

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

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State of California
 Natural Resources Agency
 Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
 Minutes
 November 18, 2010

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* Proposed Consent Calendar

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes

November 18, 2010

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, November 18, 2010, at the State Capitol, Room 4203 in Sacramento, California. Mr. John McCamman, Director of the Department of Fish and Game, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M., introduced himself, Ms. Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance; Ms. Diane Colborn, Assembly Member Jared Huffman's representative; Ms. Erin Shaw, Assembly Member Ira Ruskin's representative; Mr. John Donnelly, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, and Ms. Natalya Kulagina, Mr. Donnelly's Executive Assistant. Mr. McCamman turned the meeting over to Mr. Donnelly.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

John McCamman, Chairman
Director, Department of Fish and Game

Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager
Vice, Ana Matosantos, Member
Director, Department of Finance

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Fran Pavley

Teresa Schilling
Vice, Senator Patricia Wiggins

Diane Colborn
Vice, Assembly Member Jared Huffman

Erin Shaw
Vice, Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

John P. Donnelly, Executive Director
Dave Means, Assistant Executive Director
Peter Perrine, Assistant Executive Director
Scott McFarlin, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Debbie Townsend, Senior Land Agent (R.A.)
Natalya Kulagina, Executive Assistant
Liz Yokoyama, Senior Land Agent
Janell Bogue, Staff Counsel
Nancy Templeton, Staff Counsel
Brian Gibson, Senior Land Agent
Robert Kane, Senior Land Agent (R.A.)
Tony Chappelle, Public Land Management Specialist IV
William Gallup, Senior Land Agent

Erin Ingenthron, Office Technician
Jasen Yee, Associate Budget Analyst
Dawn Drowne, Staff Services Analyst
Chad Fien, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Roland Shield, Research Analyst I
Ashley Lackey, Staff Services Analyst
Celestial Baumbach, Office Technician
Mary Westlake, Staff Services Analyst
Teri Muzik, Senior Land Agent
Jon Wilcox, Senior Land Agent
Scott Clemons, Public Land Management Specialist IV (R.A.)
Marilyn Cundiff, Public Land Management Specialist IV

Others Present:

Andy Atkinson, Department of Fish & Game
Eric Haney, Department of Fish & Game
Julie Horenstine, Department of Fish & Game
Jennifer Navicky, Department of Fish & Game
Kent Smith, Department of Fish & Game
Larry Wyckoff, Department of Fish & Game
Carl Studebaker, Department of Fish & Game (retired)
Todd Ferrara, Natural Resources Agency
E. J. Remson, The Nature Conservancy
Gregg Werner, The Nature Conservancy
Marlyce Myers, The Nature Conservancy
Chris Fischer, The Nature Conservancy
Trish Strickland, Trust for Public Land
David Sutton, Trust for Public Land
Erik Vink, Trust for Public Land
Taylor Mee-Lee, Trust for Public Land
Tasha Newman, CA Strategy Group
Catherine Koehler, UC Davis
Pat Dyas, Wildlife Conservation Board (retired)
Bill Burrows, Red Bluff, CA
Tory Burrows, Red Bluff, CA
Bob King, TRI Commercial
Athena Shlien, Malibu, CA
Jamison Watts, North Coast Regional Land Trust
Joel Reynolds, Natural Resources Defense Council
Dave Burrows, Cottonwood, CA
Duncan Estabrook, Red Bluff, CA
Susan Schohr, Schohr Ranch, Inc.
Suzanne Goode, Department of Parks & Recreation

Roberta Marshall, DMB Associates
Edward Stanton, American Land Conservancy
Melinda Marks, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Tom Maloney, Tejon Ranch Conservancy
Eileen Reynolds, Tejon Ranch
Rob Stine, Tejon Ranch
Derek Abbott, Tejon Ranch
Allen Lyda, Tejon Ranch
Kathleen Parkinson, Tejon Ranch
Paul Hardy, Feather River Land Trust
David Newbert, General Public
Gretchen Lieff, General Public
Marcia Hanscom, Wetlands Defense Fund
Dan Taylor, Audubon California
Frank Giordano, Member of Public
Vicky Dawley, Big Bluff Ranch
Wendy Sherman, Big Bluff Ranch
Frank Dawley, Big Bluff Ranch
Julie Taylor, Big Bluff Ranch
Adele Pommerenck, Penn Valley, CA
Paul Aigner, UC Davis
Lauren Ward, Sonoma, CA
Holly Dawley, Redding, CA
Suzanne Easton, BRBNA Conservation Partnership
Joseph Bride, Eagles Nest Cattle
Tara Burrows, Red Bluff, CA
Wendy Sherman, Red Bluff, CA
Lynne Gould, Greenfield, CA
Chris McArthur, McArthur, CA

Others Present (continue):

Mary Small, State Coastal Conservancy
Kara Kemmler, State Coastal Conservancy

George McArthur, McArthur, CA
Mark Abramson, Santa Monica
Bay Restoration Foundation

Mr. Donnelly welcomed everyone to the Wildlife Conservation Board November 2010 meeting and reported that the first item on the agenda is an information item. Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions about this item. There were none.

2. Funding Status — Informational

(a) 2010-11 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$1,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-117,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$883,000.00

(b) 2010-11 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$20,668,000.00

(c) 2009-10 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-333,783.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$20,334,217.00

(d) 2008-09 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,542,490.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$18,125,510.00

(e) 2006-07 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-9,357,844.30</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$11,341,155.70

(f) 2006-07 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (2010-11 Reappropriation)	\$15,224,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,755,109.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$2,468,891.00

(g)	1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)] Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$36,100,000.00 <u>-27,515,085.39</u> \$8,584,914.61
(h)	2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation) Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$11,000,000.00 <u>-434,302.00</u> ... \$10,565,698.00
(i)	Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002, Oak Woodlands Conservation Act Budget Act (2009-10 Reappropriation) Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$4,800,000.00 <u>-4,586,689.51</u> \$213,310.49
(j)	2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund Capital Outlay Budget Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650) Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$273,000,000.00 <u>-185,331,174.82</u> \$87,668,825.18
(k)	2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568) Budget Act (2010-11 Reappropriation) Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$32,500,000.00 <u>-21,681,299.35</u> \$10,818,700.65
(l)	2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572), including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005 2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565 2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 2008-09 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 Previous Board Allocations Unallocated Balance	\$814,350,000.00 -21,000,000.00 -21,000,000.00 -4,000,000.00 -3,100,000.00 -17,688,000.00 -5,150,000.00 -1,000,000.00 <u>-666,754,469.48</u> \$74,657,530.52

(m)	2010-11 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$3,380,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,380,000.00
(n)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,000,000.00
(o)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,000,000.00
(p)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-75,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$9,925,000.00
(q)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-0.00
	2010-11 Budget Act Reversion	<u>-3,000,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$7,000,000.00
(r)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	\$24,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$24,000,000.00

(s)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,180,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$23,820,000.00
(t)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,887,872.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$11,112,128.00
(u)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1)), (2010-11 Reappropriation)	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-8,464,968.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$5,828,032.00
(v)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2)), (2010-11 Reappropriation)	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-5,378,444.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$8,914,556.00
(w)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(4)), (2010-11 Reappropriation)	\$4,762,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,722,600.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,039,400.00
(x)	2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	\$164,700,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-14,490,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$150,210,000.00

Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	\$123,525,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-50,762,633.50</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$72,762,366.50

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$883,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d) and (e)	\$70,468,882.70
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (f) and (g)	\$11,053,805.61
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (h), (i) and (j)	\$98,447,833.67
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (k) and (l)	\$95,567,185.94
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t), (u), (v), (w) and (x)	\$339,991,482.50

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004 Tax credits awarded through June 30, 2008	\$48,598,734.00
Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective January 1, 2010) Tax credits awarded	\$0.00

3. Special Project Planning Account — Informational

The Board has historically used a special project account to provide working funds for staff evaluation (appraisals, engineering, preliminary title reports, etc.) of proposed projects. Upon the Board's approval of a project, all expenditures incurred and recorded in the Special Project Planning Account are transferred to the Board approved project account which then reduces the Special Project Planning Account expenditures. This procedure provides a revolving account for the pre-project expenses.

Some appropriations now made to the Board do not include a specific budgeted planning line item appropriation necessary to begin a project without prior Board authorization. Pre-project costs are a necessary expenditure in most all capital outlay projects. The Special Project Planning Account is available to be used for these costs.

The Board, at its May 6, 1986 meeting, authorized the Executive Director to use up to 1% of a budgeted appropriation to set up and maintain an appropriate planning account with the provision it would be reported to the Board as an informational item.

Accordingly, a planning account has been set up as follows:

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Fund.....	\$35,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund.....	\$35,000.00

Mr. Donnelly provided a brief description on how a project planning account works. Mr. Donnelly explained that at the end of each agenda item, in addition to the allocation of a grant or the acquisition cost, there is an additional request for project expenses, and once the funding is approved by the Board, those funds, authorized by the Board for project-related expenses, are put back into the planning account. Mr. Donnelly commented that we try to keep the planning account whole as much as we can, but sometimes projects incur cost and are not completed and it is necessary to use planning account. Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions about this item. Ms. Finn asked if the most you can get from planning account at any time is \$70,000.00. Mr. Donnelly responded that it is up to one percent of the fund itself.

4. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4—17)

Mr. Donnelly reported that several letters of support were received for the following projects presented in Consent Calendar:

- **Item #*11** (Eticuera Creek Watershed Habitat Restoration, Napa County) Letters of support received from: Noreen Evans, Assembly Member, District 7; Patricia Wiggins, Senator, Second Senate District; Rich Burns, Field Manager, Ukiah, United State Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Ukiah Field Office; Phillip Blake, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture; Morgan Doran, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for Napa, Solano and Yolo Counties, University of CA, Agricultural and Natural Resources; Karl Burke, Closure Manager –McLaughlin Mine, Homestake Mining Company.
- **Item #*13** (Insectaries for Pollinators and Farm Biodiversity, Sonoma County). Letters of support received from: Charlette Epifanio, District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Services; Kathy Kellison, Executive Director, Partners for Sustainable Pollination; Ron Rolleri, Secretary, North Coast Resource Conservation & Development Council.

*5. Approval of Minutes — August 26, 2010

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the minutes of the August 26, 2010 meeting.

Motion carried.

*6. Recovery of Funds

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.

- \$8,881.83** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
- \$0.00** to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
- \$1,191,838.99** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
- \$43,795.21** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**
- \$735.00** to the **Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Montna Farms Wetland Restoration, Sutter County

Allocated	\$150,000.00
Expended	<u>-149,635.17</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$364.83

Truckee River Wildlife Area, Gray Creek Canyon Unit, Nevada County

Allocated	\$15,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,483.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,517.00

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$8,881.83**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Kings River Fishing Access, Fresno County

Allocated	\$11,824.00
Expended	<u>-11,824.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$0.00**

CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND

California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2007, Chorro Creek Floodplain and Riparian Restoration, San Luis Obispo County

Allocated	\$1,157,073.00
Expended	<u>-158.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,153,231.50

Eastern Mojave Desert Springs Habitat Restoration, San Bernardino County

Allocated	\$43,000.00
Expended	<u>-4,075.01</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$38,924.99

Kings River Fishing Access, Fresno County

Allocated	\$112,176.00
Expended	<u>-112,176.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Pacifica Fishing Pier Improvements, San Mateo County

Allocated	\$500,252.00
Expended	<u>-500,252.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund **\$1,191,838.99**

WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002

Loch Lomond Marina Intertidal Enhancement, Marin County

Allocated	\$207,775.00
Expended	<u>-163,979.79</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$43,795.21

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 **\$43,795.21**

SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006

Iron Mountain Wildlife Area, Expansion 4, San Diego County

Allocated	\$15,000.00
Expended	<u>-14,265.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$735.00

Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and **\$735.00**

**Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection
Fund of 2006**

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Recovery of Funds for the projects listed on pages 7 through 9 of the agenda and close the project accounts. Recovery totals include \$8,881.83 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; \$0.00 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund; \$1,191,838.99 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund; \$43,795.21 to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002; and \$735.00 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund.

Motion carried.

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| *7. Fund Shift, Various Projects
Fresno, Madera and Monterey Counties | \$887,855.00 |
|--|--------------|

Mr. Donnelly pointed out that there is a wording modification in item #7 (Fund Shift, Various Projects; Fresno, Madera and Monterey Counties), and he'll be happy to pull this project for a discussion, if necessary. Mr. Donnelly reported that on page 11 of this agenda the first sentence on the top of the page says "The no cost time extensions are due, in part, to the Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA) bond freeze." Mr. Donnelly commented that the account actually did not freeze the bonds, so Mr. Donnelly recommended that "Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA)" should be taken out and further in that sentence remove the words "which recently lifted", and that sentence would read "The no cost time extensions are due, in part, to the bond freeze of December 2008." Then, in the next sentence, Mr. Donnelly recommended to take out the words "of the PMIA freeze", and that sentence would read "As a result, the Grantee's work was either slowed or stopped by the Grantor until funding for the project allocations could be secured from up front bond sale proceeds." Mr. McCamman asked if there is no material difference with these corrections. Mr. Donnelly confirmed that this is correct.

This proposal was to consider various fund shifts for six previously approved San Joaquin River (SJR) Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) projects. The cooperative projects involve the SJR Conservancy, Department of Fish and Game, City of Fresno, County of Madera, and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. The proposed fund shifts are necessary to meet existing Grant Agreement obligations and will utilize funding authorized for the same purpose from a subsequent enactment year appropriation.

The table below outlines the fund shifts for the previously approved cooperative projects which include five projects for the SJR Conservancy from the California

Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40) and one project for the WCB from the Wildlife Restoration Fund (WRF).

Grant Agreement	Grantee	WCB Approval Date*	Project Name	County	Fund Shift Amount (Maximum)
WC-2043TC	City of Fresno	11/17/05	SJR Parkway, Lewis S. Eaton Trail, Friant Road Segment	Fresno	\$140,000.00
WC-6084TC	County of Fresno	05/24/07	SJR Parkway, Lost Lake Regional Park Master Plan	Fresno	\$223,445.00
WC-7019TC	SJR Conservancy	08/23/07	SJR Parkway, Lewis S. Eaton Trail River West CEQA	Fresno	\$125,600.00
WC-7056BT	Department of Fish and Game	02/20/08	SJ Hatchery Public Access, Phase I, Preconstruction Planning & Design	Fresno	\$187,500.00
WC-8004BT	County of Madera	05/22/08	SJR Parkway, River West-Madera Restoration Planning & Environmental Review	Madera	\$37,100.00
WC-9022AL	Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	05/27/10	Moss Landing Wildlife Area Public Access	Monterey	\$174,210.00
Total (Maximum Amount)					\$887,855.00

* The project descriptions for the previously approved items may be viewed at www.wcb.ca.gov in the WCB Meeting Minutes for the respective Board meeting.

The fund shifts for the SJR Conservancy projects are necessary as the Grant Agreements require no cost time extensions in order for the Grantee's to fulfill existing obligations. The no cost time extensions are due, in part, to the bond freeze of December 2008 which recently lifted. As a result, the Grantee's work was either slowed or stopped by the Grantor until funding for the project allocations could be secured from up front bond sale proceeds. The current allocations for these Grantee obligations are due to revert at the end of the fiscal year.

With regard to the Moss Landing Wildlife Area Public Access project, the fund shift is necessary due to an accounting error wherein a previous approved WCB project allocation was paid from a later year appropriation from the same fund source for the same purpose. The error was discovered during reconciliation and within one week of release of the monthly Agency Reconciliation Report. A Correction Memorandum was immediately sent to the State Controllers Office (SCO); however, the SCO was unable to revive the reverted appropriation. This unfortunate situation has left a cash shortage in the appropriation from which the Moss Landing Wildlife Area Public Access project was funded requiring the WCB

to fund shift a part of this Grantee obligation to the current fiscal year WRF appropriation established for the same purpose.

The table outlines the maximum amount proposed for the fund shift. The amount of the shift will be based on the unliquidated agreement balance at the time of the fund shift. A revised Funding Certification will be prepared for each Grant Agreement and submitted to the SCO. The fund shifts will utilize funding authorized for the same purpose from a subsequent fiscal year appropriation. The shifted amounts from the previous WCB allocations will be recovered and returned to their respective fund sources; therefore, the net effect of the project fund shift on the WCB allocation for the project is zero.

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the fund shifts as proposed; allocate up to \$713,645.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); allocate up to \$174,210.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the fund shifts as proposed; allocate up to \$713,645.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); allocate up to \$174,210.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| *8. Hamilton City Flood Damage
Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration
Glenn County | \$10,000.00 |
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This proposal was to consider the disposal of 120± acres of a larger 482± acre property located in the Sacramento River Conservation Area, Expansion 4 (Expansion 4), and to authorize the reuse of the proceeds to acquire 104± acres in fee title for the protection of riparian and riverine habitat supporting threatened and endangered species. The property was acquired with a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which was approved by WCB in November 2001.

LOCATION

The disposal property and proposed acquisition property (Stiles Ranch) are located approximately 10 miles west of Chico and southeast of the Hamilton City, on the west side of the Sacramento River in Glenn County. Both properties are improved with orchards and are located outside the immediate

levee system of the Sacramento River. Various governmental agencies and nonprofits own property within the vicinity, including TNC, Department of Fish and Game (DFG), California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The DFG's Sacramento River Wildlife Area (SRWA) is located further east of Expansion 4, along the Sacramento River. SRWA is 1,078± acres in size and was acquired in a number of separate transactions between the late eighties and early nineties. USFWS holdings in the area include the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge (SRNWR), located immediately north of Stiles Ranch property. Immediately east of the Stiles Ranch property is the Bidwell - Sacramento River State Park.

The Expansion 4 property lies on the protected side of the J levee, outside the main floodplain of the Sacramento River. When Expansion 4 was presented to the Board in 2000 for funding, it was anticipated the new setback levee would run through the middle of the Expansion 4, from north to south. The portion of the Expansion 4 located on the river side of the levee would be restored to riparian habitat and the portion outside the levee would be excess and considered for disposal.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Since the early 2000s, the WCB has approved six grants for acquisitions and expansions at its meetings under the title of the Sacramento River Conservation Area (SCRA). The WCB's grant to acquire Expansion 4 was one of these. The SCRA acquisitions provide protection of riparian habitat for threatened and endangered species and public access, as well as assistance in the implementation of the Hamilton City Flood Damage and Ecosystem Restoration project (Flood and Ecosystem Project).

The two main objectives of the Flood and Ecosystem Project are to expand the floodplain to create a more natural hydrology, increasing riverine and riparian habitat and provide an improved level of flood protection for Hamilton City. The riparian areas will provide an important seasonal habitat for migratory birds, waterfowl, native amphibians and salmonids. This includes a number of federal and State listed threatened and endangered species, such as the western yellow-billed cuckoo, giant garter snake, greater sandhill crane, bank swallow, western pond turtle and Swainson's hawk. Improved riverine habitat will provide improved spawning areas for the central valley steelhead and winter-run Chinook salmon. With regard to Expansion 4, the Flood and Ecosystem Project essentially called for the removal of a private levee, referred to as the J levee, and construction of a new (setback) levee further away from the river.

At this time, the current configuration of the Setback Levee Project has been established so that excess portion of Expansion 4 can be determined. Part of this proposal is for TNC to dispose of the excess 120± acres of Expansion 4

and reuse the proceeds from this disposal to assist in the acquisition of additional property along the Sacramento River. The acquisition will further implement the Flood and Ecosystem Project. The Stiles Ranch property is located within the boundary area of the Flood and Ecosystem Project and will allow for the construction of the new setback levee and the further restoration of riparian habitat within the newly expanded floodplain area of the Sacramento River.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which will evaluate the biological values of property. In this particular case the DFG, as a member of the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum (SRCAF), authorized acquisition of properties lying within the boundary of the purview of the SRCAF.

The SRCAF was established from Senate Bill 1086, passed by the State Legislature in 1986, calling for development of a management plan to protect, restore and enhance fisheries and riparian habitat along the Sacramento River and its tributaries along the 222 miles of the Sacramento River between Keswick and Verona. The SRCAF is governed by a board of directors that includes both private landowners and public interest appointees from each of the seven involved counties and an appointee of the Natural Resources Agency. The SRCAF is advised by a panel of representatives from three State agencies: the Department of Water Resources, DFG and the Reclamation Board; and three federal agencies: the Army Corps of Engineers, the USFWS and the Bureau of Reclamation. Both proposed projects have been presented to the SRCAF Board as informational items.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TNC and its partners, including the USFWS, the DFG, the WCB, and stakeholders participating in the SRCAF, have undertaken the largest riparian restoration project in the United States. The goal is to restore a continuous 100-mile stretch of ecologically viable riparian habitat to flood-prone lands along the river between Red Bluff and Colusa. On some sites the river will revegetate its banks and meander through the natural process of winter flooding and deposition. On other sites, TNC is contracting with local farmers to plant native trees and shrubs, pumping money into the local economy and helping to generate interest and involvement in local communities in the fate of the river ecosystem.

TNC, the USFWS, the DFG, and the WCB have acquired 14,000 acres along the river. Three thousand acres have been restored thus far to native riparian forest.

TNC intends to manage the properties in the immediate future, with the possibility of combining Expansion 4 with the adjacent SRWA, Pine Creek Unit. The Stiles Ranch property could potentially be added to the SRNWR.

TERMS

The grant for Expansion 4 provides that the Grantee, TNC, may dispose or transfer ownership of all or a portion of the property with the approval of the WCB Executive Director. The Executive Director has authorized the disposal of the excess portions of Expansion 4. Those proceeds are to be held in an escrow account. If approved by the Board, the funds will be used to help acquire the 104± acre Stiles Ranch property. The newly acquired Stiles Ranch property will also fall under the terms of the grant agreement and a Notice of Unrecorded Grant referring back to the original agreement will be recorded on the property. If the Board does not approve, then the funds will be returned to the WCB. The remaining portions of Expansion 4 will remain encumbered by the grant terms of the original agreement.

It is understood both the value of the disposed portion of Expansion 4 and the purchase price of the Stiles Ranch property will be based on the fair market value appraisals, approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) on August 26, 2010 (Expansion 4, Vereschagin property), and September 13, 2010 (Stiles Ranch property).

The terms and conditions of the existing grant still require staff of the WCB to review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition and disposal of the two subject properties. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the properties with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Disposal of Expansion 4 (dry side)	\$672,581.00
Purchase Stile Ranch Property	- 934,257.00
TNC contribution (via DWR grant)	<u>261,676.00</u>
TOTAL	\$0.00
Other Project-related Costs:	\$10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E) that provides funding for protection of threatened and endangered species within floodplains and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The original funding source used for Expansion 4 was the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c) that provides funding for protection of threatened and endangered species and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E) for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E) for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *9. Loch Lomond Vernal Pool \$25,000.00
Ecological Reserve Exchange
Lake County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of 1.7± acres and the disposal of 1.4± acres through an exchange of fee title land between the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and a private landowner to expand protection of vernal pool habitat at the Loch Lomond Ecological Reserve (Reserve). The proposed exchange will complete the DFG's acquisition of the complete vernal pool while disposing of property not related to the protection of critical habitat. The exchange will ensure that the total vernal pool is protected from unauthorized use but will be available for visits by schoolchildren and researchers.

LOCATION

The subject property is located adjacent to the community of Loch Lomond, along the north side of State Highway 175 corridor, within the Big Canyon/ Putah Creek Watershed, in Central Lake County. The area consists of vernal pool habitat, healthy, large conifers, black oak, and an understory of manzanita, mountain-mahogany and ceanothus. Most of the surrounding development is rural residential with some small commercial development in the vicinity.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed exchange will complete the DFG's acquisition and protection of the intended vernal pool habitat within the Reserve. The Reserve was created by three prior acquisitions, totaling approximately 13 acres. The exchange will increase the area to 14± acres and complete the last piece necessary to provide full protection of vernal pool complex. Currently there are plans to construct a perimeter fence around the entire project area once the exchange is completed. The disposal area was acquired under one of the prior acquisitions, and has been reviewed by DFG and determined not to contain any significant habitat values.

A survey of the subject property was completed by licensed staff from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). The survey was given to the real estate appraiser and will be used to record a new parcel map for the area if the project is approved. The subject property contains a Northern Ash Flow Vernal Pool and is one of two protected in the Napa-Lake County region. It contains rare, endemic vernal pool plants, including button-celery, many flowered navarretia, few-flowered navarretia, and Konocti manzanita. Acquisition of the property will also increase the public's educational opportunities, with educational field trips and access provided under the direction of DFG staff.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed exchange is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original

enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.), which gives the WCB the authority to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property and whether or not to recommend it for funding.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The maintenance, conservation, security and caretaker services on the property will be managed by the DFG's North Central Region staff. The DFG already has the fencing materials needed to enclose the property, and installation will be handled by the DFG's staff. Any additional costs associated with this project will be nominal and absorbed under the current operation and maintenance budget for the Reserve.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to trade the property for a portion of the existing ecological reserve. Both properties were appraised for \$67,000.00 by a local independent appraiser, and the appraisals were reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed exchange agreement provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, exchange documents, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to recordation of the deeds transferring title to the properties.

PROJECT FUNDING

This project is an even exchange. There are no capital costs for this project.

Other project-related costs:	\$25,000.00
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<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$25,000.00</u>
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It is estimated that \$25,000.00 will be needed for internal project-related expenses, including title insurance, fifty percent of the escrow fees, appraisal review costs by the DGS and the survey costs incurred by the CalFire.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), that allows for the protection of habitat for threatened and endangered species and preservation of wildlife values within a floodplain or flood corridors and is consistent with this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for

fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exception will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$25,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$25,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *10. Swiss Ranch, Expansion 3 \$430,000.00
Calaveras County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) of a conservation easement over 304± acres to maintain and protect unfragmented habitat in Calaveras County for the migratory Rail Road Flat deer herd, protection of oak woodland, hardwood-conifer, mixed chaparral, and riparian habitats for black bear, mountain lion, and bobcat, and contribute to linkages and corridors between upper and lower Sierra habitat. The DFG will hold and monitor the conservation easement.

LOCATION

This privately owned property is located in central Calaveras County, along Swiss Ranch Road approximately 18± miles northeast of San Andreas, between the communities of Mountain House and Rail Road Flat. The property is within the approved Railroad Flat Deer Winter Range Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The Board allocated funding in 1985, 1988 and 1998 for the purpose of acquiring conservation easements on lands immediately south and west of the subject property. Last year, the property owner donated a conservation easement to Calaveras County over a separate 197± acres immediately east of this property thereby completing a linkage between Eagle Ridge to the immediate west with federal forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land to the immediate east. The BLM land extends to

federal forest land to its east and south with DFG managed Sheep Ranch Wildlife Area. In close proximity, but non-contiguous, are the Calaveras Big Trees State Park and more federal forest land to the east and southeast.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This conservation easement will preserve and protect in perpetuity migratory deer habitat, oak woodland, hardwood-conifer, mixed chaparral, and riparian habitats for black bear, mountain lion, and bobcat. The conservation easement will provide habitat corridors and connectivity between adjacent lands that have been preserved for conservation purposes. The key species benefiting from this proposed conservation easement are migrant California mule deer, with the entire property providing winter habitat forage for large numbers of migrant deer. The ranch also supports a variety of other wildlife, including black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, and California quail. Other species that will benefit from the acquisition include ringtail cats and golden eagles.

According to the DFG's Railroad Flat deer herd management plan, 75 percent of the winter range of this herd is privately owned. Land uses in the area are gradually changing from large acreage cattle ranches to small acreage ranchettes, potentially reducing the property's wildlife values, making public protection critical to protection of this herd.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

This project provides the DFG with an opportunity to protect critical habitat, benefiting a host of wildlife species, while incurring very little management costs. It is estimated that 1-2 person days per year would be needed to conduct an onsite inspection to monitor the conservation easement area. DFG will hold title to the easement and will monitor the property on an annual basis to ensure that conservation easement conditions are being met. Monitoring costs will be covered and absorbed under the current regional operation and maintenance (O&M) budget.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement to the DFG for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$410,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed property acquisition agreement provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. Additionally, DFG staff will be responsible for monitoring the property at least once annually.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB will fund the entire purchase price of the easement which is \$410,000.00.

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$410,000.00
Other Project-related Costs	<u>20,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$430,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$20,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including appraisal costs, DGS review costs, and escrow fees bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$430,000.00.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (a) that provides funding for protection of deer, mountain lion, and oak habitats and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$430,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a), to cover the acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements

necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$430,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a), to cover the acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *11. Eticuera Creek Watershed Habitat Restoration \$515,000.00
Napa County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust of Napa County for a partnership project with the State Coastal Conservancy, the U.C. McLaughlin Reserve, the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Partnership, and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore riparian habitat in the Eticuera Creek Watershed.

LOCATION

The project is located in the Eticuera Creek Watershed between the town of Knoxville and the north shore of Lake Berryessa in Napa County. The project is located on three separate ownerships: property owned by the Homestead Mining Company (HMC), but managed through long-term agreement by the University of California McLaughlin Reserve (McLaughlin), a second portion that is privately owned, and the remainder of the project is on the Knoxville Wildlife Area, owned by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Eticuera Creek Watershed has for millenia supported riparian habitat, one of the most important habitats for wildlife in California. Statewide, most of this habitat type has been impacted by human activities through development, agriculture, and flood control. This particular watershed has been altered primarily by mining and the introduction exotic invasive plant species. Exotic invasive plant species like tamarisk, one of the main targets of this project, out-compete native plants and provide little wildlife habitat value. In some areas of the State, tamarisk has formed a complete monoculture in riparian corridors, excluding all native vegetation.

This project is a watershed-wide endeavor addressing multiple issues with multiple partners in a four pronged approach:

1. Knoxville Creek at the Knoxville town-site has been heavily impacted by both gold and mercury mining. While no longer present, a mining town was once located on the banks of Knoxville Creek and, as a consequence, nearly all riparian vegetation was removed. Later, mine tailings were disposed of along the creek banks. HMC, the current owner of the area, is in the process of moving these mine tailings away from the Knoxville Creek channel to protect water quality in the creek. While HMC owns the property, it is managed through long-term agreement by McLaughlin, and HMC is not required to replant with native plants or control invasive species. WCB funding will allow for the enhancement of the aquatic and habitat benefits of the project by eliminating exotic invasive species on the site and planting both woody and herbaceous native riparian species on 21.6 acres of floodplain created by the removal of the tailings. Additional riparian vegetation will be installed along 3500 lineal feet of creek channel. The floodplain plants will be irrigated for three years after planting and all plants will be monitored and replanted as necessary to achieve 80% survivorship.
2. Portions of Knoxville Creek at the Knoxville town site have become heavily incised and disconnected from the floodplain as a result of human activity along the creek. A hydrologic study will be implemented to identify solutions to restore more natural creek morphology and function, which will be implemented in future projects.
3. In 2002 and 2006, the Board funded a two-phase project to remove tamarisk from Knoxville and Elicuera Creeks on the Knoxville Wildlife Area. This project will continue that work on other creeks and properties in the watershed. These will include Elicuera Creek, Adams Creek and Nevada Creek on the Gamble Ranch and Long Canyon Creek, Zim Zim Creek and Nevada Creek on the Knoxville Wildlife Area. In addition, Elicuera Creek on the newly acquired Todd Ranch portion of the wildlife area will also be treated.
4. Barbed goatgrass, an exotic invasive grass, has begun to invade the Elicuera Creek watershed. This species is of particular concern because it can invade serpentine seeps, a rare wetland type with endemic plants that would be highly susceptible to such an invasion. This has already occurred in nearby watersheds. This portion of the project will control the invasion in its early stages, before it is irreversible. Preliminary surveys and mapping have been done in anticipation of herbicide treatments to be funded by this grant.

WCB PROGRAM

This project is funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration projects.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

According to the Grant Agreement, signed by both the Grantee and Landowners, the five-year implementation period is to be followed by long-term management of the project by the Grantee for riparian habitat values for at least 25 years. Furthermore, all areas where tamarisk, barbed goatgrass and other invasives were removed by this project will be monitored for reinvasion and retreated when necessary.

This project will meet the objectives of the Knoxville Wildlife Area Management Plan, The U.C. McLaughlin Reserve Management Plan and the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Framework.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$515,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	118,113.00
Homestake Mining Company	100,000.00
Other Partners	<u>92,500.00</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$825,613.00</u>

Project costs will be for project management; hydrologic assessment and mapping; planning and design; site preparation; weed control; planting; irrigation and plant protection; maintenance; monitoring/evaluation; replanting; and project administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding sources for this project are the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (e/f)(1E) and the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650. Respectively, these sources provide funding for the protection, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat located in floodplains and for habitat that provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation. They are consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The DFG, as lead agency, has prepared and filed a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project and staff has prepared written findings based upon the Mitigated Negative Declaration. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$370,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (e/f)(1E) and

\$145,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$370,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (e/f)(1E) and \$145,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *12. Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, \$10,000.00
American Canyon
Napa County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of 352± acres of land for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for protection of bay wetlands, as an addition to the DFG's Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area. The property contains scarce salt marsh habitat that support a number of waterfowl and shorebirds species in the San Francisco North Bay area, including a number of listed species.

LOCATION

The subject property is located east of the Napa River, along Eucalyptus Drive, on the western edge of the City of American Canyon, in Napa County. The property abuts up to the northeast edge of the DFG Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area (Wildlife Area) at an area referred to as the American Canyon Unit salt plant site. Portions of the project site are encumbered with an easement for development and connection with the San Francisco Bay Trail in Napa County that runs along the eastern border of the Wildlife Area, north toward the City of Napa.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The original site was acquired from the Port of Oakland, with funding provided by a CALFED grant, requiring at least 70% of the property be deeded to DFG. The other 30% is being retained by the City of American Canyon as public open space. The property is being accepted by the DFG and will be assembled into the Wildlife Area. The property is predominately bay wetlands,

and there are no plans for any future restoration. The habitat on the property will support waterfowl and shorebird species, including California clipper rail, California black rail, salt marsh yellow throat and western snowy plover.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.), which gives the WCB the authority to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property and whether or not to recommend it for funding.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The property will be assembled into the Wildlife Area and managed as tidal wetlands by the DFG. There are no pumps or hard structures on site requiring maintenance. The bay trail will be managed by the City of American Canyon. Because the property is primarily a wetland in its current condition, and is being assembled to wetland areas, any operation and maintenance costs are expected to be nominal and easily absorbed under the current operating and maintenance budget of the Wildlife Area.

TERMS

The original CALFED grant used to acquire the property was for \$2,600,000.00. The grant funding terms allows for the protection, restoration and enhancement wetlands and the transfer of the property to DFG. Staff has reviewed the title documents and conferred with DFG staff, and have agreed to accept the property subject to the terms of the CALFED grant agreement.

PROJECT FUNDING

This is a non-cash transfer from the City of American Canyon to DFG. The purchase price is \$0.00.

Other Project-Related Costs:	\$10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>

It is estimated that \$10,000.00 will be needed for internal project-related expenses, including title insurance, escrow fees, and review charges by the Department of General Services.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), which allows for protection of wetland habitat within the San Francisco Bay Area and is consistent with this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exception will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), for internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| *13. Insectaries for Pollinators and Farm Biodiversity
Sonoma County | \$73,000.00 |
|---|-------------|

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (Grantee) for a cooperative project with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Sonoma County Fish and Game Commission, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Farm Stewards and the landowners to restore and enhance wildlife and pollinator habitat by maximizing nesting and food sources for a variety of native bee species on eight privately owned properties located in Sonoma County.

LOCATION

The project is located in western Sonoma County in the Green Valley Creek Watershed, Salmon Creek Watershed, and Blucher Creek Watershed between the towns of Santa Rosa and Bodega Bay.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Native bees and other beneficial insects play an integral role in California farm industries, pollinating one-third of all food crops and numerous native plant species that compose the State's agricultural and biological diversity. Despite their significance, populations of native and European bees throughout the U.S. have crashed dramatically over the past several decades. Concerned for both their own farm productivity and the vitality of the landscape around them, innovative producers have sought to restore and enhance pollinator habitat and attract bees back to their farms.

This project represents a collaborative effort with the Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (GRRCD), the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), and Farm Stewards to create and improve substantial pollinator habitat on eight working farms in western Sonoma County. The partners will work with participating landowners to develop and implement Pollinator Farm Plans. These plans are comprehensive property assessments that will be designed to maximize nesting and food sources for a variety of native bee species while providing secondary benefits such as pest management, improved water and soil quality, and harvestable products. Efforts will focus on innovative applications of insectary habitat creation, such as drought-tolerant hedgerows on non-irrigated rangeland, and an emphasis on non-Pierce's disease host plants for vineyards. Particular emphasis will be given to habitat creation for native bee species, which have been shown to be resilient to many of the current threats to managed honeybees, and essential to many plant species throughout California. The project will include the creation of field borders, nesting structures, appropriate cover crop mixes, contour buffer strips and drift barriers, critical area planting, filter strips, riparian and farm pond revegetation, and pest management practices. Plantings will be specifically designed to provide year-round pollen and nectar sources and shelter for native bees and other pollinators, while also harboring other beneficial predatory insects that control crop pests. Planting areas will also provide essential wildlife corridors for birds and mammals, while improving riparian and pond habitat for aquatic species.

The project will take place on eight privately owned farms that represent a range of agricultural land uses, including conventional and organic vineyards, an organic orchard, organic vegetables, and grazed rangelands. The plantings will be installed to create insectary habitat throughout the eight properties, using available spaces that will expand riparian areas and provide wildlife corridors along fence lines.

WCB PROGRAM

This project is funded through the Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands Program and meets program's goal of assisting farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the facilities for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant. If at any time during the life of the project, the grantee is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$73,000.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	71,520.00
Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission	7,495.00
Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District	8,400.00
Landowners	<u>42,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL Project Cost</u>	<u>\$202,415.00</u>

Project costs will be for planting and irrigation, nursery plants, materials, vegetation maintenance, and project signs; and project design, construction supervision, and administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(4). This funding allows for assisting farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

This restoration project is exempt under Sections 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines because the project will consist of a minimal amount of earthmoving and there will be no negative impacts to the physical environment that would reduce its ability to produce native or agricultural plants. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$73,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(4); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation

Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$73,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(4); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *14. Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve Restoration, \$366,000.00
Augmentation and Change of Scope
Santa Barbara County

This project was to consider the allocation for a funding augmentation and change of scope for a grant to the Land Trust of Santa Barbara County (LTSBC) for a cooperative project with the Army Corps of Engineer and the Federal Aviation Administration to restore and enhance the Department of Fish and Game's Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve (Reserve).

LOCATION

The project is located within the City of Goleta, adjacent to and south of the Goleta Airport, in Santa Barbara County. The Reserve area was once part of an estuarine ecosystem connected directly to the tidal influences of the Goleta Slough. During World War II, portions of the Reserve were filled in and developed, restricting tidal action and effectively eliminating the estuarine areas. More recently, the Reserve area was purchased by the California Department of Transportation as a potential highway route. Plans for the route were abandoned and the property was later conveyed to the DFG. Today, the Reserve functions mostly as a freshwater wetland and upland habitat, trapping rain and run-off water from surrounding development.

The Reserve is long and triangular in shape, bounded by the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) on the south, Goleta Airport property to the west and the airport and light industrial uses to the north. A major thoroughfare, Los Carneros Road, runs north-south essentially through the middle of the reserve, dividing it into two main units connected by culverts, referred to as the West Unit and East Units.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The goal of project is to enhance and expand wetland habitat values throughout the 34.41 acres owned by the DFG in the Reserve by: (a) creating seven acres of new wetlands, (b) removing non-native plant species; (c) improving hydrologic conditions to sustain existing wetlands; (d) removing man-made features; (e) enhancing upland habitats adjacent to wetlands; (f) providing for future tide circulation opportunities; and (g) providing up to five years maintenance and monitoring to ensure the success of the project.

West Unit

The West Unit is approximately 12 acres in size. Work on the West Unit, referred to as Phase 1, entailed removal of fill materials, grading and contouring to expand and enhance wetland areas, culvert removal and improved water conveyance, removal of non-native plants and replanting of native vegetation within the wetland and upland areas, and construction of a public access trail with interpretive signs along the southern perimeter of the site. Most of the Phase 1 work on the West Unit is completed, though some infill planting, maintenance and monitoring are still required.

East Unit

The East Unit is approximately 22 acres and contains freshwater wetlands, upland areas and a tidally-influenced channel. The site also contains two old military bunkers and roads and parking areas that are used by the UCSB facilities operations. The proposed work on the east Unit includes creation of seven acres of new wetland; removal of non-native plants and planting of native vegetation; removal of the two old military world war two era bunkers, paved areas, rubble and fill; fencing; grading and contouring to enhance wetland areas; and installation of culverts and gates to improve water management along Mesa ditch, which provides muted tidal flows from Goleta Slough located near the south east portion of the site.

To date most of the necessary preconstruction work, including permits and a Remedial Action Plan to identify and test for hazardous materials, has been completed for the East Unit and the project is ready for construction. Already much of the site preparation, including removal of the bunkers and other improvements has occurred, along with removal of some of the invasive plants. The contract to begin the major restoration work on the wetland areas is in place and scheduled to occur in the fall and winter of 2010/11.

Change of Scope

As a result of an archeological survey on the site and the identification of potential sensitive areas (a Chumash Native American site), a larger than expected buffer areas was required that reduced the planned restoration site on the northwest side of the East Unit, reducing the amount of transitional wetland and upland areas planned for restoration by 1.75 acres. Total restoration acreage will be reduced from 26.26 acres to 24.51 acres.

WCB PROGRAM

The original grant and the augmentation for this project are being made under the WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program. The Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program (General) is the Board's general restoration program that includes native fisheries restoration and restoration of tidal or fresh wetland habitats, coastal scrub, grasslands, oak woodlands, and threatened and endangered species habitats. This authority is pursuant to the

Board's original enabling legislation, The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq).

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The grant and restoration project requires five years of monitoring for performance. Over the first two years bi-monthly visits will be conducted by the LTSBC to determine the success of removing invasive species and the regrowth of new native species. After two years, site visits will occur quarterly. The target survival rate is 80% after five years. Bird surveys will also be conducted through the first five years. Annual reports will be provided to the WCB each November. Maintenance during the first five years will include maintaining newly planted areas, including temporary irrigation systems, weeding, repairs to fencing, trash removal, paths and temporary erosion control items. After five years, the DFG will take over maintenance responsibilities, which are expected to be minimal.

If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will 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 original budget total for the project was \$1,738,312.00. The funding breakdown from the different partners was as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 903,312.00
US Army Corps of Engineers	795,000.00
Federal Aviation Administration	<u>40,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$1,738,312.00</u>

Of the original WCB grant approximately \$260,000.00 remains unexpended.

Because of project delays related to obtaining permits, completing remediation for contaminated soil found onsite, and higher than expected prevailing wage costs, the total project cost has gone up by \$996,000.00. The additional needed funds will come from the following:

Federal grant funds	\$593,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	366,000.00
Federal Interest Accrued	37,000.00
Total additional funds	<u>996,000.00</u>
<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<u>\$2,734,312.00</u>

Project costs will be primarily for completion of construction on the East Unit, entailing clearing, grading, contouring of land, installation of water control structures, planting, and maintenance and monitoring throughout the term of the agreement, which expires December 31, 2011.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding sources for this project are the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d) (Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, (P-50 SoCal) and the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a), both of which provide funding for the protection, restoration or enhancement of wetland areas along the southern California coast.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. A coastal development permit has already been obtained from the California Coastal Commission for this project. The Department of Fish and Game, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration for the original project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Negative Declaration for the project and has prepared proposed written findings documenting the WCB's compliance with CEQA. Upon approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$300,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d) (Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, (P50 SoCal) and \$66,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$300,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d) (Wetlands Outside the Central Valley, (P50 SoCal) and \$66,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *15. James San Jacinto Mountains Reserve Renovation \$248,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California to purchase and install five new manufactured cabins and one laundry facility, make renovations to two existing buildings, and repair roads at the James San Jacinto Mountains Reserve, located in the San Jacinto Mountain Range approximately 10 miles south of the town of Banning in Riverside County.

LOCATION

James Reserve (Reserve) sits on an alluvial bench at the lower end of Hall Canyon, a steep western flank of Black Mountain, part of the San Jacinto Mountains. The Reserve hosts a wide variety of plant communities: Sierra mixed conifer forest, oak woodlands, montane chaparral, alder-willow-cedar riparian forest. A rapidly flowing mountain stream with a manmade reservoir (Lake Fulmor) is immediately downstream. The entire watershed is protected for research and study by the U.S. Forest Service (500 acres). The reserve has recorded 259 species of vascular plants, 35 bryophytes, 6 amphibians, 18 reptiles, 125 birds (60% nesting), 35 mammals, and over 1000 invertebrates. The Reserve is also home to one of the oldest and largest ponderosa pines in southern California, at around 500 years old and 200 feet tall.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will add five cabins to provide additional and longer-term accommodation for users, with one cabin having space to be used as a classroom facility. The project will also add a laundry facility for the residents with an outdoor access bathroom for day users. The renovations will take place at Lolomi Lodge and Trailfinder Lodge. Lolomi Lodge is an integral and historic part of the Reserve and provides vital housing for the resident director. The roof, flooring, and foundation all need to be replaced. The Trailfinder Lodge also needs renovation as it has long outgrown its original design purpose. It was originally only meant to provide dormitory style housing, but has since become the main office, library, and headquarters for the Reserve. The project will renovate the kitchen facilities, office, library, meeting room and roof. The project also includes site prep for the cabins, utilities, and roadway rehabilitation.

WCB PROGRAM

Under Proposition 84, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for land acquisitions, construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources. The mission of the University of California, Natural Reserve System (UCNRS) is to contribute to the understanding and wise management of the earth and its

natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected areas throughout California. To implement this funding, the WCB and the UCNRS developed guidelines for selecting eligible projects. This also included establishment of a UCNRS Ad Hoc Advisory Subcommittee to review and set priorities for project proposals prior to submittal to the WCB.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the facilities for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant. If at any time during the life of the project, the grantee is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$248,000.00
University of California, Riverside	248,000.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$496,000.00</u>

Project costs will be for site prep, utility upgrades, five manufactured cabins, one laundry facility, renovations to two existing buildings, roadway improvements, construction supervision, and administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b)(3). This funding may be granted to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for the construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

This project is exempt under Sections 15301 and 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines because the project will consist of less than 2,500 sq. ft. of new structures and less than six dwelling units and there will be no negative impacts to the physical environment. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project was vetted through the University of California Natural Reserve System's Ad Hoc Subcommittee and recommended for funding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$248,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006

(Proposition 84), Section 75055(b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$248,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *16. Peninsular Bighorn Sheep \$5,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider a cooperative project with the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), to acquire 947± acres of private land adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument for the protection of habitat for the peninsular bighorn sheep. This acquisition is part of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County.

LOCATION

The property is located within the Santa Rosa Mountains and Coachella Valley, west of 77th Avenue, southwest of Old State Highway 86, west of the community of Oasis, and just west of the Salton Sea. Most of the property is surrounded by mountains, held by public agencies. The surrounding areas in the valley are mostly agriculture, with residential development located just to the east.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property is mostly desert mountain area, sloping down into a fluvial plain with some follow vineyards located at the lower eastern portions of the property. The acquisition of the subject parcels will provide core habitat, linkages, and transport corridors which are important for the Peninsular Bighorn sheep (PBS). Placement of this area in public ownership will add a significant buffer from the developing residential lands to the east and north. The subject property has multiple species values including habitat for desert tortoise, least Bell's vireo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. There is also potential habitat for several sensitive bat species including the western yellow bat, pallid bat, California leafnosed bat, spotted bat, pocketed free-tailed bat, and western

mastiff bat. Protection of the property would also benefit many other species that inhabit the area including mountain lion, mule deer, golden eagle, and prairie falcon.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, et seq.), which gives the WCB the authority to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property and whether or not to recommend it for funding.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The DFG has identified the subject property as being within a Significant Natural Area and has recommended the purchase of the property which would be incorporated into and managed in conjunction with other existing wildlife areas and ecological reserves in the region. The subject property may be appropriate for both passive and consumptive recreational uses. The acquisition of the subject property, if approved, brings the total number of acres protected within the Santa Rosa and Santa Jacinto Mountains National Monument area to over 115,000 acres. Management costs will be covered and absorbed under the current regional operation and maintenance (O&M) budget.

TERMS

The owners have agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$1,798,730.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The USFWS will provide a Recovery Land Acquisition Program Grant, in an amount not to exceed \$1,259,111.00 to be applied toward the purchase price of the property. The Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy has agreed to provide funds in the amount of no less than \$539,619.00 to assist in this acquisition. The terms and conditions of the proposed grants provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

USFWS Section 6 Grant (E-27-RL-3)	\$1,259,111.00
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Grant	<u>539,619.00</u>
<u>TOTAL Purchase Price</u>	<u>\$1,798,730.00</u>
Other Project-related Costs:	5,000.00

TOTAL WCB Allocation

\$5,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related expenses, including DGS review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5906.650 that allows for grants to protect habitat corridors and prevent habitat fragmentation.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been reviewed by DFG through the establishment and approval of the NCCP and has been recommended for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Program Grant from USFWS in the amount of \$1,259,111.00; allocate \$5,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5906.650 to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Program Grant from USFWS in the amount of \$1,259,111.00; allocate \$5,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5906.650 to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *17. East Elliott and Otay Mesa Regions (Sunroad) \$5,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant \$67,200.00 of the federal funds to the City of San Diego (City) to assist with the acquisition of 1± acre of land to protect critical regional wildlife linkages, coastal sage scrub, and to protect and preserve core areas of vernal pool habitat that will enhance the existing Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) area.

LOCATION

The subject property is located on the western Otay Mesa, south of Highway 905 and east of Highway 805 within the San Diego city limits. The property is within a Mutli-Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) that is a joint federally approved Habitat Conservation Plan and a state approved Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). The MSCP covers approximately 900 square miles in southwestern San Diego County and includes the City of San Diego, portions of the unincorporated County of San Diego, and ten other local jurisdictions. The planning area is bordered by Mexico to the south, National Forest lands to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and the San Dieguito River Valley to the north.

The City of San Diego, along with 12 other local jurisdictions, developed the MSCP to address potential impacts from increased development and related infrastructures and the need to protect and preserve important habitat areas and corridors within the 900 square mile area covered under the plan. Together with the wildlife agencies, the local communities developed a conservation plan that addresses both development and wildlife needs within the planning area, along with individual subarea plans that provide the details on how each jurisdiction will implement the plan within their boundaries.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Otay Mesa is a core biological resource in southern San Diego County, but is under threat from nearby development and related external impacts. Protection and preservation of properties on the Otay Mesa and surrounding area is critical to maintaining the regional wildlife linkages, coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat that will further the objectives of the MSCP. Acquisition of the subject property will contribute to the protection of critical habitat used by many sensitive species found in the area. Among these are the California gnatcatcher, San Diego fairy shrimp and the burrowing owl. Acquisition of this property will also benefit several are and/or narrow endemic species within the County's subarea plan. San Diego thornment, willow monardella, Otay mesa mint, and the Otay tarplant are only found in San Diego County. Orcutt's grass is limited to a very few locations, with one of the main sites located within the proposed acquisition area on the Otay Mesa.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.). The acquisition program enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions on behalf of the DFG, accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant the federal funds to assist with acquisitions as recommended by the DFG, provide State bond funding to assist in proposed acquisitions and to cover its project-related expenses.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The subject property is bordered on the west and south side by matching City-owned and managed one acre properties. The City will manage the property in accordance with the MSCP adopted in 1997. The City currently monitors and manages over 20,000 acres of City-owned lands. The subject property will be added to this responsibility. It is anticipated that once the acquisition is complete and the biological values of the property are evaluated, appropriate public access will be considered.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$105,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant to the City provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board (USFWS Subgrant)	\$67,200.00
City of San Diego	<u>37,800.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$105,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	<u>5,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$5,000.00</u>

It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) that provides funding for grants to

implement or assist in the establishment of NCCPs and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and approve the Agreement to Subgrant in the amount of \$67,200.00 to the City of San Diego; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. McCamman that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and approve the Agreement to Subgrant in the amount of \$67,200.00 to the City of San Diego; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

18. Cow Creek Conservation Area, Expansion 2 \$1,340,000.00
Shasta County

Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support for this project were received from Alan A. Forkey, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, Natural Resources Conservation Services, United States Department of Agriculture; and Mary Pfeiffer, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, Shasta County Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the American Land Conservancy (ALC) for a cooperative project with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to acquire a conservation easement over 5,868± acres of land for protection of rangeland, riparian corridors and other significant ecosystems. Mr. Bill Gallup of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The subject property is a privately owned rangeland parcel located in the Cascade Range foothills, north of State Highway 44 about 10 miles east of the City of Redding in Shasta County. The parcel is more specifically located on Whitmore Road, north of Millville, north of highway 44. The property is bisected by two creeks Old Cow Creek and Clover Creek. Each creek runs through the property in an east to west direction and ultimately both flow to the Sacramento River. The property has been operated as a ranch, grazed and farmed, since the 1860's. Current land uses in the area includes agriculture, recreation, residential, natural areas and water supplies.

The property is part of the DFG Cow Creek Conceptual Area Protection (CAPP) that includes a combination of blue oak woodlands, chaparral, mixed conifer, riparian, aquatic, vernal pools and grasslands habitats that support sensitive species and significant populations of native fish and wildlife. There have been two major acquisitions within the Cow Creek CAPP including Cow Creek Ranch totaling about 5,000 acres (adjacent to JS Ranch) and the Hathaway Ranch totaling about 6,600 acres. The Shasta Land Trust is expecting to close on a third property, the Richert Ranch, totaling about 5,000 acres, in the next few months. Including this proposed conservation easement, the total protected area in the Cow Creek CAPP will be in excess of 22,000 acres after the completion of this project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property contains developed springs and irrigation ditches that provide water to large tracts of land that parallel the creeks on the property. There are a number of miscellaneous barn and farm structures on site that support the ranch operation. This project will help create a landscape-scale reserve that contains a variety of different habitats, including oak woodland, chaparral, mixed conifer, riparian, grassland and aquatic habitats. These habitat areas

will support multiple species of plants and animals, including deer and mountain lion, as well as fall-run, late-fall run Chinook salmon and steelhead trout.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreational opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through either development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) or a CAPP. The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to the DFG Regional Operation Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

ALC will manage the conservation easement over property for the benefit of threatened and endangered species. The grazing use will continue into perpetuity and ALC will monitor for compliance of the terms and conditions of the easement. The owners of the property will be donating an endowment for monitoring the easement. ALC will eventually transfer the easement interest with all of the terms and conditions as well as the endowment over to the California Rangeland Trust. Because this is an easement on private land, public access will be restricted.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell a conservation easement to ALC for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$2,640,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to ALC provides that staff of WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms the WCB can encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,320,000.00
Natural Resource Conservation Service	<u>1,320,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price:	\$2,640,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	20,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$1,340,000.00</u>

This is estimated that \$20,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related costs, including the Department of General Services review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Projection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b), which provides funding for grants for the protection of wildlife corridors, significant natural landscapes and the protection endangered and threatened species, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been reviewed and approved for funding by WCB staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,340,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Projection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b) for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gallup introduced Mr. Ed Stanton, Program Manager from American Land Conservancy, and Mr. & Mrs. George McArthur, the property owners, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if public access on the property is restricted or prohibited. Mr. Gallup responded that there won't be any public access on the property. Mr. McCamman asked if this property will be eventually transferred to the Rangeland Trust. Mr. Gallup confirmed. Mr. McCamman asked if there is a time line on that. Mr. Gallup replied that he does not have a specific time line and asked Mr. Stanton to provide more information. Mr. Stanton introduced himself before the Board and responded that the transfer to the California Rangeland Trust has not been determined at this point. Mr. Stanton also said that American Land Conservancy has some projects funded by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and this is follow-up work on the ranch to do some habitat improvement and planning work and that may alter the timing to transfer the easement. Mr. McCamman asked if this is consistent with the California Rangeland Trust goals and objectives. Mr. Stanton confirmed that this is

correct and added that the American Land Conservancy is working closely with the California Rangeland Trust, and that the American Land Conservancy totally qualified to hold this easement and endowment. Mr. Stanton also added that the endowment will be transferred with the easement.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,340,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Projection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b) for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| 19. Red Bank Creek
Tehama County | \$3,960,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support were received for this project from the following people: Tracy K. Schohr, Rangeland Conservation Director, CA Cattlemen Association; and Pelayo Alvarez, Conservation Program Director, Defenders of Wildlife.

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT) to acquire conservation easements over 7,132± acres of two contiguous ownerships (3,356± acres Burrow Ranch and 3,776± acres Big Bluff Ranch) in Tehama County. The project will allow the continued operations of the ranches and at the same time protect important oak woodland habitat areas, and maintain the property's relatively natural, scenic, and open-space characteristics. Mr. Randy Nelson of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The ranches are located approximately 20 miles southwest of the City of Red Bluff, seven miles west of the town of Red Bank, along Colyear and Red Bank Roads, in Tehama County. Most of the surrounding lands comprise ranches similar to those to be protected by this project. To the north, the project area abuts over 6,000 acres of protected Bureau of Land Management land and another 1,017 acres that is part of the Mendocino National Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An estimated 60 to 70 percent of the acreage is occupied by individual oak trees, oak savannah, or oak woodland. Oak tree species present within the project area include black, valley, interior live, canyon live, blue, scrub, and tan. The project would also protect annual grassland, farmland, chamise-redshank chaparral, mixed chaparral, valley-foothill riparian land, spring-fed wetlands and creek frontage along Red Bank and North Fork Elder Creeks and a number of other perennial and seasonal creeks.

WCB PROGRAM

This project funding proposal was submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board through its Oak Woodlands Conservation Program. The project is reviewed and approved by WCB staff, and must be located within a county that has adopted an Oak Woodlands countywide conservation plan. The Program is designed to help local efforts to achieve oak woodland protection. More importantly, this program provides a mechanism to bring ranchers and conservationists together in a manner that allows the achievement of both sustainable ranch and farming operations and healthy oak woodlands. The project meets the objectives of the Oak Woodland Conservation Program by conserving some 4,275 contiguous acres of oak woodlands and allowing for the continued ranching and farming operations on the land. Because this is an easement of a private land, public access will be restricted.

In May 2010, the WCB authorized a grant to the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Audubon Society and the landowners to restore riparian habitat, reduce sedimentation and streambank erosion and improve water quality along Red Bank Creek. This project will complement those restoration improvements and will improve the wildlife values the restoration project aims to enhance.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The NCRLT will hold, manage and be responsible for the monitoring of the easement in perpetuity per the WCB grant terms. A baseline report will have been completed by the Grantee and approved by the WCB. The conservation easement deed allows access to the subject properties by both the NCRLT and the WCB for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The property owners have agreed to sell conservation easement over their properties to the NCRLT for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market values of \$1,850,000.00 and \$2,100,000.00, respectively. Combined the total purchase is \$3,950,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to the NCRLT provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of

conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance or require that title to the conservation easement be transferred to the WCB or another qualifying entity. The project lands are encumbered by Land Conservation Contracts under the Williamson Act that are not affected by the terms of the easement.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB proposes to make a grant to NCRLT for the full amount of the purchase price:

WCB Grant	\$3,950,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$3,960,000.00</u>

It is estimated that \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related costs including the appraisal review costs by the DGS.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2), that allows for the acquisition of conservation easements on agricultural properties for the protection of oak woodland habitat and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been reviewed under the WCB's Oak Woodlands Conservation Program and has been recommended for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,960,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Nelson introduced Mr. Jamison Watts, Executive Director of the Northern California Rangeland Trust, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if public access will be allowed in the property. Mr. Nelson replied that this easement does not provide for public access. Mr. Nelson added that the NCRT will be allowed on the property with members of the public periodically for educational purposes. Ms. Finn asked if the lands are under Williamson Act contract. Mr. Nelson confirmed that this is correct. Ms. Finn asked what happens with the conservation easement – will this contract be canceled or does it remain in place. Mr. Nelson responded that the contract remains in place. Mr. Donnelly added that Wildlife Conservation Board does two things when we either acquire a conservation easement or give grants for conservation easements or acquire fee title for the Department of Fish and Game, we have the obligation to notify both the Department of Conservation, which we have done, as well as the counties in which Williamson contracts apply.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this project. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,960,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| 20. Heart K Ranch
Plumas County | \$1,090,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support were received for this project from the following people: Don Williamson, Indian Valley Recreation & Parks District Board Chair; and Brian L. Morris, General Manager, Plumas County Flood Control & Water Conservation District.

This proposal was to consider the acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) of a conservation easement over 880± acres in Plumas County. The conservation easement would restrict future development and help insure that the biological and cultural resources found on the property are protected in perpetuity. The DFG will hold and monitor the conservation easement.

Mr. Brian Gibson of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The Heart K Ranch is located in Plumas County, approximately 2 hours north of the town of Truckee, 45 minutes north east from the town of Quincy, and 15 minutes east of the small town of Taylorsville. It is a top priority property within the DFG Genesee Valley Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). Genesee Valley is characterized by a large (~3,000 acres) relatively level mountain valley, bisected by Indian Creek, and surrounded on all sides by coniferous and oak forests. The north side of the Genesee Valley contains unique geologic features including large talus slopes. The mountains to the south side are dominated by dense, Douglas-fir dominated mixed conifer forests. Land uses surrounding the Heart K Ranch are primarily agriculture (ranching) with some private residences interspersed as single lots or small subdivisions. Forest lands bordering the north and south of the property are open for public use and administered by the Plumas National Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This conservation easement will preserve and protect in perpetuity a variety of animal and plant habitat. Terrestrial and riparian vegetation types around the Heart K Ranch include mixed conifer forests and black oak woodlands along upland portions of the property. These forested habitat types transition to perennial grasslands, wet meadows, and eventually the montane riparian and river habitats associated with Indian Creek, which flows through the center of the ranch. The habitat types support a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic species, including both State and federal species of special concern.

The riparian area and associated cottonwood-willow riparian habitats along Indian Creek support a large colony of state threatened bank swallow as well as state endangered willow flycatcher. The pastures and grasslands adjacent to the riparian area have regular occurrences of greater sandhill crane and bald eagle. In combination with upland conifer and hardwood forests, these habitat types provide nesting and foraging habitat for several birds of prey, including the golden eagle, northern goshawk, Cooper's hawk, and the California spotted owl. Indian Creek currently supports six species of native fishes, which include: hardhead, Sacramento pikeminnow, speckled dace, riffle sculpin, Sacramento sucker, and rainbow trout. The property also supports a highly diverse assemblage of mammal species, including Sierra Nevada mountain beaver, southwestern river otter, beaver and ringtail. There are several more common land mammals, including black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, grey fox, and blacktail deer, which are abundant throughout Heart K Ranch year-round.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered

pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The DFG will hold title to the conservation easement and will monitor the property on an annual basis to ensure that conservation easement conditions are being met. The Feather River Land Trust, which owns the property, has agreed to fully fund an endowment which will pay all costs associated with monitoring the conservation area.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement to the DFG for less than the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$2,200,000.00. The DFG will acquire the conservation easement for \$1,075,000.00, with a landowner donation (bargain sale) of \$1,125,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed property acquisition agreement provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. Additionally, DFG staff will be responsible for monitoring the property at least once annually.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,075,000.00
Landowner donation (bargain sale)	<u>1,125,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,200,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	15,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$1,090,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS review costs and escrow fees.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (a)(1E) that provides funding for protection of deer, mountain lion, oak habitats, and preservation of wildlife values within a floodplain or flood corridor, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,090,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a)(1E) to cover the acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson introduced Mr. Paul Hardy, Executive Director of the Feather River Land Trust, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked how the Feather River Land Trust acquired the property. Mr. Gibson responded that the property was purchased from The Nature Conservancy, and The Nature Conservancy acquired the property from a private landowner. Mr. McCamman asked if the WCB was involved in earlier transactions. Mr. Gibson replied that it was not. Ms. Finn asked if public money was used in either of the previous transactions.

Mr. Hardy introduced himself before the Board and commented that only private money was involved with The Nature Conservancy acquisition and Feather River Land Trust subsequent acquisition. Mr. McCamman asked if an endowment will be established to cover DFG's costs for monitoring. Mr. Hardy confirmed that this is correct, but the contract has not been finalized yet.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,090,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(a)(1E) to cover the acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

21. Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area, Expansion 6 \$1,120,000.00
Butte County

This proposal was to consider for the acquisition of 222± acres of land for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), for the protection of wetland habitat and as an expansion to the Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area (UBBWA). The property will provide habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and riparian songbirds and will contribute to the public use and other management objectives of the UBBWA. Mr. Randy Nelson of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The subject property is located approximately five miles west of the City of Biggs, in Butte County. The site is next to Cherokee Canal, and fronts the southerly side of Schohr Ranch Road, a gravel roadway that provides access to the property from Afton-Biggs Road. The DFG Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area (UBBWA), which the property will be a part of, is open to the public and allows for waterfowl hunting and other outdoor wildlife related uses. The surrounding lands consist mostly of farm, mostly rice farms, and hunting clubs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The UBBWA contains a mosaic of diverse and moist soil habitat that provides quality vegetation for wintering waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds. The project area will provide nesting areas and brood ponds for breeding waterfowl and other resident wetland related wildlife, and riparian habitat. The project will benefit mallards, gadwall, American green-winged teal, cinnamon teal, northern pintail, northern shoveler, American wigeon, riparian songbirds, white faced ibis and the long-billed curlew.

The property is currently encumbered by a conservation easement held by the DFG. Because of its location to the Cherokee Canal, and the facilities for water conveyance and appropriation, both current and future, this property could be an integral part of the overall water management on the UBBWA. For these reasons, DFG requested that staff of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) negotiate a Right of First Refusal as part of the original easement project. Consequently, the land owner notified the DFG of his intent to sell a portion of the property, and the DFG has recommended that we pursue acquisition.

In addition to waterfowl and other wildlife diversity found on site, this particular property is significant for ownership by the DFG because of the water infrastructure located within its boundaries. The property hosts an important pumping facility at its southwest boundary that appropriates/diverts water from the Cherokee Canal to the existing properties of the UBBWA. While the DFG maintains an easement for the use of this pumping facility, the landowner and UBBWA staff has made improvements to the water infrastructure to allow water to be diverted through existing ditches across the property for the benefit of the

UBBWA. The diversion and eventual flow into the UBBWA is by way of gravity flow ditch, thus reducing pumping costs and maintenance the DFG would otherwise incur. If the property were sold to another land owner, the DFG may not have the ability to access or improve the property's infrastructure to meet current and /or future water needs. This could significantly increase the costs of providing water to the area while at the same time reducing overall habitat and species management.

WCB PROGRAM

This project funding proposal is being made through the Wildlife Conservation Board's Inland Wetland Conservation Program. The Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (IWCP) was created to assist the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV), a federal entity, with specific goals to increase populations of wintering waterfowl, breeding waterfowl, non-breeding shorebirds, breeding shorebirds, waterbirds, and breeding riparian songbirds. The project meets the objectives of the IWCP by protecting habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and riparian songbirds.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Department of Fish and Game will manage these additional 222 acres as part of the Little Dry Creek Unit of the UBBWA, as a mixture of seasonal wetlands, semi-permanent wetlands, upland and riparian habitats. The property will be managed with existing DFG staff working on the UBBWA.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$1,110,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition provide that staff of the WCB review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. The property is encumbered by a Land Conservation Contract under the Williamson Act, and notification has been provided accordingly to the Department of Conservation.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB will be funding the entire purchase price of \$1,110,000.00.

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,110,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$1,120,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including appraisal and DGS review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund, (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d)(1E) Inland Wetland Conservation Program, which allows for the protection of wetland habitat within the Central Valley and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,120,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d) (1E) Inland Wetland Conservation Program, to cover the cost of acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Nelson introduced Mr. Kent Smith, Regional Manager, Region 2, and Mr. Andy Atkinson from the Department of Fish and Game; and Mr. Lauren Ward, the property owner, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if we already have a conservation easement on this property. Mr. Donnelly explained that there is currently a conservation easement over the entire property, which is just a little over 400 acres. Mr. Donnelly reported that the Wildlife Conservation Board negotiated a Right of First Refusal when the conservation easement was put into place. Because of the importance of this particular property and the Department of Fish and Game programs up there, we felt it necessary to secure the opportunity to acquire this property should it ever come up for sale, so now we are exercising our First Right of Refusal for this project. Mr. McCamman asked Mr. Kent Smith if this property is going to be managed with the existing Upper Butte complex. Mr. Smith responded that this is correct. Mr. McCamman asked if Mr. Smith has estimated cost of how to incorporate this project into existing program. Mr. Andy Atkinson responded that it is \$23,000.00. Mr. Smith commented that because of the challenging fiscal times we continue to work on new creative partnership ways to develop and implement management strategies on lands.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,120,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(d)(1E) Inland Wetland Conservation Program, to cover the cost of acquisition and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

22. Lower Yuba River, Excelsior, Phase I \$3,216,440.00
Nevada and Yuba Counties

This proposal was to consider the acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) under a cooperative project with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and Caltrans to acquire approximately 527± acres of land for protection of deer and mountain lion habitat. The project will help maintain the natural biodiversity of the Lower Yuba River watershed and surrounding foothill areas, and expand public access and fishing opportunities to the Yuba River. Ms. Liz Yokoyama of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The subject property is located adjacent to the historic community of Smartsville, along the north side of the Highway 20 corridor in the eastern portion of Yuba County, and the western edge of Nevada County. The property is situated on the Lower Yuba River between Rose Bar and Englebright Dam and includes approximately two miles of river frontage, at the confluence of the Yuba River and Deer Creek. The site is bordered by Penn Valley, Grass Valley and Nevada City to the east and Marysville and Yuba City to the west. A historic Miner's Trail used during the Gold Rush remains on the site, providing a scenic hiking access through the property. The proposed acquisition is located within the DFG Lower Yuba River Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) and will provide habitat and recreational linkage between the DFG Daugherty Wildlife Area; University of California Foothill Research Station on the north; DFG Spenceville Wildlife Area; and the Beale Air Force Base on the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is being completed in two phases. The first phase before the Board for consideration is the fee acquisition of 527± acres of land. The second phase involves the acquisition of a conservation easement over 157± acres of adjoining land and will be completed in a future transaction between the

property owner and TPL. At this time, there are no plans for WCB to participate in this second transaction.

The subject property is well known for its scenic beauty and attractiveness to fisherman for its Chinook salmon and steelhead trout. It offers recreational boaters and hikers with panoramic views of the river, Rose Bar Bridge to the west, and the Englebright Dam on the east. The acquisition will also provide connections to over five miles of recreational areas previously deemed inaccessible. The site is representative of early California history and includes a traversable Miner's Trail that was constructed and used by miners during the California Gold Rush. Remnants of an historic Chinese wall and mining tunnel also remain intact on the property from California's gold mining past.

The subject property is rich in biodiversity, and includes grassland pastures, blue oak woodlands and riparian corridors containing riverine aquatic and associated riparian/wetland habitats. The property also supports wildlife that includes at least 29 reptiles and amphibian species, 57 bird species and 10 mammal species. Listed species found on the site include the Peregrine falcon, spring run Chinook salmon, Central Valley steelhead, California black rail, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, foothill yellow-legged frog, and the burrowing owl. The proposed acquisition will contribute to the regional conservation planning efforts carried out by various entities including the California Department of Parks and Recreation; the Sierra Nevada Conservancy; the Counties of Nevada, Yuba, Placer and Butte; Nevada County Land Trust; and the Placer Land Trust.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition of this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The maintenance, conservation, security and caretaker services on the property will managed at no cost to the State, according to the terms of a Stewardship Agreement between the DFG and the Excelsior Foundation, a California nonprofit corporation, for a period of five years. At any time during the five year period and afterwards the DFG can take over management.

TERMS

The property has a fair market value of \$3,700,000.00 based on an independent appraisal of the property, reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the property at less than its approved appraised value, for \$3,505,000.00. Once the property is acquired by TPL, it will immediately be conveyed to the DFG. The terms of the option agreement between TPL and seller require that escrow must be closed no later than December 31, 2010. Should the State grant funds not be available to close escrow as stipulated in the State's purchase agreement, TPL has agreed to fund the acquisition and hold the property until State funding is available to complete the acquisition by the DFG.

The terms and conditions of the proposed purchase agreement with TPL provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

Proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board Grant	\$3,196,440.00
California Department of Transportation	308,560.00
Landowner Donation	<u>195,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$3,700,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	<u>20,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$3,216,440.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$20,000.00 will be needed for internal project-related expenses, including title and escrow fees and appraisal and transaction review costs by the Department of General Services.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), which allows for the protection of habitat threatened and endangered species and preservation of wildlife values within a floodplain or flood corridor and is consistent with this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat.

Subject to approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board, a Notice of Exception will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,216,440.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), for the acquisition and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Yokoyama introduced Mr. Kent Smith, Regional Manager, Region 2, and Mr. Andy Atkinson from the Department of Fish and Game; Mr. Erik Vink, Senior Project Manager of The Trust for Public Land; and Mr. Brian Bisnett, the property owner, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if the public access on the property, such as Miner's Trail, is marked or visible for the public. Ms. Yokoyama responded that there is access from the side, and there are plans to open it up to the public. Ms. Finn asked if it is open to the public right now. Ms. Yokoyama confirmed that the Miner's Trail is not open to the public now, but will be once we acquire this property. Mr. Kent Smith added that this is a very special piece of property as the Yuba River offers very limited public access, and this is an opportunity to create public access, as well as conservation opportunity, in an area that has historically had little or none to this reach of this river system. Mr. Smith also said that this project will provide public access to well managed system of fisheries opportunities in this particular part of Yuba River.

Ms. Finn said that the project is being completed in two phases: the first phase is 527 acres but the State is not involved in the second phase. Ms. Yokoyama confirmed that the State is not involved in the second phase of this project at this time. Ms. Finn asked if this project is only 527 acres. Ms. Yokoyama confirmed that this is correct. Ms. Finn asked if there is anything in the agreements that will make the State obligated to take on the second phase. Mr. Donnelly replied that there is no obligation for the State to be involved in the second phase of this project at this particular time. Ms. Finn asked with this property being transferred to the Department of Fish and Game, if the DFG has enough resources to cover it. Mr. Smith replied that we have at least partner support for five years, and after that we will see how it goes. Mr. Smith also added that the DFG has lots of management activities in this particular area, associated with the UC Davis property which is adjacent to this property. Mr. Donnelly pointed out that when you look at the map of this project, this property is in the heart of significant amount of the DFG's ownership.

Mr. McCamman acknowledged the presence of Ms. Teresa Schilling, Senator Wiggins representative, who joined the meeting at this point.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any additional questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,216,440.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786(b/c)(1E), for the acquisition and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

23. Bruin Ranch Phase I \$4,515,000.00
Placer County

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to Placer Land Trust for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Caltrans and Placer County to acquire 1,773± acres of property to protect habitat for threatened and endangered species, including blue oak woodland habitat and approximately three miles of riparian corridor along the Bear River. Mr. Brian Gibson of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

This privately owned property is located west of Highway 49, just west of the junction of Bell Road and Lone Star Road, adjacent to the Auburn Valley Golf and Country Club in Placer County. The property is within the DFG approved Spenceville Wildlife Area Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) made an allocation of two grants in 2007 to Placer Land Trust (PLT) for the purposes of acquiring fee interest in approximately 320 acres and a conservation easement over approximately 313 acres of land south of the subject property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Bruin Ranch is the largest parcel containing blue oak woodland in western Placer County, and includes over three miles of frontage on the Bear River. The property also includes a wide diversity of wildlife habitat, including potential habitat for the western pond turtle and its subspecies, the northwestern pond turtle, California red-legged frog and foothill yellow legged frog. In addition, protection of Bruin Ranch is a very high priority for Placer County, which is a funding partner, as part of its effort to implement the Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) for the preservation habitat and open space corridors in the face of increasing development pressure. Protection of this property may also allow

the connection of a regional trail through previously protected land to Placer County's Hidden Falls Regional Park and Coon Creek, if appropriate.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Under the terms of the grant agreement, PLT will manage the property for the benefit of wildlife habitat preservation, restoration and management, wildlife-oriented education and research, and for compatible public and private uses, all as may be consistent with wildlife habitat preservation and protection of sensitive biological resources.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$9,500,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to PLT provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms the WCB can encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds. The property is encumbered by a Land Conservation Contract under the Williamson Act, and notification has been provided accordingly to the Department of Conservation.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$4,500,000.00
Placer County's Placer Legacy Program (Pending)	5,000,000.00
Caltrans EEMP	<u>350,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$9,850,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	15,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$4,515,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS review costs and escrow fees.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650 that allows for protection of habitat for threatened and endangered species and protection of habitat corridors and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The Department of Fish and game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,515,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650 to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson introduced Mr. Dave Sutton, Director, Northern California/Nevada Program, Ms. Trish Strickland, Project Manager, both with the Trust for Public Land; and Mr. Jeff Darlington, Executive Director of the Placer Land Trust. All three were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Mr. Donnelly pointed out that a clarification needed to be made to this item in the agenda. Mr. Donnelly said that the appraised value is listed as \$9,500,000.00, and in the Project Funding section the total purchase price is \$9,850,000.00. Mr. Donnelly stated that the correct purchase price is \$9,500,000.00. Mr. Donnelly said that as of the Board meeting, it was not certain whether or not the \$350,000.00 from Caltrans would be available to help fund the project. Mr. Donnelly went on to say that in the event the Caltrans money would not be available the County was prepared to consider a grant of \$5,000,000.00. Mr. Donnelly clarified that the agenda should show Placer County's Placer Legacy Program (Pending) as \$4,650,000.00.

Mr. McCamman asked how Placer County's Placer Legacy Program (Funding) is to work. Mr. Gibson responded that the parties are working out the details,

such as a conservation easement language, and the Board of Supervisors will vote on funding for Bruin Ranch in early December. Mr. Gibson went on to say that the meetings between the Placer Land Trust, the Trust for Public Land, and the County were going very well and a “yes” vote from the Board of Supervisors was anticipated. Mr. McCamman asked what would happen if the County voted not to fund the project. Mr. Donnelly responded that in that case the Grantees would look for some another funding source and the project would likely come back to the WCB.

Ms. Finn asked who will own the property. Mr. Gibson replied that the Placer Land Trust will own the property. Mr. McCamman asked if this acquisition was consistent with the NCCP, and if it is a part of the acquisition purpose. Mr. Donnelly confirmed that this is correct.

Mr. Dave Sutton, Director, Northern California/Nevada Program of the Trust for Public Land, introduced himself before the Board and spoke in support of this item. Mr. Sutton said that this project is a component of a ten-year partnership underway with the Wildlife Conservation Board, Department of Fish and Game, Placerville Land Trust, Nevada County Land Trust, and the Trust for Public Land. Mr. Sutton stated that this project was part of a comprehensive effort to protect a 30 mile north and south swath of blue oak woodland habitat, as well as the river corridors that run 30 miles and encompass key Fish and Game investments in Spenceville. Mr. Sutton added that this project is a joint venture partnership with the Placer Land Trust, who will manage the property. Mr. Sutton said that this project is a critical investment for the Placer County conservation plan that is being develop, the NCCP. Mr. Sutton also stated that the Trust for Public Land has been working closely with each of the Board Members of Placer County Board of Supervisors, and the public session is going to be held on December 14 to approve the \$5,000,000.00 funding. Mr. Sutton said that he was confident there would be a “yes” vote. Mr. Sutton thanked the Board for considering this project.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any additional questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,515,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650 to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

Mr. McCamman announced that there was a speaker card for the item #21 (Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area, Expansion 6, Butte County) that was overlooked. Mr. McCamman called the name, Ms. Susan Schor, but she was not in the audience at that time. Mr. McCamman apologized and proceeded forward with the meeting.

24. Oak Hills Ranch \$2,296,000.00
Yolo County

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support was received for this project from Mr. Graham Chisholm, Executive Director of Audubon California.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Rangeland Trust (CRT) for a cooperative project to acquire a conservation easement over 3,316± acres of land for the protection of oak woodlands, riparian habitat, and conservation of critical wildlife migration corridors. Mr. Jon Wilcox of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the projects and its location.

LOCATION

The property is located south of the community of Dunnigan and north of the town of Esparto in Yolo County. The property provides a wildlife migration corridor adjacent to the existing and currently negotiated conservation easements in the Hungry Hollow area. The property also provides linkage with the Cache Creek watershed open space areas to the west.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property provides a high diversity of wildlife habitats that are intact and contiguous. The property is part of a much larger mosaic of intact oak woodland and oak savannah in the region and is adjacent and nearby to numerous large-acreage private ranches with similar habitat types and conditions. There are a multitude of natural vegetation communities present within the property, including California annual grassland, live oak woodland, blue oak woodland, valley oak savannah, chaparral, and riparian woodland, as well as salt water springs. Blue oaks are the dominant species and demonstrating an extremely significant regeneration rate. The live oak, blue oak and riparian woodland communities all exhibit trees of mixed age from seedlings to maturity.

Water on the property is provided by numerous springs, wells, and four seasonal creeks. The major drainages within the property provide important wildlife migration corridors and foraging, nesting, breeding and protection for a variety of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. There are also sixteen stock ponds on the property that provide water for seasonal grazing and abundant wildlife.

WCB PROGRAM

This project funding proposal was submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board through its Oak Woodlands Conservation Program (Program). The project is reviewed and approved by WCB staff, and must be located within a county that has adopted an Oak Woodlands countywide conservation plan. The Program is designed to help local efforts achieve oak woodland protection. More importantly, this Program provides a mechanism to bring ranchers and conservationists together in a manner that allows both to achieve sustainable ranch and farming operations and healthy oak woodlands. The project meets the objectives of the Program by conserving some 4,275 contiguous acres of oak woodlands and allowing for the continued ranching and farming operations on the land.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The conservation easement and project area will be managed in accordance with local land use planning under the County of Yolo's Oak Woodland Conservation and Enhancement Program. As a condition of the grant, baseline studies will be completed and provided to the WCB prior to closing escrow. The CRT, which will hold title to the conservation easement, will monitor the property on an annual basis to ensure that conservation easement conditions are being met. Because this is an easement on private land, public access will be restricted.

TERMS

The property owners have agreed to sell a conservation easement to the CRT for the Department of General Services' (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$2,286,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to the CRT provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms the WCB can request the conveyance of the conservation easement to the State and/or seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB proposes to make a grant to the CRT for the full amount of the purchase price:

Wildlife Conservation Board Grant	<u>\$2,286,000.00</u>
Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$2,296,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related expenses, including DGS review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2) and provides funding to ensure continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits to the State of California for oak woodlands preservation and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been reviewed and approved for funding by WCB staff under the WCB's Oak Woodlands Conservation Program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,296,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2) for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. McCamman commented that in the agenda he does not see endowment-related language in this item. Mr. Wilcox responded that it will be worked out with the property owner. Ms. Finn asked if the acreage is 3,300 acres or 4,300 acres. Mr. Wilcox replied that it is 3,316 acres. Ms. Finn pointed out that it says in the agenda, under "WCB Program" section, "...some 4,275 contiguous acres of oak woodlands..." and asked if it is in addition to the 3,316 acres. Mr. Wilcox confirmed that the right size is 3,316 acres and apologized for this mistake in the agenda. Mr. McCamman expressed his concern about the monitoring issue and asked if we get monitoring baseline report before the transaction closes. Mr. Wilcox confirmed that this is correct and that there is an annual monitoring to occur that is not funded yet, but is being worked out between the Rangeland Trust and the property owner.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any additional questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,296,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal

Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(d)(2) for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

25. San Joaquin River Parkway, Jensen River Ranch \$1,982,513.00
Phase II Construction
Fresno County

Mr. Donnelly explained that the San Joaquin River Conservancy is the State Conservancy, and their funding is within the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) appropriations. As the Conservancy recommends a project to move forward, the WCB acts to fund those transactions and approve the project as well.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for an interagency agreement with the Department of Water Resources for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to restore wetland and riparian habitat and construct public access trails on the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) just east of Highway 41 in the City of Fresno, Fresno County. Mr. Scott McFarlin briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The Parkway is defined in State Legislation as approximately 5,900 acres within a twenty-two mile long stretch between Friant Dam and State Route 99 on the San Joaquin River in Fresno and Madera Counties. The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The SJRC's mission includes both public access and habitat restoration within the Parkway.

The 167± acre Jensen River Ranch, acquired by the WCB in 1997, is located on the Parkway near the junction of Highway 41, in the City of Fresno, in Fresno County. Phase I was restored by the DWR in the fall of 2007 and consisted of the 100± acres south of the D/K storm water channel, which roughly divides the property into north and south halves. Planning and design for the restoration of the remainder of the property lying north of the D/K storm water channel, which is the property to be restored with this proposal, was approved by the WCB on May 22, 2008.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completing the Jensen River Ranch Project is the SJRC and the Interagency Project Development Committee's (IPDC) highest priority restoration project. The IPDC is an independent committee and serves to provide recommendations to the San Joaquin River Conservancy staff and board on priorities for both land acquisitions and restoration or public access projects. The recommended action will authorize funding for DWR to construct the remaining infrastructure on the portion of the Jensen River Ranch site north of the water retention channel, identified as Phase 2. The scope of work includes:

1. Habitat enhancement infrastructure, which includes demolition of pasture irrigation pipes; installing irrigation to the planting cells; construction of a gravel maintenance road on the perimeter; grading swales and depressions for runoff to create wetlands; and installing barbed wire fencing to allow for future prescribed grazing for weed management;
2. Improvements to public access trail within the Phase 1 area, which will improve performance and reduce maintenance by paving the surface of the Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant trail and improving trail drainage;
3. Recreation and public access infrastructure, which includes the construction of split rail fencing to demark the hiking trail (co-located on the maintenance road) and a trail ascending the bluff to connect the northern trail loop with the Lewis S. Eaton multiple purpose trail above. The City of Fresno, which maintains existing public access facilities on the site and on adjacent Parkway lands, currently has a moratorium on building new trails and parks until new local funding is identified; therefore the recreation and public access components will not be included in the bid package unless additional resources are secured; and
4. Construction oversight and environmental permitting.

Construction is planned to begin in late summer or early fall of 2011.

WCB PROGRAM

The WCB's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and Public Access Program provide the basis for WCB's ability to restore habitat and provide public access State-wide. In addition, funds were appropriated to the WCB from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40) to be provided to the SJRC for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The 167± acre Jensen River Ranch is owned by the San Joaquin River Conservancy. The SJRC, as the landowner, will be responsible for

managing the property after the project is complete, as it does at present. For all of its properties, the SJRC maintains fences and gates, maintains grazing and other leases, removes illegal dumping and nuisances, addresses citizen complaints, coordinates with the local mosquito abatement districts, performs fire prevention activities, and maintains access licenses with stewardship and educational groups. The proposed project will not significantly increase current management demands.

The San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust has also been a partner in the overall Jensen Ranch project, and received a River Parkways Grant from the California Natural Resources Agency to plant, irrigate, and maintain the habitat restoration component of Phase 1. The River Parkway Trust's work on the grant is on-going. Funding for habitat planting and maintenance is expected to be brought to the San Joaquin River Conservancy Board in the near future. Work to be funded will include weed eradication, planting native trees and shrubs, and managing irrigation and weeds for at least three years of plant establishment.

Existing recreational access has, and will continue to, be managed by the City of Fresno. However, the City of Fresno enacted a moratorium on extending trails and building new parks until new local funding can be identified. As a result, the recreational components for Phase II are budgeted but will not be constructed if the moratorium continues. Should funds be identified, the new public access facilities will be constructed, and the City of Fresno will maintain the new facilities consistent with their current responsibilities.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,982,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	513.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$1,982,513.00</u>

Project costs funded by the WCB will include DWR's construction oversight and environmental permitting and compliance; site preparation; earthmoving; gravel for access road; irrigation; trail construction; trail renovation within the Phase I area; and fencing. In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$513.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the total allocation necessary for this project to \$1,982,513.00.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5). This funding provides for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources consistent with the SJRC's mission and the Parkway Master Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

As lead agency, the SJRC filed a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in March 2002. Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared by SJRC and has prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,982,513.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Scott McFarlin introduced Ms. Melinda Marks, Executive Officer of the San Joaquin River Conservancy, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn had a question regarding the issue with the City of Fresno providing public access and asked if they are going to provide it or not. Mr. McFarlin replied that right now it does not look like the City will be able to fund this part of the project, and the Conservancy indicated that they are trying to get funding some other way. Mr. McCamman asked, with this property being public, would the public be able to access it. Mr. McFarlin responded that the trails will be closed off to the public if the City can not manage it, but the restoration project will still go forward in that area. Ms. Finn asked if the Conservancy just turned the property over to the City. Mr. McFarlin replied that the Conservancy manages the site overall with the City of Fresno providing maintenance of the trails. Mr. McCamman commented that it would be ideal to integrate this property into the adjacent park. Mr. Donnelly commented that the Conservancy itself is made up of Madera and Fresno Counties and a number of other organizations locally, including the Department of Fish and Game, and ownership pattern along the river is mosaic of different types of public ownership, and this has been an issue of ongoing struggle for the Conservancy, as well as for other public entities that own the properties along the San Joaquin River. Ms. Melinda Marks spoke before the Board in support of this project. Ms. Marks explained that the Phase I of this site has an existing trail and the City of Fresno operates that. Regarding the Phase II, we need to figure out how we can make sure that the City has adequate funding to manage it. Ms. Marks said that the Phase II will provide access roads that are necessarily to build a restoration component, and those roads will become trails at the point when we know that we have that adequate funding to proceed.

Mr. McCamman asked if the Conservancy has a master plan for this whole stretch of the river. Ms. Marks confirmed that this is correct. Mr. McCamman asked if the master plan is available on the Conservancy's website. Ms. Marks responded that it is available on their website and also the San Joaquin Parkway Trust's, and mentioned that the plan needs to be updated. Ms. Marks added that there will be a request before the Board at its February 2011 meeting to allocate funds for a Parkway Master Plan update. Mr. McCamman added that there are some hatchery expansion issues associated with this project. Ms. Marks commented that the Conservancy is working closely with the hatchery on this project to resolve those issues.

Ms. Finn asked if we are only paying \$500.00 to the Department of General Services (DGS). Mr. Donnelly replied that this is the cost of a contract review, and it used to be \$176.00 but the DGS raised their fees.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,982,513.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- | | |
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| 26. Los Vaqueros Ranch Conservation Easement,
Phase II
Monterey County | \$1,210,000.00 |
|--|----------------|

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to assist with its acquisition of a conservation easement over 800± acres of property to protect critical steelhead trout habitat as well as habitat for sensitive wildlife species. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The Los Vaqueros Ranch (Ranch) totals 2,137± acres and is located in central Monterey County in the Coast Range Mountains on the west side of the Salinas Valley, approximately 7 miles southwest of the town of Greenfield. The property includes portion of the Arroyo Seco River and its riparian corridor as well as portions of Sweetwater Creek and Vaqueros Creek.

Phase 1 of the project was approved on November 19, 2009, by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). The WCB approved a subgrant of federal funds to assist TNC with the acquisition of a conservation easement over 1,337± acres of the Ranch. Phase 1 covered the western portion of the Ranch and the proposed project (Phase 2) will allow TNC to acquire a conservation easement over the eastern 800± acres of the Ranch.

The majority of the land south and west of the Ranch is public land owned by the Federal Government. Immediately south of the Ranch is the Ventana Wilderness area, administered by the Los Padres National Forest as part of the United States Forest Service. The Ranch borders large tracts of privately owned land on its eastern and northern borders. The Department of Fish and Game has developed the Arroyo Seco River Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) and the Ranch is located within that CAPP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DFG has identified the Arroyo Seco River, in Monterey County, as a conservation priority. Protection of the river and its surrounding properties would create a terrestrial and hydrologic connection between the northern boundary of the Los Padres National Forest and the Arroyo Seco River basin and would help protect the last remaining known southern steelhead trout run in the Salinas River basin. Extensive riparian habitat will provide neotropical migratory songbird and waterfowl habitat and several sensitive wildlife species including the California red-legged frog, a federally threatened species, foothill yellow-legged frog, a federal and state species of concern, the western pond turtle and several intact populations of native fish are found on site.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreational opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through either development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) or a CAPP. The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to the DFG Regional Operation Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TNC has owned and managed lands for biodiversity conservation purposes for over 50 years. The policies and procedures adopted by the TNC's Board of Governors require that when TNC acquires any legal interests in conservation land that it intends to hold, funds must be set aside by the date of closing for the perpetual management or stewardship of that interest.

The WCB grant agreement requires the grantee prepare, and WCB approve, a baseline conditions report for the property being protected. The WCB grant agreement also requires annual monitoring by TNC and access to the property by WCB/DFG staff not less than once every three years to conduct monitoring. TNC proposes to manage the conservation easement to maintain and restore habitat for breeding populations of red-legged frogs, for steelhead passage and for potential steelhead spawning and rearing. Conservation of aquatic and riparian habitat within the Arroyo Seco watershed will help maintain red-legged frog and steelhead presence within the greater Salinas drainage, and may provide a starting point for future restoration of historic steelhead runs in other Salinas tributaries. Because this is an easement on private land, public access will be restricted.

TERMS

The Phase 2 conservation easement was appraised for \$1,465,000.00 and the appraisal has been reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement at a bargain sale price of \$1,200,000.00. The difference of \$265,000.00 represents a donation by the landowner. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to TNC provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all documents pertaining to the acquisition of the conservation easement, including, without limitation, appraisals, preliminary title reports and items referenced therein, options, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB proposes to make a grant to TNC for the full amount of the purchase price:

WCB Grant	\$1,200,000.00
Landowner Donation	<u>265,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$1,465,000.00
Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$1,210,000.00</u>

It is estimated that \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related costs including the appraisal review costs by the DGS.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund, (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E), that allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, threatened and endangered or fully protected species, provide corridors linking separate habitat areas and protect significant natural lands and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of ownership in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed the project and recommends approval of the grant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,210,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Muzik introduced Ms. Chris Fisher from The Nature Conservancy, and Ms. Lynne Gould, the landowner, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if there are funds set aside for management of this easement. Ms. Muzik confirmed that this is correct. Ms. Finn asked to confirm the purchase price. Ms. Muzik responded that the purchase price is \$1,200,000.00 and explained that \$1,465,000.00 was the approved appraised value, but the landowner agreed to sell the property at a lower price of \$1,200,000.00. Ms. Finn pointed out that it says in the agenda that we were proposing to make a grant for the full amount of purchase price of \$1,465,000.00. Mr. Donnelly commented that this includes the landowner donation, which should had been backed out of the \$1,465,000.00. Mr. Donnelly explained that the property has appraised value of \$1,465,000.00. The purchase price is \$1,200,000.00, which recognizes \$265,000.00 donation on behalf of the landowner.

Mr. McCamman asked if there are agricultural/grazing operations on the property. Ms. Muzik confirmed that there are agricultural operations on the property, and they will continue.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,210,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Section 2786 (b/c)(1E) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

27. Santa Clara River Watershed, Totlcom \$2,298,500.00
Ventura County

Mr. Donnelly reported that several letters of support were received for this project from the following people: Fran Pavley, Senator, 23rd Senate District; Julia Brownley, Assemblywoman, 41st District; Dr. Tom Dudley, Research Associate, Marine Science Institute, University of California, Santa Barbara (and family farmer in the Santa Clara Valley); Phillip W. Rundel, Distinguished Professor, University of California, Los Angeles; Barbara M. Harison, Executive Director, Ventura Hillside Conservancy; Kirsten James, Water Quality Director, Heal the Bay; Ron Bottorff, Chairman, Friends of the Santa Clara River.

This proposal was to consider the allocation of a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant to TNC for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy, Santa Clara River Trustee Council and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The project consists of the acquisition of 123± acres of land for the protection of threatened and endangered species and habitat corridors. Mr. Bill Gallup of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The subject property is a privately owned agricultural parcel located within the floodplain of the Santa Clara River east of Harbor Drive and west of Victoria Avenue, just southerly of the city limits of the city of Ventura. The property abuts the Santa Clara River and is within the 100-year flood plain area. The Santa Clara River is one of the largest watersheds in Southern California without a major dam; as such, it is one of the priority watersheds for protection and restoration. TNC has acquired the property adjacent to the subject property and intends to complete two more acquisitions nearby, thus protecting total 350± acres in the vicinity. All of the properties within the immediate area are in agricultural use.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property has been farmed over the past seventy five years and is improved with an agricultural well with diesel engine pump and miscellaneous temporary farm structures to assist during the harvest season. The project will allow for the protection of riparian and floodplain habitat along the Santa Clara River, one of the most intact river systems remaining in southern California. Southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo and the southern California steelhead; all federally endangered species, are the primary targets of the project. However, other listed and candidate species are expected to benefit from this project, including the arroyo toad and the California red-legged frog. This acquisition is part of a larger effort to protect and restore the river and

floodplain ecosystem, which supports exceptional biodiversity. The goal of the larger effort is to protect the river and floodplain from channelization, urban development, bank stabilization and other actions that alter the river and floodplain processes.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Under the terms of the grant, TNC will manage the property for the benefit of threatened and endangered species. The agricultural use will continue under specific seasonal leases managed by TNC. Monitoring for the agricultural lease will be conducted periodically by TNC and the lease will be modified to achieve the maximum protection of the resource. If appropriate for the property, levees may be removed allowing more naturally occurring floodplain and creating a wider riverine and riparian habitat area.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the property in fee to TNC below the Department of General Services' (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of \$8,800,000.00. The negotiated purchase price is \$8,577,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to TNC provides that staff of WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms the WCB can encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,288,500.00
State Coastal Conservancy	2,288,500.00
Santa Clara River Trustee Council	3,000,000.00
US Fish and Wildlife Service – Sec. 6 Grant	<u>1,000,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price:	\$8,577,000.00

Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTALWCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$2,298,500.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs, including the Department of General Services review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650, that provides funding for grants to acquire property for habitat protection for endangered and threatened species and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been reviewed and approved for funding by WCB staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,298,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gallup introduced Mr. EJ Remson, Program Manager from The Nature Conservancy, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Mr. McCamman asked about extended agricultural use of this property. Mr. Gallup commented that he was standing on the levee that is built between the farm and the river, and that a levee keeps the water out of the farm land and those levees are going to be removed ultimately to expand the habitat. Mr. McCamman commented that it is indicated in staff report that there is a lot of agricultural uses going on on this property. Mr. EJ Remson introduced himself before the Board and responded that TNC is acquiring several properties in this area to convert them into riparian or restoration activity. Mr. Remson said that TNC intends to keep this in agriculture until they have enough resources to do the restoration. Mr. McCamman asked if it would affect the operation of the Olivas Park. Mr. Remson replied that it would not because there is a natural bench which provides excellent protection.

Ms. Finn asked if we are acquiring a clean site. Mr. Remson responded that Phase I was conducted on this project, and there was no further action required, so the property we are acquiring is clean. Mr. Remson also added that, because of a diesel pump there, TNC will monitor the property.

Mr. McCamman pointed out the importance of these kinds of acquisitions where WCB has multiple partners, saying that we are not contributing all the funding but providing a portion with a partnership, which is a most effective way to leverage our funds.

Mr. Donnelly asked to make an addition to the motion, which was to include the acceptance of federal Section 6 grants as well as the authorization to subgrant those grants to The Nature Conservancy. Mr. McCamman and Ms. Finn agreed to make this addition.

Ms. Finn asked if the Coastal Conservancy took action on this project. Mr. Gallup confirmed that it had.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any comments or questions about this item. There was none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; accept federal Section 6 grants and authorize to subgrant those funds to The Nature Conservancy; allocate \$2,298,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- | | |
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| 28. Malibu Lagoon State Beach | \$4,000,000.00 |
| Lagoon Restoration, Construction Phase | |
| Los Angeles County | |

Mr. Donnelly reported that there has been significant support for this project from different organizations such as Los Angeles Audubon, Sierra Club, Santa Monica Bay Keeper, Malibu Surfing Association, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, National Park Service, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, and many others. Mr. Donnelly also reported that we received two opposition letters for this project, one from Ms. Marcia Hanscom, Director, Wetlands Defense Fund, and one from Ms. Alessandra DeClario, Ph.D., Malibu, CA.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to improve water circulation, remove non-native vegetation, restore native vegetation, and provide additional educational and public use facilities in Malibu Lagoon State Beach. Mr. Peter Perrine of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The project is located in Malibu Lagoon State Beach at Pacific Coast Highway and Cross Creek Road in Los Angeles County. The lagoon is a 31-acre shallow water embayment and coastal wetland complex occurring at the terminus of the Malibu Creek Watershed, the second largest watershed draining into Santa Monica Bay. The lagoon empties into the Pacific Ocean at world famous Malibu Surfrider Beach, renowned as a surfing and recreational destination, hosting approximately 1.5 million visitors every year.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The lagoon has undergone many changes in its recent history. In the 1950's and 60's it was used as a dump site for fill material by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and others. By the late 1970's the site was completely filled and housed two baseball fields. The lagoon has also been greatly diminished by urban development along the coast. In addition, urbanization upstream in the Malibu Creek Watershed has increased the volume of water transported into the lagoon and significantly diminished the quality of the water.

In 1983, DPR initiated restoration work on the lagoon, by excavating fill to create three channels with sloping mudflats to reintroduce tidal flow. The channels were seeded with salt marsh plants and series of boardwalks were created to allow access by the public. Over time, sediments were deposited, creating pickleweed marshes and upland habitat. In 1996 Caltrans funded a successful restoration program to mitigate impacts incurred during the Malibu Lagoon Bridge Replacement Project. Specific restoration measures, coordinated by the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM) and DPR, included a successful tidewater goby habitat enhancement project and the revegetation of areas disturbed by construction activities. However, the problems of Malibu Creek and Malibu Lagoon and its adjacent coastal waters continue. The lagoon is currently listed as impaired under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) for benthic impacts, pathogens, nutrients, eutrophication, swimming restrictions, and shellfish harvesting. Studies have indicated high pathogen concentrations in the lower Malibu Creek, the lagoon and surf zone that could potentially impact the health of swimmers and surfers. The current configuration of channels causes poor circulation, eutrophication, and low dissolved oxygen levels in the lagoon. Large algal blooms erupt in the dry season, further depleting oxygen and endangering fish and other aquatic organisms. In the summer when direct

flows to the ocean are impeded by the build up of sand bars, circulation is further reduced, thus worsening the problem.

The purpose of this project is to enhance existing water quality conditions and restore and enhance habitat areas that have diminished functions or are in a currently degraded state. Restoration activities have been designed to improve water circulation, increase tidal inundation, improve and expand critical habitat for tidewater goby and steelhead trout, remove non-native and restore native vegetation, minimize human and pet disturbance while maximizing educational and recreational use of the site. The goal of the project is to create a natural self sustaining system that minimizes future maintenance requirements.

Restoration activities will encompass two primary components. First, salt marsh enhancement in the western complex will increase tidal flushing, improve water circulation, increase holding capacity and reduce predator encroachment. Second, east lagoon restoration will restore typical salt marsh hydrology and enhance habitat for sensitive bird species. Construction activities at the lagoon will primarily involve earthwork coupled with non-native species removal and enhancement and creation of native/wetland vegetation.

In addition, the project will enhance the visitor experience through improvements to access and interpretive amenities. The existing trail along the perimeter of the western lagoon will be enhanced through the addition of five new interpretive nodes, with interpretive signage that will provide information on intertidal habitat and kelp forest ecology, watershed processes, sensitive bird and aquatic species, tidal inundation and seasonal water level fluctuations, as well as the cultural history of the site. Interpretive signage will also be installed along the trail, which will enable passive interaction without disturbing the wildlife using the lagoon.

WCB PROGRAM

This project is funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program, which allows for the restoration of native fisheries restoration, restoration of tidal or freshwater wetlands and upland areas including coastal scrub, grasslands, oak woodlands, and threatened and endangered species habitats in the State. This authority is pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq).

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the facilities for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$4,000,000.00
State Water Resources Control Board	2,495,858.00
State Coastal Conservancy	50,000.00
Los Angeles County	<u>1,129,808.00</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$7,675,666.00</u>

Project costs will be for site preparation, grading, erosion control, planting, parking lot rehabilitation, interpretive features, monitoring and project management.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a), which allows for the restoration of coastal wetlands in southern California, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The Department of Parks and Recreation, as lead agency, prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Notice of Determination for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Perrine introduced Ms. Suzanne Goode, Senior Resource Ecologist from the Department of Parks and Recreation; Ms. Mary Small, Deputy Director, and Ms. Kara Kemmler, Project Manager, both from the State Coastal Conservancy; and Mr. Mark Abramson from Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked why we are doing the restoration again if it was already done about 30 years ago. Mr. Perrine responded it was not done wrong but that we have learned a lot after all these years, and now all this knowledge will be applied to the restoration process. Mr. McCamman asked if this property has been in Department of Parks and Recreation ownership since 1960s. Mr. Perrine confirmed that this is correct.

Ms. Athena Shlien, a surfer and Malibu resident, spoke in opposition to this

project. Ms. Shlien stated that she believes that the draining, dredging and bulldozing of 13 acres at Malibu Lagoon is not a good solution and that over 4,000 petition signatures were collected. According to Ms. Shlien, the real problem is the urban run-off, which contains fertilizers, pesticides, medication and other pollutants, and this restoration is not going to solve that. Ms. Shlien added that the lagoon is filtering the toxins before they reach the ocean. Ms. Shlien said that she agrees with the plan to add 2 acres to this existing area, but she does not believe that taking away this current wetland will solve the problem. Ms. Shlien mentioned the inconvenience for beach visitors during the restoration, such as diesel smell, inability to use the beach, and water contamination from construction run-off. Ms. Shlien cited the plan as not democratic, non-transparent over the years, and inconsistent with desires of the public. Ms. Shlien added that she and other opponents of this project favor a gentler plan to restore this lagoon and asked the Board to not approve this project.

Ms. Marcia Hanscom with the Wetlands Defense Fund introduced herself and spoke in opposition to this project. Ms. Hanscom said that she came here representing several other organizations, such as San Bernardo Audubon and Pasadena Audubon, which are in agreement with her. Ms. Hanscom stated that there are a lot of mischaracterizations in terms of what this project is. Ms. Hanscom said that the description talks about removing non-native plants, and while she agrees with that, the majority of the acreage is native habitat. Ms. Hanscom stated that this wetland is not regular salt water marsh, and it is open to the sea only during winter months, so it is more fresh water environment. Ms. Hanscom added that this entire habitat will be lost due to the restoration. Ms. Hanscom said that, according to CEQA, it is required to make sure that there are no other less damaging alternatives, and Mr. Wayne Ferren, a top wetland scientist in Southern California, who worked for UC Santa Barbara for 25 years, presented a feasible alternative where we would restore only two acres. Ms. Hanscom said that draining the entire marsh, dredging it and trying to turn it into tidal system is not a solution here. Ms. Hanscom added that she thinks that the DFG biologists did not have enough staffing to do the proper analysis on this project. Ms. Hanscom stated that the endangered fish, the tide water goby, does not need the high water circulation; it needs still water, and it has been thriving there since 1990s. Ms. Hanscom stated that changes in the system will result in the long-term damage and it is unknown if the tide water goby will survive in this new system. Ms. Hanscom also added that, in a biological opinion from the Fish and Wildlife Service, summer months are very important for tide water goby's reproduction, and that is when the project is happening. Ms. Hanscom urged the Board to decline this project.

Mr. McCamman asked about the time frame of the construction on this project. Mr. Perrine responded that the construction phase for this project is two years – one year for actual construction and one for replanting, if necessary.

Ms. Finn asked if staff could speak to the comments made by Ms. Shlien and Ms. Hanscom.

Ms. Suzanne Goode from the Department of Parks and Recreation introduced herself before the Board and spoke in support of this project. Ms. Goode said that the intense construction phase will be done in less than three months, and the two years include the monitoring, which will continue for five years, to make sure that the re-vegetation method succeeds. Ms. Goode responded to the previous testimony on this project by saying that this project is not intended to change the nature of the lagoon; it is a brackish lagoon and it will remain closed most time of the year. Ms. Goode explained that with the restoration, there will be additional circulation in the western portion of the lagoon, both when lagoon is open and when it is closed. Ms. Goode said that lagoon opens up in winter time, allows all of the tide to come in and this normal occurrence will continue to happen, and when it closes, it will stay closed. Ms. Goode added that the tide water goby is thriving in the lagoon, and it tends to hang out more in the main channel of the lagoon because there is a sandy bottom that it prefers for breeding substrate. The additional flushing that will occur once this project is completed will create more of a sandy bottom in the western arm of the lagoon and making it more attractive to the tide water goby. Ms. Goode commented that the bridges on the site create pinch points which prevent the circulation within the lagoon. Ms. Goode stated that this project has a widespread support and has been in the works for about twenty years. Ms. Goode added that this project is the number one tidal wetland priority for Southern California, and that many scientists worked in project's scientific advisory panel, including Dr. Richard Ambrose of UCLA and Dr. Martha Satula of Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project. Ms. Finn asked what impact will be done to the beach. Ms. Goode responded that the beach will not be impacted, and added that there is a very complicated and thorough de-watering plan in place that will discharge completely clean water from the lagoon.

Ms. Kara Kemmler from the State Coastal Conservancy introduced herself and spoke in support of this project. Ms. Kemmler clarified that there are multiple sensitive species on this site that we are managing for, and while it was recognized that during construction there would be some short-term impact, the project will have long-term benefits to all sensitive species. Ms. Kemmler added that there is no work proposed on the main lagoon, providing a refuge area for birds and fish during construction. Ms. Finn asked if the public access will improve with this project. Ms. Kemmler responded that with a new parking lot a perimeter path will be about 200 feet longer, and there is an interpretive program proposed that involves multiple notes on that new pathway. Ms. Finn asked if the Water Resources Control Board funding has already been approved. Ms. Kemmler confirmed that it has been approved.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any additional questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

29. Tejon Ranch \$15,800,000.00
Kern and Los Angeles Counties

Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support for this project were received from the following people: Mr. Joel Reynolds, Senior Attorney, Director, Urban Program, Natural Resources Defense Council; Mr. Graham Chisholm, Executive Director, Audubon California; Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League; Ms. Traci Sheehan, Executive Director, Planning and Conservation League; Mr. Bill Center, Chair of the Board, Planning and Conservation League; Mr. Harry Love, Conservation Chair, Kern Audubon Society; Mr. Richard Hawley, Executive Director, Greenspace-the Cambria Land Trust; Mr. Jeffrey D. Parrish, Ph.D., Executive Director, Freedom to Roam; and Ms. Kristeen Penrod, Conservation Director, Science and Collaboration for Connected Wildlands.

This proposal was to consider the allocation for five grants to the Tejon Ranch Conservancy (Conservancy) to acquire five perpetual conservation easements over a total of 62,003± acres to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent fragmentation, and promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species. The five easement properties are all situated within a larger property, known as Tejon Ranch, which comprises approximately 270,000 acres located in Kern and Los Angeles Counties. Mr. Jon Wilcox of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The Tejon Ranch is located along Interstate 5, approximately 60 miles north of Los Angeles and 30 miles south of Bakersfield. Its 422 square miles make it almost as large as the City of Los Angeles and about 40% the size of Rhode Island. The project provides a key linkage and wildlife corridors between the southern region of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Tehachapi Mountains.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Tejon Ranch was founded in 1843 as a Mexican land grant and through the decades the Ranch grew in size as additional land grants were purchased by

General Edward Fitzgerald Beale. The Ranch contains a mosaic of rugged mountains, steep canyons, oak covered rolling hills, and broad valleys.

The landowner has agreed to convey five conservation easements over Tejon Ranch in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement. The Agreement was struck with the landowner, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Audubon Society, Planning and Conservation League, Sierra Club, Endangered Habitats League and the Conservancy.

Further the Tejon Ranch Company (TRC) has agreed to dedicate conservation easements over an additional 135,000 acres as TRC receives development approvals, with all dedications to occur within 30 years from final approval of the first development project.

Tejon Ranch straddles the Tehachapi Mountains, and lies at the confluence of four major ecological regions: Great Central Valley, Sierra Nevada, Mojave Desert, and Southwestern California. Thus, the diversity of plants and animals found on Tejon Ranch reflects its position at what has been termed a biogeographic crossroads, where species unique to each of these regions can be found together on the Ranch. The east-west trending Tehachapi Mountains serve as the spine of regional landscape linkage between the Coast/Transverse Ranges to the west and the Sierra Nevada to the east.

Tejon Ranch lies at the center of this continentally significant linkage, protection of which has long been a conservation priority for many organizations and agencies. This linkage includes the last grassland corridor around the agricultural lands in the southern San Joaquin Valley, oak and pinyon-juniper woodlands that connect to the west and east slopes of the Sierra Nevada respectively, and "sky islands" of conifer habitat connecting the more extensive conifer forests in the adjacent Transverse Range and Sierra Nevada. Tejon Ranch appears to be a hotspot of evolution, where a large number of different species and subspecies have evolved over time. The Ranch is also characterized by a significant amount of topographic complexity – over 6,000 feet of elevation change, major north-south and east-west trending canyons, and a well distributed diversity of slopes and aspects – thereby providing landscape resilience and a potential refugium for species in the face of climate change.

The easement areas support a wide-variety of plant and animal species, including a number of special status species. These include bald and golden eagles, tricolored black bird, San Joaquin kit fox, Swainson's hawk, American badger, and Bakersfield cactus.

Tejon Ranch contains a very rich record of intact prehistoric archaeological sites resulting from three different adaptive systems, dating back at least 4000

years. Tejon Ranch was the location of the first Indian reservation in the U.S., established in 1853. The sites associated with this reservation are remarkably well preserved. They represent the single best, and most complete, archaeological district of historical-era Native American sites in California.

The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) runs through a portion of the Ranch and one of the easement areas will be bisected by the future realignment of the PCT.

The five easement areas are explained in more detail below:

White Wolf. The 16,178-acre White Wolf easement area is located entirely within Kern County. The easement area is bounded by the Tejon Ranch property boundary to the west, near top of slope to the north, and a varying contour line to the south and east. Highways 58 and 223 traverse the easement area, and secondary county-maintained roads include Deer Trail Road in the southern portion and Bena and Caliente-Bodfish roads cut across the northern portion. The Bakersfield National Cemetery inholding lies within White Wolf. Current land uses in the easement area are cattle ranching, wildlife management (hunting), and mining. Approximately 10,969 acres of the easement area is under Williamson Act contract, within which 93 acres of that have a non-renewal notice filed.

White Wolf supports four primary natural community types: grassland, oak woodland, scrub, and riparian. The grassland community type (14,222 acres) is found on the San Joaquin Valley floor and lower foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains. At higher elevations and northeast facing slopes of the Tehachapi Mountain foothills, grasslands transition to oak woodlands (1,748 acres), both open savanna and closed woodland types.

Shrub communities (133 acres) are scattered on slopes within grassland communities. Riparian communities (75 acres) are associated with drainages on the flank of Bear Mountain, tributaries of Caliente Creek, and springs and areas with very high groundwater. Within these four major communities, a wide array of plant species associations or alliances can be found. Excluding designated mining areas, all of the natural communities within White Wolf are generally devoid of human alteration and support high quality resource conditions.

Some of the special status species documented within the White Wolf easement include Tejon poppy, Swainson's hawk, tricolored blackbird, American badger and San Joaquin kit fox.

Michener. The 1,585-acre Michener easement area is located within Los Angeles County. The easement area is bounded by the Tejon Ranch property boundary to the south, west and east, and the north ends of T8N, R19W, Section 1 and T8N, R18W, Section 6. Current land uses in the easement area

are cattle ranching and wildlife management (hunting). There are no Williamson Act contracts in Los Angeles County. The majority of the property (1,456 acres) lies with Los Angeles County Significant Ecological Area #59.

Michener supports grassland and oak woodland natural community types. Oak woodlands (467 acres) tend to be associated with north and east facing canyons, which are surrounded by grassland communities (1,118 acres). It is a fairly species rich area for its size, with a relatively high percentage of native species. All of the natural communities within Michener are generally devoid of human alteration and support high quality resource conditions.

Michener supports two primary drainages: Bear Canyon and Crane Canyon, which drain north to Castac Lake. Michener comprises an approximately 2-mile portion of a regional habitat linkage design proposed by the South Coast Wildlands Project (Penrod et al. 2003) to conserve connectivity for a broad suite of plant and animal species.

Tri-Centennial. The 7,183-acre Tri-Centennial easement area is located entirely within Kern County. The easement area is bounded by the Tejon Ranch property boundary to the south, the approximately 4,500-foot elevation contour to the north, the extension of 290th Street to the west, and T9N, R16W, Section 9 to the east. Current land uses in the easement area are cattle ranching and wildlife management (hunting). The entire easement area is under Williamson Act contract.

Tri-Centennial supports natural communities that can be grouped into four major types: grasslands, shrub, riparian, and Joshua tree woodland. The grassland community type (3,316 acres) is found on the Antelope Valley floor and dissected alluvial terraces of the Tehachapi Mountains. Scrub communities (2,652 acres), including both chaparral and desert scrub habitats, occur along the foothills and alluvial terraces of the Tehachapi Mountains. Riparian communities (534 acres) are found in Antelope Canyon, the only significant stream draining the southern slopes of the Tehachapi Mountains, and springs discharging along the foothills and alluvial terraces. Joshua tree woodlands (681 acres) are found within Canyon del Gato Montes and some adjacent alluvial fans. All of the natural communities within Tri-Centennial are generally devoid of human alteration and support high quality resource conditions. The flora of Tri-Centennial is characterized by a high percentage (92%) of native species and many unique plant assemblages. The desert scrub communities in Tri-Centennial are of particularly high quality. These scrub communities generally have very low levels of disturbance, low levels of nonnative plant species, and a high diversity of native shrubs, forbs and grasses.

Tri-Centennial supports a series of small, intact watersheds draining the southern slope of the Tehachapi Mountains. Tri-Centennial comprises an

approximately 4-mile portion of a regional habitat linkage design proposed by the South Coast Wildlands Project to conserve connectivity for a broad suite of plant and animal species.

Special status species documented within Tri-Centennial include the Loggerhead shrike and Tehachapi pocket mouse.

Old Headquarters. The 26,716-acre Old Headquarters easement area is located entirely within Kern County. The easement area is bounded by the Tejon Ranch property boundary to the northeast, approximately the 2,000-foot contour to the southeast, between a 1,100 to 2,400-foot contour to the north and a varying contour line to the west. The site of the original headquarters of the Tejon Ranch Company lies within the easement area, which currently support numerous houses, barns, and workshops. Current land uses in the easement area are cattle ranching, wildlife management (hunting), and oil and gas extraction. Approximately 12,920 acres of the easement area is under Williamson Act contract.

Old Headquarters supports natural communities that can be grouped into three major types: grasslands, oak woodlands, and riparian. The grassland community type (21,435 acres) is found on the San Joaquin Valley floor, Tejon Hills, and lower foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains. At higher elevations and northeast facing slopes of the Tehachapi Mountain foothills, grasslands transition to oak woodlands (2,537 acres), both open savanna and closed woodland types. Riparian communities (1,592 acres) are associated with drainages traversing Old Headquarters and springs and areas with very high groundwater. Within these three major communities, a wide array of plant species associations or alliances can be found. There is also a grove of nonnative eucalyptus trees near the agricultural areas (18 acres).

There are three major watersheds comprising Old Headquarters: Tejon Creek, El Paso Creek, and Tunis Creek. All of these watersheds drain to the Tulare Lake Hydrologic Region of the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Old Headquarters comprises an approximately 10-mile portion of a regional habitat linkage design proposed by the South Coast Wildlands Project to conserve connectivity for a broad suite of plant and animal species. With the exception of the Designated Farming and Disturbance Areas, the majority of natural communities within Old Headquarters is generally devoid of human alteration and provides connectivity functions for many San Joaquin Valley species.

Some of the special status species documented within Old Headquarters include the Bakersfield cactus, Striped adobe lily, Tejon poppy, Western spadefoot, bald eagle, golden eagle, San Joaquin kit fox, northern harrier and tricolored blackbird.

Bi-Centennial. The 11,026-acre Bi-Centennial easement area is located within both Kern (10,777 acres) and Los Angeles (249 acres) counties. The easement area is bounded by the Tejon Ranch property boundary and the Kern/Los Angeles County line to the south, the extension of 290th Street to the east, the National Cement lease boundary to the west, and extends north to a boundary line between the 3,500 and 4,500-foot contours. The Bi-Centennial easement area is essentially bisected by the proposed future conservation easement corridor for a realignment of the Pacific Crest Trail through Tejon Ranch. Current land uses in the easement area are cattle ranching, wildlife management (hunting), mining, agriculture, and a series of infiltration basins associated with the Tejon Ranch Company (TRC) Water Bank. The California Aqueduct traverses the western portion of the easement area. Approximately 7,044 acres of the eastern two-thirds of the easement area is under Williamson Act contract.

Bi-Centennial supports natural communities that can be grouped into four major types: grasslands, shrub, oak woodlands, and riparian. The grassland community type (5,847 acres) is found on the Antelope Valley floor and dissected alluvial terraces of the Tehachapi Mountains. Scrub communities (3,475 acres), including both chaparral and desert scrub habitats, occur along the foothills and alluvial terraces of the Tehachapi Mountains. At higher elevations between Los Alamos and Big Sycamore canyons, grasslands transition to open oak woodlands (628 acres). Riparian communities (847 acres) are associated with streams draining the southern slopes of the Tehachapi Mountains and springs discharging along the foothills and alluvial terraces. Except for the designated mining and agricultural areas and TRC Water Bank, all of the natural communities within Bi-Centennial are generally devoid of human alteration and support high quality resource conditions. In particular, Bi-Centennial supports outstanding native grasslands, and Bi-Centennial is well-known for its very showy native wildflower displays in the spring.

Bi-Centennial supports a series of small watersheds draining the southern slope of the Tehachapi Mountains, including Los Alamos Canyon, Little Sycamore Canyon, Bronco Canyon, and Pescado Creek, and a number of unnamed drainages. All of these watersheds drain to the Antelope Hydrologic Unit of the Lahontan Region in the western Antelope Valley.

Some of the special status species documented within Bi-Centennial include the silvery false lupine, Adobe yampah, coast horned lizard, northern harrier, loggerhead shrike, tricolored blackbird, burrowing owl and the Tehachapi pocket mouse.

The Bi-Centennial easement area in the Antelope Valley portion of the Ranch supports an approximately 7-mile wide swath of the southern foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains rising approximately 1,500 feet from the Mojave Desert

floor. Bi-Centennial is visible from surrounding communities, such as Palmdale, Lancaster, and Neenach, visitors to the Antelope Valley Poppy Preserve, and by travelers on Highway 138.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Under the terms of the conservation easements, the landowner will continue Ranch activities, including ranching /livestock management, farming, hunting and other wildlife management activities and water banking. The Conservancy will hold the conservation easements and will monitor the property for compliance with the purposes, terms and conditions of the conservation easements. Monitoring will be performed by the Conservancy staff.

Day to day operations and overall management will be carried out consistent with a management plan. The Interim Ranch-Wide Management Plan (IRWMP) and subsequent Ranch-Wide Management Plan (RWMP), identifies and assess natural resource and conservation attributes of the conserved lands in order to develop sustainable stewardship management strategies that provide for protection and enhancement of natural resources values and management of existing ranch uses. In addition the RWMP will establish best management practices for continued use of the conserved lands for existing ranch uses.

Public enjoyment of the conserved lands is high priority of the Conservancy and TRC. Both parties have agreed to establish and implement a public access plan that encourages and facilitates public access, including public access opportunities for underserved populations.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easements for the Department of General Services' (DGS) approved combined appraised fair market value of \$15,750,000.00. The DGS approved combined fee interest value is \$49,720,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to the Conservancy provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and

sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account(s) established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can request the conveyance of the conservation easement to the State and/or seek reimbursement of funds.

The separate DGS approved conservation easement values are broken down below:

Conservation Easement Area	Conservation Easement Value	Acres
White Wolf	\$4,340,000.00	15,500
Old Headquarters	\$7,050,000.00	26,717
Michener	\$450,000.00	1,585
Bi-Centennial	\$2,910,000.00	11,019
Tri-Centennial	\$1,000,000.00	7,183

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB will be funding the entire purchase price.

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$15,750,000.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	<u>\$15,750,000.00</u>
Other Project-related Costs:	50,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$15,800,000.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$50,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review and independent appraisal reviews.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this acquisition is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b). This fund allows for acquisition and protection of habitat that promotes recovery of threatened and endangered species; provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent fragmentation; and protects significant landscapes and ecosystems, including old growth redwoods, mixed conifer forests, oak woodlands, riparian habitat and other significant habitats and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the grants to the Tejon Ranch Conservancy for its acquisition of the conservation easements as proposed; allocate \$15,800,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b) to cover the grant amounts and pay internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Wilcox introduced Mr. Robert Stine, President of the Tejon Ranch Company; Mr. Tom Maloney, Executive Director, from the Tejon Ranch Conservancy; and Mr. Graham Chisholm, Executive Director of the Audubon California, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked why we are having five separate grants in this project. Mr. Wilcox responded that there are special requirement uses for each area, and there are four different regions involved in this project. Ms. Colborn asked if the oil and mining activities will continue and if they are compatible with the conservation plans and purposes. Mr. Wilcox responded that these activities are limited to where they occur now and the uses are provided for in the conservation easement and will continue. Mr. Wilcox added that the Tejon Conservancy will monitor the activities and will be responsible for those items.

Mr. Maloney introduced himself before the Board and spoke in support of this project. Mr. Maloney mentioned the importance of public access and said that the Tejon Ranch Conservancy has been working closely with different organizations and the public to get a better understanding and use of public access on the property. Mr. Maloney said that community hikes are very popular in the area, especially during wildflowers blooming season. Mr. Maloney commented that the Pacific Crest Trail realignment, that represents 38 miles of public access, routing has been agreed to between the US Forest Service, Pacific Crest Trail Association, Tejon Ranch Conservancy and the fee holder, Tejon Ranch Company, are currently working on conveyance agreement.

Mr. McCamman mentioned hunting opportunities that are now on the property and asked if they will continue as the Tejon Conservancy will manage the property. Mr. Maloney responded that hunting opportunities will continue. Mr. Maloney also added that four principal uses that the fee holder will continue on the conserved lands are cattle ranching, the hunt program, wildlife management program, and the filming activity; each of these activities will be subject to the ranch-wide management plan, prepared by the Conservancy.

Ms. Finn had a question about public access. Mr. Maloney replied that, until the first ranch-wide management plan is due in 2013, the Conservancy is

working on an annual basis in coordination with Tejon Ranch Company natural resources staff to arrange hikes, and commented that this coordination is working extremely well. Mr. Maloney said that the public access plan will be essential component of the ranch-wide management plan.

Mr. EJ Remson of TNC introduced himself and said that he came to today's Board meeting representing two groups: The Nature Conservancy and Southern Sierra Partnership, and spoke in support of this project. Mr. Remson said that this project is among the highest priority for conservation in the State. Mr. Remson also stated that this project represents about a 60 mile linkage that connects the coastal ranges with the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Mr. McCamman commented that several years ago, the Governor signed the agreement which led to this acquisition and was identified at that time as a high priority project.

Mr. Donnelly commented that it is hard to summarize the amount of work, the amount of frustration and pleasure that goes into landmark projects such as this one, and he wanted to acknowledge and express his gratitude to the people who put their work into this project and were in the audience today. Mr. Donnelly recognized Ms. Nancy Templeton and Mr. Jon Wilcox of the Wildlife Conservation Board; Ms. Catherine Caldwell, the initial land agent who started working on this project; Mr. Bob Stine, President of the Tejon Ranch Company; Mr. Graham Chisholm, Executive Director of the Audubon California. Mr. McCamman also acknowledged in audience Mr. Todd Ferrara from California Natural Resources Agency who has been working on this project for several years.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any other questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the grants to the Tejon Ranch Conservancy for its acquisition of the conservation easements as proposed; allocate \$15,800,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b) to cover the grant amounts and pay internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

30. Bottle Peak \$3,562,900.00
San Diego County

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support for this project was received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director of the Endangered Habitat League.

This was a proposal to consider the allocation for a grant to The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) to assist with the acquisition of 418± acres of property to anchor regional habitat conservation planning efforts, in central San Diego County and provide a critical ecological link between coastal habitat and the higher elevation Cleveland National Forest. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The subject property is located east of Interstate Highway 15 and west of Lake Wohlford on the northeasterly border of the City of Escondido in San Diego County. The property has been identified by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) as a priority for protection in the Rancho Guejito Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The subject property is strategically located west of Guejito Ranch and contributes to a north-south habitat linkage between the South San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and the North San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (NC MSCP).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property contains a variety of significant biological resources. The existing natural open space represents a large portion of the remaining open space in the contiguous unincorporated region of the City of Escondido and supports many sensitive plant and animal species including the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, coast live and Engelmann oak woodlands, various types of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grasslands and riparian habitats. Based on its topography, native vegetation, large north-south canyon/drainage and adjacent open space areas, the property provides essential landscape linkage, habitat biodiversity and an important natural linkage for wildlife corridors at the intersection of the MSCP and the NC MSCP. Acquisition of the subject property will also create a significant habitat and open space buffer from the more urbanized areas to the west.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being made under the Land Acquisition Program at WCB. The Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the WCB's original enabling legislation, The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 (Fish and Game Code Section 1300 et seq.) to acquire areas that can successfully sustain wildlife and provide for suitable recreation opportunities. Under this program, acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP).

The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

TECC is a non-profit, public benefit corporation dedicated to the preservation, restoration and protection of the natural open space within the Escondido Creek watershed. It currently owns and/or manages approximately 266 acres of land in seven separate ownerships in the Escondido Creek watershed, spanning roughly between the Cities of Encinitas and Escondido. The landowner is considering making an endowment to TECC for management of this property.

Since this project will be managed by TECC consistent with the guidelines established for the MSCP and NC MSCP plans, public access to the property will be minimal but will likely include access for educational and scientific studies. If appropriate, guided tours by local groups may also be considered by TECC.

The WCB grant agreement requires annual monitoring by TECC and access to the property by WCB/DFG not less than once every three years to conduct monitoring.

TERMS

This proposed acquisition is for approximately one-half (417±) of the total acreage (800±) of the subject property. The full property was appraised and the appraisal was approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Before the project could be completed, the available bond funding was frozen and the project was placed on hold. When funding was again available, the appraisal was updated. The value had decreased and the updated appraisal was reviewed and approved by the DGS. Due to budget constraints, the project was scaled back to the current acreage. After consultation with the DGS appraisal review staff, the per-acre value in the updated appraisal of the whole property was deemed to be applicable to the current project. The landowner has agreed to sell the property for the approved, appraised value of \$3,552,900.00.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to TECC provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all preliminary title reports, title documents, documents for purchase and sale, instruments of conveyance, and escrow instructions prior to disbursement of funds directly in the escrow account established for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB proposes to make a grant to TECC for the full amount of the purchase price.

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$3,552,900.00
Other Project-related Costs:	10,000.00
<u>TOTAL WCB Allocation</u>	<u>\$3,562,900.00</u>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c), that allows for grants to implement or assist in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,562,900.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Muzik introduced Mr. Greg Lowther, the landowner's representative, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if the Escondido Creek Conservancy has enough resources to manage the property. Ms. Muzik confirmed that this is correct.

Mr. Lowther introduced himself before the Board and said that the landowner is giving an endowment for \$240,000.00 with an option for the State to purchase the remaining 800 acres. Ms. Finn asked if this option is for the State, not for the Conservancy. Ms. Muzik commented that this is the Right of First Refusal, so this is the option for the State.

Mr. McCamman asked if there were any questions or comments about this item. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,562,900.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(c) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

31. DFG Presentation Informational
Conservation and Habitat Mapping

Ms. Monica Parisi from the Department of Fish and Game presented this item.

In 2010, the Department of Fish and Game (Department) completed work on two complementary statewide mapping and modeling efforts. To guide and inform its priorities for species and habitat conservation in service of its broad mission to conserve California's natural resources for both ecological and recreational values, the Department undertook Areas of Conservation Emphasis II (ACE II). The primary focus of ACE II was to collect and summarize the best available statewide spatial data on biological richness, including species diversity, rarity, and sensitive habitats. Information on recreational needs and opportunities throughout the State, including fishing, hunting and wildlife-viewing, was also compiled. Because a functional network of connected wildlands is essential to the continued support of California's diverse natural communities in the face of both human development and climate change, the Department partnered with Caltrans on the California Essential Habitat Connectivity (Connectivity) Project -- a commissioned study to identify large remaining blocks of intact habitat or natural landscape and model linkages between them that need to be maintained, particularly as corridors for wildlife.

The projects shared the goal of using the best available science, data sets, spatial analyses and modeling techniques in a process both transparent and repeatable. They supplement, and in many cases validate, earlier approaches to identify priorities by having experts with on-the-ground knowledge hand draw areas of high biological, recreational, or connectivity value on large maps.

Rather than produce single statewide maps depicting priorities, both projects produced a set of Geographic Information System (GIS) data layers that can be used flexibly to inform decision-making. ACE II layers represent specific biological and recreational values, threats, and landscape considerations at a consistent scale of 2.5 square mile hexagons that can be combined in various ways to identify priorities for conservation, depending on management question

or funding opportunity. The Connectivity Project has one layer identifying large intact habitat blocks, another modeling the “path of least resistance” or “least cost corridor” between them, and a third showing places where only a road disrupts habitat connectivity and Caltrans can offer solutions for restoring a connection.

These two complementary mapping efforts will continue to aid the DFG and conservation partners in the development of Land Acquisition Evaluations and Conceptual Area Protection Plans. They are key to achieving a network of large connected reserves of high biological value -- a focus of the State Wildlife Action Plan, the California Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, land acquisition and management, and conservation planning across jurisdictional boundaries.

Ms. Finn asked if other conservancies or other land groups in the State can benefit from using this information. Ms. Parisi responded that the connectivity data has been out since February and people can download maps and other supporting materials. Ms. Parisi also added that the conservancies are represented on the technical multi-disciplinary teams for the connectivity project. Ms. Diane Colborn had a question about miles Ms. Parisi mentioned in reference to the ACE Program. Ms. Parisi clarified that it is 2.5 square miles. Ms. Colborn asked how the Wildlife Conservation Board might be able to use the data. Ms. Parisi responded that this is a very simple process with connectivity data when you are looking at the corridor, which is actually rasterized data set, you can make it sort of semi-transparent, and you lay all the conserve lands underneath that in GIS, so you can see where the gaps are, and where one more acquisition can be completed. Ms. Colborn asked if Caltrans participated with the DFG in this connectivity project. Ms. Parisi replied that this is correct, and added that Caltrans are combining the data with their own database where they have wildlife crossings statistics where wildlife get hit, and Caltrans will use these two systems together to prioritize where they need to retrofit highway projects, and it would also help them being proactive to where actually site new transportation projects.

Mr. McCamman said that he would like to see how the projects that are being approved by this Board fit into CAPP programs in relation to the connectivity project. Mr. Donnelly commented that we have started this process as a part of restructuring of LAE and CAPP guidelines and criteria. Mr. Donnelly said that ACE II in the corridor mapping considerations are built into the work, and we should be able to incorporate into the agenda write-ups. Mr. Donnelly commented that there may be projects that we considered that come through other planning avenues such as Central Valley Joint Venture or South Coast Wetland Recovery Project, and Mr. Donnelly said that he would not want to foreclose the opportunity for the Wildlife Conservation Board to consider those projects even though the data was not secured through ACE II. Mr. McCamman agreed and commented that these data collection processes are

important. Mr. Donnelly commented that having this information available on the Internet and accessible by the public is very important. Ms. Finn asked if the Board Members can be updated on this item at a future meeting. Mr. Donnelly confirmed.

32. 2011 Wildlife Conservation Board Tentative Meeting Schedule Informational

The Wildlife Conservation Board adopted the following Board Meeting schedule for the 2011:

February 24, 2011

June 2, 2011

August 25, 2011

November 17, 2011

Mr. Donnelly expressed his gratitude for the entire WCB staff for making this Board meeting successful. Mr. Donnelly also reported that one of the WCB staff, Ms. Janell Bogue, will be leaving the Wildlife Conservation Board. Mr. Donnelly also mentioned that this is the last meeting we will have our Board Members, Senator Patricia Wiggins and Assembly Member Ira Ruskin, represented at our Board. Mr. Donnelly thanked Ms. Teresa Schilling, Senator Wiggins's representative, and Ms. Erin Shaw, Assembly Member Ruskin's representative, for serving on the Board Legislative Advisory Committee.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John Donnelly
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on November 18, 2010, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$2,234,062,144.78. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

The statement includes projects completed under the 1964 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act, the 1970 Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Bond Fund, the Bagley Conservation Fund, the State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974, the General Fund, the Energy Resources Fund, the Environmental License Plate Fund, the State, Urban and Coastal Park Bond Act of 1976, the 1984 Parklands Fund, the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Bond Act, the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988, Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund of 1988, California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990, the Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Act of 1996, the Natural Resources Infrastructure Fund, the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund, Forest Resources Improvement Fund, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond, Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Protection Fund, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, and the Wildlife Restoration Fund. In addition to projects completed with the above funding sources, this statement includes tax credits awarded under the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act. The tax credits are not reflected in the total amount allocated to projects.

A. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement	41,962,415.28
Reservoir Construction or Improvement.....	5,605,699.00
Stream Clearance and Improvement	28,543,077.09
Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	542,719.86
Marine Habitat.....	3,046,619.07
Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	4,224,300.26
C. Fishing Access Projects	53,441,681.40
Coastal and Bay	4,612,013.11
River and Aqueduct Access	17,582,175.38
Lake and Reservoir Access.....	10,494,639.87
Piers.....	20,752,853.04
D. Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
E. Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	2,058,230,332.93
Wildlife Areas (General)	414,853,091.24

Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development.....	21,751,962.86
Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat).....	738,800,972.11
Land Conservation Area.....	12,992,940.18
Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	25,724,296.36
Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	65,135,393.64
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants.....	778,971,676.54
F. Hunting Access Projects.....	636,898.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	22,123,289.94
H. Special Project Allocations	1,696,372.89
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects.....	39,284,585.15
State Owned.....	2,338,506.19
Grants.....	36,946,078.96
J. Sales and/or exchanges	533,455.07
K. Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded) ..	(48,598,734.00)
Statutory plans.....	(0.00)
Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and riparian habitat.....	(6,234,658.00)
Agricultural lands	(13,775,640.07)
Water and water rights	(0.00)
State and local parks, open space and archaeological resources.....	(28,588,435.93)
 Total Allocated to Projects	 \$2,234,062,144.78