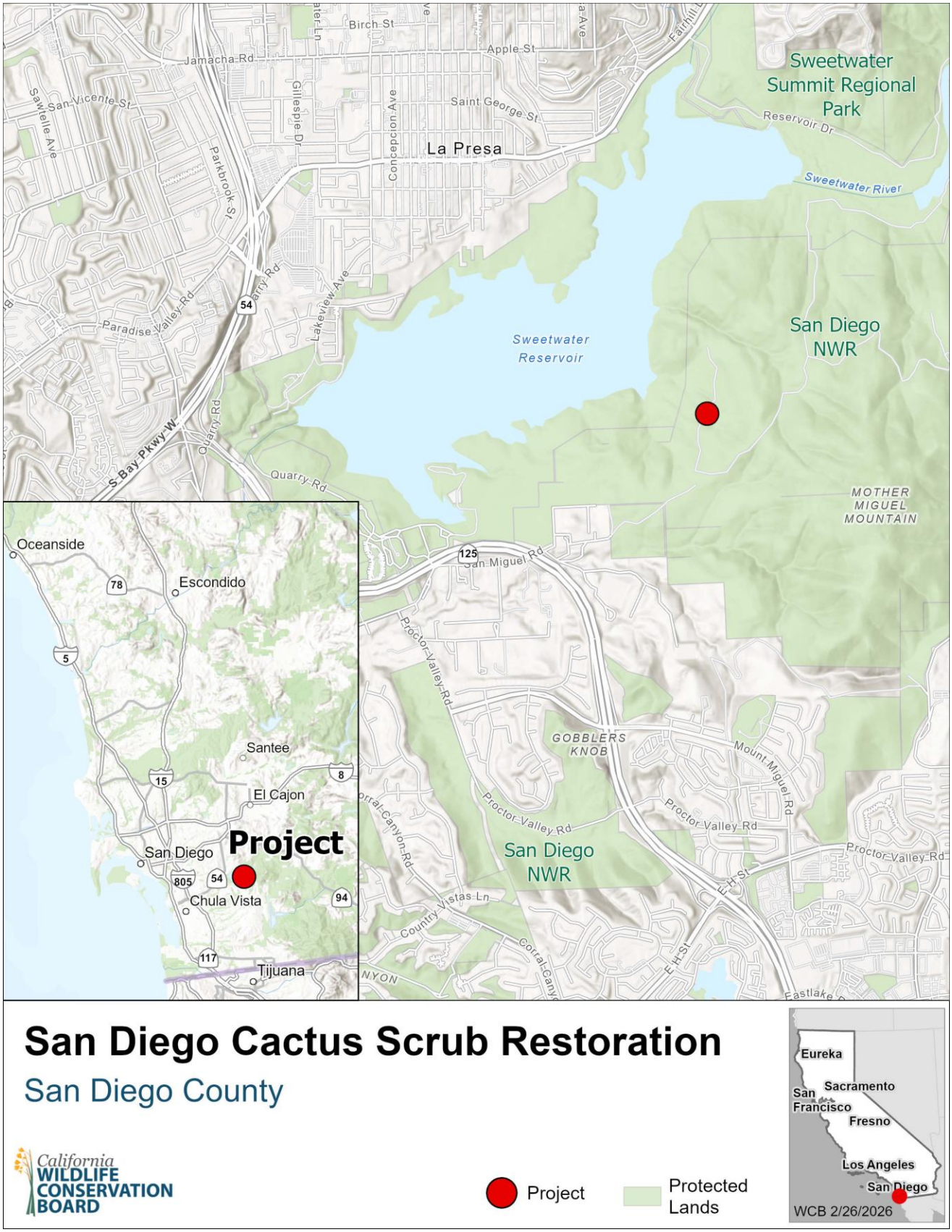
WCB Grant: $737,856
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b)
Grantee: Earth Discovery Institute
Landowner: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Location: Four miles southeast of Lemon Grove
County: San Diego

Project Highlights

- Located in the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge (SDNWR)
- Key species: Coastal cactus wren
- Project will increase habitat connectivity and reduce wildfire risk
- Regional Plans: San Diego Gas & Electric Subregional Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan, SDNWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan, The Management and Monitoring Strategic Plan for Conserved Lands in Western San Diego County: A Strategic Habitat Conservation Roadmap

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.1, C1.3, C2.2


Sweetwater Summit Regional Park
Reservoir Dr
Sweetwater River
La Presa
Birch St
Apple St
Saint George St
Jamacha Rd
San Vicente St
Sawtelle Ave
Gillespie Dr
Concepcion Ave
Parkbrook St
Paradise Valley Rd
Lakeview Ave
S Bay Pkwy W
Quarry Rd
54
Sweetwater Reservoir
San Diego NWR
MOTHER MIGUEL MOUNTAIN
San Miguel Rd
125
Proctor Valley Rd
GOBBLERS KNOB
Mount Miguel Rd
Corral Canyon Rd
Country Vistas Ln
E H St
Fastlake
Oceanside
Escondido
78
5
Santee
15
8
El Cajon
Project
San Diego
805
54
Chula Vista
94
117
Tijuana
San Diego Cactus Scrub Restoration
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The San Diego Cactus Scrub Restoration (Project) site is recognized as a high-priority management area for Coastal cactus wren (CCWR) due to its potential to support a large CCWR population. However, the Project site is currently dominated by invasive grasses and existing habitat is fragmented. The Project will establish additional cactus patches to improve habitat connectivity and reduce wildfire risk by:

- Treating invasive grasses that currently dominate the project site.
- Establishing 56 new cactus patches across 139 acres. These patches will be strategically positioned to reduce inter-patch distances and will create the dense thickets that are needed for nesting, cover, and dispersal.
- Monitoring utilizing the protocols established in the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program and the U.S. Geological Survey.
- To treat invasive grasses and broadleaf species, the project will use a combination of hand pulling, line trimming, and targeted herbicide application of Fusilade and Garlon 4 to remove thatch and suppress regrowth. Herbicide will be used as described in the Project's Herbicide Use Questionnaire.

Long-Term Management

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 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 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	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$138,798	---	$138,798
Restoration Coordination and Activities	$439,313	$125,017	$564,330
Monitoring	$45,075	---	$45,075
Data analysis and Reporting	$29,784	---	$29,784
Indirect Costs	$84,886	---	$84,886
Total	$737,856	$125,017	$862,873

Non-WCB funders include:

- Earth Discovery Institute - $40,140
- California Climate Action Corps - $60,210
- USFWS - $24,667

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Kristine Preston, Senior Ecologist, San Diego Management and Monitoring Program
- Michael Beck, President, Endangered Habitats Conservancy

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, 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 Steve Padilla, District 18
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Questionnaire

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

The vegetation composition at the cactus scrub restoration project at the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge consists of restored cholla cactus (Cylindropuntia spp.), coastal sage shrub vegetation, and invasive non-native Mustard (Brassica spp.) and grasses (Brachypodium spp.).

The site necessitates sustained maintenance to prevent complete encroachment by weeds that threaten the restored cactus and native vegetation. These invasive species exhibit varying growth patterns; noteworthy is their tendency to proliferate near the sage shrub and the cholla cactus. Maintaining a vigilant approach to weed control is imperative, particularly until the newly planted cactus reaches maturity, as unchecked weed growth may smother and outcompete the restored cactus.

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

Selective herbicides will be used to control invasive grasses and broadleaf species that threaten restored cactus scrub.

- Fusilade (fluazifop-P-butyl) will be applied as a post-emergent treatment targeting invasive grasses (e.g., *Brachypodium spp.*). Applications will be timed during periods of active grass growth in spring, using label-recommended rates (0.4–0.6 fl oz per 1,000 sq ft) mixed with a non-ionic surfactant at ~0.25% v/v to ensure foliar uptake. This selective grass herbicide minimizes non-target impacts on cactus and broadleaf natives.

- Garlon 4 (triclopyr ester) will be applied for control of broadleaf invasives such as Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) and other perennial broadleaf species. Applications will follow label guidance at 1–4 quarts per acre for foliar spot treatments, with surfactant added as specified on the product label. Timing will focus on rosette and early flowering stages of mustard in late winter and spring, when plants are most susceptible to systemic control.

Both herbicides will be applied as directed, foliar spot treatments by hand, avoiding broadcast applications to reduce drift risk.

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

- *If your project includes the use of a glyphosate product, have safer formulations (i.e. those registered for aquatic applications) or alternative herbicides been considered to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts? Please provide justification for the formulations and tank mixes selected as the preferred approach.*
- *If adjuvant(s) will be used in this project, are safer products that do not contain nonylphenol (often listed as "alkylphenol ethoxylate" on labels) being used to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts?*

Glyphosate was considered but not chosen for this project. Garlon® 4 (triclopyr ester) was selected based on Earth Discovery Institute's experience using this product effectively in a previous cactus scrub restoration project. Garlon 4 has been successfully used to control priority woody and broadleaf invasive species when applied in a highly targeted manner, supporting cactus establishment and long-term habitat recovery.

While cactus are dicots and therefore susceptible to triclopyr, Garlon 4 will be applied only as hand-applied, spot treatments to individual target plants, with strict avoidance of contact with cactus and other native vegetation. Applications will be conducted under low-wind conditions and in accordance with label requirements to minimize drift and volatility. This approach allows effective invasive species control while limiting non-target impacts and reducing the need for repeated treatments.

No nonylphenol ethoxylates or other alkylphenol ethoxylate adjuvants will be used. Only label-approved surfactants that do not contain nonylphenol compounds will be selected to minimize potential environmental impacts.

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

To reduce overall herbicide use, the project incorporates non-chemical treatments such as hand pulling, line trimming, and targeted mechanical removal of invasive plants. These methods are especially useful in smaller infestations, near sensitive native vegetation, or where herbicide application may pose drift risks. By integrating manual control with selective herbicide use, the project minimizes chemical inputs while still ensuring effective suppression of invasive weeds.

The potential ecological impacts of these non-chemical methods have been evaluated. While vegetation removal can temporarily affect pollinators and other insects by reducing floral resources, the extensive coastal sage scrub habitat at the site already provides abundant pollinator resources. This means that the removal of non-native plants has only a minor impact on pollinator foraging opportunities, while also creating more space for natives that provide long-term, higher-quality habitat.

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

Herbicide applications will be carefully managed using best practices to reduce potential impacts on water quality, non-target plants, pollinators, and wildlife. Treatments will be limited to low-volume, directed foliar spot spraying on invasive patches, avoiding broadcast applications. Applications will only be made during periods of active target plant growth, and spraying will be conducted only when no rain is forecast and wind speeds are low to prevent runoff or drift. Equipment will be calibrated regularly to ensure accurate dosage and minimize overspray. Selective herbicides—Fusilade for grasses and Garlon 4 for broadleaf species—are chosen specifically to target invasives while sparing native vegetation. Only label-approved, nonylphenol-free surfactants will be used to reduce the risk of contamination and non-target effects.

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

Exclusive reliance on non-chemical methods, such as hand-pulling, line trimming, and mowing, is technically feasible for weed removal within the project area. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that manual weeding is significantly more labor-intensive than herbicides, substantially escalating the overall project cost. Hand-pulling can be useful in small patches, but it is impractical at the scale of this project and often fails to remove entire root systems, allowing rapid regrowth. Line trimming or mowing reduces aboveground biomass but does not suppress invasive grasses at the root or seed bank level, and repeated treatments would be required. Burning is not appropriate at this site due to the elevated wildfire risk and potential harm to sensitive native vegetation, including cactus and coastal sage scrub. At present, there are no safe or effective biocontrol agents available for key target species such as *Brachypodium spp.* (invasive grasses) or *Brassica tournefortii* (Sahara mustard).

For these reasons, the project will employ a combined approach of manual removal and targeted herbicide application, which has been shown in Preston et al. (2025) and Cox & Allen (2008) to be more effective and longer-lasting than mechanical methods alone.

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

If this restoration project were to rely exclusively on non-chemical weed abatement methods (hand-pulling, line trimming, and mechanical removal), the overall project budget would

increase by an estimated USD 200,000 compared to the integrated approach that includes selective herbicide use. This additional cost reflects the substantially higher labor requirements to achieve even partial coverage using only manual methods. Non-chemical treatments also require more frequent repetition to maintain control of invasive species, further driving up costs.

The long-term management costs would also increase significantly under a non-chemical approach. Scientific studies (e.g., Preston et al. 2025; Cox & Allen 2008) show that herbicide treatments are more effective and longer-lasting than mowing or hand removal alone. Non-chemical methods tend to provide only short-term reductions, allowing invasive grasses and mustard to quickly reestablish. This means more staff time, additional contracts, and ongoing site visits would be necessary to sustain vegetation goals, compounding costs well beyond the initial project budget.

For California Department of Fish and Wildlife owned/managed properties only:
Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated past management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project?

Yes.

13. Southern California Pollinator Conservation **Restoration – Planning**

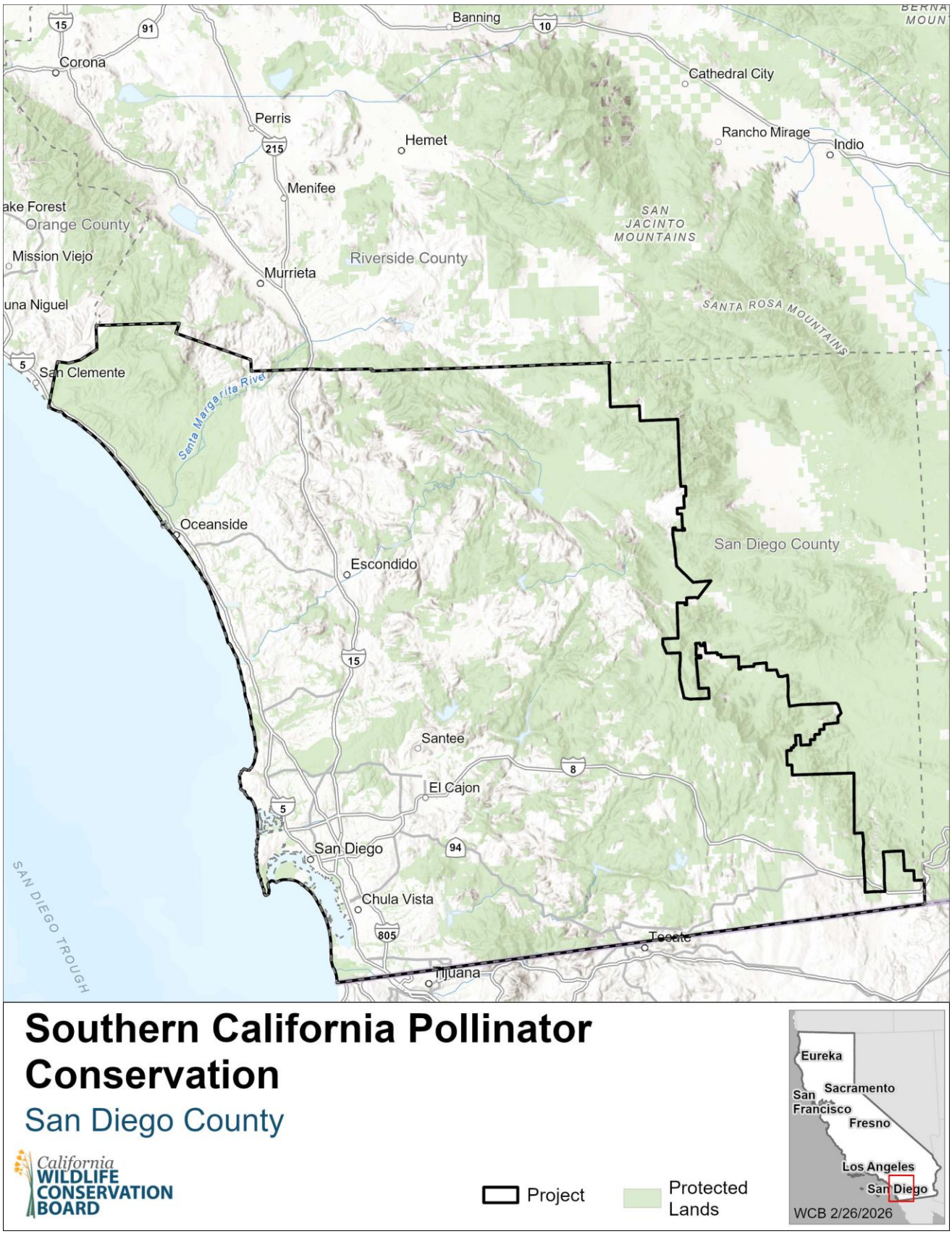
WCB Grant: $601,577
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b)
Grantee: Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County
Landowner: Will be determined through the planning process
Location: Will be determined through the planning process
County: San Diego

Project Highlights

- Project will fill valuable data gaps for two species of imperiled butterflies, the Quino checkerspot butterfly (QCB) and the Harbison's dun skipper (HDS) while planning for habitat restoration
- Key species: QCB, HDS, Laguna mountain skipper (LMS), Hermes copper butterfly (HCB)
- Regional or Species Plan: County of San Diego Butterflies Habitat Conservation Plan, County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program, The Management and Monitoring Strategic Plan for Conserved Lands in Western San Diego County: A Strategic Habitat Conservation Roadmap, San Diego County Water Authority Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan, San Diego Gas and Electric Subregional Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.1, B2.2, B2.3, C1.2, C2.2


Banning
Corona
Cathedral City
Perris
Hemet
Rancho Mirage
Indio
Menifee
Orange County
SAN JACINTO MOUNTAINS
Mission Viejo
Riverside County
Murrieta
SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS
San Clemente
Santa Margarita River
Oceanside
San Diego County
Escondido
Santee
El Cajon
San Diego
Chula Vista
SAN DIEGO TROUGH
Tijuana
Southern California Pollinator Conservation
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Southern California Pollinator Conservation (Project) will focus on four species of imperiled butterflies in Southern California. The QCB, HDS, LMS, and HCB have experienced significant population decline due to development, habitat fragmentation, wildfires, and drought. To increase their resilience in the face of increased unpredictable variations in environmental conditions associated with more severe weather patterns and rising temperatures, it is critical to reintroduce the species to locations that retain sufficient habitat features that can support their populations and restore critical habitat, which will be accomplished by:

- Compiling existing survey data from partners for QCB, HCB, LMS, and HDS.
- Surveying existing and new potential source populations for QCB and HDS to support translocations.
- Completing focused surveys and habitat assessments for QCB and HDS.
- Developing final site-specific restoration plans for QCB and HDS.
- Securing necessary environmental compliance documents for translocations and habitat restoration.
- Convening partners quarterly to support restoration plan development.

Long-Term Management

Not applicable to this Project

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Habitat Assessment and Surveys	$125,580	$250,000	$375,580
Restoration and Translocation Planning	$329,700	$15,000	$344,700
Partner Collaboration	$109,101	---	$109,101
Indirect Costs	$37,196	---	$37,196
Total	$601,577	$265,000	$866,577

Non-WCB funders include:

- SanDAG - $250,000
- CDFW - $15,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jonathon Snyder, Acting Field Supervisor, USFWS
- Jason Hemmens, Director, County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation
- Kim Smith, Senior Regional Planner, SanDAG
- Kevin Clark, Director of BioServices, San Diego Natural History Museum
- David Franco, CFO, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

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 Board approval of the Project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Steve Padilla, District 18
- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Senate: Senator Akilah Weber, District 39
- Senate: Senator Brian Jones, District 40
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75
- Assembly: Assemblymember David Alvarez, District 80

Staff Recommendation

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

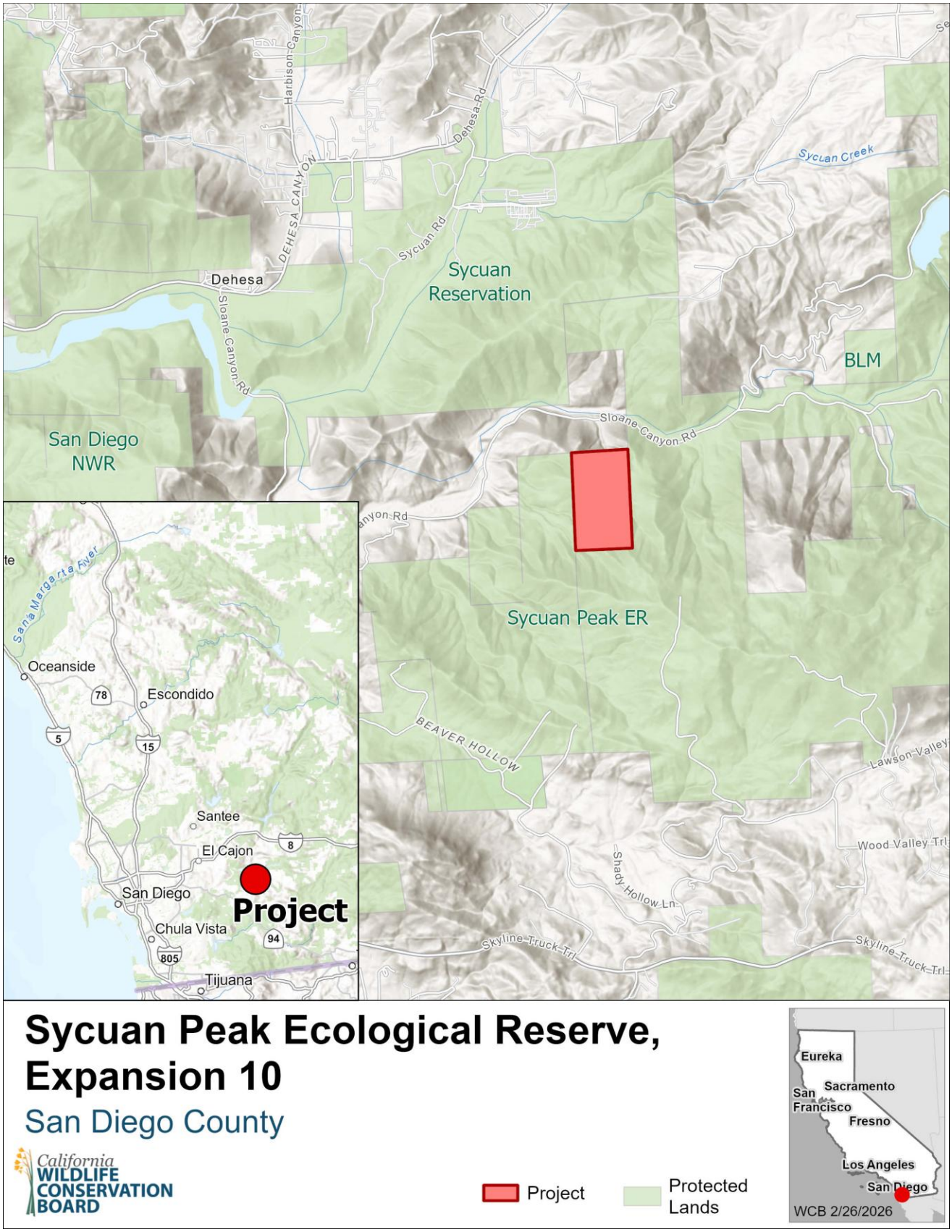
14. Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve, Expansion 10 **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $280,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: Two miles southeast of the community of Dehesa
County: San Diego
Acres: 85± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Inholding to Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve
- Habitats represented: Dense chaparral scrub with nearby upland riparian.
- Key species: Quino checkerspot butterfly
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C2.2, P1
- Public Access: Yes. CDFW will manage the Property as part of the 2,300± acre Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve. The acquisition will provide expanded public access recreational activities, including wildlife viewing and hiking.


Harbison Canyon
Dehesa Rd
DEHESA CANYON
Sycuan Creek
Sycuan Rd
Dehesa
Sycuan Reservation
Sloane Canyon Rd
BLM
San Diego NWR
Sloane Canyon Rd
Sycuan Peak ER
BEAVER HOLLOW
Lawson Valley
Wood Valley Trl
Shady Hollow Ln
Skyline Truck Trl
Skyline Truck Trl
Santa Margarita River
Oceanside
Escondido
78
5
15
Santee
El Cajon
8
San Diego
Project
Chula Vista
94
805
Tijuana
Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve, Expansion 10
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Long-Term Management

CDFW will manage the Property as part of the Sycuan Peak Ecological Reserve. CDFW expects minimal, if any, additional expenses as a result of this acquisition. Possible future public use opportunities that may be considered include wildlife viewing and hiking.

Project Funding

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

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

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 Brian W. Jones, District 40
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, 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.

15. Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Corridor **Restoration – Implementation**

WCB Grant: $1,962,000
Fund Source: Proposition 68, Public Resources Code Section 80132(e)(1)
Grantee: Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
Landowner: Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Location: 1.5 miles west of the city of Watsonville
County: Santa Cruz

Project Highlights

- Project site is located at the northern end of the proposed Buena Vista Wildlife Undercrossing (BVWU) adjacent to a SDAC. Designs and plans were partially funded by WCB in 2019.
- Habitats restored: 3.5 acres of oak woodland and a 0.3 acre-pond will be restored to provide functional aquatic breeding habitat for endemic amphibians.
- Project will improve wildlife habitat connectivity between the Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge and upland habitat in the Santa Cruz Mountains
- Key species: Santa Cruz long toed salamander (SCLTS)
- Regional or Species Plan: SCLTS Recovery Plan (USFWS 1999)

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C2.2


Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander ER
Aptos Hills
Rio del Mar
State Highway 1
Aptos Hills-Larkin Valley
Larkin Valley
La Selva Beach
Watsonville Slough ER
Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander ER
Manresa SB
Gallighan Slough
Ellicott Slough NWR
Watsonville Slough ER
Corralitos Lagoon
Calabasas Rd
Chandler Ln
Dusty Trl
Freedom Blvd
Milky Way
Meltvers Way
Seascape Blvd
San Andreas Rd
Robak Dr
E Bel Mar Dr
Larkin Valley Rd
Playa Blvd
Water Tank Rd
Spring Valley Rd
Fiesta Way
Rancho Rd
Ranport Rd
Tulsa Ln
Crest Dr
Buena Vista Dr
Lilly Way
Zils Rd
Beach Rd
McQuaide Dr
Harkins Slough
Sunset Beach Rd
COASTAL RANGE
CRUZ MOUNTAINS
101
Gilroy
Santa Cruz
Aptos
Capitola
Watsonville
Project
Monterey Bay
CANYON
Salinas
Salinas River
Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Corridor
Santa Cruz County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander Corridor (Project) site is a 3.5-acre tract located adjacent to California Highway 1 (Hwy. 1) that is dominated by eucalyptus trees and other non-native plant species. Hwy. 1 bisects the entire range of the federally endangered SCLTS, eliminating opportunities for genetic exchange between populations to the north and south of the roadway. However, the construction of the proposed BVWU will facilitate successful dispersal of SCLTS across Hwy. 1 and restore breeding population connectivity. The southern approach to the BVWU is located within the Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge and maintains high quality native habitat. The northern approach, however, has been highly disturbed and provides very little SCLTS habitat. The Project will restore habitat on the northern side of BVWU and facilitate improvements in the genetic health of SCLTS by implementing the following actions:

- Debris removal, including removal of non-usable existing mounds of stone, mulch, woody debris, and dirt from the Project site.
- Removal of invasive plants, including almost two acres of eucalyptus trees.
- Construction of a 0.3-acre SCLTS breeding pond.
- Installation of irrigation, erosion control, and approximately 3.5 acres of native plantings.
- Oversight and coordination with agencies.
- Hand removal of invasive species will be utilized wherever possible, but the eucalyptus and acacia tree removal will require using Glyphosate to treat stumps to prevent resprouting which will occur if only mechanical methods are used. Herbicide will be used as described in the Project's Herbicide Use Questionnaire.

Long-Term Management

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County 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, 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	$111,676	---	$111,676
Permitting	$81,556	---	$81,556
Site Preparation	$508,355	$5,600	$513,955

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Pond Construction	$634,615	$11,200	$645,815
Revegetation	$120,159	$4,600	$124,759
Maintenance and Monitoring	$368,389	$5,600	$373,989
Indirect Costs	$137,250	---	$137,250
Total	$1,962,000	$27,000	$1,989,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County - $27,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Eric Lombardo, External Affairs Director, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas, District 29

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide use questionnaire

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

The west and southern sections of the property contain a dense stand of Eucalyptus trees (*Eucalyptus globulus*) with significant levels of cut trunks, branch and bark/leaf litter. The north and middle sections of the property, which were cleared and graded by the previous landowner, are now covered in illegally dumped piles of cut or chipped woody debris, rocks and dirt. In some locations, the chip piles exceed depths of 72 inches and in areas where the chips are spread out, chip pile depths exceed 42 inches. This has inhibited the growth of both native and non-native species. The remaining areas outside of the dense Eucalyptus stand and without wood chips are partially covered with non-native invasive plant species such as French broom (*Genista monspessulana*), Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Horseweed (*Erigeron* sp.) and to a lesser degree; Stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), Buffalo berry (*Solanum rostratum),* Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), Kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) and Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*). Additionally, in the open areas, there are moderate to high densities of native Madia sp., with small, isolated patches of Poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*) and other native species.

Table 1 provides a summary of the density and location of non-native plant species. No rare or special status species have been identified on-site.

Table 1. Non-native Plant Species of Concern, Trabing Property, August 2022.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Note
Acacia	*Acacia sp.*	NE corner only
Rattlesnake grass	*Briza maxima*	limited along road and NE corner
Italian thistle	*Carduus pynocephalus*	spreads rapidly, likely large seed bank
Yellow star thistle	*Centaurea solstitialis*	only 1 plant found with seed
Bull thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*	Found sporadically in open areas
Poison hemlock	*Conium maculatum*	Patches in a few areas
Jubata grass	*Cortaderia jubata*	NE corner, but found throughout area
Bermuda grass	*Cynodon dactylon*	A number of small patches
Stinkwort	*Dittrichia graveolens*	Throughout site
Tasmanian blue gum	*Eucalyptus globulus*	dominant tree species with extensive seed bank
Fennel	*Foeniculum vulgare*	3 small plants growing out of pile of chips
French broom	*Genista monspessulana*	Seed viability of decades rapidly expanding seedbank
Bristly ox-tongue	*Helminthotheca echioides*	only a few plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Note
Kikuyu grass	*Pennisetum clandestinum*	A few small patches
Buffalo berry	*Solanum rostratum*	3 plants found and removed with most seed intact

Note: Removal of all *Dittrichia graveolens* (prior to flower or seed) and *Solanum rostratum* (in flower and seed) was completed on July 30, 2022. All plants were pulled and bagged for disposal, including any visible seed for the *Solanum rostratum*. On September 10, 2022, a second removal was completed for *Dittrichia graveolens*. Additionally, 3 *Foeniculum vulgare* and 1 *Centaurea solstitialis* were removed, at that time.

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

The preferred herbicide is glyphosate with no pre-mixed surfactant. Product potentially used would be Aquamaster© Rodeo© or Roundup Custom for Aquatic Habitats©. All 3 have no preadded surfactant and are 51.8% glyphosate from the manufacturer. All cut and paint activities would occur between August 1 and October 15 or 48 hours prior to any forecasted rain.

Eucalyptus trees – a cut and paint application for the Eucalyptus stumps. After the tree is cut down, the herbicide would be applied undiluted to the cambium layer area only of the stumps, within 2 minutes maximum, using a 1” brush. No adjuvant would be used. No spraying would be used for this activity.

Acacia trees (only a few trees present) – a cut and paint application for the Eucalyptus stumps. After the tree is cut down, the herbicide would be applied undiluted to the cambium layer area only of the stumps, within 2 minutes maximum, using a 1” brush. No adjuvant would be used. No spraying would be used for this activity.

Application rates for all glyphosate herbicide spray activities will be no more than 28 - 38 ounces for the entire 3.5-acre site. If the Bermuda and kikuyu grass have not spread throughout the entire area by start of work activities, no more than 23 ounces of product would be required. All herbicide spray would be applied with a backpack sprayer or handheld tank sprayer.

Jubata grass – small clumps would be dug up. Larger clumps may be removed with equipment or sprayed with Aquamaster©, Rodeo©, or Roundup Custom for Aquatic Habitats©. The tank mix concentration would be a 50:1 ratio (2.5 oz. per gallon of water. A non-ionic surfactant would be added that does not contain nonylphenol and mixed according to the label directions. A non-toxic blue dye would be added to assure full coverage. Floral stalks would be removed and bagged prior to herbicide application. Applications of herbicide spray would be in the mid to late spring.

Bermuda and Kikuyu grass – Spot sprayed with Aquamaster©, Rodeo©, or Roundup Custom for Aquatic Habitats©. The tank mix concentration would be a 50:1 ratio (2.5 oz. per gallon of water. A non-ionic surfactant would be added that does not contain nonylphenol and mixed according to the label directions. A non-toxic blue dye would be added to assure full coverage. Applications of herbicide spray would be in the mid to late spring.

Although listed as a potential action for Bull thistle, poison hemlock and French broom, herbicide use is not planned for these 3 species at this time. If necessary to limit disturbance in year 1, herbicide could be used to spot spray French broom seedlings. The tank mix concentration would be a 50:1 ratio (2.5 oz. per gallon of water). A non-ionic surfactant would be added that does not contain nonylphenol and mixed according to the label directions. A non-toxic blue dye would be added to assure full coverage. Applications of herbicide spray would be late winter early spring during a dry period of at least 4 days.

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

Other herbicides were considered (Aminopyralid and Triclopyr). Glyphosate was chosen as it does not have residual soil activity which would lead to reductions in native plant species recruitment, its proven effectiveness in cut and paint treatments of Eucalyptus and Acacia and its low toxicity when used properly with non-ionic surfactant. Additionally, Aminopyralid and Triclopyr are not effective with grasses.

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

The 3 formulations mentioned above are all safer formulas registered for use in aquatic habitats. Other herbicides were considered (see previous question). The formulas and tank mixtures selected are those recommended by the product labels, herbicide applicators, multiple organizations, (ex: CAL-IPC, CDP) and personal experience.

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

Nonylphenol will be avoided, if at all possible. The exact replacement (ex; alcohol ethoxylates or organosilicone) is being researched for the most effective and least toxic possible alternative and will follow the label's recommendation for concentration and mixing order.

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

Outside of the Eucalyptus and Acacia trees, hand removal will be used as much as is practical to control invasive plant species and to minimize any environmental impacts. As a portion of this site is relatively open, weedwackers may be used to treat thistles prior to flowering. Herbicide will be used on the Kikuyu and Bermuda grass due to their roots, rhizomes and ability to spread vegetatively from small pieces.

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

- All restrictions on the labels will apply at all times.
- All safety recommendations on the labels will be followed.
- Signs of proposed spray herbicide use may be posted 48 hours prior to application.
- Buffer zones must be maintained for spray applications.
- When initially brought onto the project site, herbicide and adjuvants should be in unopened, sealed containers.
- Mixing of herbicide and adjuvants should follow the concentrations and order recommended on the labels.
- Dye must be added to the herbicide to track the application coverage.
- All application containers should be filled and stored within an appropriate, specific area to reduce any possibility of contamination.
- Spill and cleanup materials should be located on site and readily available at a designated area.
- Cut and paint (stump applications) will use a 1” paint brush or Molotow© dripstick and be applied to the cambium layer area only.
- For cut and paint applications herbicide must be applied within 1-3 minutes of the cut, maximum.
- During the maintenance period, if a spray application of herbicide is utilized, an approved non-ionic surfactant should be utilized. Although it may not be required for cut stump applications, a non-ionic surfactant could increase effectiveness.

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

There are no other effective control methods (including biocontrol agents) for Eucalyptus and Acacia. There is 1 approved biocontrol for bull thistle, but it has limited effectiveness and only reduces seed production. There are no approved biocontrol agents for Bermuda

grass or kikuyu grass. There are no approved biocontrol agents for French broom, although 2 are currently being studied.

There are no other practical or realistic methods to control Eucalyptus, Acacia, Bermuda grass, or kikuyu grass. Bull thistle could be hand pulled but if extensive, spot treatment of herbicide while it's in the rosette stage is the most effective method. We will attempt to remove the French broom with equipment or hand removal. However, due to the extensive seedbank, long-term viability of seed and the extent of the French broom, at some point during the project maintenance, either a careful spot spray of seedlings or use of flaming the seedlings in the late winter may be required. French broom plants along Trabing Road are nearly impossible to hand pull, even with a weed wrench, given past on-going years of monitoring.

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

As described above, a number of species on-site require chemical application for their successful control.

For California Department of Fish and Wildlife owned/managed properties only:
Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated past management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project?

Not applicable

16. Curry Canyon Ranch **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $641,560 **Conservation Easement/Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Grantee: East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
USFWS Section 6 Subgrant: $1,508,440
Location: Five miles north of the city of Clayton
County: Contra Costa
Acres: 315± (Property)

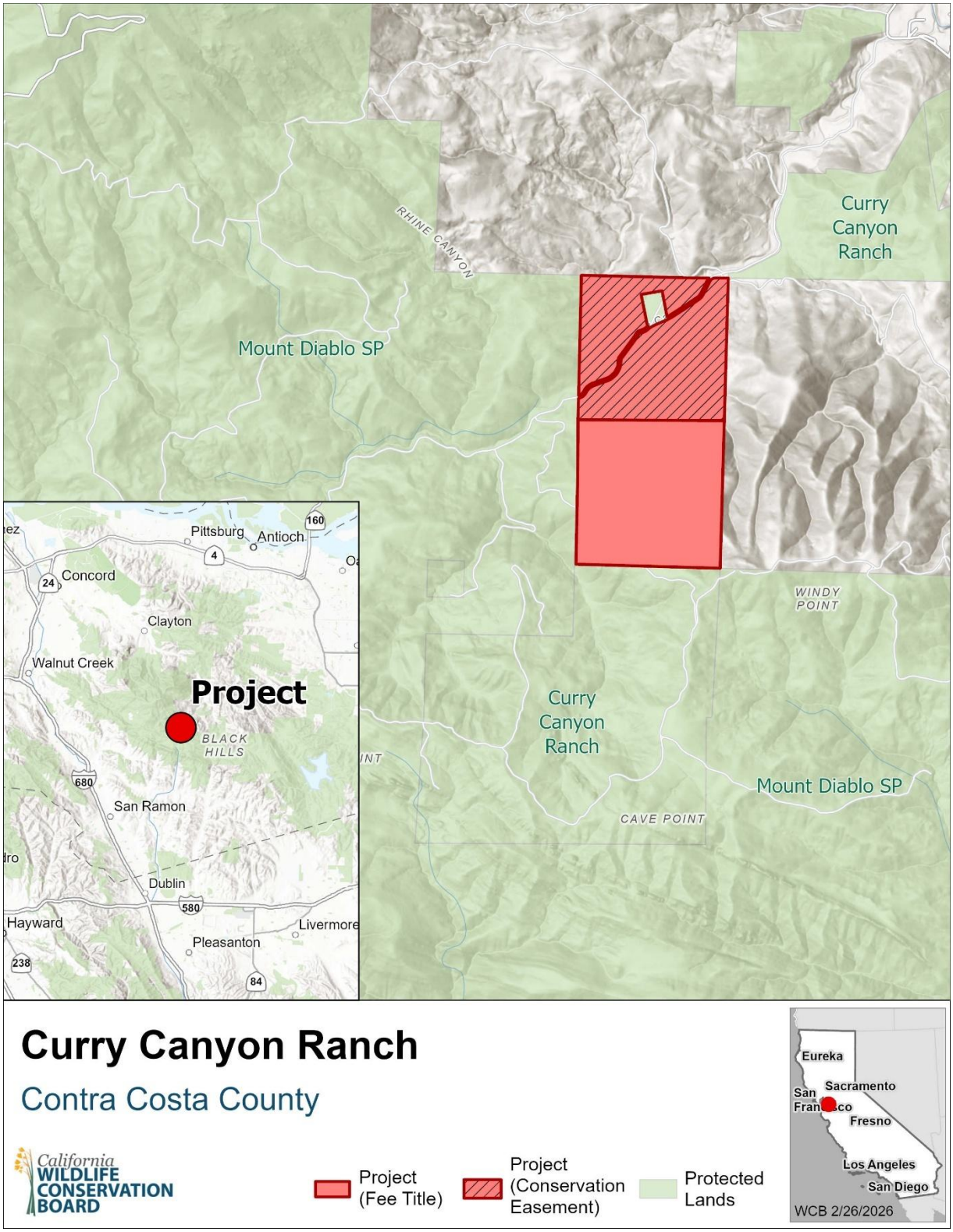
Property Highlights

- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy will conserve 155 acres via a conservation easement and the remaining 160 acres will be acquired in fee.
- Habitats represented: Oak woodland, annual grassland, oak savanna, wetland, and riparian.
- Key species: San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, California tiger salamander, western pond turtle, Alameda whipsnake, golden eagle, and Mount Diablo fairy lantern.
- USFWS identified this area as critical for Alameda whipsnake recovery because it provides connectivity between the Los Vaqueros Watershed lands and Mount Diablo State Park, both core areas of whipsnake habitat.
- The Property is adjacent to Mount Diablo State Park which also connects to other conserved land owned by the East Bay Regional Park District and the City of Walnut Creek. Trail connections exist from Mount Diablo State Park through other portions of the larger Curry Canyon Ranch property with a small section through the proposed acquisition Property.
- The portion of the Property to be acquired in fee title is intended to be temporary, with the goal of transferring it to California State Parks for incorporation into Mount Diablo State Parks.
- The Property is designated in the East Contra Costa County (ECCC) Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) as a high priority acquisition to achieving the conservation goals of the ECCC HCP/NCCP. When acquired by the Habitat Conservancy, the land will be added to the ECCC HCP/NCCP Preserve System and managed in accordance with a management plan aligned with the requirements of the ECCC HCP/NCCP.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions, and Pathway 3, Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, and P1.3

- Public Access: Yes, the Property currently has existing trails with public access that directly connect to Mount Diablo State Park.



Conservation Easement Restriction Highlights

- The purpose of the conservation easement is to ensure that existing and future natural, wildlife, and habitat values of the Easement Area/Property will be forever protected by preventing any use of the Easement Area/Property that would impair or interfere with the conservation values.
- Landowner may continue to use and/or lease the Easement Area for the purpose of livestock grazing in accordance with grazing guidelines and requirements in the Management Plan.

Long-Term Management

The Property is designated in the ECCC HCP/NCCP as a high priority acquisition to achieving the conservation goals of the ECCC HCP/NCCP. This acquisition will contribute toward the goal of assembling a Preserve System and will be managed by East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy in coordination with Save Mount Diablo. The portion of the Property to be acquired in fee title is intended to be temporary, with the goal of transferring it to California State Parks for incorporation into Mount Diablo State Parks land. These discussions with California State Parks are ongoing.

Project Funding

The DGS approved fair market value with an internal corrective review and confirmed it is not less than $2,150,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB Easement	$259,608
USFWS – Section 6 Easement	$610,392
WCB Fee	$381,952
USFWS – Section 6 Fee	$898,048
TOTAL Purchase Price	$2,150,000

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 Timothy Grayson, District 09
- Assembly: Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, District 16

Staff Recommendation

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

17. Roddy Ranch Golf Course Restoration Augmentation **Restoration – Implementation**

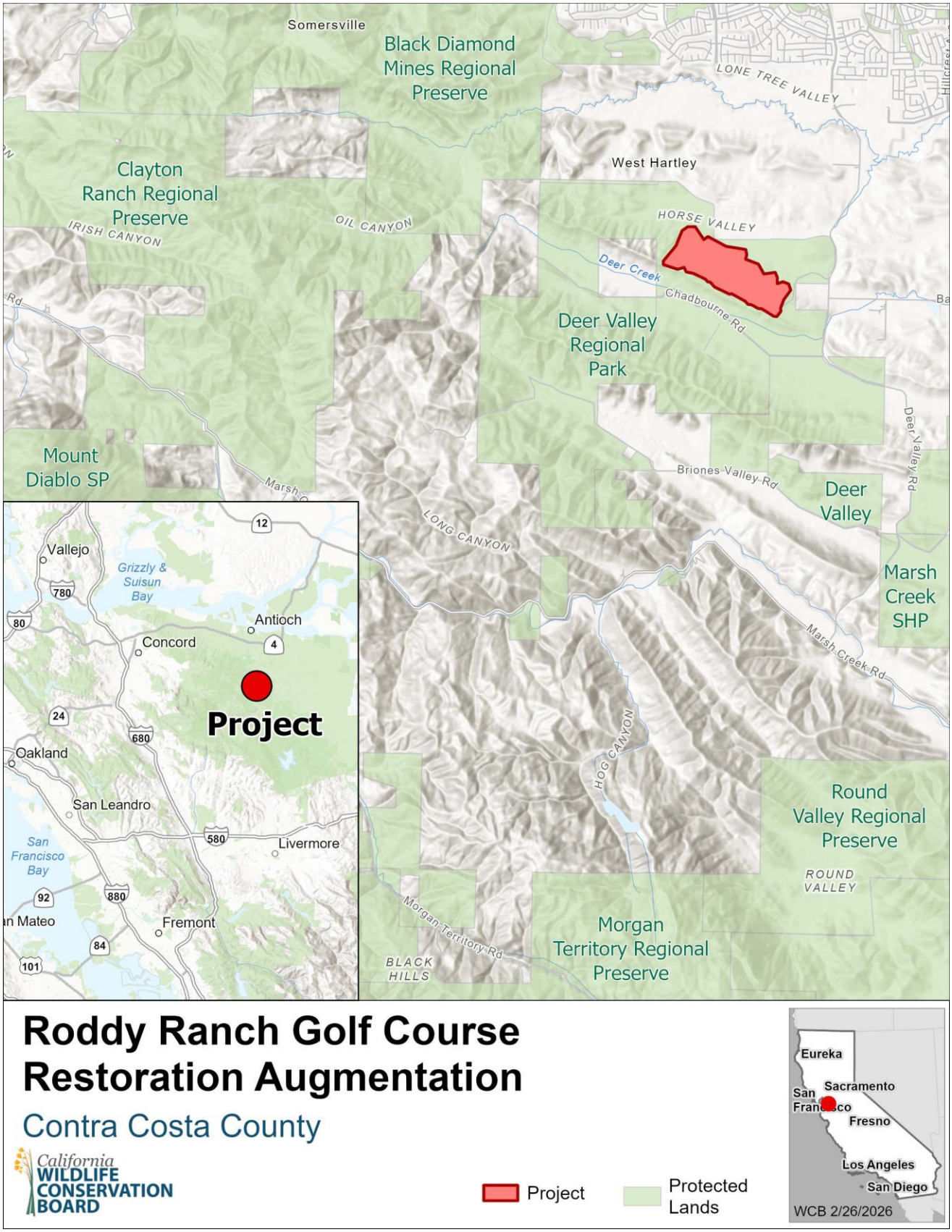
WCB Grant: $1,527,950
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b)
Grantee: East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD)
Landowner: EBRPD
Location: One mile south of Antioch
County: Contra Costa

Project Highlights

- The funding proposed will augment $2,453,000 of Proposition 68 funds that were originally approved by WCB in August 2024.
- WCB provided funding for the acquisition (2018) and the planning phase (2020) for this project.
- Located at the former Roddy Ranch Golf Course.
- Key habitats to be restored: native grassland and seasonal freshwater wetlands.
- This site provides habitat connectivity between the western extent of the San Joaquin Valley and the eastern reach of the Diablo Range.
- Regional Plans: East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP and East Bay Regional Park District 2013 Master Plan.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C1.2, P1.3


Somersville
Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve
LONE TREE VALLEY
West Hartley
Clayton Ranch Regional Preserve
IRISH CANYON
OIL CANYON
HORSE VALLEY
Deer Creek
Chadbourne Rd
Deer Valley Regional Park
Mount Diablo SP
Briones Valley Rd
Deer Valley
Deer Valley Rd
LONG CANYON
Marsh Creek SHP
Marsh Creek Rd
HOG CANYON
Round Valley Regional Preserve
ROUND VALLEY
Morgan Territory Rd
Morgan Territory Regional Preserve
BLACK HILLS
Vallejo
Grizzly & Suisun Bay
Antioch
Concord
Project
Oakland
San Leandro
San Francisco Bay
Livermore
Fremont
12
780
80
4
24
680
580
92
880
84
101
Roddy Ranch Golf Course Restoration Augmentation
Contra Costa County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Roddy Ranch Golf Course Restoration (Project) site is a former golf course that has been heavily degraded and is comprised of non-native grassland and tree species. Today, remnants of the golf course remain, including six miles of golf cart paths, a subsurface drainage system, irrigation ponds, water quality basins, a 142-space parking lot, a septic system, restrooms, and a pump house.

Funding for this Project was originally approved in August 2024. Since Project approval, the 90% construction designs were completed resulting in increased total Project costs. The Grantee is working on securing additional funds for public access construction, but additional funding from WCB is necessary to ensure that the habitat restoration component of the Project can be successfully completed. The Project will restore the ecological and hydrological functions of this site by:

- Demolishing and removing existing infrastructure and remnant golf course features.
- Regrading sand traps and artificial golf course grading to a natural topography to ensure sustainable drainage and support grassland and wetland function.
- Restoring approximately 83.5 acres of native grassland habitats by reestablishing native vegetation at freshly graded areas with bare soils through the re-placement of suitable topsoil to utilize the local seed bank. In areas without suitable topsoil, sterile or native seed or plantings will be placed to encourage revegetation.
- Restoring approximately 0.6 acres of seasonal freshwater wetlands by modifying two constructed ponds and one constructed basin to provide aquatic habitat to support special status species.
- Daylighting and restoring nearly a mile of ephemeral drainages.

Long-Term Management

The EBRPD 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, EBRPD 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 Allocation	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Mobilization and General Demolition	$853,000	$127,950	---	$980,950
Restoration Construction	$1,600,000	$1,400,000	---	$3,000,000

Project Task	Original WCB Allocation	WCB Augmentation	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Public Access	---	---	$5,000,000	$5,000,000
Construction Management	---	---	$225,000	$225,000
Permit Compliance Monitoring	---	---	$150,000	$150,000
Total	$2,453,000	$1,527,950	$5,375,000	$9,355,950

Non-WCB funders include:
- CA State Parks - $5,000,000
- EBRPD - $375,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:
- Federal D. Glover, Chair, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
- Abigail Fateman, Executive Director, East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA

The EBRPD, as lead agency, prepared an EIR Addendum for the project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Staff considered the EIR Addendum 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 Tim Grayson, District 9
- Assembly: Assemblymember Anamarie Avila Farias, District 15

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.

18. Lagunitas Creek Aquatic Habitat Enhancement, Phase 2a Restoration – Implementation

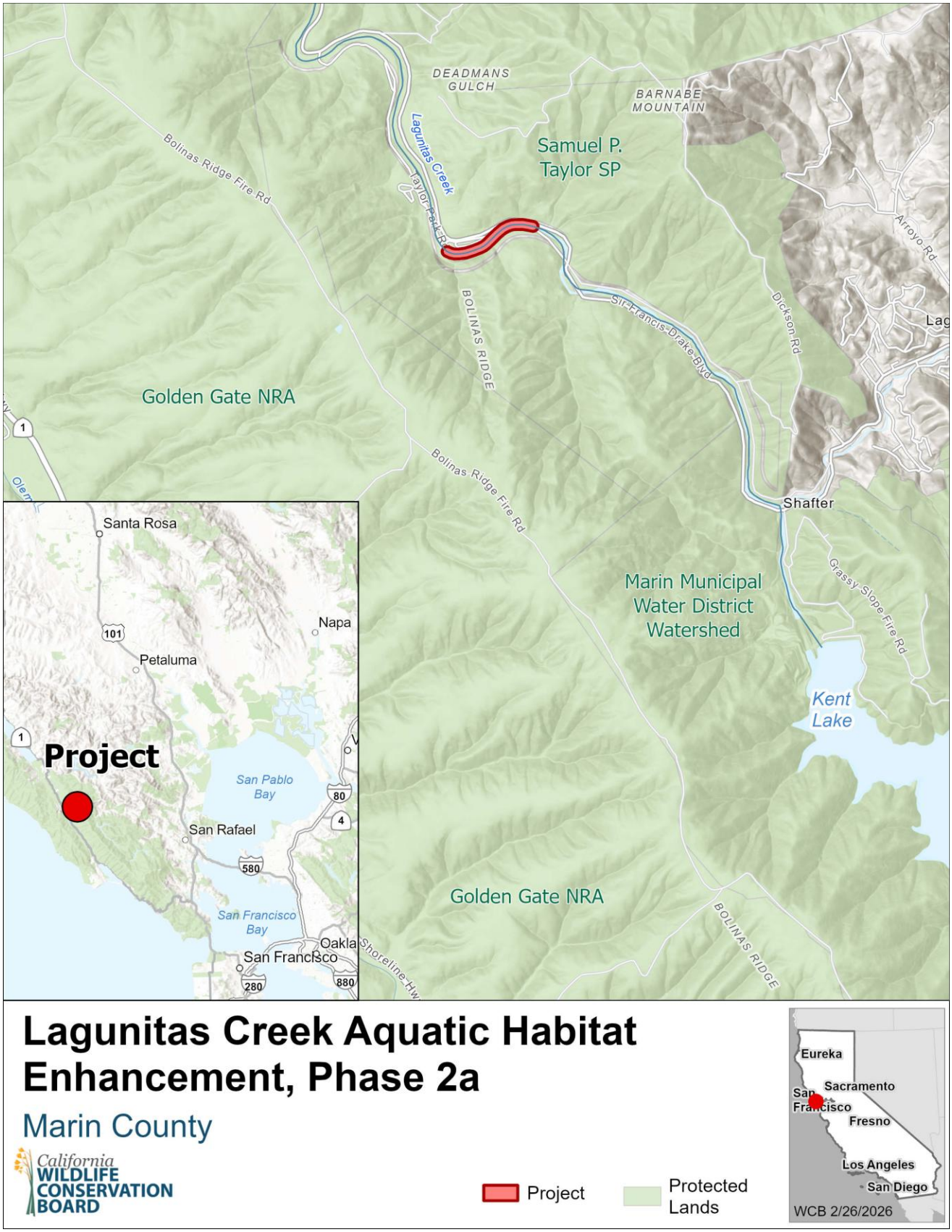
WCB Grant: $1,109,000
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: Marin Municipal Water District
Landowner: California Department of Parks and Recreation
Location: Approximately 7 miles southeast of Point Reyes Station
County: Marin

Project Highlights

- Fully construct two instream restoration sites
- Improve habitat quantity and quality by increasing channel complexity
- Bring back natural hydrologic and geologic conditions
- Key species: Coho salmon, steelhead, California freshwater shrimp
- Support and interact with other restoration efforts in this waterway

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria was involved in planning, cultural resource surveys, and overseeing implementation of Phase 1. This involvement will continue for Phase 2 sites.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.2


DEADMANS GULCH
BARNABE MOUNTAIN
Lagunitas Creek
Taylor Park Rd
Samuel P. Taylor SP
Bolinas Ridge Fire Rd
BOLINAS RIDGE
Sir Francis Drake Blvd
Arroyo Rd
Dickson Rd
Golden Gate NRA
Bolinas Ridge Fire Rd
Shafter
Marin Municipal Water District Watershed
Grassy Slope Fire Rd
Kent Lake
Golden Gate NRA
BOLINAS RIDGE
Santa Rosa
Napa
Petaluma
Project
San Pablo Bay
San Rafael
San Francisco Bay
San Francisco
Oakla
Shoreline-Hwy
101
80
4
580
280
880
Lagunitas Creek Aquatic Habitat Enhancement, Phase 2a
Marin County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The dams on Lagunitas Creek greatly reduce the supply of coarse sediment and large wood downstream and access to upstream habitat. As a result, habitat below these dams has been reduced in both quantity and quality compared with pre-dam conditions, impacting coho salmon, steelhead, California freshwater shrimp, and other aquatic and riparian species. The project will implement stream restoration activities in the lower reaches of Lagunitas Creek to increase habitat conditions for these species by:

- Constructing 2 instream habitat restoration sites.
- Adding large wood habitat structures.
- Encouraging pool formation.
- Increasing habitat complexity.
- Improving the sorting and storage of spawning gravels.
- Providing direct sources of nutrients to the aquatic food web.

Long-Term Management

The Marin Municipal Water District has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-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
Administration	$199,000	---	$199,000
Contracting/Construction	$710,000	$1,400,000	$2,110,000
Monitoring	$200,000	---	$200,000
Total	$1,109,000	$1,400,000	$2,509,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Department of Water Resources - $1,400,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Bree Hardcastle, Environmental Scientist, California State Parks

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Marin Municipal Water District, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, 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 Damon Connolly, District 12

Staff Recommendation

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

19. Trout Creek Meadow Restoration **Restoration – Project Implementation**

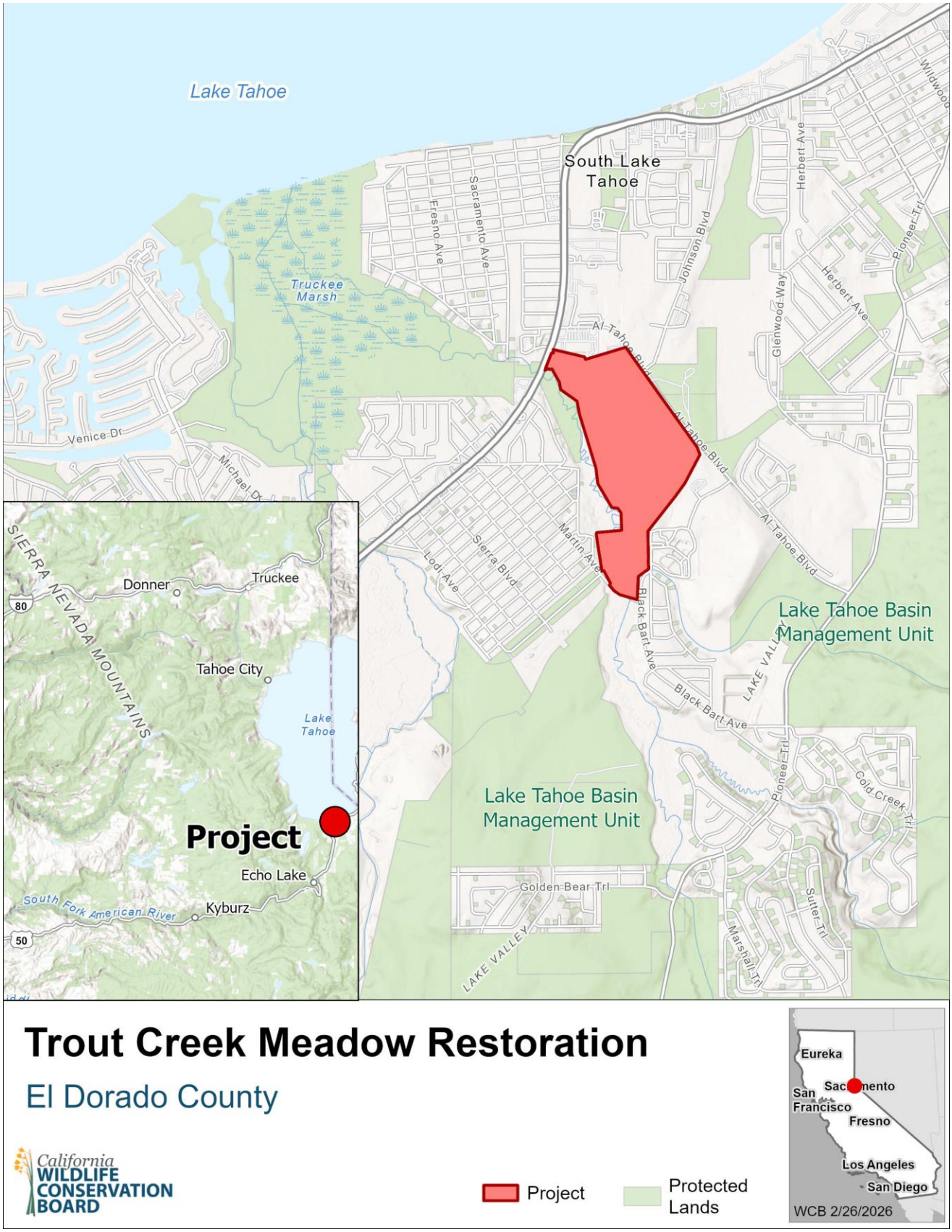
WCB Grant: $710,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f)
Grantee: Lake Tahoe Community College
Landowner: Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC)
Location: South Lake Tahoe
County: El Dorado

Project Highlights

- Habitats restored: 28 acres of mountain meadow
- Climate benefits through increased carbon sequestration and decreased threat of carbon loss to wildfire
- Tribally inclusive project in partnership with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California for cultural burning and traditional ecological knowledge
- Wildland urban interface (WUI) project that leverages higher education resources to provide education and training to community members

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, within a disadvantaged community (DAC) and adjacent to a SDAC. The project is located on lands open to the public and will reduce wildlife risk to the local community.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California will participate in cultural burning.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters, Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3, B3.4, C1.1, C1.3, C2.1, C2.3


Lake Tahoe
South Lake Tahoe
Truckee Marsh
Venice Dr
Michael Dr
Fresno Ave
Sacramento Ave
Johnson Blvd
Herbert Ave
Glenwood Way
Pioneer Trl
Wildwood
Al Tahoe Blvd
Sierra Blvd
Lodi Ave
Martin Ave
Black Bart Ave
LAKE VALLEY
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Golden Bear Trl
Marshall Trl
Sutter Trl
Cold Creek Trl
SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS
Donner
Truckee
Tahoe City
Lake Tahoe
Project
Echo Lake
Kyburz
South Fork American River
80
50
Trout Creek Meadow Restoration
El Dorado County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Trout Creek Meadow is one of several meadow systems that punctuate the city of South Lake Tahoe and contribute to the iconic landscape of the Tahoe basin. Meadow systems provide a wide array of wildlife and climate benefits; however, factors such as fire suppression and land use change undermine the ecological function of these important habitats. Over the last 50 years, lodgepole pine has populated Trout Creek Meadow and amplified dry meadow conditions through increased transpiration. Conifer encroachment on the site has increased vegetative fuel quantity and continuity, while undermining the ability of the meadow to modulate fire intensity in the event of a wildfire. The project will enable the removal of conifers from the portion of the meadow owned by LTCC, accompanied by cultural burning in partnership with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (Washoe Tribe). Biomass removed from the site will be donated to the Washoe Tribe for its Elder Firewood program, and any unusable material will be hauled offsite to render the meadow fuel load suitable for the application of cultural burning. LTCC will work with the Washoe Tribe to cultivate tribally significant plants and increase biodiversity utilizing beneficial fire and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). LTCC will leverage its role as an institution by installing interpretive signage along public access trails to provide education regarding water quality, biodiversity, fire resilience, TEK, conservation, restoration, etc. The project will increase carbon sequestration, wildfire resilience, biodiversity, and tribal inclusivity through the following actions:

- Conifer removal from 28 acres of meadow habitat
- Cultural burn plan creation
- Implementation of cultural burning in partnership with the Washoe Tribe
- Implementation of TEK practices to enhance biodiversity in the meadow
- Design and installation of interpretive signs for public education
- Workforce development via LTCC student participation in implementation and monitoring

Long-Term Management

The LTCC has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 15-year life of the project, LTCC 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	$174,342	$60,000	$234,342
Restoration	$411,000	$175,000	$586,000
Cultural Burning	$32,000	---	$32,000
Indirect Costs	$92,658	---	$92,658
Total	$710,000	$235,000	$945,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Lake Tahoe Community College – $60,000
- Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board - $175,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Cale Pete, WEPD Interim Program Director, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- Mike Vollmer, Executive Director, Tahoe Resource Conservation District

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, 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.

20. Woodlake and River Bend Grassland Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

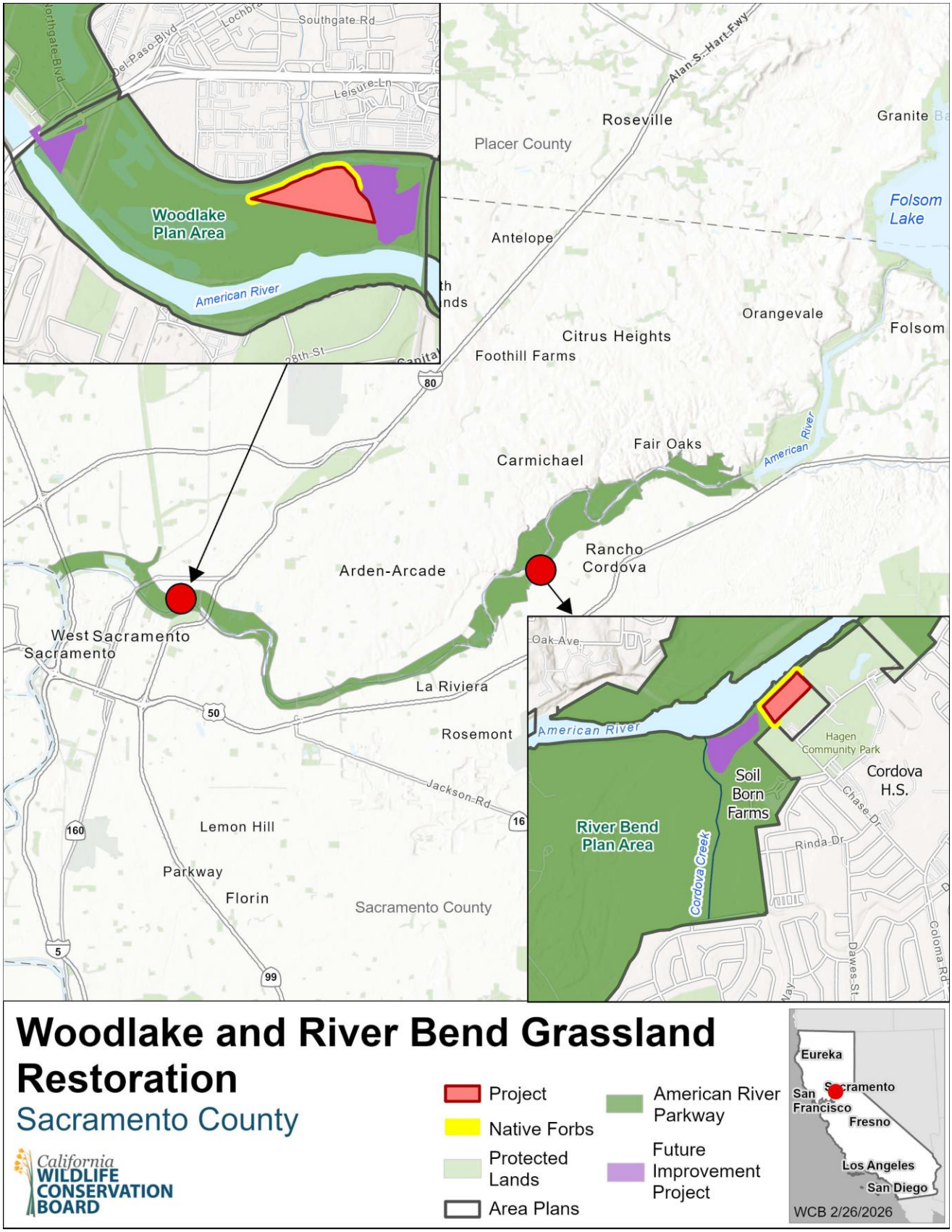
WCB Grant: $770,500
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80100(a)(3); Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Fund (Proposition 4), Public Resources Code Section 91032(g)(SB 105, Sec. 96)
Grantee: Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks
Landowner: Same as Grantee
Location: City of Sacramento, Woodlake Area and City of Rancho Cordova, River Bend Area
County: Sacramento

Project Highlights

- Habitats to be restored: 30 acres of native grassland and one acre of native forb habitat
- Key species: pollinators and grassland bird species
- Interpretive signs will educate parkway users about the importance of native grasslands
- Improving habitat resilience in a fire-prone area of the lower American River watershed
- Facilitating groundwater infiltration and reducing stormwater runoff into the American River

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, both restoration sites are within or immediately adjacent to a DAC in the DWR DAC Mapping Tool and the Woodlake site is in the top 25th percentile on CalEnviroScreen. Restored native grasslands will reduce wildfire risk and increase long-term carbon sequestration and storage.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: C1.3, 2.1


Woodlake Plan Area
American River
Southgate Rd
Del Paso Blvd
Leisure Ln
28th St
Roseville
Placer County
Alan S. Hart Fwy
Granite
Folsom Lake
Antelope
Citrus Heights
Foothill Farms
Orangevale
Folsom
Carmichael
Fair Oaks
American River
Arden-Arcade
Rancho Cordova
West Sacramento
Sacramento
La Riviera
Rosemont
Jackson Rd
Lemon Hill
Parkway
Florin
Sacramento County
Oak Ave
Hagen Community Park
Soil Born Farms
Cordova H.S.
River Bend Plan Area
Cordova Creek
Chase Dr
Rinda Dr
Dawes St
Coloma Rd
80
50
160
16
5
99
Woodlake and River Bend Grassland Restoration
Sacramento County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Native Forbs
Protected Lands
Area Plans
American River Parkway
Future Improvement Project
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Woodlake and River Bend Grassland Restoration (Project) sites have dense fuel loads of nonnative annual plants and compacted soil driven by agriculture practices in the mid-20th century. Under current conditions, these sites do not function as high-quality habitat for foraging raptors, small mammals, and grassland birds, and increase the risk of wildfire and stormwater runoff because the non-native plants generate large amounts of dense standing fuel that dries early in the season and their shallow roots do not penetrate deep into the soil. The Project will restore native grassland and forb habitat types, increase biodiversity and climate resiliency, improve soil health and water infiltration, and educate the community by:

- Reducing the non-native seed bank with integrated pest management strategies including mowing, grazing, light disking, and chemical treatments over two years. Herbicide will be used as described in the Project's Herbicide Use Questionnaire.
- Seeding 30 acres with a native grass seed mix.
- Seeding one acre of native forb species along the edge of established grassland areas to increase habitat for pollinators.
- Designing and installing up to six multi-lingual interpretive signs about the importance of native grasslands and the wildlife that use them.

Long-Term Management

Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks (Regional Parks) has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the restored grasslands and forb plots. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, Regional Parks does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management and Interpretive Signs	$500	$36,000	$36,500
Environmental Monitoring	40,000	$36,000	$76,000
Site Preparation and Native Grass Seeding	$325,048	$55,598	$380,646
Forb Seeding and Maintenance	$223,921	$21,493	$245,414

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
General Expenses: Equipment	$3,600	---	$3,600
Contingency	$177,431	---	$177,431
Total	$770,500	$149,091	$919,591

Non-WCB funders include:

- Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks - $149,091

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Marina LaForgia, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences, Sacramento State University

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks, as lead agency, prepared a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) that supplements the American River Parkway Plan Update FEIR for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the SEIR and prepared 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 Angelique Ashby, District 8; Senator Roger Niello, District 6
- Assembly: Assemblymember Maggy Krell, District 6; Assemblymember Josh Hoover, District 7

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Use Questionnaire
American River Parkway Grassland Restoration and Establishment Project

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

The proposed grassland restoration sites are dominated by the following invasive species and nonnative grasses:

- Yellow star-thistle (dense monocultures, 45-60% cover)
- Mustard(s) (forms near-monocultures, mixed with wild radish. 5-10% cover)
- Wild radish (forms near-monocultures, mixed with mustard. 5-10% cover).
- Italian thistle, bull thistle, milk thistle (0-5 % cover)
- Perennial pepper weed (0-5% cover)
- Nonnative grasses (including but not limited to medusahead, barbed goatgrass, Italian ryegrass, wild oats. 15-20% cover)

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

Due to the high prevalence of weedy plants throughout the site, two years of initial broadcast spray with subsequent weed control through broadleaf selective chemical is anticipated. All treatments would be based on the recommendation of a licensed pest control advisor (PCA) with experience in California native plant restoration.

This Project will include initial broadcast applications of Glyphosate (Aquamaster/RoundUp Custom) to treat flushes of weeds and invasive grasses that follow disking events during the spring and summer growing season. Application of chemical early in the growing season will allow for lighter concentrations to be effective in weed control for the site, but higher concentrations may become necessary for late-season treatment of mature plants. Chemical mix concentration suggested by Roundup label indicates that 5-11 fluid ounces per acre are sufficient to kill annual grass weeds and up to 22 fluid ounces per acre may be needed for the mustards, wild radishes, and thistle species if applied early in the growing stages. Initial spray concentrations will be at the 22 fluid ounces per/acre rate and any follow up treatments will have a mix concentration dependent upon weed species re-growth; favoring the lighter glyphosate mix if possible. Surfactant will be used for these chemical applications to assist in chemical efficacy. Regional Parks has demonstrated success in past herbicide applications using LIBERATE, a non-ionic surfactant that helps in both spray adhesion and drift reduction at a ratio of 2 quarts per 100 gallons. However, we will prioritize the use of crop oil concentrate or vegetable oil-based adjuvants in coordination with the recommendation of a PCA.

Aminopyralid (Milestone) herbicide combined with 2,4-D will be used to provide preemergence control for thistles during the initial seedbed preparation phase, with treatments prior to seeding occurring at least 60 days before grass germination to allow degradation of the chemical. This mixture will also be used for the broadleaf selective chemical applications that occur after native grass seeding. The application will target post emergent young star-thistle and mustard plants that are either in their rosette stage, or in the beginning stages of bolting when lower application rates tend to still work well. It is expected that a single application during this time should provide season-long control. Suggested concentration rates for Aminopyralid are to be used at 0.75 to 1.75 oz acid equivalent/acre, or 3.9 oz/acre. UC IPM research suggests this application rate, combined with 2,4-D at 12 oz/acre, should provide acceptable control of yellow-star, and other thistle weed species. Recommendations are to use a high-quality non-ionic surfactant or adjuvant at 0.25 to 0.5% volume per volume, or 1 to 2 quarts per 100 gallons of spray to enhance the efficacy of the herbicide application. It is the intention to again combine oil-based adjuvants and/or LIBERATE at the abovementioned concentrations to bolster herbicide efficacy.

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

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

This project will use Roundup Custom/ Aquamaster which has glyphosate as the active ingredient and is registered for aquatic applications. Initial applications are intended to be non-selective to remove the herbaceous community entirely comprised of weed species. Weed management for this project will employ an integrated approach that consists of early-timed and varied chemical treatments in conjunction with subsequent mechanical and biological weed control. This will allow for less applications, using the lowest recommended product effective concentration rates, of glyphosate to be used for weed control.

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

The adjuvant to be used in all chemical applications will be LIBERATE, non-ionic surfactant that does not contain nonylphenol, or alkylphenol ethoxylate.

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

Non-chemical treatments will be used as the primary tool in the overall integrated approach to weed and habitat management for this site. Mechanical treatments will initially be used for

site preparation for decreasing residual biomass available to intercept herbicide during spray application. This should maximize target plant surface exposed to chemical spray treatments; and therefore, allow for lighter mix concentrations to be more effective. Once the project site has been prepared and planted, site maintenance will consist of selective mechanical treatment (i.e. mowing and string trimmers) as well as biological treatments (i.e. prescribed grazing) to manage both weed populations from undergoing senescence and reaching an overaccumulation of biomass.

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

Herbicide application measures to reduce negative impacts for this project are:

- Environmental considerations
  - Site preparation to decrease residual biomass will increase target species' exposed surface area and allowing for greater chemical uptake into plants.
  - Selective timing for herbicide application will allow for less concentrated herbicide mix to be effective.
  - Combining herbicides with LIBERATE, a non-ionic surfactant, will increase droplet retention and plant uptake, allowing for a less concentrated mix to be effectively applied. It will also decrease droplet drift potential.
  - Herbicide application will be under U.S. EPA's product label directions for maximum environmental threshold.

- Wildlife and Pollinator considerations
  - Early herbicide application will prevent broadleaf weeds from flowering, temporarily decreasing pollinator habitat suitability.
  - Initial mowing/disking of the site early in the growing season and maintaining a disturbed site for the duration of the Project implementation phase, will temporarily decrease wildlife habitat suitability and discourage use.

- Water quality considerations
  - Chemical application will occur approximately 500ft from the American River at the Woodlake site, and 120 ft from the river at the River Bend site.
  - The Project site topography has minimal contouring and thus, the potential for hydrologic runoff is also minimal.
  - Herbicide applications will take place during times when weather forecasts do not predict rain.

Pesticide Drift Management Considerations:
Spray at wind speeds of 2-9 mph, temperatures less than 70 degree, and humidity over 40%;
Do not spray during inversion conditions.

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

Removal of invasive weeds within the project area may be possible using a combination of non-chemical methods but would be impractical for a 3-5 year grant project and provides less certainty of successful control. In order to address widespread monocultures of yellow-star-thistle, UC IPM recommends the following non-chemical methods.

- *Prescribed burning* – this strategy typically only achieves a significant level of control when repeated multiple times in successive years and works best when thatch and dry vegetation are also present to carry the burn at a high temperature. While this approach could provide some initial control and seedbank reduction, it would not be advisable for treatment of star-thistle and other broadleaf weeds immediately after native grasses have been seeded, since it would damage the young grasses.
- *Mowing/Grazing* – Timed mowing and grazing can aid in managing starthistle over many seasons, but they do not address the preexisting seedbank. Like prescribed burning, this strategy is not feasible for broadleaf control during the first couple years of perennial grass establishment.
- *Hand-pulling* – Due to the extent of the nonnative seedbank at the proposed project sites, it is very likely that widespread hand-pulling would be necessary to control broadleaf weeds during native grass establishment. This strategy is effective, but costly and time consuming.
- *Biocontrol-* Biocontrol agents for yellow star-thistle are already widespread throughout the state, and employing additional releases of these insects was not considered because it complicates the use of other management tools. UC IPM recommends using biocontrol in combination with herbicide. Because insects utilized for biocontrol attack the flower and seed head of the plant, mowing or grazing cannot be conducted at the ideal timing just prior to flowering. Prescribed burning would damage insect populations or cause them to leave the site.

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

In order to remove invasive vegetation and deplete the nonnative seedbank and provide broadleaf weed control during grass establishment using only non-chemical methods, we estimate a total cost of approximately $784,800 and timeline of 6-7 years for the following activities.

A. 3-4 years of site preparation: annual prescribed burning (assuming sufficient fuel load), 2 timed mowing/grazing events per year, and 2 disking events per year.
B. 3 years of establishment maintenance: annual hand-pulling for 30.4 acres, plus up to 2 grazing/mowing events in the third year.

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

Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated past management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project?

N/A

Resources:

DiTomaso JM, Kyser GB. Effects of Aminopyralid on California Annual Grassland Plant Communities. *Invasive Plant Science and Management*. 2015;8(1):98-109. doi:10.1614/IPSM-D-14-00010.1

Surfactant for Herbicides: What It Is, How to Use It, When to Apply, and Tips – FarmerDB

Yellow Starthistle Management Guidelines--UC IPM

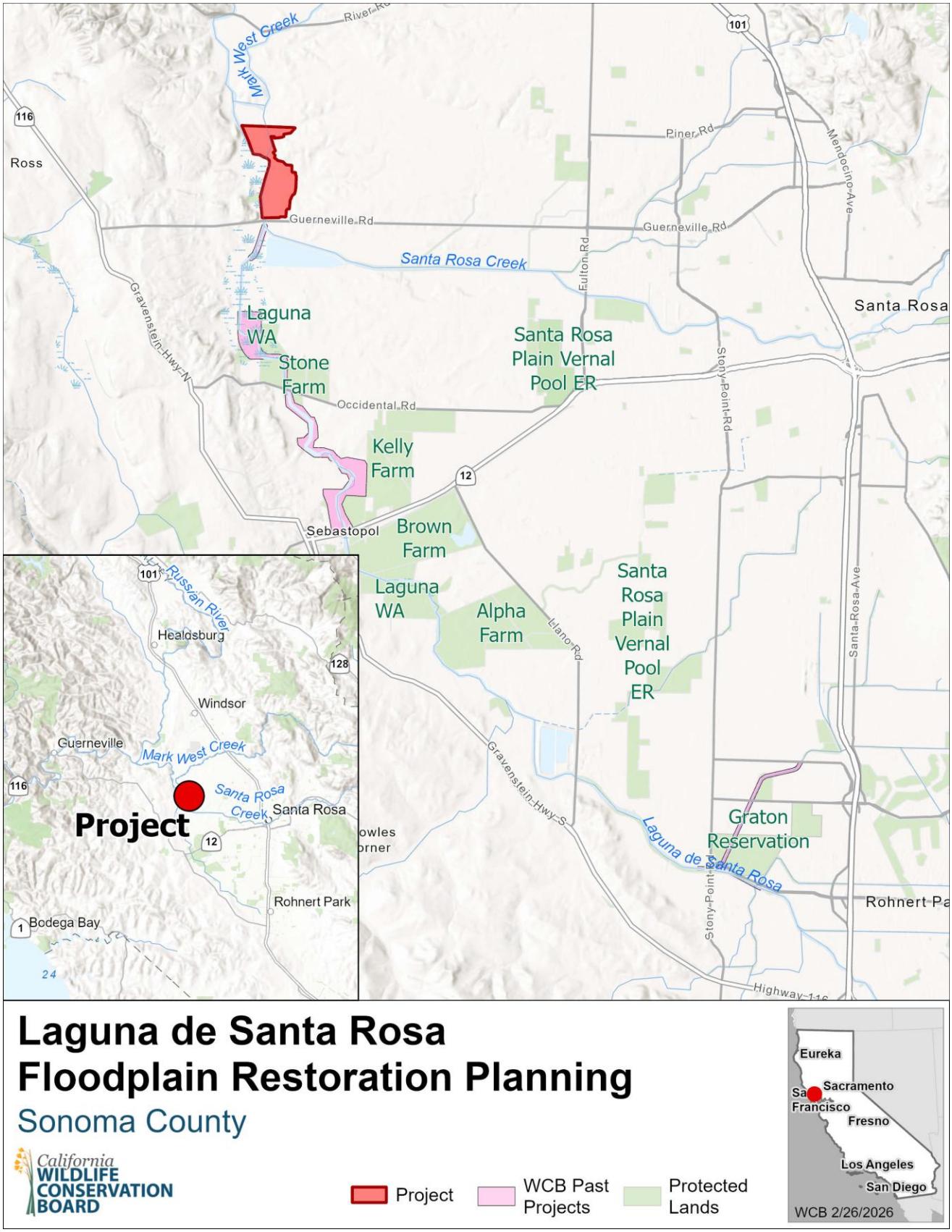
21. Laguna de Santa Rosa Floodplain Restoration Planning **Restoration – Planning**
WCB Grant: $1,045,694
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f)
Grantee: Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
Landowner: Private
Location: 3 miles north of Sebastopol
County: Sonoma

Project Highlights

- Advancing a priority project in the Restoration Plan for the Laguna de Santa Rosa to a shovel-ready status
- Designing stream, wetland, and upland restoration on 175 acres of land along the Laguna de Santa Rosa, an internationally recognized freshwater wetland and biodiversity hotspot
- Key species: migrating coho salmon and steelhead, mammals that rely on riparian-to-upland transition zones for movement such as American badger, river otter, and pond turtle
- Addresses recovery actions in the Recovery Plan for the Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Central California Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS 2012) and Final Coast Multispecies Recovery Plan for California Coastal Chinook Salmon, Northern California Steelhead and Central California Coast Steelhead (NMFS 2016)

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. The project is upstream from DACs according to the DWR DAC Mapping Tool and the designed restoration will reduce flood risk to these downstream justice communities.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria is a key partner and is on the project's technical advisory committee.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, 2.2, 3.4; C1.1


Laguna de Santa Rosa
Floodplain Restoration Planning
Sonoma County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
WCB Past Projects
Protected Lands
Project
Laguna WA
Stone Farm
Kelly Farm
Brown Farm
Laguna WA
Alpha Farm
Santa Rosa Plain Vernal Pool ER
Santa Rosa Plain Vernal Pool ER
Graton Reservation
Santa Rosa Creek
Mark West Creek
Guerneville Rd
Occidental Rd
Piner Rd
Fulton Rd
Stony Point Rd
Santa Rosa Ave
Mendocino Ave
Gravenstein Hwy S
Laguna de Santa Rosa
Llano Rd
Ross
Santa Rosa
Sebastopol
Healdsburg
Windsor
Guerneville
Rohnert Park
Bodega Bay
Russian River
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Laguna de Santa Rosa Floodplain Restoration Planning (Project) site was converted to farmland in the 1950s and the creeks that flow across the site were straightened around the same time for flood control. These alterations to land and water have removed important habitat types, disconnected creeks from their floodplains, and interrupted the natural movement of water and sediment across the landscape. The 175-acre Project site is located along a 6,000-foot reach of the Laguna de Santa Rosa (Laguna) downstream of its confluence with Santa Rosa Creek, and includes the confluence with Mark West Creek, an important salmonid-bearing stream for coho salmon and steelhead. The Project will complete 100% designs and regulatory compliance for a shovel-ready implementation project to enhance natural hydrologic function and aquatic habitat along 5,200 linear in-stream feet and restore: 60 acres of freshwater marsh, 25 acres of wet meadow, 28 acres of riparian forest, 6 acres of native grasses and sedges, and 16 acres of oak-savannah vernal pool complex. Upon implementation, these improvements will restore a natural hydrograph to the Laguna, decrease sediment and nutrient delivery to the Laguna, expand and connect a mosaic of habitat types, and re-establish native plant communities that support ecological and cultural values. The Project will complete the following actions:

- Extensive collaboration and engagement through a technical advisory committee made up of tribal representatives, landowners, agricultural organizations, regional experts and land and water managers.
- Hydraulic modeling to address potential impacts of site sedimentation and hydrologic regimes of the designed habitat zones.
- 90% and 100% design plans and permitting for the Laguna channel realignment and floodplain restoration.
- Conceptual, 65%, 90% and 100% design plans, CEQA compliance, and permitting for lower Mark West Creek stream enhancement, floodplain restoration, and riparian-to-upland habitat enhancement.
- Community meetings and individual outreach to interested parties.

Long-Term Management

Not applicable to this Project

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$44,050	$10,000	$54,050
Studies and Design	$677,513	$176,000	$853,513
Regulatory Compliance	$273,784	---	$273,784

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Indirect	$37,653	---	$37,653
Total	$1,033,000	$186,000	$1,219,000

Non-WCB funders include:
- Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation - $16,000
- State Water Resources Control Board - $150,000
- Marin Sonoma Mosquito Vector Control District - $20,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:
- Senator Mike McGuire, 2nd District, California State Senate
- Assemblymember Chris Rogers, 2nd District, California State Assembly
- Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, 5th District, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Supervisor James Gore, 4th District, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Valerie Quinto, Executive Officer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Grant Davis, General Manager, Sonoma Water
- Misti Arias, General Manager, Sonoma County Ag + Open Space
- Mark Stapp, Mayor, City of Santa Rosa
- Warner Chabot, Executive Director, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Chris Rogers, District 2

Staff Recommendation

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

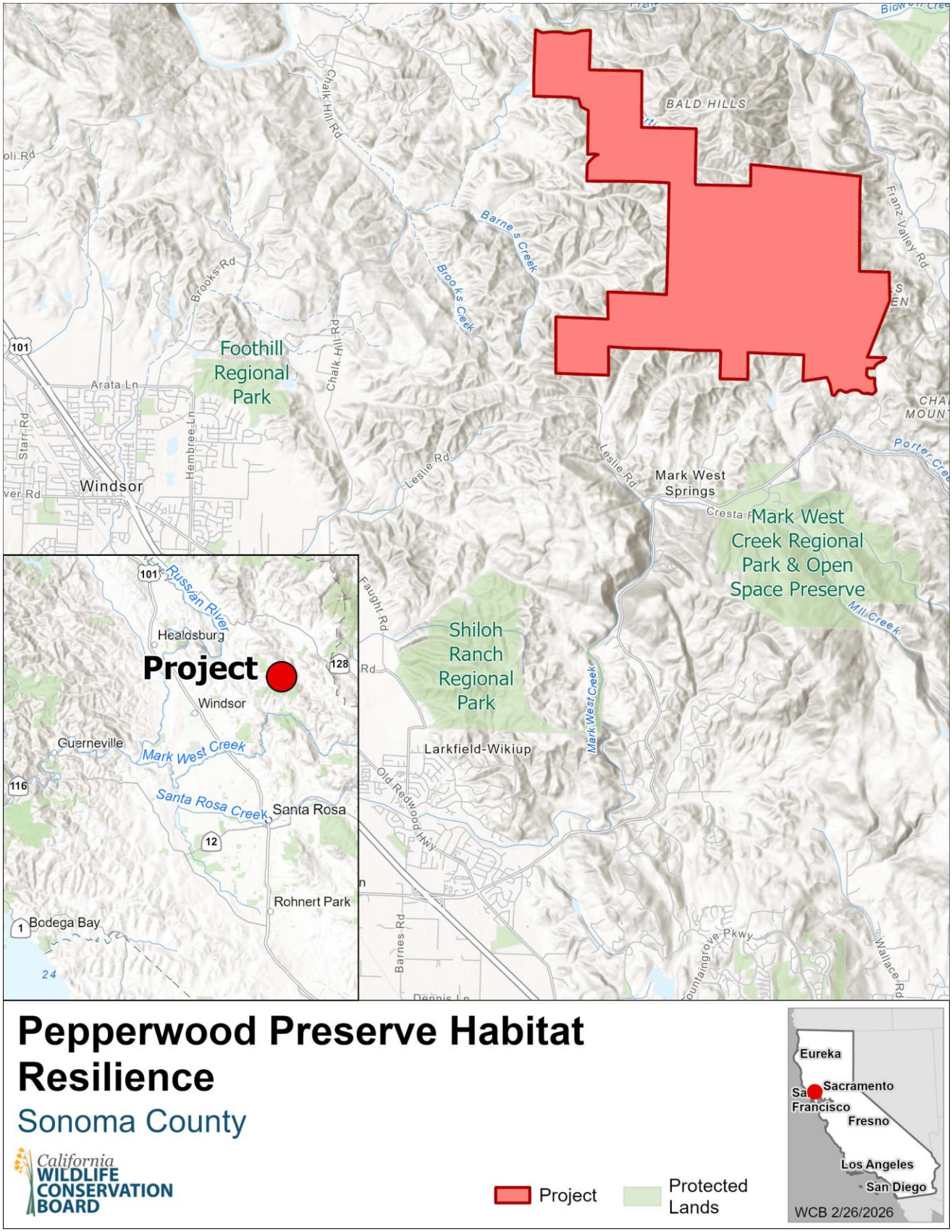
22. Pepperwood Preserve Habitat Resilience **Restoration – Implementation**
WCB Grant: $1,755,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Pepperwood Foundation
Landowner: Pepperwood Foundation
Location: 12 miles east of Santa Rosa
County: Sonoma

Project Highlights

- Restoration in wildfire impacted preserve
- CDFW Area of Conservation Emphasis ranked as an Irreplaceable and Essential Corridor
- Enhanced carbon sequestration through oak woodland and perennial grass restoration
- Habitat benefits in headwaters of coho bearing watershed (Mark West Creek)
- Key species: Napa false indigo, foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle
- Project includes public engagement through outreach, education, and stewardship learning events
- Leverages extensive monitoring history documenting climate driven ecological shifts

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the project is within a SDAC and will reduce wildfire risk to the local community.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Pepperwood Preserve has a Native Advisory Council comprised of six members from several tribal groups that participate in project planning.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B3.4, C1.2, C1.3, C2.1, C2.3


BALD HILLS
Foothill Regional Park
Windsor
Mark West Springs
Mark West Creek Regional Park & Open Space Preserve
Shiloh Ranch Regional Park
Larkfield-Wikiup
Healdsburg
Project
Windsor
Guerneville
Santa Rosa
Rohnert Park
Bodega Bay
Russian River
Mark West Creek
Santa Rosa Creek
Barnes Creek
Brooks Creek
Chalk Hill Rd
Leslie Rd
Old Redwood Hwy
Mill Creek
Pepperwood Preserve Habitat Resilience
Sonoma County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Pepperwood Preserve is a 3,200-acre ecological reserve located at the headwaters of multiple Russian River tributaries in Sonoma County. Through history, the site has been impacted by the removal of Native American stewardship during colonization followed by intensive grazing and homestead development. These disruptions to essential disturbance regimes resulted in increased fuel loads, the introduction of invasive plants, and degradation of oak woodland habitat function. The site was burned by wildfire multiple times, with undesirable fuel loads contributing to increased fire severity and further reducing ecosystem function on the property. The Pepperwood Preserve Habitat Resilience Project (Project) will enhance oak woodlands, aid post-fire habitat regeneration, increase biodiversity and habitat resilience by:

- Thinning encroaching conifers from oak woodlands
- Prescribed and cultural burn preparation by pile burning biomass generated by thinning
- Prescribed and cultural burning to enhance biodiversity and reduce fuels
- Native seed collection and propagation
- Restoration plantings in areas treated with beneficial fire
- Invasive plant treatment (manual and mechanical)

Long-Term Management

The Pepperwood Foundation has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 15-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	$15,046	$57,262	$72,308
Forest Restoration	$749,926	$64,000	$813,926
Grassland Restoration	$761,140	$28,901	$790,041
Community Outreach	---	$330,027	$330,027
Indirect	$228,888	---	$228,888
Total	$1,755,000	$480,190	$2,235,190

Non-WCB funders include:

- Pepperwood Foundation - $480,190

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Anger Minor, Chief Executive Officer, Conservation Corps North Bay
- Meghan Wall-Murphy, Lead Partner, North Bay Bear Collaborative

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to the March 1, 2025, Proclamation of State of Emergency by Governor Newsom suspending CEQA for projects expediting critical fuels reduction. CEQA and the California Natural Resources Agency issued a Secretarial Suspension Authorization for the Project on December 17, 2025. 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 Chris Rogers, 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.

23. Feather River Headwaters Aspen Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

WCB Grant: $1,335,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f)
Grantee: Plumas Audubon Society (Plumas Audubon)
Landowner: U.S. Forest Service, Plumas National Forest
Location: 6.6 miles Southeast of Janesville
County: Plumas

Project Highlights

- Biodiversity hotspot benefits to crucial headwater ecosystems
- Habitats restored: 77 acres aspen, 132 acres meadow (209 acres total)
- Key species: Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, gray wolf, Northern goshawk, California spotted owl, bank swallow, greater sandhill crane
- Workforce development

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, within a DAC on lands open to public recreation. The project will reduce wildfire risk to the community.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4: Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters, Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3, B2.1, C1.1, C1.3, C2.1, C2.3, P2.2. O1.3


Feather River Headwaters Aspen Restoration
Plumas County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026
Project
Susanville
Lassen NF
Plumas NF
Tehama County
Plumas County
BLM
Honey Lake
Honey Lake Valley
Eagle Lake
Janesville
Buntingville
Belfast
Standish
Bass Hill WA
Honey Lake WA
Antelope Mountain
Hamilton Mountain
Bald Mountain
Diamond Mountains
State Route 36
State Highway 36
Feather Lake Hwy
Main St
US Highway 395

Project Description

The Feather River Headwaters Aspen Restoration (Project) site is located in the northern Sierra Nevada and has been heavily affected by climate-driven changes such as earlier snowmelt, reduced snowpack, and high-severity wildfire, leading to the decline of aspen and meadow ecosystems. These trends are expected to continue and intensify, reducing the occurrence of high-elevation wetlands and riparian areas, making it essential to protect these habitats as wildlife increasingly depend upon these resource-rich areas for water, forage, and refuge. Exclusion of low severity fire has led to increasing conifer encroachment and dense forests that inhibit aspen regeneration, drain riparian zones, and increase fire severity. The meadows within the Project area suffer from incised channels and floodplain disconnection. The Project will restore aspen and meadows within two headwater basins of the Feather River (Indian Creek and Boulder Creek) which flows into the State Water Project and provides essential drinking water for more than twenty-seven million people in addition to agricultural irrigation in the Central Valley. The Project lies within designated critical habitat for the federally endangered and state listed threatened Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and will have direct habitat benefits to the species. The Project will enhance aspen and meadows to increase biodiversity, enhance habitat for special status plants and wildlife, and increase wildfire and climate resilience by:

- Conifer removal and invasive plant treatment in aspen stands (77 acres)
- Processed-based meadow restoration using beaver dam analogs and/or post-assisted log structures (132 acres)
- Prescribed burning of piled biomass and broadcast burning in aspen stands and meadows (209 acres)
- Pre and post project monitoring for wildlife and hydrologic impacts
- Community engagement and outreach including site tours, volunteer opportunities, and workforce development

Long-Term Management

The U.S. Forest Service has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Project area. If at any time during the 15-year life of the Project, Plumas Audubon 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	$142,507	---	$142,507

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Aspen & Meadow Restoration	$689,254	---	$689,254
Monitoring	$113,495	---	$113,495
Prescribed Burning	$215,581	---	$215,581
Indirect	$174,163	---	$174,163
Total	$1,335,000	---	$1,335,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Leigh Ellen Johnson, District Ranger, U.S. Forest Service
- Michael Hall, District Manager, Feather River Resource Conservation District
- Zachary Browning, Steering Committee Member, Feather River Stewardship Coalition
- Gia Martynn, Executive Director, Plumas Corp
- Jonathan Kusel, Executive Director, Sierra Institute for Community and Environment

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

Presentation Items

24. SR 62 Wildlife Crossings Planning — Restoration – Planning

WCB Grant: $5,498,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 - Habitat Connectivity), Public Resources Code Section 93030 (SB 105, Sec. 95)
Grantee: Mojave Desert Land Trust
Landowner: N/A
Location: 2 miles southeast of the town of Yucca Valley
Counties: Riverside, San Bernardino

Project Highlights

- Project will develop plans and designs to create two wildlife crossing structures that will link wildlife habitat in the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains including the Sand to Snow National Monument, Joshua Tree National Park, and the San Gorgonio and Bighorn Wilderness Areas.
- Identified by CDFW as a priority wildlife movement barrier.
- Key species: Mountain lion, desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, bear, bobcat, and desert tortoise.
- Builds upon a wildlife connectivity study completed for Caltrans in 2021.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B1.2, C2.2


Pioneertown Mtns. Preserve
Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
Yucca Valley
247
29 Palms
BLM
San Bernardino County
Little Morongo Height
BLM
Palm Wells
LITTLE MORONGO CANYON
BLM
MORONGO VALLEY
Joshua Tree NP
Morongo Valley
62
Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS
Highland
Project
Yucaipa
Riverside
Banning
10
Palm Springs
Perris
215
Hemet
Menifee
15
SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN
Murrieta
BLM
Riverside County
SR 62 Wildlife Crossings Planning
Riverside and San Bernardino Counties
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The SR 62 Wildlife Crossings Planning (Project) will develop plans and designs for two proposed wildlife crossings over State Route 62 (SR 62) where the roadway bisects the San Bernardino (SB) and Little San Bernardino (LSB) Mountains. Prior to the construction of the highway, there was a seamless connection between the two mountain ranges that allowed wildlife to roam in search of feeding and breeding habitat. That migration is now constrained due to traffic volumes and safety improvements on SR 62, including concrete medians, that have significantly impeded wildlife movement. A wildlife connectivity study completed for Caltrans in 2021, found "a complete barrier effect," with no adequate crossing structures on the Morongo and Yucca Grade segments of the highway and recommended that wildlife crossings be constructed at each location to enhance and restore wildlife connectivity. The crossings will improve and restore connectivity for plants and animals between the SB and LSB Mountains to ensure their health and to provide species with the ability to shift their ranges in response to climate change. The Project will create "shovel ready" plans and designs for the construction of two wildlife crossing structures by developing:

- Outreach to wildlife, land use, and transportation agencies, landowners and managers, Tribes, and conservation organizations in the region
- CEQA and NEPA environmental review
- 65% designs for two wildlife crossing structures
- Caltrans documentation

Long-Term Management

Not applicable to this Project.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$262,218	$100,000	$362,218
Caltrans Documentation	$1,196,672	$252,717	$1,449,389
Environmental Review	$1,765,754	$114,759	$1,880,513
Designs	$2,186,620	$144,524	$2,331,144
Outreach	$55,177	---	$55,177
Indirect Costs	$31,559	---	$31,559
Total	$5,498,000	$612,000	$6,110,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy - $512,000
- Coachella Valley Conservation Commission - $50,000
- Mojave Desert Land Trust - $50,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Congressman Raul Ruiz, 25th District of California, Congress of the United States
- Assemblymember Greg Wallis, 47th District, California State Assembly
- Brigadier General Mark H. Clingan, Commanding General, United State Marine Corps
- Brian Croft, Field Supervisor, USFWS
- Jane Rodgers, Superintendent, Joshua Tree National Park
- Elizabeth M. King, Executive Director, Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
- Tom Kirk, Executive Director, Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
- Brittany Chavez, General Manager, Morongo Valley Community Services District
- Christopher Nicosia, Archaeologist, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Paul Beier, Conservation Research Fellow, Center for Large Landscape Conservation
- Kristeen Penrod, Director, SC Wildlands
- Robin Kobaly, Executive Director, The SummerTree Institute
- Mari Galloway, California Program Director, Wildlands Network
- T. Robert Przeklasa, Executive Director, Native American Land Conservancy
- Tammy Martin, Executive Director, Friends of the Desert Mountains
- Frazier Haney, Executive Director, The Wildlands Conservancy
- Bettina Rosmarino, Land Acquisition Director, Oswit Land Trust
- Jill Bays, President, Transition Habitat Conservancy
- Peter Jorris, Executive Director, San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust
- Kevin Wong, Executive Director, Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
- Brendan Cummings, Conservation Director, Center for Biological Diversity
- Arch McCulloch, President, California Native Plant Society Mojave Desert Chapter
- Brendan Wilce, Conservation Program Coordinator, California Native Plant Society
- Cara Lacey, Climate Program Associate Director, The Nature Conservancy
- Linda Castro, Assistant Policy Director, CalWild
- Pamela Flick, California Program Director, Defenders of Wildlife
- Joan Taylor, Chair, Tahquitz Group Sierra Club
- Luke Basulto, California Desert Program Manager, National Parks Conservation Association
- Devin O’Dea, Western Policy and Conservation Manager, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
- Jacqueline Guevara, Executive Director, Joshua Tree National Park Association

- Steve Bardwell, President, Morongo Basin Conservation Association
- Sant Khalsa, Professor of Art, Emerita, CSU San Bernardino
- Meg Foley, Executive Director, Friends of the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
- Peter Spurr, Broker, Joshua Tree Realty
- Meredith Kuchon, Owner, Roadrunner Grab and Go
- Nicole Holland, Owner, Cactus Mart and Morongo Valley Hardware
- Ken Layne, Publisher, Desert Oracle
- Lark McMillan, Realtor, Roadrunner Realty
- Buddy Stogner, Owner, B and T Tire/24 Hour Roadside Service

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh, District 19
- Assembly: Assemblymember Greg Wallis, District 47

Staff Recommendation

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

25. Spanish Ranch
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

26. River West Core Project **Infrastructure – Implementation**

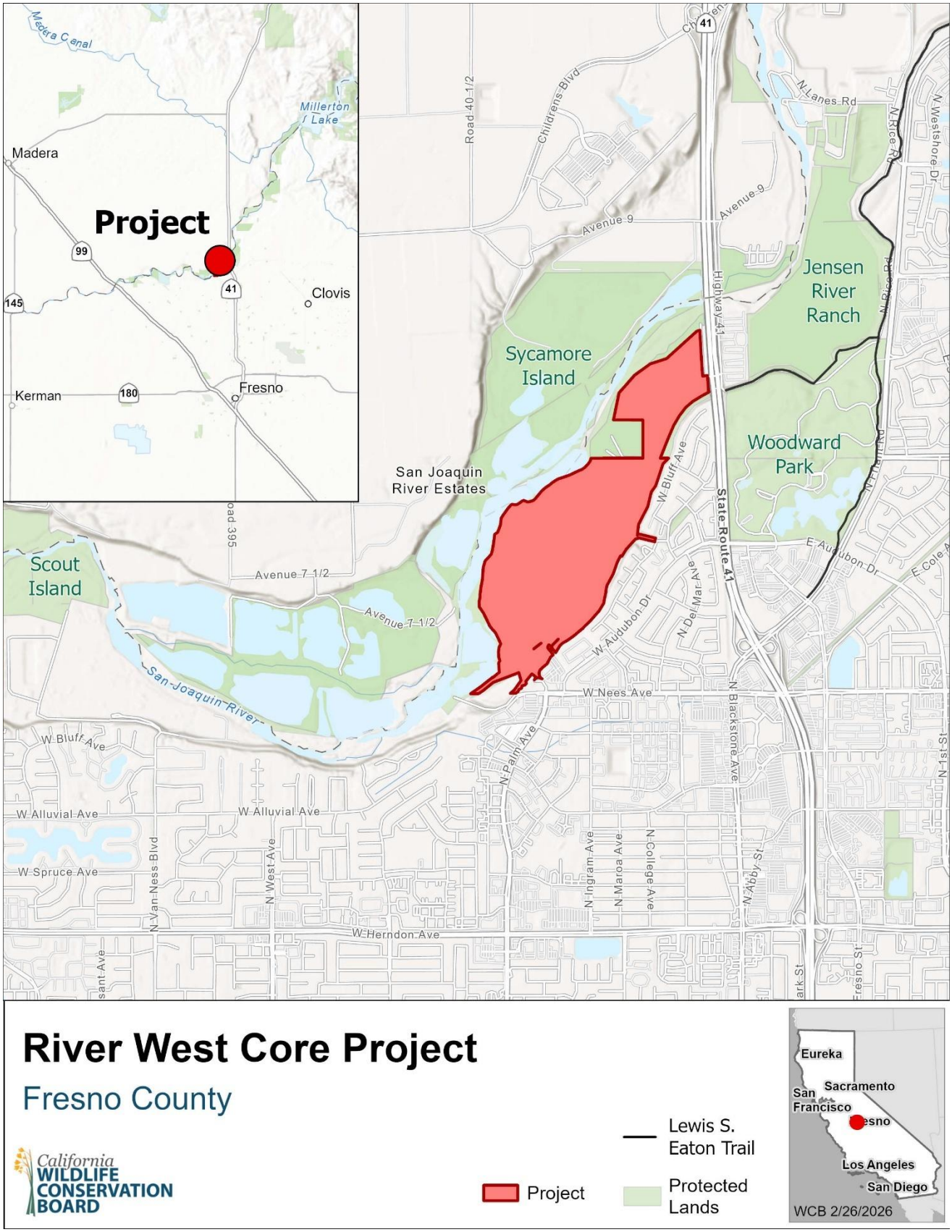
WCB Grant: $5,550,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b)(7) San Joaquin River Conservancy allocation
Grantee: City of Fresno
Landowner: San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC)
Location: Within the City of Fresno
County: Fresno

Project Highlights

- The “Core Project” implementation of part of the River West Fresno Eaton Trail Extension Project
- High priority for SJRC
- Further develops the San Joaquin River Parkway
- Plans and designs were developed with a WCB grant
- Extends the existing Lewis Eaton Trail (Eaton Trail) and increases Parkway connectivity
- Creates new public access amenities, including a trailhead, parking, ADA accommodations, and a restroom

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the Project is adjacent to and serves the Pinedale Community, a DAC with a CalEnviroScreen overall score of 96, and Madera County, which has a CalEnviroScreen overall score of 93.
- Tribal Partnerships: No, but Grantee met with the Mono, Tachi, and Chukchansi Tribes and members of the inter-tribal community on the overall project, revegetation best practices, and the potential to include tribal stewards in the maintenance of River West.
- Pathways to 30x30: N/A
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: P1.3, P3.1


Madera Canal
Millerton Lake
Madera
Project
99
41
145
Clovis
Kerman
180
Fresno
Road 40 1/2
Childrens Blvd
N Lanes Rd
N Westshore Dr
Avenue 9
Highway 41
Jensen River Ranch
N Rice Rd
Sycamore Island
Woodward Park
N Fruit Rd
San Joaquin River Estates
W Bluff Ave
State Route 41
E Audubon Dr
E Cole Ave
Road 395
Scout Island
Avenue 7 1/2
N Del Mar Ave
W Audubon Dr
San Joaquin River
W Nees Ave
N Blackstone Ave
N Palm Ave
W Alluvial Ave
W Spruce Ave
N Van Ness Blvd
N West Ave
N Ingram Ave
N Marola Ave
N College Ave
N Abby St
W Herndon Ave
Fresno St
River West Core Project
Fresno County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Lewis S. Eaton Trail
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Project site currently provides limited public access to the San Joaquin River via steep terrain and dirt social trails. It has only one official access point at Riverview Drive, where visitors may park along the neighborhood streets and enter through pedestrian access gates. Palm Avenue has a secondary access point which requires trail users to hike down the steep river bluff to the existing dirt social trails. The northern end of the project site is only accessible by steep, crumbling, dirt social paths by the State Route (SR) 41 undercrossing. An existing 6-foot chain link fence blocks public access at the Perrin Ave undercrossing of SR41. Additionally, users with accessibility needs have no access to the Fresno River West area under current conditions. The Project will increase public access to the San Joaquin River by:

- Extending the Eaton Trail by constructing ~2.86 miles of paved, multiuse, accessible trails
- Supporting multimodal access to the trail with a new access point and parking area at Perrine Ave near SR 41 (“Woodward West”)
- Improving overall Parkway connectivity by extending the Eaton Trail from Woodward West to Woodward Park, a popular existing city park
- Incorporating ADA-compliant public access features
- Providing a two-vault toilet and other trail amenities at Woodward West
- Constructing a concrete stairway with integrated bike rail to connect Palm Ave and Spano Park to River West

Long-Term Management

The City of Fresno has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the River West property. If at any time during the 20-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	---	$30,948	$30,948
Construction	$5,550,000	$3,608,632	$9,158,632
Construction Engineering	---	$1,618,954	$1,618,954
Total	$5,550,000	$5,258,534	$10,808,534

Non-WCB funders include:

- City of Fresno - $184,784
- SJRC - $5,073,750

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

- Senate: Senator Shannon Grove, District 12
- Assembly: Assemblymember Jim Patterson, District 8

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.

27. Watsonville Slough Trails and Gateway **Public Access – Implementation**

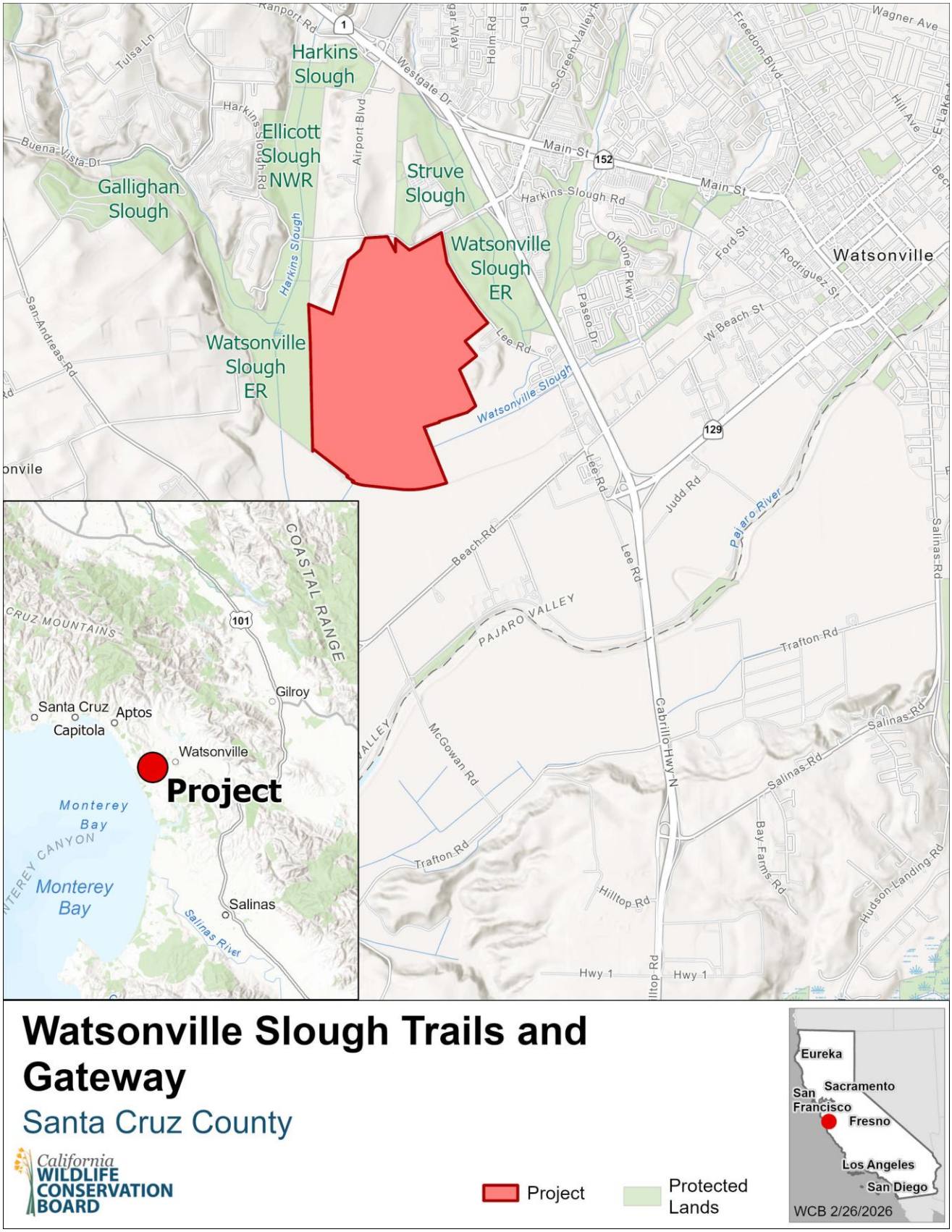
WCB Grant: $4,880,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Landowner: Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Location: West of Watsonville (less than 1 mile)
County: Santa Cruz

Project Highlights

- New construction of a 5-mile trail network and supporting amenities to provide free access to nature at the Watsonville Slough Farm property.
- Site design and future educational programming were shaped through extensive local engagement and collaboration with community stakeholders.
- Previous investments by WCB in the property include acquisition and planning activities.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the project is less than a mile from several DAC and SDAC block groups and will serve residents of areas scoring in the 81st percentile on CalEnviroScreen. In Watsonville, California State Parks' Factfinder lists just 1.4 park acres per 1,000 people.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the property lies within the ancestral territory of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, and the Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT) participates in stewardship of the property. AMLT and other tribes in the region will support the development of educational programming and interpretation.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Targets: P1.1, P1.3, P2.1, P3.1


Harkins Slough
Ellicott Slough NWR
Gallighan Slough
Struve Slough
Watsonville Slough ER
Watsonville Slough ER
Watsonville
Harkins Slough Rd
Main St
Lee Rd
Watsonville Slough
Beach Rd
Judd Rd
Pajaro River
PAJARO VALLEY
Trafton Rd
Salinas Rd
Cabrillo Hwy N
Hilltop Rd
Hwy 1
COASTAL RANGE
CRUZ MOUNTAINS
Santa Cruz
Aptos
Capitola
Gilroy
Watsonville
Project
Monterey Bay
Monterey Bay
Salinas
Salinas River
Watsonville Slough Trails and Gateway
Santa Cruz County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Watsonville Slough Trails and Gateway (Project) is located at Watsonville Slough Farm, a 490-acre property adjacent to the City of Watsonville city limits and CDFW's Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve. In 2010, WCB and other funding partners helped the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC) acquire the property, protecting it from development. One of the original commitments made by LTSCC and partners upon acquisition was that Watsonville Slough Farm would one day be open to the public for outdoor recreation.

The Project will create free access to nature with bilingual environmental interpretation and education opportunities for Watsonville's diverse and historically under-resourced community. The City of Watsonville is installing a bike and pedestrian trail directly to the Project site, addressing the lack of accessible nearby parklands. The new amenities and programming will enable Pajaro Valley residents and visitors to forge a deeper connection to the wildlife-friendly organic agriculture, vibrant habitat, and diverse wildlife of this regionally significant birding and wildlife area.

- The centerpiece of the Project is a welcome area and trailhead (the "Gateway") with amenities including flush restrooms, drinking water, picnic areas, amphitheater seating for classes, ADA parking and pathways, and kiosks with maps and bilingual interpretation.
- From the Gateway, visitors will be able to access a new 5-mile trail system winding among the organic farm fields and the restored grasslands and wetlands. Two boardwalks will be installed to bridge the sloughs, which, in addition to three wildlife viewing and fishing platforms, will enable visitors to get up-close views of the wetlands and wildlife while minimizing impacts to wetland habitat important for California red-legged frog and other native species. A secondary picnic area and additional restroom will be located at the Cypress Hilltop.
- Local organizations will play key roles in activating the space through educational programming and volunteer engagement. Additionally, the Amah Mutsun Land Trust will have access to spaces on the property for cultural activities, ceremonies, stewardship of culturally significant plants, and youth education. LTSCC and partners plan to deliver environmental education programming to 2,500 - 5,000 students annually.

Long-Term Management

LTSCC has an existing Management Plan which guides management actions for the property. Over the course of the Project, they will develop a Public Access Management Plan to address the additional demands and upkeep of the new amenities. Ongoing maintenance and management will also be supported by non-profit partners. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, LTSCC 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
Gateway Area Construction	$2,465,850	$3,363,848	$5,829,698
Trail System Construction	$1,697,236	$2,165,399	$3,862,635
Construction Mobilization	$398,250	$398,250	$796,500
Project Management	$251,489	$183,510	$434,999
Indirect Costs	$67,175	---	$67,175
Total	$4,880,000	$6,111,007	$10,991,007

Non-WCB funders include:

- California Natural Resources Agency - $1,200,000
- Monterey Bay Master Gardeners - $150,000
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County - $2,261,007
- California State Coastal Conservancy - $2,500,000 (pending)

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Noelle Chambers, Executive Director, Amah Mutsun Land Trust
- Assemblymember Dawn Addis, District 30
- Felipe Hernandez, Chair, County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors
- Kimberly DeSerpa, Second District, County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors
- Jeff Gaffney, County Parks Supervisor, County of Santa Cruz
- Nick Calubaquib, Deputy City Manager, City of Watsonville
- Lisa Lurie, Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- Nancy Faulstich, Director, Regeneración
- Jonathan Pilch, Executive Director, Watsonville Wetlands Watch
- Mireya Gomez-Contreras, Executive Director, Esperanza Community Farms
- Atticus Rotoli, Board President, UC Master Gardeners of Monterey and Santa Cruz

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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

State Government

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

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.

28. La Grange Salmonid Habitat Restoration Phase 2a **Restoration – Implementation**

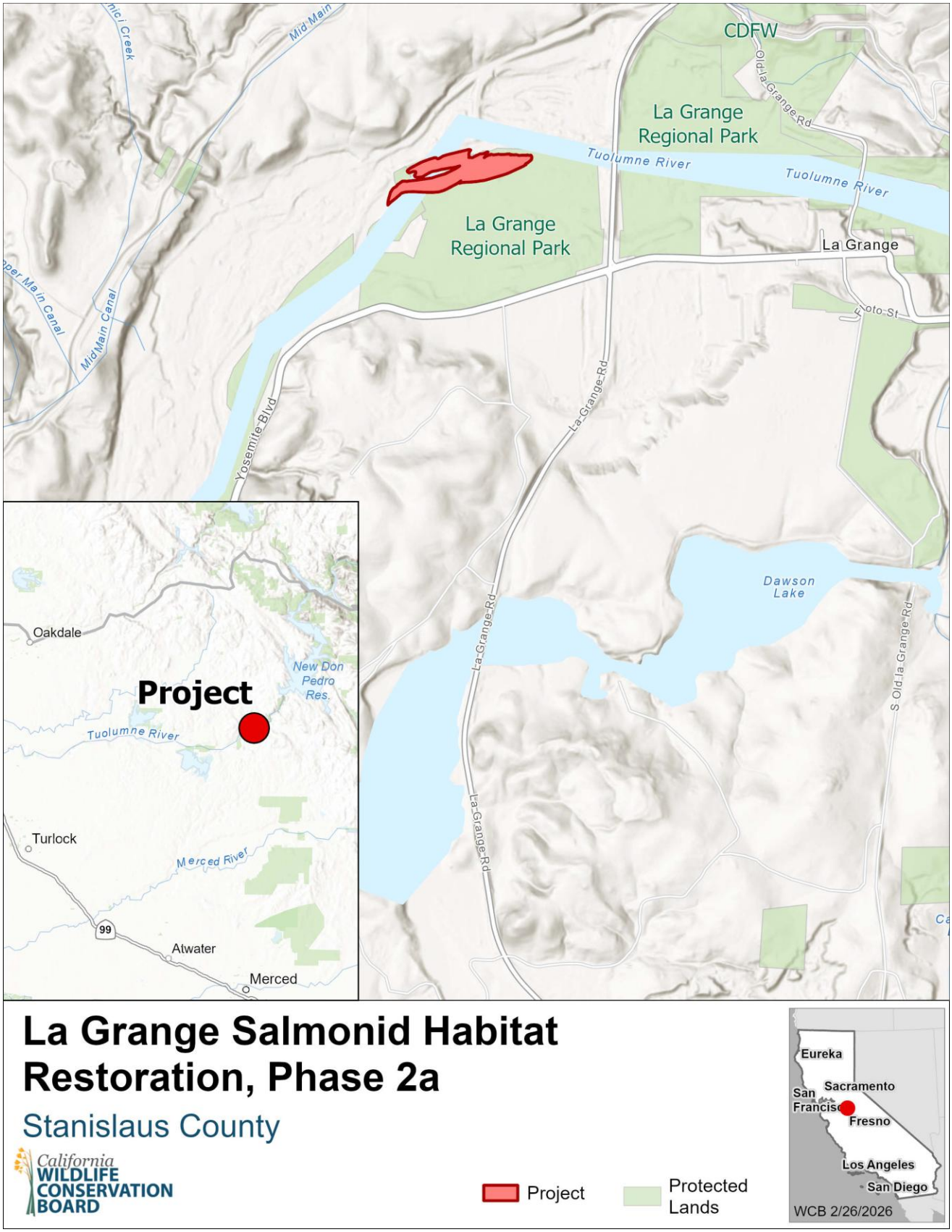
WCB Grant: $3,654,000
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: Yosemite River Alliance
Landowner: Stanislaus County, CDFW, Private Landowner
Location: 0.5 miles west of La Grange
County: Stanislaus

Project Highlights

- Restore 0.23 miles (3 acres) of the Tuolumne River and surrounding 5 acres of floodplain to benefit spawning and rearing migratory salmonids
- Reconnect a reach of the Tuolumne River to its historic floodplain
- Key species: Fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the project is in a SDAC and will reduce its flood and pollution exposure.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Chicken Ranch Rancheria Band of Me Wuk Indians will provide traditional ecological knowledge and conduct monitoring during project implementation.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.2


CDFW
La Grange Regional Park
Tuolumne River
La Grange Regional Park
La Grange
Old La Grange Rd
Mid Main
Mid Main Canal
Yosemite Blvd
La Grange Rd
Dawson Lake
S Old La Grange Rd
Oakdale
Project
New Don Pedro Res.
Tuolumne River
Turlock
Merced River
99
Atwater
Merced
La Grange Salmonid Habitat Restoration, Phase 2a
Stanislaus County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead have declined significantly in the Tuolumne River over the past several decades largely as a result of dredge mining. This mining activity has created disconnected floodplains that are loaded with tailings and a river channel with few spawning areas or long backwater pools. The project will improve geomorphic, hydrologic, and biologic functionality to the Tuolumne River and its surrounding floodplain by:

- Creating 0.23 miles (3 acres) of river habitat.
- Constructing 4 acres of new low floodplain habitat.
- Creating 1 acre of high floodplain habitat.
- Revegetating 5 acres with native plants.
- Returning hydrologic function to the river channel and floodplains.
- Reconnecting the river to its historic floodplain.
- Increasing groundwater recharge on restored floodplains.
- Creating floodplains that will reduce pollution exposure of surrounding communities by filtering out pollutants.

Long-Term Management

The Yosemite River Alliance has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-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	$184,754	$66,012	$250,766
Permitting	$108,607	$2,900	$111,507
Pre-Construction Surveys	$327,180	---	$327,180
Engineering and Environmental	$44,685	$40,370	$85,055
Construction	$2,903,520	$370,852	$3,274,372
As-Built Report	$25,000	---	$25,000

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Maintenance and Monitoring Plan	$18,000	---	$18,000
Indirect Costs	$42,254	---	$42,254
Total	$3,654,000	$480,134	$4,134,134

Non-WCB funders include:
- Applicant - $2,000
- National Fish and Wildlife Federation - $478,134

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:
- Erika Holcombe, Fish Biologist/Habitat Restoration Coordinator, Lodi Fish and Wildlife Office, USFWS
- Bernard Aguilar, Habitat Restoration Coordinator – Region 4, CDFW
- Amy Bailey, Environmental Program Manager, Department of Water Resources
- Tera Chumley, Director, Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation
- Brad Koehn, General Manager, Turlock Irrigation District
- David M. Boucher, President, Tuolumne River Conservancy
- Ron Zanker, Landowner, La Grange, CA
- Bob Cole and Christine Stevenson, Residents, La Grange, CA

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA

CDFW, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, 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
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heath Flora, District 9

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.

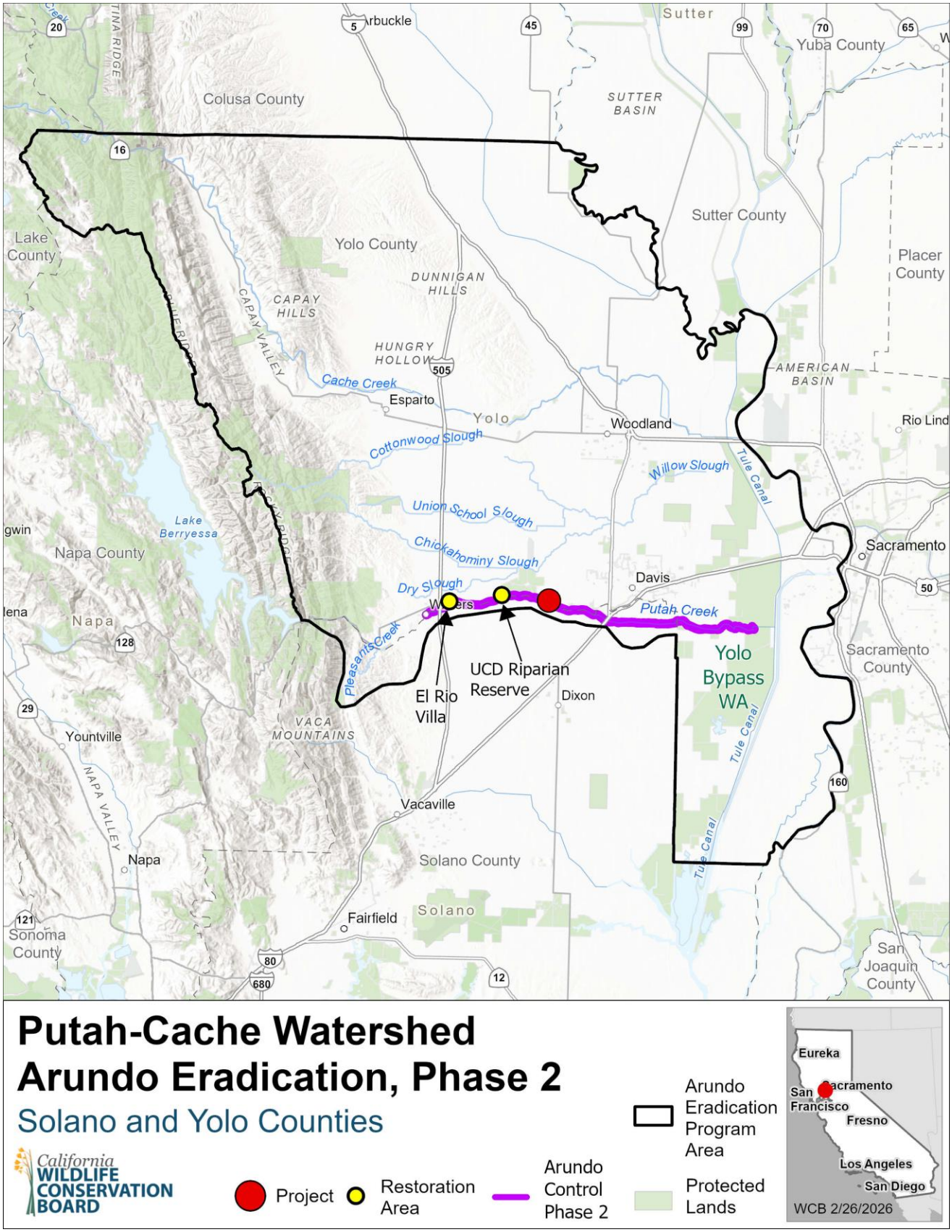
29. Putah-Cache Watershed Arundo Eradication, Phase 2 **Restoration – Implementation**
WCB Grant: $1,800,000
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f)
Grantee: Yolo County Resource Conservation District
Landowner: Various, public and private
Location: 2 miles east of Winters
Counties: Yolo, Solano

Project Highlights

- In December 2025, Chinook salmon returned to Putah Creek in record numbers (over 2,150 individuals documented)
- Project will fully eradicate arundo from Putah Creek
- Project will improve access to nature for underserved residents of the Yolo County Housing Authority and improve habitat at the UC Davis Riparian Reserve
- Habitats restored: 10 acres of riparian habitat with a native forb understory for pollinators
- Key species: Chinook salmon and pollinators
- Supports the Putah Creek Accord and principles of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program through habitat modifications that improve waterflows, streamside habitat, and instream conditions for salmon

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, project is located within a SDAC according to the DWR DAC Mapping Tool and will reduce fire and flood risk and improve access to nature for underserved communities.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is a funding partner and will serve as a tribal monitor as needed.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2, P2.1, C2.1


Putah-Cache Watershed
Arundo Eradication, Phase 2
Solano and Yolo Counties
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Restoration Area
Arundo Control Phase 2
Arundo Eradication Program Area
Protected Lands
Eureka
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026
Colusa County
Yolo County
Sutter County
Yuba County
Placer County
Lake County
Napa County
Solano County
Sacramento County
San Joaquin County
Sonoma County
Esparto
Woodland
Davis
Dixon
Vacaville
Fairfield
Yountville
Napa
Rio Linda
Sacramento
Cache Creek
Cottonwood Slough
Willow Slough
Union School Slough
Chickahominy Slough
Dry Slough
Putah Creek
Pleasants Creek
Tule Canal
Lake Berryessa
SUTTER BASIN
DUNNIGAN HILLS
CAPAY HILLS
CAPAY VALLEY
HUNGRY HOLLOW
AMERICAN BASIN
VACA MOUNTAINS
NAPA VALLEY
El Rio Villa
UCD Riparian Reserve
Yolo Bypass WA

Project Description

The Putah-Cache Watershed Arundo Eradication, Phase 2 (Project) site has over 9 acres of arundo scattered along 19 miles of lower Putah Creek and riparian habitat that has been invaded by other noxious invasive plants that are degrading valuable aquatic and terrestrial habitat, limiting access to nature, and increasing flood and fire risk to nearby vulnerable communities and public land. The Project builds on Phase 1 that was funded in part by WCB and controlled over 64 acres of arundo in the Cache Creek and Putah Creek watersheds of Yolo County and revegetated 6 acres with native forbs and pole cuttings to reduce erosion and increase pollinator habitat. The Project targets Putah Creek because a) it is an important riparian corridor in Yolo County that provides a band of contiguous habitat in an agriculture-dominated landscape, b) it supports increasing numbers of Chinook salmon every year, and c) full eradication of arundo is highly likely given previous investments during Phase 1 and from other projects that have successfully controlled arundo in upstream reaches. In addition to treating arundo and other noxious weeds, the Project will restore 10 acres of riparian habitat on public land at two sites: 1) El Rio Villa which is owned by the Yolo County Housing Authority and provides housing for migrant workers, and 2) the Russel Ranch unit of the UC Davis Putah Creek Riparian Reserve. The Project will improve access to nature on public lands, reduce fire and flood risk, and enhance ecosystem function, wildlife habitat, and the health and resilience of the only salmon-bearing creek in Yolo County by:

- Employing integrated pest management practices to eradicate arundo and control tree of heaven, tamarisk, eucalyptus, and nonnative forbs such as thistles and perennial pepperweed. Herbicide will be used as described in the Project's Herbicide Use Questionnaire.
- Restoring two, 5-acre sites to structurally diverse native riparian habitat with an understory of native pollinator habitat.
- Hosting community workdays to engage nearby residents and tribal members in the habitat restoration and maintenance of each restored site.
- Mulching 1,850 linear feet of informal trail at El Rio Villa to improve creek access for the community.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of invasive plant treatments and establishment of plantings.
- Retreating invasive plants and replanting natives as needed during the 3-year adaptive management period.

Long-Term Management

The Yolo County RCD has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the treated and restored properties. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, Yolo County RCD 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	$109,905	$60,000	$169,905
Coordination, Outreach, and Permitting	$395,955	$65,000	$460,955
Invasive Plant Control and Habitat Restoration	$966,204	$673,779	$1,639,983
General Expenses	$182,834	$55,000	$237,834
Indirect	$145,102	---	$145,102
Total	$1,800,000	$853,779	$2,653,779

Non-WCB funders include:

- Yolo County RCD - $187,779
- Solano County RCD - $86,000
- Solano County Water Agency - $500,000
- Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation - $40,000
- Putah Creek Council - $5,000
- UC Davis - $35,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Anthony Roberts, Tribal Chairman, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
- Senator Christopher Cabaldon, 3rd District, California State Senate
- Supervisor Lucas Frerichs, 2nd District, Yolo County Board of Supervisors
- Kristin Sicke, Executive Officer, Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency
- Michael Webb, Administrative Officer, County of Yolo
- Ian Evans, Executive Director, Yolo County Housing Authority
- Mathew Tuggle, PE, Engineering Manager, Solano County Department of Resource Management
- Kristine DeGuerre, Environmental Services Manager, City of Winters
- Doug Johnson, Executive Director, California Invasive Plant Council
- Pamela C. Muick, PhD, President, Jepson Chapter, California Native Plant Council

- Max Stevenson, Putah Creek Streamkeeper, Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee
- Paul Havemann, Director, Stebbins Cold Canyon Reserve, UC Davis Natural Reserve System
- Jonathan Flora, Chairman, Yolo County Fire Safe Council
- Chris Alford, Interim Executive Director, Yolo Habitat Conservancy

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Yolo County RCD, 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.

The Solano County Water Agency, as lead agency, prepared a Programmatic EIR (PEIR) for a portion of the Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the PEIR 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 Christopher Cabaldon, District 3
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, District 4
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lori D. Wilson, District 11

Staff Recommendation

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

Herbicide Use Questionnaire
Yolo County RCD Putah-Cache Arundo Eradication Program Phase 2

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

Putah Creek

Putah Creek, I-505 to Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area: Large overstory weeds such as tamarisk, arundo, eucalyptus and tree of heaven are spread in patches down along the creek on both sides and mixed with native trees. In places, the arundo and tamarisk is 100% cover. Understory weed composition has occasional patches of native sedges and grasses but is roughly 75% non-native mustards, thistles, pepperweed and annual grasses, and will need to be controlled on the selected restoration sites. Sensitive plants are the host of the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle, the elderberry bush. this is also potential habitat for western pond turtle, Swainson's hawk, White tailed kites and other raptors. The elderberry bushes will be mapped and are always protected during work.

Primary Native Plant Species Present	
Plant species	**Common name**
Baccharis salicifolia	Mulefat
Elymus triticoides	Creeping Wild Rye
Salix spp	Willow
Rosa californica	CA wild rose
Artemesia douglasiana	CA Mugwort
Populus fremontii	Cottonwood
Sambucus Mexicana	Elderberry
Quercus lobota	Valley Oak

On the unplanted banks, the current cover of native plants is approximately 25%. The overstory is dominated by a mix of the native trees listed above (roughly 65%), and about 35% cover of invasive large trees such as eucalyptus spp., tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), catalpa spp., and of course tamarisk and arundo. Approximately 85% of the understory area is dominated by mustards and thistles: Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus)*, yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), milk thistle *(Silybum marianum*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens),* Bermuda grass *(Cynodon dactylon*) and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*), and 10% is covered by invasive annual grasses, such as *Avena fatua*, *Lolium perenne*, and *Bromus diandrus*. These non-native invasive plant species provide little or no habitat value to most native wildlife, particularly the pollinator insects and native bird species this project seeks to support. The native riparian plants and native grasses with which these species will be replaced will provide superior native wildlife habitat.

There are no known listed rare plant species within miles of these sites, as they are surrounded by intensive agriculture and the streambanks are heavily invaded with non-native plants, which outcompete native plants.

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

Species	**Treatment method**	**Herbicide**	**Herbicide concentration**	**Adjuvant**	**Adjuvant concentration**	**Application rate**	**Timing of application**
Arundo	Cut stump	Imazapyr	10%	Hasten EA	5%	< 6 pints/acre	Late summer/early fall
Arundo	Foliar application	Glyphosate	2%	Hasten EA	1%	< 8 quarts/acre	Late summer/early fall
Tamarisk	Cut stump	Imazapyr	10%	Hasten EA	5%	< 6 pints/acre	Late summer/early fall
Tamarisk	Foliar application	Glyphosate	2%	Hasten EA	1%	< 8 quarts/acre	Late summer/early fall
Eucalyptus spp., tree of heaven	Stem injection-One cut per every three inches of tree truck diameter; 1 ml added to each cut.	Imazapyr or Vastlan or Glyphosate	100%	None	NA	< 6 quarts/acre- highly unlikely to get to this rate when applying by the ml	Late summer/early fall
Perennial pepperweed stinkwort, Mustard and wild radish	Foliar- Spot treatment with backpack sprayer. Targeted to broad leaf invasives for spot spraying	Vastlan	2%	Hasten EA	1%	< 6 quarts/ acre	When target is actively growing
Yellow star thistle, Italian thistle, milk thistle, mustard	Spot treatment with backpack sprayer. Targeted to broad leaf invasives for spot spraying	Capstone	Spot spray at 4%			5 pints per acre	Before and after restoration planting, as needed

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

Glyphosate formulated for use near water is used for foliar treatment on large woody species because imazapyr is the only other aquatic labeled herbicide product that can effectively control these plants. However, imazapyr has soil residual actively that will negatively impact restoration efforts; in other words, one cannot plant young plants into an area that has been treated with imazapyr. Also, bare open ground is very susceptible to erosion, which should be avoided along creek banks. Glyphosate has no soil residual activity (DiTomaso, J.M., G.B. Kyser et all. 2013. Weed Control in Natural Areas of the Western United States. Weed Research and Information Center, University of California. 544pp.).

Vastlan is a broadleaf herbicide that is labeled for aquatic use and controls most of our target broadleaf weeds such as pepperweed and thistles. The majority of the herbicide treatment along the creek banks will use Vastlan (Triclopyr choline) which is a chemical formulation approved by the US EPA for use near water.

Aquatic formulations of surfactants will be used to improve translocation of the herbicide, with marking dye added to the mix to assure adequate coverage. Marking dye also allows applicators to ensure that no drift occurs to non-target vegetation. This work will typically occur in the late spring or early summer, as well as early fall, to achieve the best results. For perennial pepperweed, herbicide applications in the late spring when perennial pepperweed is flowering but before the plant sets seed and slows its growth for the summer have been shown to be most effective.

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

The glyphosate used by the Yolo County RCD is an aquatic approved product approved by the EPA.

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

Products that do not contain nonylphenol will be used to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts. We prioritize use of crop oils that are regulated at federal and state levels and do not contain nonylphenol. The adjuvant used by the YCRCD is called Hasten EA and is also approved by the EPA for use near water.

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

Annual weeds can be mowed or weed whacked using power tools; this is one of the most common non-chemical techniques used by YCRCD staff. The goal of this technique is to cut the plants to the ground, to the point where they cannot resprout or make seeds. Cutting tools, if used at the right time in the plant's life cycle, reduce weed biomass and control of seed production and dispersal. The philosophy of using cutting tools for invasive weed control comes from the understanding that plants get energy from photosynthesis. Repeated removal of aboveground biomass can eventually kill the plant by starving the roots of carbohydrates. Under the right conditions and with the right timing, cutting can limit the reproduction of invasive plants. With persistence, this technique can be used to eradicate small stands of certain weeds. It can also stop the expansion of some non-natives along the edge of an infestation. Multiple and regular work are required for multiple years in order for mowing and weed whacking to be effective as a weed control tool. This repeated mowing is expensive, time consuming, and hard work. These techniques may also impact pollinators and wildlife by adding disturbance to wildlife, so careful surveys of the area will occur before stepping out with equipment. Wildlife surveys must be done before any spring mowing so nesting birds and emerging reptiles are not harmed, although they may be displaced. Resources (funds and labor), consistency, and persistence are necessary for using mowing and weed whacking effectively as a management tool.

Adding drip irrigation to a restoration site will support the robust establishment of native vegetation. Ultimately, the establishment of healthy native vegetation is intended to physically reduce weed establishment by competing with and shading out many weed species, transitioning the restoration site to non-chemical weed control after the implementation period.

Chemical treatment with hand-operated, non-powered backpacks creates less disturbance on a site than motorized equipment. This team uses a combination of weed whacking, mowing and judicious, targeted use of herbicide to reduce and control aggressive invasive plants and promote native plants. The team has expert knowledge on the best biological timing to use these tools to prevent negative impacts on wildlife and will plan activities around protecting the wildlife on site.

Manual removal is not recommended for large, deep-rotted perennial species; most can regenerate from vegetative plant parts left behind underground. If a weed is able to reproduce vegetatively, there is a significant chance a grub hoe, or other similar tool, will not be an effective and may even spread plant fragments around. This includes our target weeds, which are deeply rooted perennials like arundo, tamarisk and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*). This also includes weeds that have underground storage structures, (rhizomes, nutlets, bulbs, or tubers) such as nutsedges (*Cyperus* spp.), which is found in the project area. And it includes weeds that form stolons or resprout from nodes, such as Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) which is also present in the project area, since the chopping action of the hoe can sever runners and numerous plant fragments may re-root in the soil.

Manual removal is also very time- and labor-intensive and therefore significantly costlier compared to other techniques. Manual removal becomes dramatically less practical as the patch size to control becomes larger. Another disadvantage of pulling whole plants is

erosion. If soil is disturbed by plant removal, then there is a risk of erosion. Erosion risk is higher on steeper slopes. Level of erosion is directly correlated with density of the target population being removed. Large woody weeds would have to be pulled or scooped out with a backhoe and our permit issued by CDFA does not allow us to use large equipment adjacent to creeks.

In small areas, manual removal will be combined with other weed control technique. The flush of weed seed emergence following soil disturbance associated with this technique may be particularly well suited to control with chemical methods that are effective and efficient at killing seedlings, thereby killing two generations of weeds in a single season. Manual removal will also be used following large-scale activities or less selective techniques like mowing or broadcast herbicide application to remove late emerging individuals and resprouts.

Manual removal, however, will not be employed on large weed populations where control is unsustainable or in species with extensive root systems or underground vegetative reproductive structures. It will not be used on plants that are already dispersing seeds unless seeds can be contained or there is already a large soil seed bank.

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

The Yolo County RCD, in accordance with the law, holds a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the California State Water Board. We collect samples before, during and after a spray event along creek banks in cases where herbicide might get in the water. These samples are tested by an independent lab. After completing 5 treatment seasons in our current arundo management program, our samples have not tested positive for the herbicides we use.

Project partners will follow an integrated pest management plan for this project, using an adaptive framework that considers site management objectives, human and wildlife health and safety, and local, state and federal regulations as well as multi-benefit outcomes. We incorporate monitoring to ensure a science-based management approach that minimizes potential negative impacts and maximizes benefits.

The Yolo County RCD's IPM program is a standardized system for decision-making for the adaptive management of populations or behavior of any native and non-native organisms that are incompatible with a site's resource management, public health, aesthetic, and conservation goals. IPM is a long-term, science-based decision-making system that assesses pest control alternatives and monitors site conditions to effectively control a target pest with minimum impact to human health, the environment, and non-target organisms. IPM methodology includes the following elements:

1 Correctly identify the pest and understand its life cycle;
2 Determine and map the extent of the problem or infestation;
3 Establish the tolerance level for control actions;

4 Utilize the least toxic suite of treatment methods to control the pest at the most vulnerable stages of its life cycle; and
5 Monitor populations and effectiveness of treatment methods.

IPM requires knowledge of the biology/ecology of each pest, the available techniques for controlling them, and understanding of the secondary effects of the control techniques. The effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of control methods are important considerations as they apply to the specific site conditions and life history of the target pest. IPM requires monitoring site conditions before, during, and after treatment to determine if objectives are being met and if methods need to be revised. IPM requires that non-chemical methods be considered in addition to pesticides. If pesticides are necessary to meet a pest control objective, the potential for harm to workers and the public are carefully considered, as are effects on the environment, and then the least toxic and most effective, efficient, and target-specific pesticide is chosen.

The YCRCD has been studying, monitoring, and controlling all target species for management included in the project area for decades. From this vast experience we have gained expert, local knowledge on the most effective methods of control while protecting our sensitive resources and restoring critical habitat for many listed species. To minimize known effects to aquatic resources, only aquatic-approved herbicide will be used when in proximity to open water and/or moisture-saturated soil. Effects on non-target plant species is minimized by working with professional contractors with whom we have worked for many years, and YCRCD habitat restoration staff works side by side with contractors, or does treatment in house, during all weed control activities, and conducts rigorous pre- and post-treatment monitoring. This monitoring will also include pre-treatment wildlife surveys, wildlife baseline surveys, and monitoring during treatments to evaluate the response of wildlife to our habitat restoration activities.

We always consider non-chemical methods first as part of our framework for multi-benefit outcomes and will be mowing and weed whacking before plants set seed. When herbicides are deemed necessary, such as when controlling perennial pepperweed, safety concerns for people and the environment are carefully weighed and the least toxic and most targeted, effective, and efficient products and techniques are selected.

- Herbicide application rates will be carefully calibrated.
- All applicators are professionals trained and supervised by a state-licensed Qualified Applicator.
- All pesticide use laws are mandated by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). These laws are set forth to protect the environment, and the public, and are required by the County Agricultural Commissioner to be followed to maintain a Pesticide Permit. Applicators are trained using the A1-A12 Pesticide Safety Series from DPR. We are also required by law to follow the herbicide label directions with the requirements needed to safely apply the product with minimal exposure to nontarget and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Best management practices will be used at all times. Strict adherence to pesticide labels and instructions will be followed. Guidelines in the BLM Manual 901 and H-9011-1 will be adhered to. Herbicide applications within management area boundaries will be limited to

wind conditions less than 7 miles per hour. Herbicide will be carefully applied a safe distance away from existing native plants.
- Monitoring will be conducted on-site and at reference locations to examine responses to the restoration activities, including invasive species management. A pre- post-comparison will be employed using established protocols.

On large perennials, herbicide treatments will be carried out by hand crews using backpack sprayers or ATVs with small tanks and hoses. Tamarisk, arundo and perennial pepperweed are the most difficult species to control and require several seasons of treatment before restoration work can begin. Their deep roots enable the plants to re-sprout after initial treatment and these re-sprouts will be treated each year; because of these deep roots, alternative cultural, mechanical and biological IPM methods are either not practical or effective.

Stem injection will be used on very large woody species such as eucalyptus. Stem injection consists of cutting or drilling into the tree trunk and injecting a small amount of undiluted chemical. The standard is to make one cut around the truck for each three inches of tree truck diameter and inject one milliliter to each cut. This is an effective method to control tree of heaven as well, and there is no drift or harm to any other species.

Additional weed management will be required less often and over smaller areas given the established native cover; where needed, weed management will continue to follow the IPM strategy described above.

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

Scientific research has demonstrated that non-chemical control methods are ineffective in providing long-term control of most of the invasive weeds that currently dominate Putah Creek. Invasive mustards, stinkwort and thistles occupy a large extent of the project area and are too dense for hand removal except around new native plants. Plants that are cut by mowing will re-grow, but some success can be achieved by carefully timed mowing and weed whacking. However, the ground around riparian areas is often too uneven and rough to pull a mower over, and it is expensive and painful for crews to weed whack acres at a time.

Non-chemical methods will be employed where possible to reduce the use of chemicals, including mowing and targeted weed whacking in site preparation as well as during the maintenance phase. A non-chemical approach that solely uses manual and mechanical methods was evaluated and rejected because it would be ineffective in controlling invasive species on-site and would impact native vegetation and the biodiversity that relies on that vegetation.

Native species have been established in the literature as seed-limited (Seabloom et al. 2003), and seed limitation is a major issue for native restoration (Stromberg et al. 2007,

Eviner 2016). A single large yellow star thistle plant can produce 100,000 seeds, which, if even a fraction of those seeds germinates on-site, would derail the establishment of the native plants and require years more work and effort to control. Preventing exotic forb growth with broadleaf herbicide is thus a highly effective method to ensure long-term success.

The effective control of large woody invasive plants such as arundo and tamarisk cannot be done solely with non-chemical methods of control because of their size, density, area cover and their ability to resprout if not chemically treated and killed. There are also ample examples in the scientific literature, land management reports, and from our own experience that non-chemical use alone cannot control the occurrence and expansion of invasive species such as those targeted by our proposed project. However, YCRCD staff are committed to supporting native plants for wildlife habitat and can control invasive plants with almost zero damage to non-target species.

Here are some potential scenarios of attempting to control our main target large weeds on the site without herbicide:

The predominant invasive species impacting remnant riparian habitat in the watershed is arundo. YCRCD has researched multiple methods for the invasive species removal including grazing, tarping, mechanical removal, biomass removal, and the judicious use of chemical growth inhibitors.

Non-chemical methods to control arundo have been attempted for many years in many regions of California, and none have had documented long-term success. The extensive root mass of this massive perennial grass makes it very prone to resprouting if the roots are not completely removed or killed (DiTomaso and Healy 2003). The literature among the scientific and practitioner community is clear on the need for herbicide to effectively eradicate arundo. Other, less effective, methods include:

Tarps: The use of heavy plastic tarps to kill vegetation can be effective, but if it is successful, it is non-selective and kills everything under the tarp. Cal-IPC (2020) notes that tarps should not be attempted on infestations (of any weed) larger than 0.01 acres, and that the practice poses a serious threat to reptiles and amphibians who can be trapped and killed under the tarps. Colleagues in nearby counties have tried using tarps to kill arundo and found that it not only did not die under 6 months of tarping, but winter storms damaged tarps, moved them into the streams, and created a significant trash problem (Mendocino County RCD, personal communication). In addition, arundo must be pruned before the tarps can be laid over at patch, and pruning arundo stimulates its growth, and it will quickly pierce and grow through tarping plastic.

Goats: Arundo, like most perennial grasses, is very effective at re-sprouting after being mowed or grazed; it is thus unlikely to be eradicated via grazing by any livestock. The only livestock species with the possibility of finding arundo palatable are goats, and it is still so bitter that it is actively researched as an anthelmintic to control worms and other parasites in livestock, including goats (Badar et al 2021). There are no documented cases of goats

effectively controlling arundo, and when put in a riparian setting, the goats will prefer eating any native plants there.

Mechanical removal: It is nearly impossible to mechanically remove all rhizomes from an established arundo plant (DiTomaso and Healy 2023), and particularly in riparian areas where subsurface water is available to root fragments left behind, the likelihood of re-sprouting is very high. The heavy equipment necessary for mechanical removal, such as a backhoe, causes tremendous soil disturbance to streambanks, and is therefore highly discouraged by State and Federal regulatory permitting agencies as a means of control. Our streambank alteration permit does not allow it. The impacts to both the soil and the non-target vegetation of a riparian ecosystem make mechanical removal of large arundo patches both infeasible and ecologically irresponsible.

The approach that minimizes impacts to non-target native vegetation and wildlife, is most effective and least costly has been found to be a combination of biomass removal and the targeted application of herbicide by trained professionals. This method occurs in two stages: (1) reduction and/or cutting/removal of biomass, which is usually used for dense stands and (2) treatment with herbicide to control the plant. Typically, biomass reduction occurs first, followed by herbicide treatment of re-sprouting arundo. Most of our work will have arundo biomass cut and removed by hand or arundo will be treated with herbicide and left in place. Only target non-native plants will be treated. No biomass will be left or deposited in the low flow channel. Small scattered patches of arundo will be treated and left in place to decay naturally.

The herbicide treatment of arundo, tamarisk and other target non-native vegetation will occur primarily in the late summer to fall right before arundo stands go into dormancy including initial treatments and treatments of re-sprouting arundo (referred to as arundo retreatments). Fall herbicide applications have been shown to be more effective as plant resources are moving from above ground biomass to below ground rhizome biomass. Arundo retreatments are typically carried out annually in the fall until 100% control is achieved (2-4 years). Treatment methods include preparing target plants for herbicide application by separating them from native vegetation, using targeted foliar application of herbicide by crews on foot, using highly qualified personnel who have experience treating invasive plants in sensitive riparian habitat, and using herbicides that are approved for use in wetlands such as aquatic-approved formulations of glyphosate, imazapyr and triclopyr that have been shown to be non-toxic or have very low toxicity to fish and fauna. Glyphosate, imazapyr and triclopyr herbicides were chosen due to their efficacy in controlling the target species, low toxicity to non-target organisms, and chemical properties that limit potential impacts to the environment. Triclopyr is a broadleaf herbicide and will not control arundo, while glyphosate and imazapyr will control both grasses and broadleaf plants. EPA aquatic-approved formulations for use near water will be used for all target plants in riparian and wetland areas. Aquatic formulations of surfactants will be used to improve translocation of the herbicide, with marking dye added to the mix to ensure adequate coverage. Marking dye also allows applicators and on-site biological monitors to ensure that no drift occurs to non-target vegetation.

Herbicide treatments will be carried out by trained professional crews using power sprayers mounted on ATVs, side-by-sides (2-person off-road vehicle), or pickup trucks, and in some cases, by hand crews using backpack sprayers. Arundo stands can be reduced by 90% the first year of herbicide treatment, but re-sprouting from the underground root masses is expected to occur the next year. These re-sprouts will be treated each summer. The first flush of regrowth can be extensive, and these re-sprouts will be allowed to grow to about 4-8 ft so that there is enough leaf area for adequate herbicide absorption. Arundo treatment areas will be monitored and retreated as necessary every year during the life of the grant. After the first three years, if the arundo stands appear to be greatly reduced, the protocol could begin treating every other year as necessary until arundo stands have been completely eradicated. Under our landowner agreements, participating landowners agree to treat arundo regrowth appearing in years 5-10 with assistance from the RCD with mapping and biological guidance.

Biological control agents are an exciting control method to restoration practitioners for difficult, widespread plants like arundo, and currently, there are biological control agents for arundo and tamarisk. However, these agents have shown limited success in controlling large populations of our target plants because they tend to work on a very slow time scale.

“The rhizome-, shoot- and leaf-feeding armored scale *Rhizaspidiotus donacis* (Hemiptera: Diaspididae) was released for biological control of invasive arundo (Arundo donax) in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds of the Central Valley of northern California. Although the scale successfully established and dispersed at most sites, they did so 4-8 years after release and now have “potential to negatively impact A. donax” (Moran PJ, Valle DV, Bitume EV, Portman SL, Goolsby JA. 2025). Thus, the timeline is slow and has no guarantee of success.

Similarly, “the shoot-tip galling wasp *Tetramesa romana*, harmless to humans, was released for biological control of arundo in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds of northern California as well as in their Delta” (Moran, P.J. 2025). These too have established in their release site but have not yet caused any arundo mortality.

On the other hand, the tamarisk leaf beetle (Diorhabda spp) has defoliated and killed hundreds of acres of tamarisk in the Southwest. *Diorhabda elongata* was released in the Capay Valley in 2001, and spread and defoliated over 10 river miles of Cache Creek in 2008, but then the population disappeared, and no tamarisk plants were killed.

New agents are being evaluated for perennial pepperweed, but there are no agents available at this time. There is biocontrol available for yellow star thistle, but its use would not complete the task during the timeline of this grant. There is no biocontrol for stinkwort.

A qualified biologist approved by CDFW will oversee work activities when needed to assure that conditions of CDFW and USFWS permits are followed. The biologist will also perform a general habitat assessment survey for suitable habitat for species of concern prior to the start of project activities. If the habitat assessment reveals that there is suitable habitat for a particular species of concern then a more focused survey will be performed prior to project

activities. The biologist will also check on crews daily, reviewing work completed and work planned.

In summary this project will employ a science-based integrated pest management approach that includes manual, mechanical, and chemical treatment of weeds. Steps will be taken to reduce the intensity of herbicide application, and the most targeted, effective, efficient products and techniques will be implemented. A team of experts from Yolo County Resource Conservation District, Solano RCD, and the Solano County Water Agency will guide, implement and monitor the integrated pest management actions. A Licensed California Pest Control Advisor who is experienced in recommending safe herbicides to use in restoration projects will prescribe the proper herbicides when chemical treatment is necessary to achieve restoration goals. All herbicide applicators either hold an applicators license or are trained and supervised by a state licensed Qualified Applicator.

This project supports the State's Nature Based Solutions (30x30) conservation pathway to "Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship."

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

Based in our experience and that of our contractors, the cost of this project will be prohibitively expensive if done using only non-chemical control methods. In terms of cost, we estimate non-chemical methods would result in at least 10x increase in the short-term and long-term maintenance budget, based on budget analysis of previously funded WCB projects, and even this would involve large work crews that would be extraordinarily difficult to hire, train and manage for short term, seasonal work.

8) *Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated past management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project?*

Not at this time, as our herbicide use is relatively uncomplicated, but YCRCD staff have attended meetings with CDFW's PCA and would be happy to reach out to her to discuss herbicide work along Putah Creek should this project be funded.

References

Badar SN, Iqbal Z, Sajid MS, Rizwan HM, Shareef M, Malik MA. 2021. Comparative anthelmintic efficacy of Arundo donax, Areca catechu, and Ferula assa-foetida against Haemonchus contortus. Braz J Vet Parasitol; 30(2).

Cal-IPC 2020. Best Management Practices for Non-Chemical Weed Control. Report to California Department of Pesticide Regulation under grant number 18-PML-G002. 291 pp.

DiTomaso JM and Healy EA. 2003. Aquatic and Riparian Weeds of the West. University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. Publication 3421.

Moran, P.J. 2025. Regrowth of arundo (Arundo donax) after herbicide treatment supports a higher density of the shoot tip-galling wasp Tetramesa romana released for biological control. Southwestern Entomologist. 50(1):104-116. https://doi.org/10.3958/059.050.0133.

Moran PJ, Valle DV, Bitume EV, Portman SL, Goolsby JA. 2025. Establishment and dispersal of the armored scale Rhizaspidiotus donacis for biological control of Arundo donax in northern California. Biocontrol Science and Technology 35(7): 755-776. https://www.doi.org/10.1080/09583157.2025.2514451.

30. Mark West Creek and Wetland Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

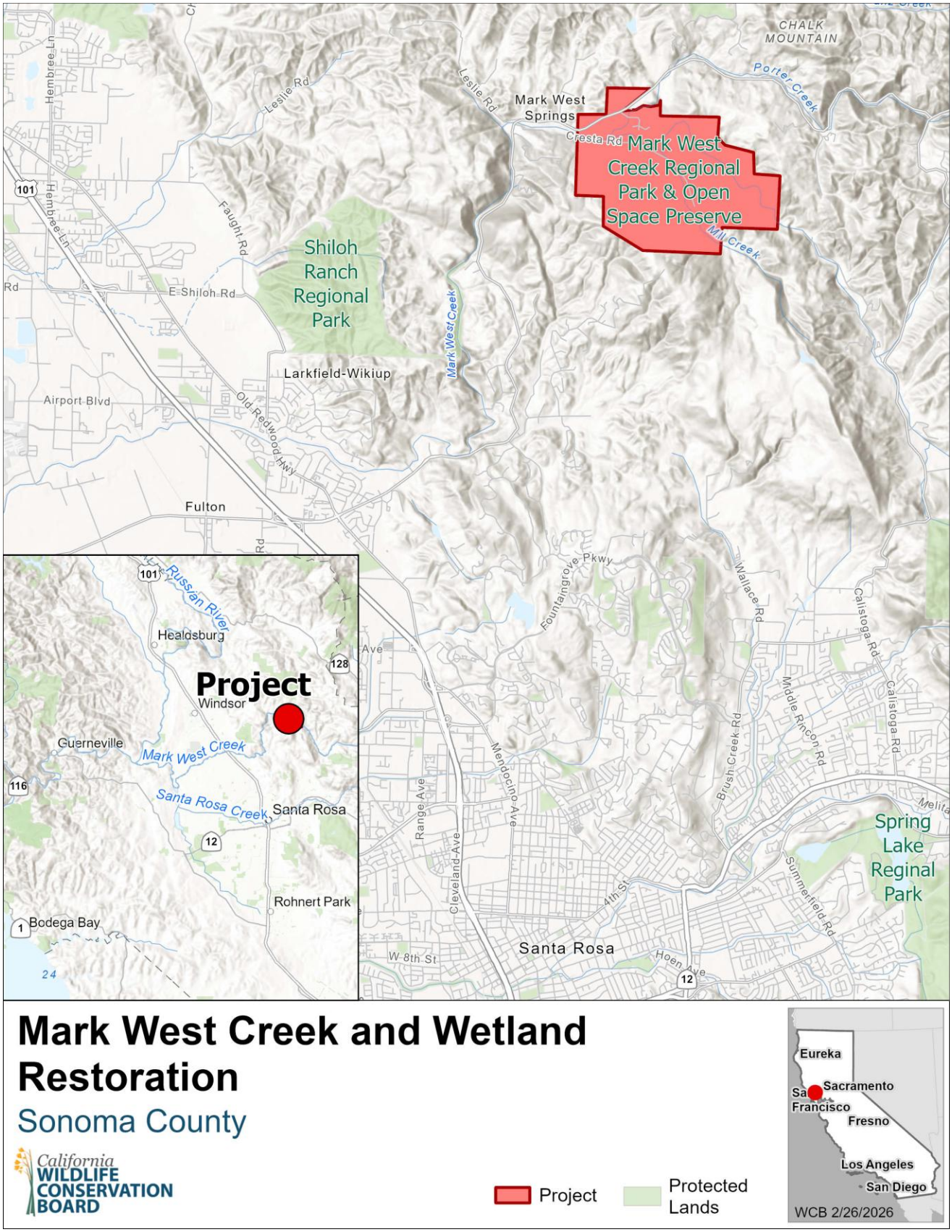
WCB Grant: $1,505,000
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: County of Sonoma, Regional Parks
Landowner: County of Sonoma, Regional Parks
Location: 3 miles northeast of the City of Santa Rosa
County: Sonoma

Project Highlights

- Project addresses channel incision, fire prone overgrown forest, lack of floodplain connectivity, poor salmonid habitat and increasingly dry ephemeral streams through the addition of large woody debris to creeks, removal of flashy fuels, removal of fish passage barriers, and construction of beaver dam analogs. Focus: Mark West Creek, Porter Creek, and Mill Creek.
- Habitats restored: riparian, floodplain, wetlands, oak woodland, and redwood groves.
- Key species: Central California coast coho salmon.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, portion of project located in a DAC. Project site was acquired by Sonoma County Regional parks for inclusion within the Mark West Regional Park and Open Space Preserve. Once open to the public, the park will offer the opportunity for community members to experience a restored landscape that hosts a greater variety of flora and fauna for non-consumptive wildlife recreation
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2, C2.2


CHALK MOUNTAIN
Porter Creek
Mark West Springs
Cresta Rd
Mark West Creek Regional Park & Open Space Preserve
Mill Creek
Leslie Rd
Hembree Ln
Faught Rd
E Shiloh Rd
Shiloh Ranch Regional Park
Mark West Creek
Larkfield-Wikiup
Airport Blvd
Old Redwood Hwy
Fulton
Fountaingrove Pkwy
Wallace Rd
Calistoga Rd
Middle Rincon Rd
Brush Creek Rd
Range Ave
Mendocino Ave
Cleveland Ave
4th St
W 8th St
Santa Rosa
Hoen Ave
Summerfield Rd
Spring Lake Reginal Park
Russian River
Healdsburg
Project
Windsor
Guerneville
Mark West Creek
Santa Rosa Creek
Santa Rosa
Rohnert Park
Bodega Bay
101
128
116
12
1
24
Mark West Creek and Wetland Restoration
Sonoma County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Mark West Creek and Wetland Restoration (Project) site is a stronghold for salmonids in the Russian River (River) watershed, acting as one of the few tributaries to the River that provides high-quality summertime flows. Unfortunately, this area increasingly suffers from declining stream flows and stream disconnection that threaten the site's ability to support salmonids long term. This Project will enhance stream flow and bolster high quality salmonid habitat by:

- Removing trees and shrubs for use as in-stream large woody debris, thereby reducing flashy fuels, arresting channel incision, creating in-stream salmonid habitat, and attenuating peak flows.
- Installing beaver dam analog structures to restore incised channels into wet meadow swales and increase groundwater infiltration.
- Notching or removing relic concrete dams to allow salmonid access to an additional 4 miles of upstream habitat.
- Implementing stream flow monitoring to evaluate effectiveness.

Long-Term Management

The County of Sonoma, Regional Parks has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Property. If at any time during the 20-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	$62,512	$10,000	$72,512
Implementation	$1,142,204	$50,000	$1,192,204
Streamflow Monitoring	$287,784	---	$287,784
Education for Stewardship	$12,500	$10,000	$22,500
Indirect	---	$225,000	$225,000
Total	$1,505,000	$295,000	$1,800,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- County of Sonoma, Regional Parks - $225,000
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - $50,000
- Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation - $20,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Senator Mike McGuire, California State Senate
- Valerie Quinto, Executive Officer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Grant Davis, General Manager, Sonoma Water
- Anne Morkill, Executive Director, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
- Harriet Buckwalter, Co-Chair, Friends of Mark West Watershed
- Lynn Garric, Chair, Upper Mark West Firewise Communities

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

Sonoma County Regional Parks, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, 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 Chris Rogers, 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.

31. Colby Mountain Recreation Trails **Public Access – Implementation**

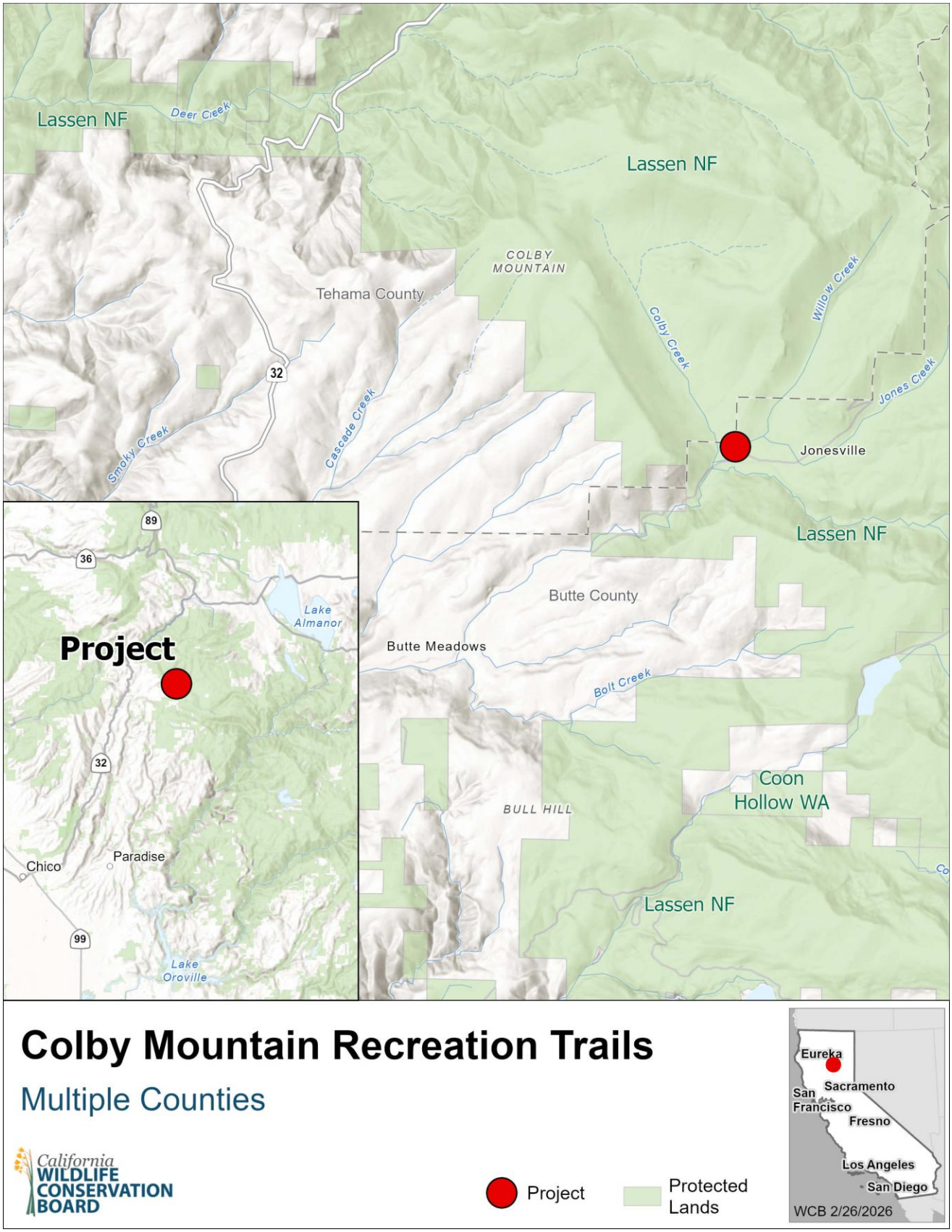
WCB Grant: $2,670,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Butte County Resource Conservation District (BCRCD)
Landowner: U.S. Forest Service
Location: 38 miles northeast of Chico
Counties: Butte, Tehama, Plumas

Project Highlights

- Improves access to public lands in a region that has been highly impacted by wildfires.
- Trailheads include ADA amenities and portions of the trail network are accessible to adaptive mountain bikes (aMTBs).
- Provides environmental education opportunities for students from Chico and surrounding areas, including nearby DACs.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the project area is within a DAC block group as identified in the Department of Water Resources DAC Mapping Tool. The project provides close-to-home recreational opportunities and climate refuge during hot summers.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the Cultural Preservation staff from the Mechoopda Indian Tribe, Konkow Maidu Tribe, and the Redding Rancheria will support the development of educational signage and curriculum.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: P1.3, P2.2, P3.2


Lassen NF
Deer Creek
Lassen NF
COLBY MOUNTAIN
Tehama County
Willow Creek
Colby Creek
Jones Creek
32
Cascade Creek
Smoky Creek
Jonesville
Lassen NF
89
36
Lake Almanor
Project
Butte County
Butte Meadows
Bolt Creek
32
Coon Hollow WA
BULL HILL
Paradise
Chico
Lassen NF
99
Lake Oroville
Colby Mountain Recreation Trails
Multiple Counties
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Colby Mountain Recreation Trails (Project) will improve access to public lands in the Lassen National Forest (Almanor Ranger District) near the community of Jonesville through the construction of 36 miles of non-motorized trail, improvement of trailhead facilities, and creation of a classroom trail highlighting watershed education. Public access and recreation in Butte County and the surrounding region have been highly impacted by wildfire in recent years. The Project area is bordered by areas recovering from the 2021 Dixie Fire (963,405 acres) and the 2024 Park Fire (429,603 acres).

The Project creates a low-cost recreation opportunity that will provide a high-elevation heat refuge and health benefits for surrounding communities, increased use of public lands, enhanced environmental and public lands stewardship, and regional economic benefits. The trail system will provide a variety of high-quality recreational experiences, from one-mile loops to all-day adventures with multiple options for riders and hikers of all levels. It includes 16 miles of trail designed to accommodate aMTBs, improving access for riders with disabilities. The Project partners, BCRCD and Chico Velo, have already completed nearly 16 miles of trail, leaving about 20 miles to be completed with WCB funding.

The Project also includes the following trailhead facility improvements and educational opportunities:

- The main trailhead will be located at Jonesville Snowpark, which is currently utilized for over-snow (motorized and non-motorized) recreation. This existing parking lot will be repaired and will serve as the main access point for the Watershed Health Classroom Trail, which will serve as a field trip opportunity for students from nearby DACs. The Classroom Trail is roughly a one-mile loop featuring educational signage.
- The Humboldt Summit trailhead currently provides informal access to the Pacific Crest Trail. The Project will improve and formalize this trailhead by adding equestrian dedicated parking, an ADA accessible vault toilet, picnic benches, an ADA accessible overlook area, and kiosks featuring signage about tribal history and geology. Local tribes and the Chico State Geology Department will provide technical guidance for tribal history information and geological information, respectively.
- Slight improvements will be made to the lookout trailhead at the top of Colby Mountain. A kiosk will be installed with information about the trail system and the history of Forest Service lookouts.
- The Hub, a new trailhead, will be constructed at the intersection of six trails and will feature an ADA accessible vault toilet, picnic table, and parking. A kiosk will be installed with information about the trail system and wildlife.
- The Project will also develop curriculum for the Classroom Trail which will be geared toward 5th and 6th graders starting their natural sciences focus. This will be an experiential education opportunity that will allow students to view ongoing restoration projects and learn about the importance of meadows, headwaters, and

forest health. Project partners will engage the Chico Unified School District and other local charter schools through the curriculum development process.

Long-Term Management

BCRCD has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, BCRCD 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	$121,235	---	$121,235
Trail Construction	$1,438,000	$105,000	$1,543,000
Trailhead Construction	$973,000	$150,000	$1,123,000
Interpretive Kiosks and Signage	$60,000	---	$60,000
Watershed Classroom Trail Curriculum	$10,000	---	$10,000
Indirect Costs	$67,765	---	$67,765
Total	$2,670,000	$255,000	$2,925,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Chico Velo - $255,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Ivan Garcia, Programming Director, Butte County Association of Governments
- Mandi McKay, Board President, Chico Velo
- Connor Swift, Northern Sierra Regional Representative, Pacific Crest Trail Association
- Nichole Farley, CDME, Executive Director, Explore Butte County

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

BCRCD, as lead agency, prepared a 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 WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember James Gallagher, District 3

Staff Recommendation

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

32. Habitat Incentive Programs for Waterbirds **Restoration – Implementation**

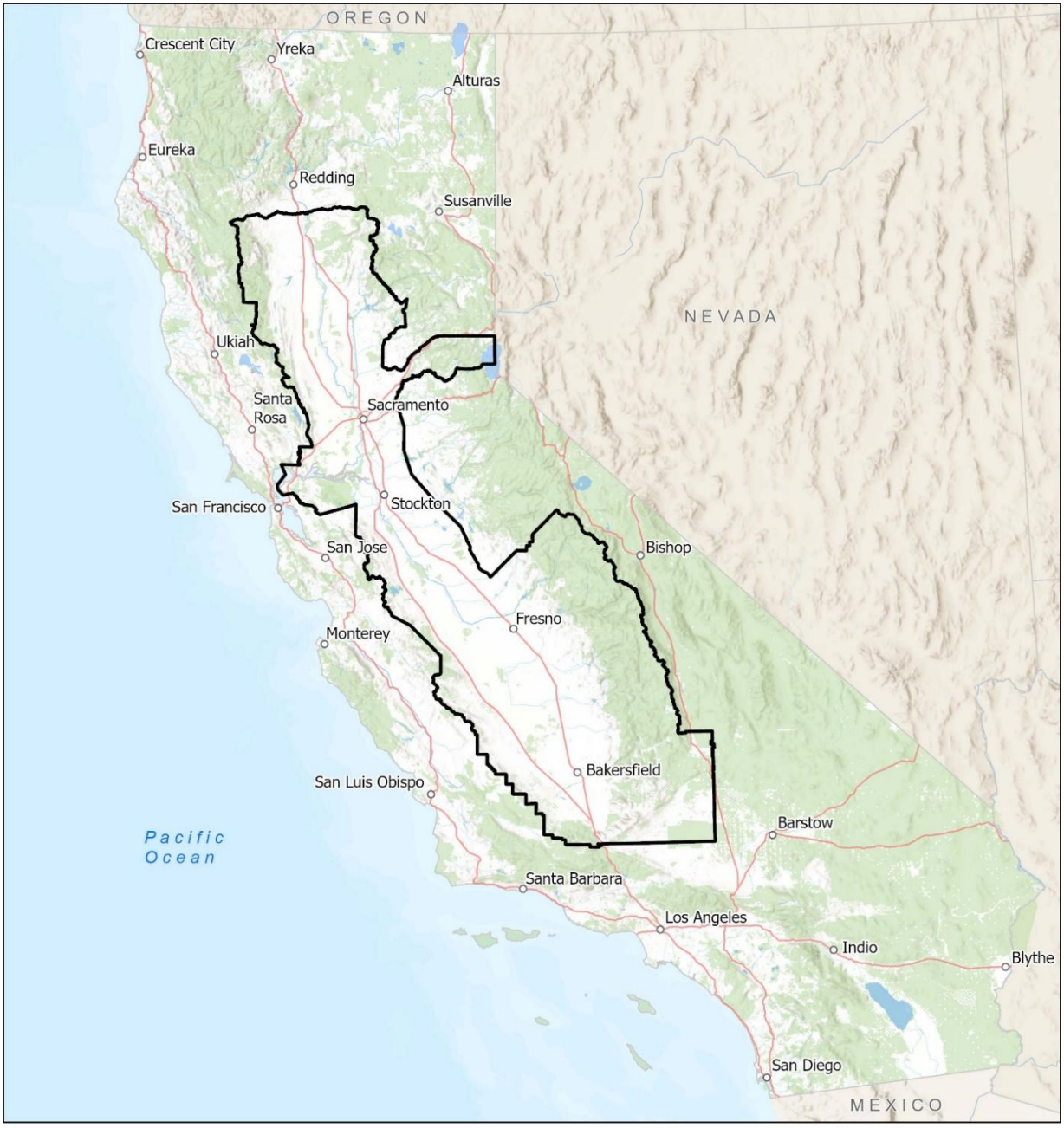
WCB Grant: $10,003,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94 Migratory Birds)
Grantee: CDFW
Landowner: Various Private Landowners
Location: 19 counties throughout the program implementation area
Counties: Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, Yuba

Project Highlights

- Project supports critically important Central Valley migratory bird habitat
- Project contributes to Central Valley Joint Venture statewide habitat objectives
- Project incentivizes private landowners to create wetland habitat
- Habitat goals: 13,500 acres spring wetlands, 40,000 acres summer wetlands, 40,000 acres late summer farmland flooding, 40,000 acres fall wetlands, 10,000 acres sandhill crane roosting and foraging habitat, 40,000 extended ricelands flooding, 50,000 acres winter flooded rice
- Key species: Sandhill crane, tricolored blackbird, giant garter snake, various waterfowl, waterbirds, and shorebirds

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3



Habitat Incentive Programs for Waterbirds

Multiple Counties

California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Project

Protected Lands

Project Description

The Central Valley (CV) is a critically important region in the Pacific Flyway, supporting an estimated 60 percent of waterbirds that utilize the flyway throughout the year. Given California has lost 95 percent of its historic wetlands, creating and maintaining wetland habitats is vital for the survival of migratory and resident waterbirds. In 1988, the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) was established to set habitat objectives and goals for meeting the needs of migratory and resident waterbirds throughout the CV. While federal and state-owned National Wildlife Refuges and Wildlife Areas provide waterbird habitat perpetually, nearly 60 percent of the wetlands and most of the farmlands in the CV are privately owned. To help meet habitat objectives, private land incentive programs are necessary to encourage landowners to create habitat during specific windows where habitat deficits are greatest.

The private land incentive programs below have successfully created habitat throughout the CV during critical periods in waterbirds' annual cycle. Both wetland managers on duck hunting clubs and agricultural producers can manipulate and maintain water at levels that are beneficial to waterbirds. Using bird movement models, and current habitat conditions, the programs allow for the targeted enrollment of properties, when and where birds need it most. In collaboration with the Migratory Bird Conservation Partnership (MBCP), which includes The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Point Blue Conservation Science (PBCS), Audubon California (Audubon), Suisun Resource Conservation District (SRCD), and the California Rice Commission (CRC), CDFW will oversee the administration of funds and implementation of the following programs:

BirdReturns: The BirdReturns program has several seasonal programs, all of which aim to meet specific habitat requirements during the designated season. After several years of implementing these programs, monitoring efforts have found that fields enrolled in the program support a greater density, richness, and diversity of shorebirds than fields not enrolled in the program. BirdReturns fields also support 15 times more waterfowl than surrounding fields during migration.

Bid4Birds: Bid4Birds provides shallow flooded habitat for migratory shorebirds on rice fields post-harvest. Fields must be flooded from July 15th to October 7th, fully flooded (1-4 inches) for the first 3-4 weeks followed by an evaporative drawdown for 1-2 weeks. In addition, fields should have minimal vegetation or residual organic matter, which may require disking, chiseling, chopping, rolling, burning, or baling.

California Winter Rice Habitat Incentive Program: To be eligible for the California Winter Rice Habitat Incentive Program (CWRHIP), applicant fields must have been planted in rice the previous growing season, to ensure waste grain is available for waterbird consumption. Successful applicants are then required to maintain flooded fields at a depth of 1-12 inches for 70 days between October 15th and March 25th. A

recent study conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey found that properties enrolled in CWRHIP supported at least 271,000 birds per day during drought years.

The CDFW programs funded by this grant will fund projects that provide habitat for migratory waterbirds during times of year when birds need it most by:

- Incentivizing land management practices (that landowners otherwise would not do) to create migratory bird habitat.
- Soliciting program applications which are scored and selected using several criteria including: proximity to protected lands, history of bird use, and habitat availability timing.
- Ongoing program monitoring will evaluate program effectiveness to inform selection criteria, program goals, and objectives.
  Prior to commencement of any project funded by CDFW from this grant, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed by CDFW and documentation of that compliance shall be provided to WCB per the terms of the Grant Agreement. Funds from this grant may be used to fund such CEQA compliance.

Long-Term Management

Beyond the grant period, this project will provide lasting stewardship by equipping growers and wetland managers with the knowledge and experience to create and maintain wildlife-friendly practices for the benefit of various bird groups. The knowledge base gained from growers and wetland managers learning and participating in these CDFW programs, as well as the economic benefits, will be seen from years to come.

While the CDFW programs focus on creating short-term habitats, these habitats are critical factors for recruitment and overall population dynamics of breeding waterbirds through migration, winter habitat conditions, and availability of summer wetlands. Ultimately, these short-term habitats could positively influence populations, helping to sustain the Pacific Flyway's populations of waterbirds.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Totals
Project Management	$637,000	$637,000
BirdReturns Program	$7,360,000	$7,360,000
Bid4Birds & CWRHIP Programs	$1,874,000	$1,874,000
Indirect Costs	$132,000	$132,000
Total	$10,003,000	$10,003,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- James Cogswell, Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture
- Dean Kwasny, Easement Program Manager, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the approval of a grant to CDFW for potential funding of potential future projects to restore or enhance habitat located on 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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle District 01, Senator Christopher Cabaldon District 03, Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil District 4, Senator Jerry McNerny District 5, Senator Roger Niello District 6, Senator Jesse Arreguín District 7, Senator Angelique Ashby District 8, Senator Tim Grayson District 9, Senator Scott Weiner District 11, Senator Shannon Grove District 12, Senator Anna Caballero District 14, Senator Melissa Hurtado District 16.
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick District 01, Assemblymember James Gallagher District 03, Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry District 4, Assemblymember Joe Patterson District 5, Assemblymember Kevin McCarty District 6, Assemblymember Jim Patterson District 8, Assemblymember Heath Flora District 9, Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen District 10, Assemblymember Lori Wilson District 11, Assemblymember Carlos Villapudua District 13, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks District 14, Assemblymember Tim Grayson District 15, Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan District 16, Assemblymember Juan Alanis District 22, Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria District 27, Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula District 31, Assemblymember Vince Fong District 32, Assemblymember Devon Mathis District 33.

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. Lower Battle Creek Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

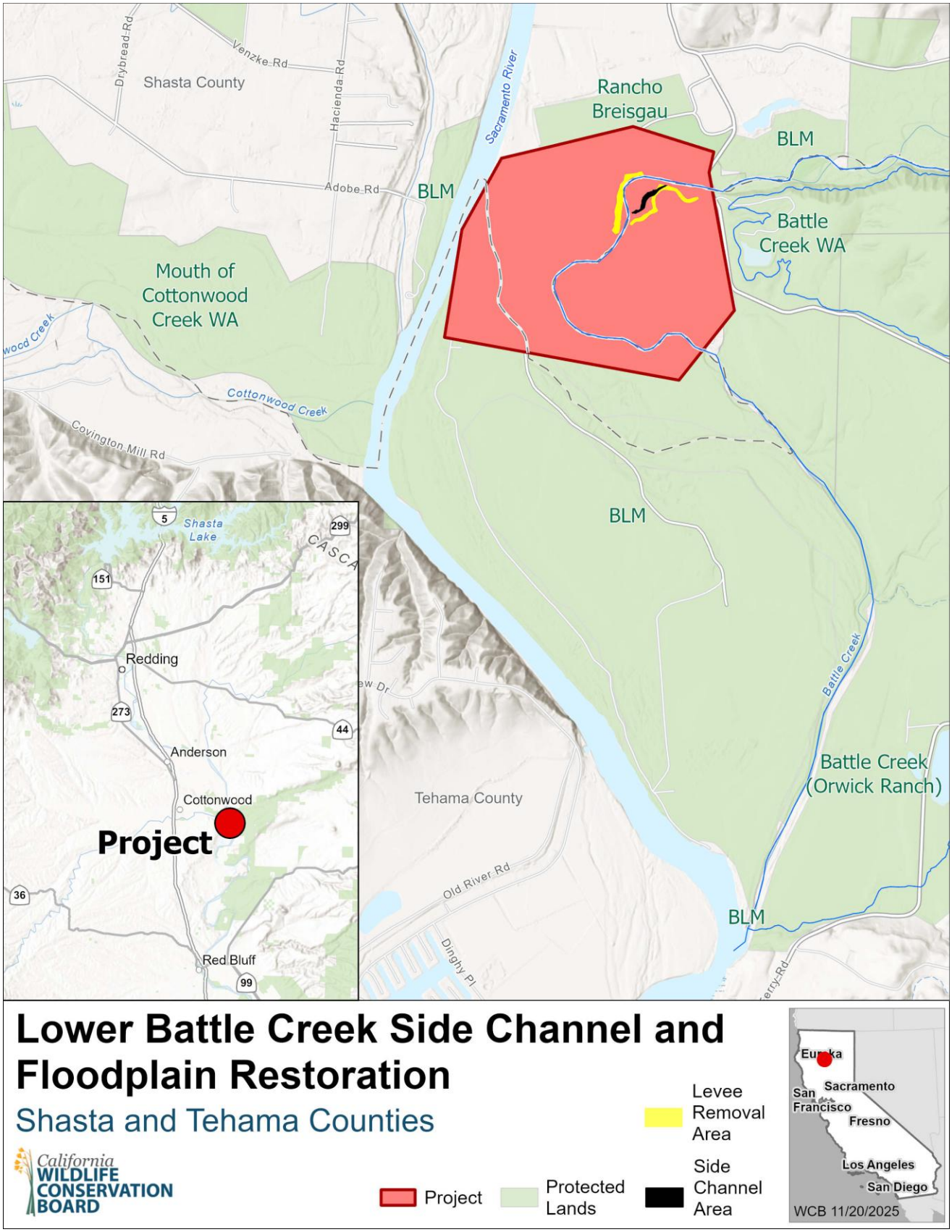
WCB Grant: $1,847,000
Fund Source(s): Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act of 2024, Streamflow Programs (SB 108, Sec. 107(1)(3))
Grantee: Chico State Enterprises
Landowner: CDFW
Location: 8 miles east of Cottonwood
County: Tehama

Project Highlights

- Construct side-channel on Battle Creek to create 1.5 acres of juvenile salmonid rearing habitat and year-round refugia.
- Remove 1,700 feet of levee and reconnect 74 acres of floodplain habitat.
- Key species: Chinook salmon (specifically winter-run) and Central Valley steelhead
- Project meets objective 2 in the California Salmon Strategy for a Hotter Drier Future, “Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing.”

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians and Nor Rel Muk Wintu Nation have been involved in consultation leading up to project implementation and have indicated that they intend to provide cultural monitoring. Additionally, Yurok tribe intends to act as construction contractor and Yurok tribal technical fisheries team intends to complete fisheries monitoring and mapping activities.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2, C2.2


Shasta County
Tehama County
Rancho Breisgau
BLM
Battle Creek WA
Mouth of Cottonwood Creek WA
Sacramento River
Cottonwood Creek
Battle Creek
Battle Creek (Orwick Ranch)
Drybread Rd
Venzke Rd
Hacienda Rd
Adobe Rd
Covington Mill Rd
Old River Rd
Dinghy Pl
Shasta Lake
Redding
Anderson
Cottonwood
Project
Red Bluff
5
299
151
273
44
36
99
Lower Battle Creek Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration
Shasta and Tehama Counties
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Levee Removal Area
Side Channel Area
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/20/2025

Project Description

The Lower Battle Creek Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration (Project) site has experienced a precipitous loss of salmonid rearing and spawning habitat due to the construction of nearby dams, altered flows, water diversions and habitat fragmentation. This Project addresses these losses, increasing salmonid habitat availability by:

- Constructing a new perennial side channel.
- Removing portions of nearby levee to reconnect the creek to the historic floodplain.
- Installing in-stream habitat structures including large woody debris and boulders.
- Re-establishing riparian and wetland vegetation through targeted plantings.
- Ameliorating stranding areas that currently trap juvenile fish during flooding events.
- Implementing biological monitoring to ensure ecological effectiveness.

Long-Term Management

Chico State Enterprises has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-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
Implementation	$1,405,707	---	$1,405,707
Monitoring	$146,217	---	$146,217
Management	$60,854	---	$60,854
Indirect	$234,222		$234,222
Total	$1,847,000	---	$1,847,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Radley Ott, Supervising Engineer, Department of Water Resources, Northern Region Office
- Jon Barrett, District Manager, Resource Conservation District of Tehama County
- Robert Warren, Watershed Program Director, Bonneville Environmental Foundation

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The State Water Resources Control Board, as lead agency, prepared a Programmatic EIR (PEIR) covering the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the PEIR 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 will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember James Gallagher, District 3

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the 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. The Kopta Slough Multi-Benefit Project
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

35. Honey Lake WA Sanctuary Enhancement Phase I **Restoration – Implementation**

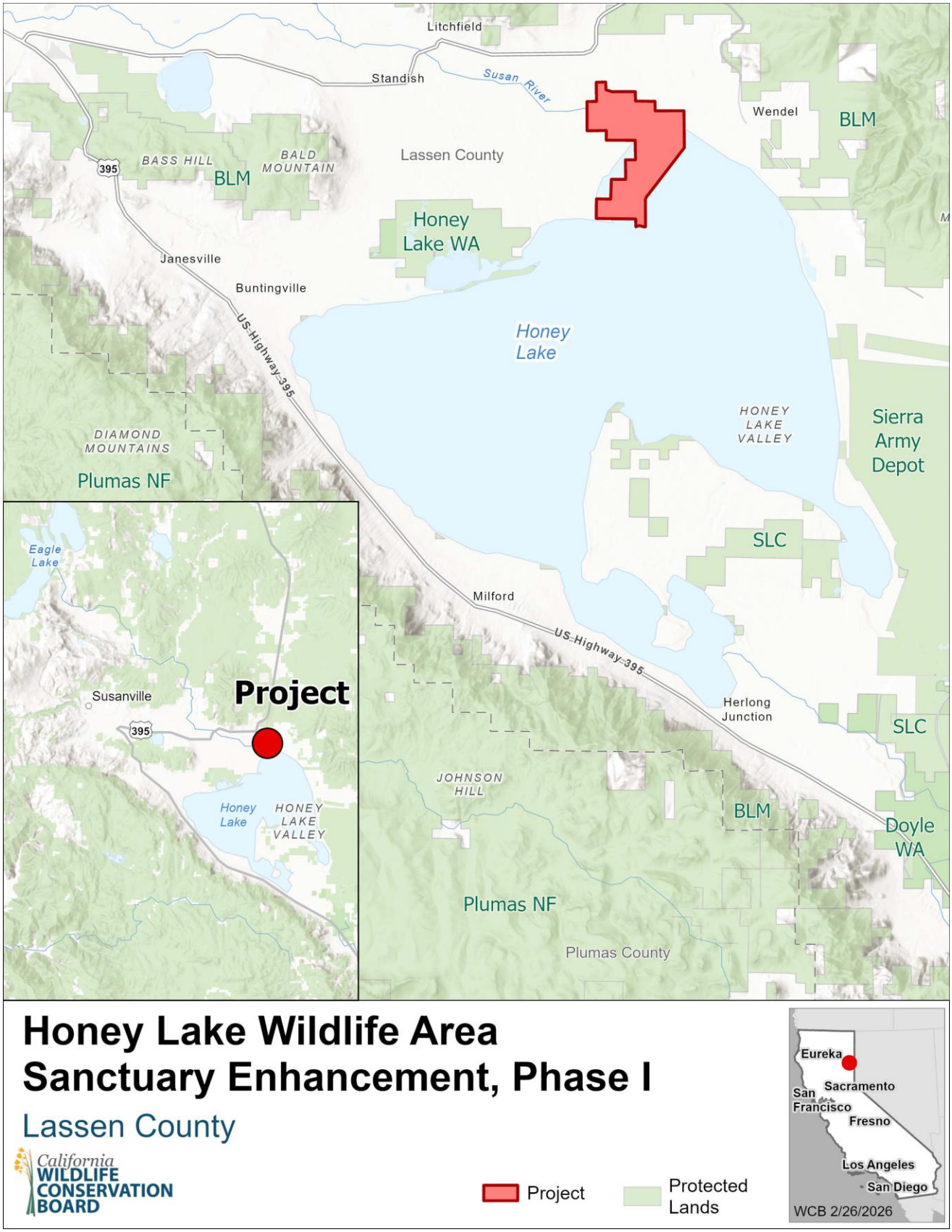
WCB Grant: $2,200,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(c) ref (1)
Grantee: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Landowner: CDFW
Location: 21 miles east of Susanville
County: Lassen

Project Highlights

- Located at CDFW's Honey Lake Wildlife Area
- Habitats restored: 1,079 acres of seasonal and semi-permanent wetland habitat and 75 acres of wetland associated upland habitat
- The project is Phase I of a multi-phase project to build a "Flagship" property for migratory bird conservation
- Key species: Great Basin Canada goose, American avocet, sandhill crane
- Within the Intermountain West Joint Venture priority bird areas for waterfowl, waterbirds, shorebirds, and landbirds.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3


Litchfield
Standish
Susan River
Wendel
BLM
BASS HILL
BALD MOUNTAIN
BLM
Lassen County
395
Honey Lake WA
Janesville
Buntingville
US-Highway-395
Honey Lake
HONEY LAKE VALLEY
Sierra Army Depot
DIAMOND MOUNTAINS
Plumas NF
SLC
Eagle Lake
Milford
US-Highway-395
Susanville
Project
395
Herlong Junction
SLC
JOHNSON HILL
Honey Lake
HONEY LAKE VALLEY
BLM
Doyle WA
Plumas NF
Plumas County
Honey Lake Wildlife Area
Sanctuary Enhancement, Phase I
Lassen County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

Honey Lake WA Sanctuary Enhancement Phase I (Project) is located within the Honey Lake Wildlife Area (HLWA). HLWA consists of approximately 7,600 acres of sagebrush and wetland habitat surrounding a shallow lake in the Great Basin Desert, within the Southern Oregon-Northeastern California region of the Pacific Flyway. HLWA has been a state wildlife area since 1953 and is operated primarily for waterfowl and upland game bird hunting and wildlife viewing. Prior to being a state wildlife area, the area was operated as both seasonal pasture and for producing hay and alfalfa. HLWA is within an Intermountain West Joint Venture Bird Priority Area for waterfowl, waterbirds, shorebirds and landbirds.

Despite having adequate water rights to support breeding and molting habitat, there is generally minimal water on the Project area past May. Waterfowl breeding season occurs on HLWA in spring, and ducklings are typically fully grown by August or September. For this reason, water in June and July is critical to the survival of ducklings. The semi-permanent ponds in the HLWA waterfowl sanctuary have not provided adequate wetland habitat due to insufficient water management and a lack of conveyance infrastructure.

The Project will overhaul the HLWA waterfowl sanctuary to provide high quality seasonal and semi-permanent wetland habitat for migratory waterfowl. The “Fleming Dam,” “Mickey Mouse Dam,” and “Overflow Dam” are the three primary diversion structures off the Susan River. Efficient operation of these dams is critical to provide water to the entire Project area. All three structures are dilapidated and restrict the ability to deliver water to managed wetland units and could cause winter flooding if they fail. The Project will reconstruct all three of these dams, replacing them with modern structures that will improve water and vegetation management capabilities.

Long-Term Management

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$386,000	---	$386,000
Construction	$1,638,000	$187,000	$1,825,000

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Indirect Costs	$176,000	---	$176,000
Total	$2,200,000	$187,000	$2,387,000

Non-WCB funders include:
- USFWS - $187,000

Letters of Support or Opposition
Support:
- Dave Smith, Coordinator, Intermountain West Joint Venture

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA
The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, as replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government
- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, 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.

36. Cannibal Island Restoration Project
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

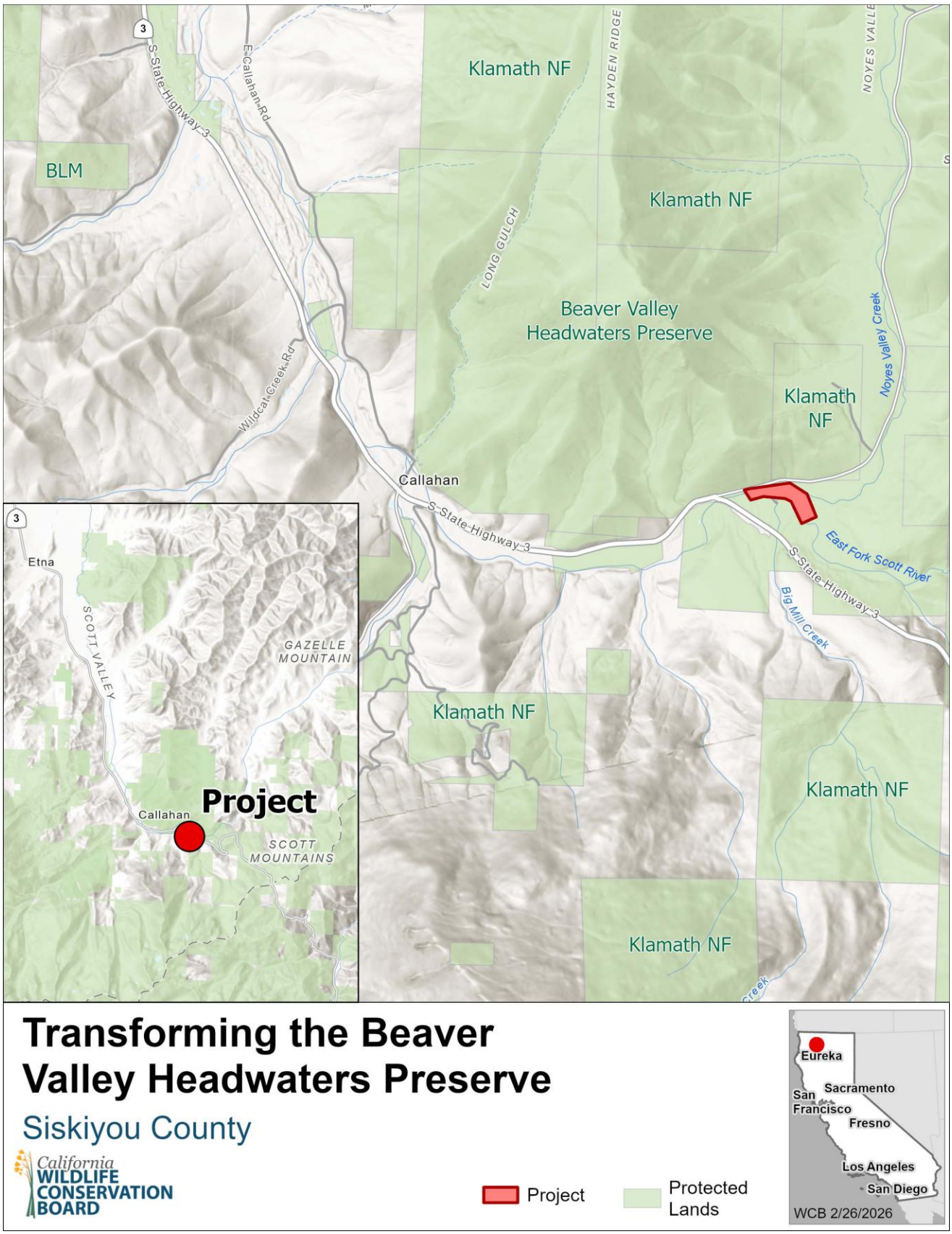
37. Transforming the Beaver Valley Headwaters Preserve **Restoration – Implementation**
WCB Grant: $2,926,000
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: California Trout, Inc.
Landowner: The Wildlands Conservancy
Location: 2.3 miles east of Callahan
County: Siskiyou

Project Highlights

- Restore a reach of the East Fork Scott River, an important region for coho salmon
- Increase channel complexity and habitat value by adding large wood structures and creating side channels and alcoves
- Reconnect the river to its historic floodplain
- Restore riparian corridor health
- Create outreach and education for local school and tribal youth

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. Project is located within a SDAC, will increase economically important populations of migratory salmonids, and will provide employment to local community members.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. The Karuk Tribe and the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation will participate in the project and will have access to the restored area for cultural practices. Also, the members of these tribes were involved in developing the plans for this project and will be subcontractors for the construction.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2, C2.2


Klamath NF
BLM
Klamath NF
Beaver Valley
Headwaters Preserve
Klamath
NF
Callahan
S State Highway 3
East Fork Scott River
Big Mill Creek
Klamath NF
Klamath NF
Klamath NF
HAYDEN RIDGE
LONG GULCH
Noyes Valley Creek
Wildcat Creek Rd
E Callahan Rd
Etna
SCOTT VALLEY
GAZELLE
MOUNTAIN
Project
Callahan
SCOTT
MOUNTAINS
Transforming the Beaver Valley Headwaters Preserve
Siskiyou County
California
WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION
BOARD
Project
Protected
Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San
Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 2/26/2026

Project Description

The Scott River, one of the primary tributaries to the Klamath River, produces the greatest number of federally threatened coho salmon in the Klamath Basin. However, mining, agriculture, and development have significantly altered hydrologic function and degraded riparian habitat. The project will increase the quality and quantity of aquatic and riparian habitat on the Beaver Valley Headwaters Preserve by:

- Restoring 0.33 miles and enhancing 7 miles of the East Fork Scott River.
- Increasing channel complexity and habitat value by adding at least 14 large wood structures that will aid sediment transport and sorting, increase pool depth, and increase area of cold-water refugia.
- Increasing off-channel rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids by creating at least 4 off-channel alcoves and 1,000 feet of side channel habitat.
- Reducing floodwater velocities and reconnecting the river to historic floodplains.
- Reducing erosion rates.
- Enhancing riparian habitat corridor including installation of native plants on at least 3 acres.
- Bringing at least 800 elementary school youth to the site for science-based field experiences.
- Hosting at least 1 week-long event focusing on on-site engagement in restoration activities for local tribal youth.

Long-Term Management

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

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management and Administration	$292,843	---	$292,843
Engineering and Design	$144,850	---	$144,850
Permitting	$87,466	$20,000	$107,466
Construction	$2,102,103	---	$2,102,103
Education and Outreach	$58,100	---	$58,100

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Monitoring	$81,863	---	$81,863
Indirect Costs	$158,775	---	$158,775
Total	$2,926,000	$20,000	$2,946,000

Non-WCB funders include:
- California Department of Transportation - $20,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:
- Russell Attebery, Karuk Tribal Chairman, Karuk Tribe
- Shari Anderson, Klamath Branch Fish Biologist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Valerie Quinto, Executive Officer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Kelly Barlow, Chair of the Board of Directors, California Trout
- Emily Afrait, North Coast Regional Director, The Wildlands Conservancy
- Amy Campbell, Senior Project Director, The Nature Conservancy

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Board, as lead agency, prepared a PEIR for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the PEIR 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 Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, District 1

Staff Recommendation

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

38. Monarch Overwintering and Breeding Habitat Restoration **Restoration – Implementation**

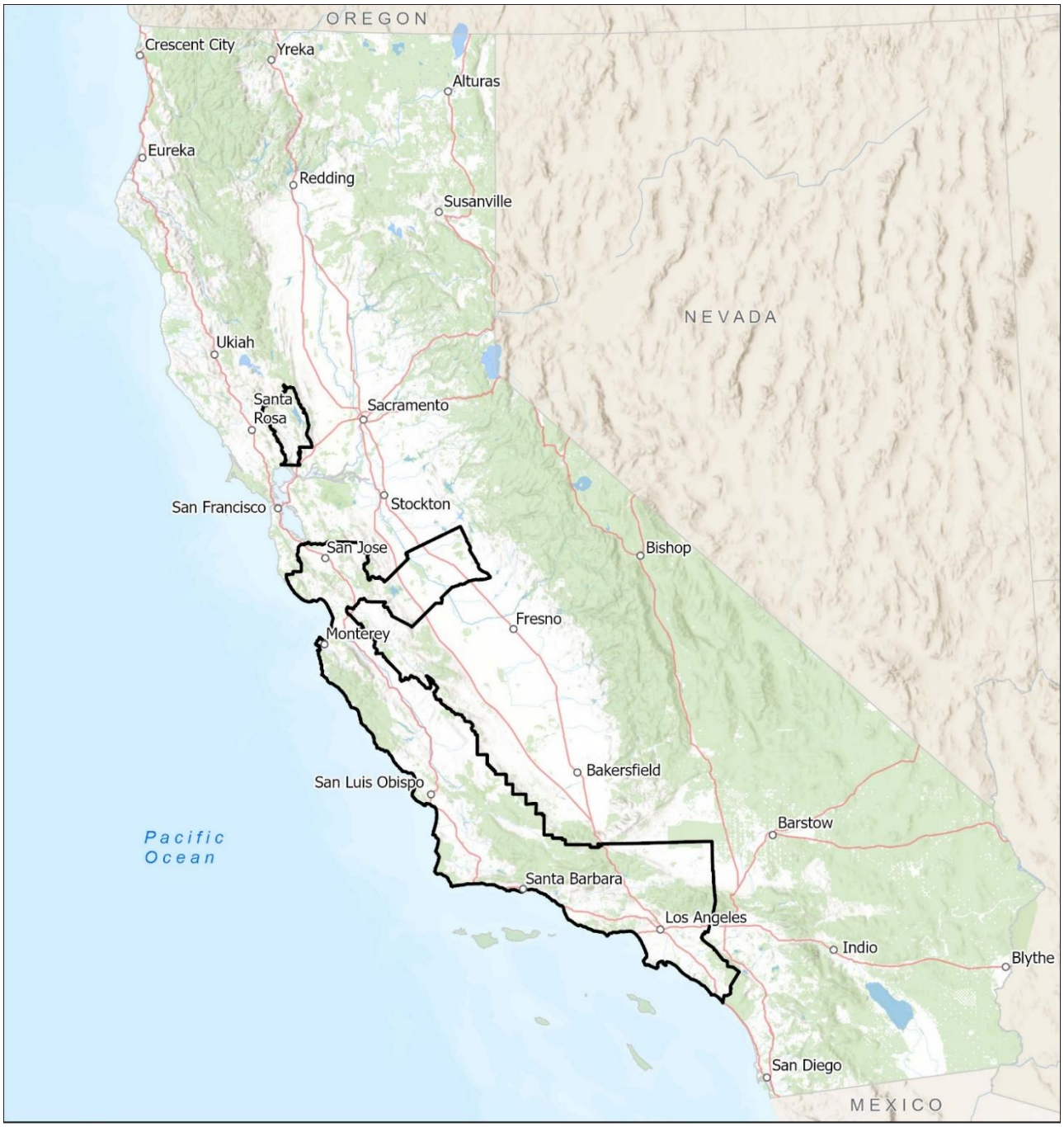
WCB Grant: $3,085,229
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Xerces Society
Landowner: CDFW, Department of Defense, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Location: 10 counties throughout the project implementation area
Counties: Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Orange, Los Angeles, Santa Clara, Merced, Napa

Project Highlights

- This project builds on monarch overwintering habitat restoration projects previously funded by WCB
- Habitats restored: 75 acres of monarch butterfly overwintering habitat and 12.5 acres of early season monarch butterfly breeding and migratory habitat
- Key species: Monarch butterfly
- Regional or Species Plan: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 50 Year Western Monarch Conservation Plan

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.3, C2.2



Monarch Overwintering and Breeding Habitat Restoration

Multiple Counties

California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Project

Protected Lands

Project Description

The western monarch butterfly population has declined by more than 95 percent since the 1980s, with the second lowest overwintering population on record last year. The Monarch Overwintering and Breeding Habitat Restoration (Project) aims to address the two highest priority actions that can be taken to stabilize and recover the western monarch population, overwintering habitat restoration and early-season breeding habitat restoration. These actions will be accomplished by:

- Developing 100 overwintering site habitat assessments and 15 site-specific, shovel-ready plans for monarch overwintering habitat restoration.
- Restoring 75 acres of monarch overwintering habitat by implementing shovel-ready overwintering habitat management and restoration plans.
- Developing site-specific monarch and pollinator habitat assessments and habitat restoration plans for early-season breeding habitat projects on at least three CDFW managed natural areas.
- Conducting habitat site preparation, habitat planting, and follow up maintenance and management to establish 12.5 acres of restored monarch migratory and early-season breeding habitat.

Long-Term Management

The Xerces Society has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Project improvements. If at any time during the 10-year life of the Project, Xerces Society 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
Overwintering Habitat Restoration	$2,172,527	$255,273	$2,427,800
Breeding Habitat Restoration	$370,943	$31,374	$402,317
Indirect Costs	$541,759	$56,156	$597,915
Total	$3,085,229	$342,803	$3,428,032

Non-WCB funders include:

- Xerces Society - $319,803
- CDFW - $23,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Gretchen Swinehart, Chief Installation Management Flight, Department of the Air Force
- Jay Chamberlin, Chief Natural Resources Division, California State Parks

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, 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: Multiple counties
- Assembly: Multiple counties

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. Public Forum for Items not on the Agenda

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF February 26, 2026, PROJECTS

ATTACHMENT B – WCB DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

ACRONYMS

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

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act	SGMA
Tahoe National Forest	TNF
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS
U.S. Forest Service	USFS
Wildlife Conservation Board	WCB

ATTACHMENT C – WCB STRATEGIC PLAN TARGETS

GOAL B. PROTECT AND RESTORE BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth from genes to species to ecosystems. Our natural world supports and sustains us, and the plants and animals that power our ecosystems rely on areas with minimal disturbance to survive and thrive. Biodiversity protection is at the core of WCB's mission.

B1. Build, protect, and restore large interconnected landscapes

B1.1 Each year invest in at least five habitat acquisition or restoration projects that help build connected landscapes for fish and wildlife.

B1.2 Each year, invest in at least three wildlife under-or over-crossing projects in locations deemed high priority by both transportation and fish and wildlife agencies.

B1.3 Each year, invest in at least five projects that restore or enhance at wetlands (coastal, valley, or mountain meadows) in support of migratory bird joint venture3 priorities.

B2. Protect and restore sensitive and/or rare habitats and help recover special status species

B2.1 Each year, invest in at least ten projects that benefit sensitive species and advance habitat and natural community goals embodied in SWAP, Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, Regional Conservation Investment Strategies, or other regional conservation plans.

B2.2 Each year, invest in at least ten projects that will enhance stream flow, riparian habitat, and/or floodplain habitat.

B2.3 Each year, invest in at least three projects that have a primary purpose of conserving or restoring native pollinator habitat.

B3. Return ancestral lands and habitat management to tribes to support biodiversity and ecosystem function

B3.1 By 2030, complete ten ancestral conservation land return transactions.

B3.2 By 2030, support at least four projects that include cultural conservation easements.

B3.3 By 2030, invest in at least five projects that will result in tribal co-management of protected lands.

B3.4 Each year, invest in at least five restoration projects that will incorporate tribal ecological knowledge in coordination with local tribes.

GOAL C. TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Functioning natural ecosystems are essential to maintain community health and well-being in a changing climate. Intact and restored terrestrial, freshwater, and coastal

systems remove and store carbon from the atmosphere, safeguard important resources such as clean water, and can help protect people and wildlife from the impacts of climate change like megafires, flooding, and extreme heat.

C1. Reduce and remove carbon pollution

C1.1 Each year invest in at least 15 projects that help meet California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets to conserve or restore forests, wetlands, or deserts.

C1.2 Each year, support at least 15 projects that help meet California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets to conserve or restore grasslands, rangelands, or oak woodlands.

C1.3 Invest in at least ten projects that include beneficial fire or other fuel reduction or climate resilience activities (invasive species removal, restoration forestry, native plant restoration) to reduce wildfire risk.

C2. Increase resilience to climate impacts for vulnerable ecosystems and communities

C2.1 Ensure that 75 percent of habitat improvement projects have a primary or secondary purpose of increasing resilience to climate change.

C2.2 Each year, support ten projects that are in areas identified as refugia for vulnerable plant or animal species or represent ecosystems highly resilient to climate change.

C2.3 Invest in ten projects that provide climate benefits for vulnerable people and ecological communities.

GOAL P. EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS TO NATURE

Access to nature is critical to human health and well-being. People with access to the outdoors experience the health benefits of physical activity, social interaction, reduced stress and decreased exposure to noise, air pollution, and extreme heat. In California and across the country, outdoor access and its many benefits are not equitably distributed or equally welcoming to all communities. California is committed to an Outdoors for All, and WCB supports this initiative by funding wildlife-oriented recreation and related nature-focused education throughout the state.

P1. Promote diverse outdoor experience

P1.1 Each year invest in at least three projects that provide or enhance fishing or hunting access.

P1.2 By 2030, support at least five private land acquisition or restoration projects that include **SHARE** Program Participation.

P1.3 Each year, invest in at least five projects that have a primary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

P2. Protect and restore natural areas for communities that lack access to nature

P2.1 By 2030, invest in at least ten projects that protect or restore areas that provide public access for disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged1 communities.

P2.2 By 2030, support at least five projects that deliver direct ecological benefits, beyond public access, to disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities.

P3. Support accessible and representative education, outreach, and engagement

P3.1 For all projects with a primary purpose of public access, provide educational and interpretive signs that are culturally relevant and available in multiple languages.

P3.2 Each year, for projects with a primary purpose of public access, support at least three that are tribally led and include tribal storytelling or other cultural interpretive information.

GOAL O. IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Partners are the cornerstone of WCB's success. WCB is proud of its reputation for collaborative problem solving to deliver creative and effective projects throughout the state. Since 2019, WCB has worked with over 40 new organizations and will continue to build our network to offer grant opportunities. WCB sponsors and participates in numerous public workshops, conferences, and other convenings. At the same time, WCB ensures transparency through recorded, hybrid Board meetings and regularly posted information on our website.

O1. Create new partnerships and expand engagement

O1.1 Each year, attend or conduct at least two meetings that result in outreach, workshops, and materials to increase visibility of the WCB programs with at least one in a disadvantaged community.

O1.2 Each year, sponsor at least five conferences or workshops throughout the state and distribute outreach materials about WCB programs.

O1.3 Each year, develop five new partnerships to support nature and wildlife connections consistent with WCB programs.

O1.4 Each year, track and share progress toward meeting statewide conservation strategies (30x30, NBS climate targets, etc.) and strategic plan goals.

O1.5 By 2027, update the WCB 75-year assessment—for WCB's 80th anniversary—to highlight program accomplishments, including the acreage of habitat type preserved and restored, partnership metrics, and more.

O2. Ensure program and project success through ongoing monitoring and learning

O2.1 Continue implementation of WCB's compliance monitoring program, with staff monitoring approximately 100 randomly selected projects per year.

O2.2 Implement a pilot effort to evaluate the feasibility and utility of incorporating remote monitoring, reliant upon free, readily available imagery, into WCB's compliance monitoring program as a means of increasing the number of projects evaluated on an annual basis, assessing impacts of significant events (e.g., wildfire, flood), and exploring topics of interest.

O2.3 By 2028, develop an improved approach to coordinated compliance monitoring and sharing of outcomes with partner agencies (e.g., Coastal Conservancy, and CDFW).

O3. Improve grantmaking processes (Cut Green Tape)

O3.1 Develop and share an online project portal that integrates and streamlines paperwork and invoicing from pre-application through project close.

O3.2 Develop and offer a grantee feedback survey to solicit ideas on how to improve processes.

O3.3 By 2030, using results from the grantee feedback survey (D3.2), identify and implement five process improvements to simplify grantmaking.

O3.4 Develop and offer grant writing workshops and/or online videos to increase understanding of and access to WCB grants.