

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

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**NOTICE OF MEETING****WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

November 17, 2005

10:00 A.M.

<sup>1</sup> State Capitol, Room 112  
 Sacramento, California 95814

**FINAL AGENDA ITEMS**

<b>ITEM NO.</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>
1. Roll Call	<b>1</b>
2. Funding Status – Informational	<b>2</b>
3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 - 14)	<b>5</b>
*4. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of August 25	<b>5</b>
*5. Recovery of Funds	<b>5</b>
*6. Fund Transfer	<b>8</b>
<p>To consider shifting two (2) San Joaquin River Parkway projects approved at the August 25, 2005, meeting to an alternate fund source. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5)]</p>	
*7. Famosa Slough Restoration, San Diego County	<b>\$181,000.00 9</b>
<p>To consider the allocation for a grant to the Friends of Famosa Slough for culvert repairs to improve tidal flow and support the natural restoration of Famosa Slough, a tributary to the San Diego River Estuary, located within the City of San Diego. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]</p>	

\* Proposed Consent Calendar

<sup>1</sup> These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

- \*8. Rio de Los Angeles State Park, Taylor Yard Public Access, \$77,000.00 11  
Los Angeles County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California State Parks Foundation for a cooperative project with the Department of Parks and Recreation to construct an interpretive loop trail and interpretive signage around a restored wetland and riparian habitat area near the Los Angeles River in the City of Los Angeles. [Wildlife Restoration Fund (Minor Capital Outlay)]

- \*9. San Joaquin River Parkway, Weed Eradication, \$146,500.00 13  
Jensen River Ranch, Fresno County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, Inc., to implement a weed eradication project in conjunction with the Habitat Restoration and Public Access Plan for the San Joaquin River Conservancy's Jensen River Ranch property, located in Fresno County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5)]

- \*10. Accornero Wetland Restoration, Merced County \$48,000.00 14

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the landowner, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Fish and Game to restore approximately 38 acres of seasonal wetlands, 9 acres of semi-permanent wetlands and 28 acres of associated uplands, and enhance approximately 243 acres of seasonal wetlands on privately owned property located east of Moffatt Road, approximately five miles southeast of the City of Gustine in Merced County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP]

- \*11. McAravy Ranch Wetland Restoration, Yolo County \$55,000.00 16

To consider the allocation for a grant to California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the landowner, Pheasants Forever, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Department of Fish and Game, to restore approximately 48 acres of seasonal wetlands, 36 acres of semi-permanent wetlands, 46 acres of upland grassland and 30 acres of riparian habitat on privately owned property, located two miles east of the community of Dunnigan in Yolo County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP]

- \*12. Department of Fish and Game Land Management Plans, \$156,000.00 18  
Sacramento Valley-Central Sierra Region, Phase II,

Sierra, Lassen and Alpine Counties

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation, Inc., for project administration in the preparation of two (2) land management plans for various properties owned by the Department of Fish and Game in the Sacramento Valley - Central Sierra Region. The properties are Hallelujah Junction Wildlife Area, Sierra and Lassen counties, and Heenan Lake Wildlife Area in Alpine County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

- \*13. Burton Ranch Wetland Restoration, Lassen County \$40,000.00 22

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the landowner, Pheasants Forever, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Intermountain West Joint Venture and the Department of Fish and Game to restore approximately 11 acres of seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands, 64 acres of upland grassland and 2 acres of riparian habitat on privately owned property, located one mile west of the community of Litchfield in Lassen County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d), Other]

- \*14. Redwoods to the Sea, Mattole River (Upper Tract) \$5,000.00 24  
Property Transfer, Humboldt County

To consider the transfer of Wildlife Conservation Board grant restrictions from properties originally purchased by Save-the-Redwoods League (League) to adjacent target properties being acquired through exchange by the League, located within the Mattole River watershed, east of the town of Honeydew in Humboldt County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

15. Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration, \$390,000.00 25  
Santa Barbara County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Santa Barbara for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, State Coastal Conservancy, Department of Parks and Recreation and the County of Santa Barbara to enhance and restore the Arroyo Burro Estuary, a coastal wetland, and restore riparian habitat along Mesa Creek, a tributary to the estuary, located in the City of Santa Barbara. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

16. Trabuco Creek Fish Passage Steelhead Restoration, \$1,199,000.00 28  
Orange County

To consider the allocation for a grant to Trout Unlimited, South Coast Chapter, for a cooperative project with the Department of Transportation, Orange County, the California Conservation Corps and the Department of Fish and Game to improve fish passage by modifying the concrete channel that carries Trabuco Creek under Interstate 5 and Camino Capistrano Road, located on public land approximately one mile north of the City of San Juan Capistrano in Orange County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

17. Bluebird Preserve, Los Angeles County \$6,910,000.00 31

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Glendora to assist in the acquisition of 69± acres of vacant land in the City of Glendora, County of Los Angeles, for the purpose of protecting coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands plant communities along with the sensitive and endangered species potentially resident within this habitat. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

18. Duarte Hills, Los Angeles County \$4,010,000.00 33

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Duarte to assist in the acquisition of 328± acres of real property located on Spinks Canyon Road in the City of Duarte for the protection of critical habitat for five sensitive natural terrestrial plant communities, seven plant species and six animal species. Acquisition of this property will protect one of the last natural open space areas within a developing urban area. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

19. Las Flores Creek Stream Restoration, Los Angeles County \$600,000.00 34

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Malibu for a cooperative project with the Department of Water Resources and the Resources Agency to restore a functioning stream channel and associated fish and wildlife habitat along approximately 2,400 feet of Las Flores Creek upstream of the Pacific Coast Highway on private and public land, located within the City of Malibu in Los Angeles County. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

20. Malibu Lagoon, Los Angeles County \$2,005,000.00 37

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the City of Malibu to assist in the acquisition of a 20± acre site in the vicinity of the Malibu Civic Center area and the Malibu Lagoon. The adjacent Surfrider Beach is recognized as one of the most polluted beaches in Southern California. The primary purpose of the acquisition is to clean up the contamination of the lagoon complex by filtering stormwater and treated

wastewater into a managed wetland, which will benefit species dependent upon wetlands, and should substantially reduce contamination in the lagoon, benefiting ocean and riverine species. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

21. Solstice Creek Steelhead Barrier Removal, Los Angeles County \$200,000.00 **40**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the National Park Service for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy to demolish and remove three check dams and an Arizona crossing and construct a bridge over Solstice Creek in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, located in Los Angeles County. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a)]

22. Rancho La Purisima, Santa Barbara County \$1,285,000.00 **42**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over 1,007± acres of land for the protection and preservation of rangeland, grazing land, grasslands and agriculture, located about three miles north of the City of Buellton adjacent to State Highway 101 in Santa Barbara County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f)]

23. Gabilan Ranch, Monterey and San Benito Counties \$2,005,000.00 **44**

To consider the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over 11,190± acres of real property located approximately 11 miles southwest of San Juan Bautista and 45 miles from San Jose in northern Monterey County and southern San Benito County. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to protect rangeland and wildlife habitat conditions of the property, together with the continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits that occur from livestock grazing. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f)]

24. Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 5, Santa Cruz County \$500,000.00 **45**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Watsonville Wetlands Watch to assist with the acquisition of 6± acres as an expansion of the Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve in the City of Watsonville for the protection and preservation of critical habitat known to contain a colony of endangered Santa Cruz tarplant. The acquisition will also protect wildlife habitat for the California red-legged frog and the burrowing owl. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c)]

25. San Joaquin River Parkway, Habitat Restoration and Public Access, Jensen River Ranch, Phase I, Fresno County \$2,118,226.00 47

To consider the allocation for an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Water Resources to proceed with the construction of infrastructure, including an irrigation system, fencing, and pipelines, and the restoration of habitat at the San Joaquin River Conservancy's Jensen River Ranch property, located in Fresno County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5)]

26. Shaver Lake Boat Ramp Augmentation, Fresno County \$500,000.00 48

To consider an augmentation to a grant to the County of Fresno for a cooperative project with the Department of Boating and Waterways to construct an additional boat ramp, parking area and restroom at an existing boat launching facility on the north shore of Shaver Lake, located in the Sierra National Forest approximately 45 miles northeast of the City of Fresno. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

27. Fine Gold Creek, Madera County \$640,740.00 50

To consider the allocation for a grant to The Trust for Public Land to assist in the acquisition of 220± acres of privately owned land located on the eastern slope of Hulbert Mountain near Millerton Lake, in Madera County, for the protection and preservation of a valuable watershed as well as many special status species including the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (a)]

28. Wetland Habitat Restoration, Eden Landing Ecological Reserve Augmentation, Alameda County \$1,300,000.00 51

To consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game to augment an existing project to restore approximately 570 acres of tidal marsh and enhance approximately 126 acres of salt pan and 95 acres of seasonal wetlands on the Department's Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, located just south of Highway 92 on the western edge of the City of Hayward in Alameda County. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (c)]

29. Cache Creek Riparian Restoration, Capay Valley Reach, Yolo County \$500,000.00 53

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Yolo County Resource Conservation District for a cooperative project with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Audubon Society, Yolo County, California Conservation Corps, Rumsey

Community Fund, Rumsey Rancheria, U.C. Davis, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, and several private landowners to remove nonnative invasive plants and restore native vegetation at selected sites on a 13 mile reach of Cache Creek and one tributary stream, located on public and private land in the upper Capay Valley of Yolo County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (e/f)]

30. Sacramento River Riparian Restoration, Del Rio Site, Phase II, \$511,000.00 **57**  
Glenn County

To consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service to restore and enhance approximately 163 acres of riparian habitat on private land, located approximately one mile east of the Sacramento River and five miles north of Butte City in Glenn County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (e/f)]

31. Llano Seco Rancho Conservation Area, Butte County \$2,010,000.00 **60**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Northern California Regional Land Trust for a cooperative project with the Department of Conservation and the Department of Fish and Game to assist with the acquisition of a conservation easement on 4,240± acres of the historic Llano Seco Rancho located near Durham, in Butte County. This proposal also requests authorization to accept a grant from the Department of Fish and Game, CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Program and authority to apply this grant toward the costs associated with the acquisition of the conservation easement. This project is for the protection and preservation of rangeland, grasslands, grazing land and agricultural land. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f)]

32. Musty Buck Ridge Wildlife Area, Expansion 2, Butte County \$3,208,255.00 **62**

To consider the cooperative acquisition of 754± acres as an addition to the Department of Fish and Game's contiguous holdings in the Big Chico Creek and Musty Buck Ridge area, located east of the northernmost portion of the City of Chico and to the east of Chico Municipal Airport, for the protection of a critical wetland habitat containing a high concentration of vernal pools and swales, and threatened and endangered species including the Butte County meadowfoam. The proposal also requests authorization to accept grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from the Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program and funding from the California State University, Chico Research Foundation and the use of those funds to be applied toward the purchase of the property. [California Clean Water, Clean Air,

Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

33. Sierra Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 3, Plumas County \$458,000.00 **64**

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Feather River Land Trust to assist in the acquisition of a 1,360± acre conservation easement for the protection and preservation of rangeland, grasslands, grazing land and agriculture located in the northern portion of Sierra Valley, in Plumas County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f)]

34. Montgomery Woods, Mendocino County \$1,000,000.00 **65**

To consider the allocation for a grant to Save the Redwoods League to assist in the acquisition of a 1,116± acre site (to be held in fee by the Department of Parks and Recreation) in the vicinity of the Montgomery Woods State Reserve for the purposes of securing watershed protection and restoration opportunities for salmon-bearing tributaries of the South Fork Big River and preserving potential habitat for many sensitive wildlife species. California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

35. Lake Earl Wildlife Area Expansions, Pacific Shores Unit, Phase II, Del Norte County \$2,000,000.00 **67**

To consider the acquisition of up to 250± acres of privately-owned land, including several tax-default parcels in a Chapter 8 sale, located in the Pacific Shores Subdivision on the north shore of Lake Earl approximately seven miles north of Crescent City for the preservation and restoration of wildlife habitat. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

Inquiries regarding agenda items may be directed to Al Wright, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, at the address and telephone number shown on the letterhead.

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**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

November 17, 2005

10:00 A.M.

<sup>1</sup> State Capitol, Room 112  
Sacramento, California 95814

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Kellogg, Chairman  
President, Fish and Game Commission  
Michael C. Genest, Member  
Acting Director, Department of Finance  
L. Ryan Brodrick, Member  
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Wesley Chesbro  
Senator Sheila Kuehl  
Senator Abel Maldonado

Assembly Member Patty Berg  
Assembly Member Fran Pavley  
Assembly Member Lois Wolk

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Al Wright

\* Consent Calendar

<sup>1</sup> These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

2. Funding Status as of November 17, 2005 (Informational)

(a) 2005-06 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act - Minor Projects ..... \$500,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (0.00)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$500,000.00

(b) 2005-06 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act ..... \$20,551,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (0.00)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$20,551,000.00

(c) 2004-05 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act ..... \$20,577,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (1,663,900.00)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$18,913,100.00

(d) 2003-04 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act ..... \$20,620,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (8,426,000.00)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$12,194,000.00

(e) 2000-01 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget	Act	(2003-04	Reappropriation)
(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) .....			\$14,562,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations .....			(13,412,512.17)
Unallocated Balance .....			\$1,149,487.83

(f) 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)] ..... \$36,100,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (25,128,524.46)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$10,971,475.54

(g) 2005-06 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) ..... \$1,545,000.00  
 Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (0.00)  
 Unallocated Balance ..... \$1,545,000.00

- (h) 2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget
- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)..... | \$11,000,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....                    | (0.00)          |
| Unallocated Balance .....                                | \$11,000,000.00 |
- (i) 2003-04 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget
- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)..... | \$8,500,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....                    | (20,000.00)    |
| Unallocated Balance .....                                | \$8,480,000.00 |
- (j) 2002-03 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget
- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Budget Act (2005-06 Reappropriation)<br>(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) ..... | \$2,500,000.00  |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....  | (20,000.00)     |
| Unallocated Balance .....  | \$2,480,000.00  |
| Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002 .....  | \$4,800,000.00  |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....  | (1,665,180.00)  |
| Unallocated Balance .....  | \$3,134,820.00  |
| Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002 .....  | \$19,200,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....  | (4,952,925.00)  |
| Unallocated Balance .....  | \$14,247,075.00 |
- (k) 2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget
- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650) ..... | \$273,000,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations .....              | (104,264,390.37) |
| Unallocated Balance .....                          | \$168,735,609.63 |
- (l) 2004-05 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)
- |                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Budget Act .....                      | \$13,250,000.00 |
| Less Previous Board Allocations ..... | (12,169,751.38) |
| Unallocated Balance .....             | \$1,080,248.62  |

- (m) 2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)
  - Budget Act ..... \$32,500,000.00
  - Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (20,011,970.00)
  - Unallocated Balance ..... \$12,488,030.00
  
- (n) 2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget
  - Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572).. \$814,350,000.00
  - Less 03-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Sec. 79565.. (21,000,000.00)
  - Less 04-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Sec. 79565.. (21,000,000.00)
  - Less 05-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Sec. 79565.... (4,000,000.00)
  - Less 05-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Sec. 79572.... (3,100,000.00)
  - Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (615,604,350.70)
  - Unallocated Balance ..... \$149,645,649.30
  
- (o) 2003-04 Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget
  - Budget Act (Pursuant to Chapter 588, Statutes of 2001)..... \$5,000,000.00
  - Less Previous Board Allocations ..... (0.00)
  - Unallocated Balance ..... \$5,000,000.00

**RECAP OF FUND BALANCES**

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a) .....	\$500,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c) and (d) .....	\$51,658,100.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (e) and (f) .....	\$12,120,963.37
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k).....	\$209,622,504.63
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (l), (m) and (n) .....	\$163,213,927.92
Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (o) .....	\$5,000,000.00

**RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000**

Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000  
 Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000

Total Tax Credits Available.....	\$100,000,000.00
Less Previously Awarded Tax Credits .....	(48,241,234.00)
Balance of Tax Credits Available.....	\$51,758,766.00

- 3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 – 14)
- \*4. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of August 25, 2005
- \*5. 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.

- \$211,924.08** to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
- \$129,468.23** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
- \$2,813.84** to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
- \$100,469.69** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
- \$33,461.91** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**

**SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND**

Eagle Lake Fishing Access Improvements, Lassen County

Allocated	\$260,270.00
Expended	<u>-260,270.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Natural Community Conservation Planning, San Diego County

Allocated	\$36,005,375.00
Expended	<u>-35,879,593.33</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$125,781.67

Project Planning

Allocated	\$273,000.00
Expended	<u>-189,097.59</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$83,902.41

San Joaquin River Parkway, MacMichael Trail, Fresno County

Allocated	\$31,180.00
Expended	<u>-31,180.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

San Miguel Ranch, Expansion 1, San Diego County

Allocated	\$1,703,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,700,760.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,240.00

**Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water,  
Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund** **\$211,924.08**

**HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND**

Basso Bridge Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1, Stanislaus County

Allocated	\$98,000.00
Expended	<u>-12,123.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$85,877.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Knoxville Wildlife Area, Napa County

Allocated	\$120,635.00
Expended	<u>-77,043.77</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$43,591.23

Wetland Habitat Restoration (Shasta Valley Wildlife Area), Siskiyou County

Allocated	\$110,000.00
Expended	<u>-110,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

**Total Habitat Conservation Fund** **\$129,468.23**

**WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND**

Eagle Lake Fishing Access Improvements Augmentation, Lassen County

Allocated	\$200,135.00
Expended	<u>-200,107.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$28.00

Eagle Lake Fishing Access Improvements, Augmentation #2, Lassen County

Allocated	\$40,107.00
Expended	<u>-37,321.16</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,785.84

**Total Wildlife Restoration Fund** **\$2,813.84**

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

Dos Reis Fishing Access (Transfer), San Joaquin County

Allocated	\$10,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,724.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,276.00

Humboldt Bay Wildlife Area, Lighthouse Ranch Unit, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$1,025,000.00
Expended	<u>-957,095.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$67,904.50

Sacramento Valley Oak Woodlands Public Outreach and Education,  
Amador, El Dorado and Sacramento Counties

Allocated	\$68,000.00
Expended	<u>-57,520.23</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,479.77

Sierra Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 1, Plumas County

Allocated	\$1,273,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,263,778.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,222.00

Sky Valley-Cordelia Hills Open Space, Solano County

Allocated	\$1,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,001,412.58</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,587.42

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund** **\$100,469.69**

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

Ellwood Mesa, Santa Barbara County

Allocated	\$4,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-4,003,506.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$6,494.00

Ellwood Mesa Augmentation, Santa Barbara County

Allocated	\$2,000,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Del Norte County

Allocated	\$20,000.00
Expended	<u>-16,173.09</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,826.91

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, Tolay Creek Unit, Expansion 4, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$8,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-8,002,283.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,717.00

North Claremont Reserve, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$1,403,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,397,576.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,424.00

Ormond Beach, Ventura County

Allocated	\$6,496,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,486,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

**Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002** **\$33,461.91**

\*6. Fund Transfer \$238,507.00

At its August 25, 2005 meeting, the Board approved an augmentation for two (2) San Joaquin River Conservancy projects totaling \$238,507.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.355. The Proposition 12 bond funds were not available for encumbrance beyond June 30, 2005. Therefore, it is necessary to shift the allocations to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5).

The projects involved in this fund transfer are as follows:

Project Name and County	Amount
San Joaquin River Parkway, Lewis S. Eaton Trail, Friant Road Segment, Augmentation, Fresno County	\$140,000.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, Habitat Restoration and Public Access Plan, Jensen River Ranch, Augmentation, Fresno County	\$98,507.00

Staff recommends the Board approve these fund shifts as proposed; allocate \$238,507.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood

Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish these fund shifts; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*7. Famosa Slough Restoration, San Diego County \$181,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant for a cooperative project with the Friends of Famosa Slough to assist in the restoration of Famosa Slough through the repair of an existing culvert that will increase tidal flow to the slough. Famosa Slough is located at the junction of West Point Loma Boulevard and Famosa Boulevard, one-half mile south of Interstate 8 in the City of San Diego.

Famosa Slough is a 37± acre Wetland Preserve owned and managed by the City of San Diego. It was historically part of the Mission Bay/San Diego River estuary system before the San Diego River Flood Control Channel was built in the 1950's that reduced its connection to the River. The Slough is tidally flushed and supports a wide diversity of wetland wildlife and vegetation.

At moderate tide levels, tidal flows are carried under the street through a single 48-inch reinforced concrete culvert. At higher tide levels, the flows are also carried by a set of large box culverts. The existing culvert system results in hydraulic constraints to tidal circulation which both mutes the overall tidal range and creates an impediment to efficient flushing of Famosa Slough at moderate and low tidal stages. The effects of the current muted conditions are limitations in wetlands and mudflats within the Slough, degradation of water quality and impacts to more significant habitat restoration opportunities.

A second 48-inch culvert crosses under West Point Loma Boulevard parallel to and a few inches west of the culvert mentioned above. When the street was widened from two lanes to four lanes in the 1960's, the City did not extend this second culvert as it was not needed for storm water conveyance due to the construction of the higher elevation double box culvert as an element of the road widening. Both ends of the second 48-inch culvert were sealed with concrete plugs. The southern end of that culvert is still visible and the northern end was buried under the fill at the northern edge of the widened road. A Feasibility Analysis has confirmed the culvert to be in good condition and capable of being restored to operational use. This can occur by removing and replacing the plugged pipe segments and adding 16 feet to the northern end. The culvert will extend out of the roadway embankment and be the same length, elevation, and slope as the eastern culvert.

The culvert extension project is an essential hydrological element of the Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan, 1994. The enhancement plan has been endorsed by the resource and regulatory agencies, the City, and community and

environmental organizations, and since the plan's adoption numerous elements of work have been completed through state and federal grant assistance, local governmental support, and community-based funding and labor investments. To date, approximately 50% of the overall work called for in the enhancement plan has been implemented or is underway.

The feasibility of restoring this culvert was verified by the City using funds provided by the State Coastal Conservancy, on behalf of the Southern California Wetland Restoration Program (SCWRP), and the City of San Diego. The City, also using funds provided by the SCWRP, later completed design and permitting for the culvert extension.

This project will make final design adjustments and permit modifications, remove the concrete plugs, drive support piles for the culvert extension, excavate the soil for the culvert extension, remove one plugged section of pipe, extend the pipe with a 16 foot section, restore and stabilize the bank, and fund required construction monitoring by the City. The Friends of Famosa Slough will provide management of the overall project, including managing the contract, revegetating the bank and monitoring and maintaining the erosion control measures installed by the contractor. These activities will be done as an in-kind contribution.

All previous state permits that have been obtained were for a more costly implementation of this project. The current implementation will have less of a footprint and less potential for environmental impact and is thus a preferred restoration alternative to accomplish project goals. A Coastal Development Permit has been granted but will be reviewed to determine if an amendment to modify the project description is required. A City Site Development Permit has been issued for the project. It is anticipated that the project will be in substantial conformance with that permit and that the City will only need to make such findings. The Department of Fish and Game has expressed support for the overall Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan and has been instrumental in nearby projects, including implementation of water quality enhancement ponds at the southern end of the Slough. Remaining environmental documents and exemptions will be completed before construction begins.

The project will be funded as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$181,000.00
Friends of Famosa Slough (in-kind)	<u>2,100.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$183,100.00

Previously funded phases of the entire Famosa Slough Restoration Plan were funded as follows:

Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan Completed 11/93

Treatment Ponds	\$126,000	California Regional Water Quality Control Board
	\$124,000	In-kind Donations Contractor, Volunteers & Materials
Enhancement Plan Implementation	\$540,000	Federal & Local Funds Projects
Culvert Extension Feasibility Study	\$ 12,000	Coastal Conservancy
Culvert Extension Design	\$ 76,709	Coastal Conservancy
Upland Restoration Project (Friends)	\$367,000	State Water Resources Control Board
	<u>\$100,000</u>	In-kind Donations Contractor, Volunteers & Materials
Total Prior Funding:	\$1,345,709	

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$181,000 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 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.

- \*8. Rio de Los Angeles State Park, Taylor Yard Public Access \$77,000.00  
Los Angeles County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to fund a cooperative project with the California State Parks Foundation (Foundation) and the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to construct a loop trail and interpretive signage around a restored wetland and riparian habitat area near the Los Angeles River in the new Rio de Los Angeles State Park in the City of Los Angeles.

The proposed project is located on a 40± acre parcel, known as Parcel D, located just east of the Los Angeles River in the Cypress Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, five miles northwest of downtown. This parcel, once part of a flourishing railyard and industrial site known as Taylor Yard, was acquired by DPR in 2001 with the goal of creating an innovative, multi-use urban park. The park will provide a unique opportunity for users to experience not only the typical urban park amenities such as athletic fields and picnic areas but also to observe and learn about wetlands, riparian habitat and the wildlife that depends on these habitats. This feature of the park makes sense given its proximity to the Los Angeles River. The park will be jointly managed by the City of Los Angeles and DPR. DPR will be the sole manager of the portion of the park (about 20 acres) where this trail and habitat project will be implemented.

Over the last several years, the Los Angeles River has been undergoing a significant revitalization. Once a wild and free flowing river whose waters were the lifeblood of the newly forming agricultural community of Los Angeles in the late 1700's and early 1800's, the river was later channelized in the interest of flood control and was for years basically thought of and operated as a large drainage canal. Then in the 1990's, a movement began to restore the Los Angeles River as a significant parkway and move it back towards the forefront of the Los Angeles landscape as a place to be valued and enjoyed by the people of the City and the State. New parks, greenbelts, and trails have been created along the river and are being received with great enthusiasm by the public. This project, adjacent to the remnants of old Taylor Yard, will be a part of this process.

By the early 1920's, Taylor Yard had become a major railyard and for years was an industrial site. However, in the 1960's and 1970's rail operations slowed substantially and by 1985 the site was vacant and was ultimately designated as a brownfield. Until very recently when grading began for the park construction, Parcel D has been a highly disturbed area consisting of mostly ruderal vegetation and a perched artificial wetland. The Los Angeles River nearby supports some native riparian vegetation and consequently does attract significant numbers of wildlife.

This project will create self-sustaining habitat area for wildlife and educate visitors about the Los Angeles River and the importance of wildlife and wildlife habitat. The project will construct an approximately 2,400 foot long, 10 foot wide loop trail with interpretive signage around a 3.4± acre restored wetland, riparian woodland, willow scrub habitat area. The trail surface will be decomposed granite and will be barrier-free with appropriate slope and width to accommodate mobility impaired individuals and satisfy the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Interpretive signage will be installed along the trail to provide users an opportunity to learn about the importance of wetlands, riparian habitat and local wildlife. The project will also restore 3.4± acres of the aforementioned habitat types. Only plants native to the area and appropriate for the site soil and hydrological conditions will be planted including willows, cottonwoods and sycamore trees. Irrigation and/or water management will be provided to ensure successful plant establishment and continued vigor. DPR will monitor the rate of plant establishment, cover and density. Monitoring surveys will also document wildlife usage and will be summarized in brief reports to offer recommendations to increase wildlife usage when necessary. Monitoring will also include water quality and hydrologic function to ensure proper water quality and quantity on the site. Portable restrooms and trash receptacles will also be furnished. Finally, there will be 6.3± acres of open space/buffer zone between the parking area and sport fields and the habitat restoration and trail area. This area will be landscaped with trees and turf.

The total cost for this park and public access project is estimated to be \$1,727,000.00. The funding partners are as follows although it should be noted that the Coastal Conservancy funds have not yet been secured:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 77,000.00
Department of Parks and Recreation	<u>\$1,650,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$1,727,000.00

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and supports the proposed improvements. DPR has completed an Initial Study for the project and has filed a Notice of Determination for a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. DPR will obtain the necessary permits, administer the construction contracts, and operate and maintain the project for 25 years.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$77,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund (Minor Capital Outlay); and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*9. San Joaquin River Parkway, Weed Eradication,  
Jensen River Ranch, Fresno County \$146,500.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, Inc., (Trust) to implement weed eradication/control for Phase I of the San Joaquin River Conservancy's (Conservancy) Jensen River Ranch Habitat Restoration and Public Access Project (see Item 25 in this Agenda). The 167± acre project site is within the San Joaquin River Parkway and is predominantly irrigated pasture with a narrow belt of mixed riparian woodland along a 0.5 mile river frontage, located approximately one-half mile upstream of the Highway 41 Bridge in Fresno County.

The objectives of weed management on the Jensen Ranch are to eradicate/control the number of target weedy species and to eradicate all plant species within the designated planting cells allowing native plant species to grow with limited competition. A plant inventory of the site has been completed and target non-native species have been identified for control within the weed management plan. A revegetation plan for the site has also been completed. The plan identifies areas or cells where concentrated planting of native vegetation will occur. These cells will require removal of all vegetation to reduce competition for the cultivated native species.

The Trust will assist the Conservancy and the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in the continued adaptive management of the Weed Management Plan to update the plan to reflect changes in objectives, timeline and resources. The target species include bull thistle, nettle, Johnson grass, spiny cocklebur, star thistle and tocalote. The control of each of these species will require a multi-step

process using herbicides, mowing/chopping, mechanical and/or hand removal and grazing. The plan will recognize that the project is in a riverine environment, utilizes managed grazing and contains federally protected elderberries. The Trust will work with the Conservancy, DWR and other experts to identify chemicals and methods that will be best for the site management and oversee the implementation as planned.

The Conservancy, as the landowner, will be responsible for managing the property after the project is complete. For all of its properties, the Conservancy 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.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been adopted by the Conservancy for the Jensen River Ranch Habitat Enhancement and Public Access Plan. In April 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued a letter of concurrence that the project would not adversely affect critical habitat for the endangered Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle. The Trust will ensure that all pesticide applications comply with the requirements for elderberry shrub avoidance (USFWS), and ensure that all work meets with all state, federal, and local regulations regarding herbicide application. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that all persons who will be applying the chemicals are licensed Pest Control Applicators with the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR), that all Material Safety Datasheets are available to employees and posted where appropriate, that all reporting requirements and all pesticide safety rules are met through CDPR, and that proper Personal Protective Equipment and clean up and spill prevention material are readily available. The Trust will coordinate with DWR and the Conservancy to ensure compliance with all plans and permits currently used for the project are met. This may include meeting with the public and other stakeholders in order to brief interested parties and coordinate resolution of issues that may arise.

The total cost of the weed eradication project is \$146,500.00 with the WCB funding the entire amount. Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, Inc., as proposed; allocate \$146,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5) for project costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*10. Accornero Wetland Restoration, Merced County \$48,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) for a cooperative project with the landowner, the U.S. Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore approximately 38 acres of seasonal wetlands, 9 acres of semi-permanent wetlands and 28 acres of associated uplands, and enhance approximately 243 acres of seasonal wetlands. The project is located on privately owned property, east of Moffatt Road, approximately three miles southeast of the City of Gustine in Merced County. The project site lies five miles north of the DFG's Volta Wildlife Area, five miles west of the Salt Slough Unit of the North Grasslands Wildlife Area, and seven miles south of the China Island Unit of the North Grasslands Wildlife Area.

Seventy-five acres of the site were recently enrolled in the NRCS Wetland Reserve Program and have been protected with a perpetual federal easement. The USFWS is working with the landowner to protect the remaining 243± acres with a wetland conservation easement. These voluntary programs offer landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. The NRCS and USFWS provide technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), USFWS and NRCS have a long and cooperative history together, protecting and restoring wetland habitat throughout the Central Valley and California. The Accornero property is a prime example of this cooperation, with the NRCS and USFWS providing funds for its protection and assisting the WCB, the landowner and the other partners in the restoration efforts.

The Grasslands is one of the most important wetland areas in California, containing nearly one third of all managed wetlands in the State. It has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention as a Wetland of International Importance, one of only 22 sites so recognized in the United States. Most of the 180,000± acres of wildlife habitat is privately owned, but there are also nearly 50,000 acres of wetlands and uplands on USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and nearly 19,000 acres of wildlife habitat on the DFG's Los Banos, North Grasslands and Volta Wildlife Areas. The Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) considers this area to be of critical importance to breeding and wintering waterfowl and other wetland dependent species. The CVJV Implementation Plan calls for the protection and enhancement of 20,000 acres of restorable lands within the San Joaquin Basin, which includes the Grasslands. The CVJV Plan also recognizes that certain areas of the western Grasslands are at risk to development. Lying where it does only three miles from the rapidly expanding City of Gustine, this site will provide valuable wildlife habitat in its own right, but will also buffer existing wetlands from the disturbance of a growing community.

The project calls for the restoration of wetlands through the construction of a system of levees and water control structures that will allow the landowner to precisely manage water levels on the property to maximize wetland habitat values. Swales will be cut through previously laser-leveled fields, and islands, submerged mounds, peninsulas, and tree berms will be constructed to increase wetland diversity. Five hundred willows, button willows and cottonwoods will be planted to begin the revegetation of the riparian forests on the site and native

grasses will be planted on 20± acres. To better manage the water on the property, eleven water control structures will be installed. Once the habitat work is complete, managed wetlands such as this will provide wintering habitat for bird species such as pintails, dunlin, and green-winged teal. Breeding birds that may benefit include mallards, cinnamon teal and northern harriers. Mammals, amphibians and reptiles will also benefit, including species such as river otters, beavers and pacific tree frogs.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 48,000.00
NRCS (Easement)	187,500.00
NRCS (Restoration)	46,855.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	34,700.00
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	20,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (Indirect Overhead)	23,562.00
Landowner (Cash)	<u>11,500.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$372,117.00

Project costs will be for the NRCS conservation easement; water control structures; earthmoving; riparian planting; upland seeding; and project design, construction supervision and administration.

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for twenty-five years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$48,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP; 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.

- \*11. McAravy Ranch Wetland Restoration, Yolo County \$55,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Department of Fish and Game to restore approximately 48 acres of seasonal wetlands, 36 acres of semi-permanent

wetlands, 46 acres of upland grasslands and 30 acres of riparian habitat. The project is located on privately owned land two miles east of the community of Dunnigan in Yolo County.

The site was recently enrolled in the NRCS Wetland Reserve Program and protected with a perpetual federal easement. This voluntary program offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. The NRCS provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. Typically, these lands are marginal farmlands that regularly flood, and this is no exception. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and NRCS have a long and cooperative history together, protecting and restoring wetland habitat throughout the Central Valley and California. McAravy Ranch is a prime example of this cooperation, with the NRCS providing funds for its protection and assisting the WCB, the landowner and the other partners in the restoration efforts.

This site is located in the Colusa Basin, identified by the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) as having a high potential for successful wetland restoration. This project will help the CVJV meet its goal of 15,000 acres to be restored in the Basin, and further, the site is located in the southern portion of the Basin, an area identified as the highest priority area within the Basin for restoration activities. In addition, Dunnigan Creek, which is now a straight ditch flowing through the center of the property, will be restored to more than 30 acres of riparian habitat on both sides of the creek, reestablishing the natural meanders in the process. Finally, the site is located immediately adjacent to protected properties that are currently being restored. This project will be integrated into a much larger restoration effort on several thousand acres immediately to the east.

The wetlands will provide resting and feeding areas for migrating and wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, such as gadwalls and greater yellowlegs. As mentioned above, extensive riparian habitat is planned for this site, which will benefit such species as yellow warblers and song sparrows. Finally, the native grassland restoration planned for this site will provide important nesting habitat for a number of species, including western meadowlarks and savannah sparrows, and wintering habitat for Lincoln's sparrows and horned larks.

The project calls for the restoration of wetlands through the construction of a system of levees and water control structures that will allow the landowner to precisely manage water levels on the property to maximize wetland habitat values. Swales will be cut through previously laser-leveled fields, islands will be constructed to increase wetland diversity, at least 10,000 willow and cottonwood cuttings will be planted to begin the revegetation of the riparian forests on the site, and native grasses will be planted on 43 acres. To better manage the water on the property, 18 water control structures will be installed, and a pipeline will be constructed to provide water efficiently to the wetlands and riparian areas.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$55,000.00
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service	<u>126,010.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$181,010.00

Project costs will be for earthmoving; water control structures; native grasses; trees; a pipeline; and project design, construction supervision and administration.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for twenty-five years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$55,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP; 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.

- \*12. Department of Fish and Game Land Management Plans, \$156,000.00  
Sacramento Valley-Central Sierra Region, Phase II,  
Sierra, Lassen and Alpine Counties

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation, Inc., (CWF) to provide project administration for preparation of two land management plans for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Sacramento Valley-Central Sierra Region's high priority wildlife areas. The DFG is the public trust steward of properties acquired throughout the state by the Wildlife Conservation Board for various purposes and, as such, follows policies relating to the management and enhancement of wildlife and the habitats on which they depend, while providing appropriate public use on those lands. Because of the rapid rate of acquisitions over the last decade (most due to voter-approved bonds), some properties have gone without planning and have been minimally managed. In order to assess resources, involve the public and provide guidance to the DFG's programs that relate to land management, land management plans are necessary. The Sacramento Valley-Central Sierra Region has selected the following two sites for this project:

Property Descriptions:

- 1) Hallelujah Junction Wildlife Area (HJWA) totals 13,400± acres and is located in eastern Sierra and southern Lassen counties. The property is depicted on

U.S. Geological Survey 7.5' Evans Canyon and a small portion of the Beckworth Pass, CA Quadrangles. It is roughly 15 miles northwest of Reno, Nevada, and 25 miles southeast of Portola, California, bisected by U.S. Highway 395.

The majority of the property is critical deer winter range for the Loyalton-Truckee deer herd, one of the most important deer herds in the state. Much of the area is covered in sagebrush with a lesser amount of antelope bitterbrush. On the eastern side of the area is a significant amount of juniper mixed in with the sagebrush. HJWA has a substantial amount of wet meadow on the southern portion, much of which is used for cattle grazing or for hay production. Approximately 3,250 acres of the southern end are leased for cattle ranching.

The HJWA is adjacent to portions of the Toiyabe National Forest, lands owned by the Santa Clara Water District, and a minor amount of Bureau of Land Management property. The eastern boundary of the area is the Nevada state line. Much of the adjoining property in Nevada is owned by the Bureau of Land Management while a relatively minor amount is privately owned.

HJWA contains seven habitat types classified by the Wildlife Habitat Relationships Program (WHR) (Mayer and Laudenslayer, 1988) listed below, along with the equivalent classification in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) in parentheses (Holland 1986).

1. **Annual Grassland** (Valley and foothill grassland)
2. **Sagebrush** (Great basin mixed scrub, big sagebrush scrub, sagebrush steppe, rabbitbrush scrub, great basin juniper woodland and scrub)
3. **Wet Meadow** (Meadow and seep)
4. **Eastside Pine** (Eastside ponderosa pine forest, Jeffrey pine forest, Washoe pine-fir forest)
5. **Bitterbrush** (Great basin mixed scrub, big sagebrush scrub, rabbitbrush scrub)
6. **Montane Chaparral** (Montane chaparral, montane dwarf scrub)
7. **Montane Riparian** (Montane riparian forest, montane riparian scrub)

The HJWA is large and has a diverse assemblage of habitat types and wildlife species. The complexity and length of the plan will be determined by the property's management requirements. A management plan was prepared for HJWA in 1990. Since that time, over 7,000 acres have been added to the HJWA, either by land exchange with the BLM, or by purchase from private landowners. The Management Plan (Plan) is to be prepared per DFG guidelines, A Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans (Guide), and other local or Federal agency requirements as necessary. The Plan is to be written to fulfill CEQA and CESA requirements. The product will be suitable for CEQA review and approval. Tasks that may be required to complete the plan, depending upon individual plan circumstances, include but are not limited to:

- Evaluate existing biological and cultural resource data to determine what type of inventory work needs completion or updating.

- Conduct resource inventory and mapping, including soils, sensitive plants and animals, and wildlife resources.
- Habitat mapping.
- Identify and map all leases and easements that may occur on or pass through DFG lands.
- Prepare a noxious weed management component.
- Prepare a cultural resource assessment and management element for the plan.
- Conduct a literature search.
- Prepare a conceptual educational component to the plan.
- Prepare a fire management component, including past fire history.
- Prepare a public use component which shall include a discussion of current public uses and their potential impact on the resources of the WA.
- Prepare a restoration component, including mapping areas in need of restoration, a priority ranking, and a proposed timeline for completion.
- Evaluate the existing DFG water rights on the WA.

2) Heenan Lake Wildlife Area is located in Alpine County approximately seven miles southeast of Markleeville, California. The lake itself consists of 130 acres of the 1,653± acre property. The primary purpose of the acquisition was to conserve the state and federally listed threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi*). The lake is used to raise brood fish and there is an egg taking station on the property. These eggs are used to raise fingerling trout for maintenance stocking in California and Nevada. Heenan Lake also provides a popular catch and release fishery during September and October for trophy-sized Lahontan cutthroat trout and is a Fish and Game Commission designated Wild Trout, Catch-and-Release, and Heritage Trout water. The lake has a water storage capacity of 3,000 acre-feet. DFG has acquired 78.8 percent or 2,324 acre-feet of water storage right in four phases. The acquisition of Heenan Lake also provides important summer range and migration corridors for the Carson River deer herd.

The reason for a management plan update is due to the recent acquisition of water rights since the original management plan was developed. Acquisition of additional water rights will affect operation and management of the fisheries resource of Heenan Lake. In addition, a land swap with the Bureau of Land Management has occurred that has changed the original boundaries of the property that included obtaining the land where the egg-taking station was located.

Data that is being collected from our current resource assessment endeavors will further affect management goals. Increased recreational pursuits may negatively affect biological resources present on the area. Additional public pressure may create potential conflicts on sensitive habitats and wildlife populations. Wildlife using this area includes nesting bald eagles, osprey, white pelicans, various waterfowl species, red-tail and Cooper's hawks, golden eagles, ravens, blue grouse, mountain and valley quail, black bears, mule deer, coyotes and marmots.

Habitat for Sierra Nevada red fox and wolverine exist on the property, although neither species have been detected.

The Plan is to be written to fulfill CEQA and CESA requirements. The product will be suitable for CEQA review and approval. Tasks that may be required to complete the plan, depending upon individual plan circumstances, include but are not limited to:

- Map revised property boundaries.
- Assess recent water rights acquisitions/management options. The plan should evaluate acquiring additional water rights for fisheries management and riparian restoration.
- Prepare a public use component which shall include a discussion of current public uses and their potential impact on the resources of the wildlife area.
- Prepare a restoration component, including mapping areas in need of restoration, a priority ranking, and a proposed timeline for completion.
- Provide a list of the biological resources on the area.
- Prepare a fire management component, including past fire history.
- List land ownership and management outside the boundaries that would affect the biological resources and management of the wildlife area (cattle trespass, public use and access, resource extraction activities, etc.).
- Prepare a cultural resource assessment and management element for the plan.
- Assess known historical wildlife habitats, land use practices or other natural resources which provide a historical context to the property. Focus should be placed on the status of Lahontan cutthroat trout in terms of distribution and importance.
- Research on recorded easements and encumbrances should be conducted.
- Provide management options that include habitat restoration and improvement, that include using fire or timber extractions as tools.
- Assess land management and wildlife area maintenance activities, with an estimated budget.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The Department or selected subcontractors will complete all California Environmental Quality Act requirements and obtain all necessary permits.

Amounts requested:

Hallelujah Junction Wildlife Area	\$100,000.00
Heenan Lake Wildlife Area	40,000.00
California Wildlife Foundation, Inc. Administrative Costs	<u>16,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$156,000.00

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$156,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood

Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*13. Burton Ranch Wetland Restoration, Lassen County \$40,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) for a cooperative project with the landowner, Pheasants Forever, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Intermountain West Joint Venture, Lassen County Special Weed Action Team (Lassen SWAT) and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore approximately 11 acres of seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands, 64± acres of upland grassland and two acres of riparian habitat. The project is located on privately-owned property approximately one mile west of the community of Litchfield in Lassen County. The property lies five miles west of DFG's Honey Lake Wildlife Area Fleming Unit, five miles north of the Dakin Unit, and six miles northeast of the Bass Hill Wildlife Area.

The landowner bought this property several years ago, with a vision of restoring the abandoned fields to native habitats. At that time, about one third of the property was native ground covered in Great Basin sagebrush habitat, but much of the remainder was non-native perennial pepperweed, a noxious weed that covers huge expanses of the Honey Lake Valley. After two years of battling the weeds on his own, DU was called to help tackle the weeds and provide some vegetated diversity. The potential for restoration was evident; the site is ideally located, lying immediately south of the Susan River with an old slough channel running through the property and soils that are ideal for wetland and riparian habitat restoration. Unfortunately, the infrastructure of the old farm is failing, and the weeds are proving to be a formidable challenge.

DU has put together a team, consisting of funding agencies and technical assistance providers, to assist the landowner in his efforts. Lassen SWAT provides technical assistance and funds for weed eradication efforts, NRCS and the Wildlife Conservation Board provide funds for wetland restoration; Pheasants Forever is interested in developing high quality upland areas for nesting habitat; and the Intermountain West Joint Venture has funds to benefit migrating waterfowl and other wetland dependent birds. With these partners firmly behind them, the restoration appears certain to succeed.

Project objectives are to install a well and pump to provide a reliable water supply for fall habitat, renovate the water conveyance and control system to improve water and vegetation management capabilities and allow water to be used more efficiently for habitat management, increase the amount of wetland and riparian habitat, remove perennial pepperweed, restore native grasses and shrubs in wetland-associated uplands and improve the quality of habitat throughout the property. Planned restoration activities will improve the reliability of wetland,

riparian and associated upland habitats that are available for waterfowl and other wildlife throughout the year.

The Honey Lake Valley supports numerous species of wetland, riparian and upland grassland dependent species, both migratory and summer resident. Wetlands and adjacent uplands are needed to provide breeding habitat to waterfowl such as gadwalls and mallards. The nearby Honey Lake Wildlife Area produces more than 1,000 geese and 5,000 ducks in an average year, and this site will add to that production. In addition, other ground nesting birds, such as meadowlarks and pheasants will benefit from the upland habitat provided. The riparian habitat will provide habitat for such species as yellow warblers, ash-throated flycatchers and Cooper's hawks. In the fall, thousands of migrating birds stop in the valley. Waterfowl such as the American widgeon, pintails and shorebirds, including dowitchers and sandpipers, will also benefit from this project. Special status species expected to benefit include the white faced ibis that are often seen foraging on site.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 40,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	12,234.00
Landowner	22,331.00
Pheasants Forever	10,000.00
Lassen SWAT	9,000.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	15,289.00
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service	12,608.00
Intermountain West Joint Venture	<u>46,438.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$167,900.00

Project costs will be for earthwork for swales, wetlands and ditches; a new concrete supply ditch; a well and pump; water control structures; treatment of perennial pepperweed; upland seeding; riparian planting; and project design, construction supervision and administration.

DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for twenty-five years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a Habitat Management Plan. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$40,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d),

Other; 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.

- \*14. Redwoods to the Sea, Mattole River (Upper Tract) \$5,000.00  
Property Exchange, Humboldt County

This proposal is to consider the approval of the transfer of Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant restrictions from properties originally purchased by the Save-the-Redwoods League (League) to adjacent target properties being acquired through exchange by the League. The target properties are located within the Mattole River watershed, east of the town of Honeydew, in Humboldt County.

In 2001, the WCB awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,552,000.00 to the League to assist with the purchase of 1,100± acres in the Redwoods to the Sea Corridor. In 2004, the WCB made another grant for \$217,500.00 to assist the League with the purchase of 1,000± acres.

The Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) prepared in support of the grant applications describes the ecological importance of the Corridor and scope of anticipated transactions. Over the past six years, through a series of transactions that were consistent with the CAPP, the WCB approved the transfer of various League holdings to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), subject to the grant terms. The property the League retained is now the subject of the planned exchange with a private landowner. Approximately 1,200± acres (the Exchange Parcels) of League holdings will be traded to the private landowner in return for an equal acreage of land referred to as the "Target Parcels". The Target Parcels were designated as high priorities for acquisition in the CAPP due to their location (they link and consolidate other BLM holdings) and due to their superior resource values (portions of the property contain large, old trees). Along with the land exchange, the landowners will grant a conservation easement to the League over the entire 4,000± acre ranch as it will exist after the exchange.

The League is requesting that the terms of the grant agreements be eliminated from the Exchange Parcels and transferred to the Target Parcels. They have submitted an appraisal of the Target Parcels and the Exchange Parcels. The Department of General Services (DGS) approved the values of the properties, ensuring that the Target Parcels have equal or greater value than the Exchange Parcels. The proposed project does not require an augmentation. Staff does, however, propose that the WCB approve an allocation, in the amount of \$5,000.00, for related project costs including appraisal review charges by the DGS.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership of an

interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommends the Board approve the project, as proposed; allocate \$5,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for administrative costs; 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.

15. Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration, \$390,000.00  
Santa Barbara County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Santa Barbara for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, State Coastal Conservancy, Department of Parks and Recreation, and the County of Santa Barbara to enhance and restore the Arroyo Burro Estuary and restore portions of Mesa Creek, a tributary to the estuary. The project is located in the City of Santa Barbara near the intersection of Cliff Drive and Las Positas Road, just east of the County of Santa Barbara's Arroyo Burro Beach Park.

The project site is situated on both city and county property and covers the eastern portions of the Arroyo Burro Estuary, a portion of the parking lot for the Arroyo Burro Beach Park and the City of Santa Barbara's Douglas Family Preserve Park. The site contains 1.2± acres of coastal estuarine, the lower section of Mesa Creek (flowing underground in a culvert), disturbed willow scrub and disturbed oak woodland habitat. There are two unique aspects to the project: 1) the project will expand an existing coastal wetland estuary area (that has been significantly reduced in size due to surrounding development), and 2) it will be one of the first creek "daylighting" projects in southern California ("daylighting" entails uncovering an enclosed creek and restoring it to an exposed open flowing stream).

The project proposal has been reviewed and recommended for funding by the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project (SCWRP), and is included in the current work-plan approved by the SCWRP Board of Governors. The SCWRP was developed in 1998 to implement a regional strategy to protect and restore coastal wetlands and adjoining uplands in the five southern California coastal counties (Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego). The need for the program grew out of the large population and development boom that occurred along the southern California coast in the 1950's, and has continued on through today. This growth has eliminated and degraded a majority of the coastal wetlands and watershed areas and has severely impacted species that rely on these habitats.

The six major goals of the SCWRP are:

1. Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems.
2. Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.
3. Recover native habitat and species diversity.
4. Integrate wetlands recovery with other public objectives.
5. Promote education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watershed.
6. Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in southern California.

The SCWRP consists of a broad-based partnership of 17 state and federal agencies working in concert with scientists, local governments, environmental organizations, business leaders and educators. Projects are normally developed and implemented at a local level, relying on County Task Force groups, led by local government officials, involving local conservation groups and participants. A science advisory panel, public advisory committee and managers group are also utilized in the development, selection and prioritization of projects that are eventually placed within a work-plan for approval by a governing board. Through the SCWRP, the State Coastal Conservancy has helped the City fund the design and permitting portions of the project so that the project is now ready for implementation.

The habitat at Arroyo Burro Estuary has been severely degraded over time due to surrounding development. Approximately 75% of the original estuary has been filled for construction of roads, housing and parking. A majority of the banks have been stabilized using riprap and are almost vertical with very little shallow estuary habitat remaining. The Cliff Drive Bridge located at the eastern end of the estuary is undersized, restricting flow and increasing erosion in the estuary. Three hundred feet of Mesa Creek has been buried and channelized in a concrete culvert and both the estuary and the Mesa Creek corridor are invaded by non-native species, such as *Arundo donax*. Water quality in the estuary and on Mesa Creek is also very poor, resulting in numerous ocean water contact warnings at Arroyo Burro Beach. Although the estuary is degraded, it still provides valuable habitat for birds and other wildlife including the federally endangered tidewater goby and rare wetland plant species.

The types of habitat to be restored by the project include coastal estuarine, riparian, oak woodland and coastal sage scrub. Coastal estuary and riparian habitat areas will be expanded by approximately 12,000 square feet, along with enhancement of 1.2 ± acres of adjoining habitat. Portions of the site are currently used as an open space park for passive recreation. This use will continue on portions of the project area after the project is completed. The following is a list of the major project components:

- Remove a 300-foot concrete culvert on Mesa Creek and construct 300 feet of new open creek channel on Mesa Creek (daylight).
- Stabilize the new creek banks using biotechnical bank stabilization

methods.

- Expand coastal estuarine habitat by 6,000 square feet.
- Remove exotic plants within the estuary and Mesa Creek corridor.
- Revegetate the site with over 5,000 native plants/trees.
- Modify an existing riprap grade control structure to enhance fish passage.
- Construct trails and install a footbridge over the newly constructed channel on Mesa Creek.

The wildlife and habitat benefits of the project include improved aquatic habitat for fish and amphibians, increased foraging and nesting habitat for birds and terrestrial species, increase in plant diversity, improved habitat linkages to upstream and adjoining habitat areas and improved fish passage up Arroyo Burro Creek. The project will also improve the hydrology of Mesa Creek and the estuary by reducing erosion and storm flow velocities and expanding storm flow capacity. These hydrology improvements will also help reduce pollutants within Mesa Creek, the estuary, and the immediate coastal waters. Trails and a footbridge over Mesa Creek, in addition to interpretive signage, will improve public access and provide opportunities for education concerning wetland and riparian habitats.

The Arroyo Burro Creek had at one time maintained a viable steelhead population. However, due to development and construction of fish passage barriers, the creek no longer supports steelhead. The hope is, once this project is complete in conjunction with other barrier removal projects planned for upstream areas, steelhead will return to the watershed. The Arroyo Burro Creek watershed, including its main tributary San Roque Creek was included in the Stoecker/Conception Coast Report, an assessment of southern California steelhead streams, and has been evaluated by the Department of Fish and Game and determined to provide suitable habitat for steelhead.

Success criteria have been established for the project based on native plant cover, weed coverage and erosion. After five years, the native plant cover should be a minimum of 80%, and weed cover can be no more than 15% of the restored site. The site should also have no visible erosion after five years. Native plant and weed coverage will be monitored using transects and photos. All results will be provided through yearly monitoring reports. Erosion will be monitored through visual inspection, photos and surveys, if necessary.

The City's Creeks Program is uniquely positioned to implement and maintain restoration and water quality projects because it has a guaranteed source of funding provided through hotel bed taxes. The five year Creeks Program budget includes \$30,000.00 per year for maintenance of the Arroyo Burro Estuary Restoration Project. Maintenance will be conducted by contractors and/or City personnel under the direction of the Creeks Restoration Planner. After the first five years, it is anticipated that maintenance costs will decrease significantly due to establishment of native plants and a reduction in weed infestations. All additional funding to maintain the restoration area, after the first five years, will be provided as needed by the Creeks Program.

The City of Santa Barbara Creeks Division has been developing the Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration Project using funds provided by the State Coastal Conservancy since early 2002. In order to prepare the project design, the Creeks Division has conducted extensive technical studies, convened a technical working group to review design options, and solicited neighborhood input during community meetings and site visits. The project has been extensively reviewed and approved by the Creeks Program Advisory Committee, City Park and Recreation Commission, County of Santa Barbara Parks Department and the State Coastal Conservancy. A total of ten public meetings were held to review the design and environmental issues associated with the project. The grant requires maintenance of the improvements for 25 years, and includes a payback provision if the project area is not maintained accordingly.

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (Mitigated Negative Declaration) was completed in April 2004 and a Notice of Determination was issued on May 13, 2004. All necessary local, state, and federal permits have been obtained for the project including a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission, a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the Department of Fish and Game, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit, a California Regional Water Quality Control Board 401 permit and a Caltrans Encroachment Permit. Project plans to 65% detail were completed in December 2004. The City intends to issue a contract for construction subsequent to approval by the Board. Project construction is scheduled to start in June of 2006 and completed by December of 2006.

The total implementation cost of the project is \$1,167,000.00. The funding breakdown from the different partners is as follows:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$ 25,000.00
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	120,000.00
Department of Parks and Recreation	200,000.00
County of Santa Barbara	13,000.00
City of Santa Barbara	419,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>390,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$1,167,000.00

Staff recommends the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$390,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 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.

16. Trabuco Creek Fish Passage Steelhead Restoration, \$1,199,000.00  
Orange County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Trout Unlimited, South Coast Chapter (TU) for a cooperative project with Caltrans, Orange County, the California Conservation Corps and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to modify the concrete channel that carries Trabuco Creek under Interstate 5 and Camino Capistrano Road in southern Orange County. This project will provide fish passage for steelhead to access several miles of high quality upstream spawning habitat. The project will be constructed on land that is owned by Caltrans and the County of Orange, and is located approximately one mile north of the City of San Juan Capistrano.

The existing concrete grade control structure was built in response to the 1969 flood. Prior to that time, steelhead were able to migrate upstream for spawning. The modifications proposed for this concrete channel would provide the first substantial fishway/ladder in Orange County. The San Juan Creek Watershed (which includes Trabuco Creek) is the most pristine of all the watersheds in Orange County. Allowing access to Trabuco Creek would open up 17 miles of excellent habitat and give steelhead another refuge for recovery between Topanga Creek in the Santa Monica Mountains and San Mateo Creek in San Diego County. The DFG has indicated that this fishway/ladder is the highest priority project in the highest priority watershed for steelhead recovery in southern California.

Trout Unlimited will modify the existing concrete channel that begins 200 feet upstream of the centerline of the I-5 Northbound Bridge and extends 230 feet downstream of the centerline of the Camino Capistrano Bridge. The modifications include saw cutting a low-flow channel into the existing concrete culvert, lining the low-flow channel with grouted boulders of varying size, and saw cutting the existing concrete apron and stilling basin to provide a low-flow channel and grouted boulder-lined step-pools.

Trout Unlimited and the DFG will monitor and assess the effectiveness of the improvements following a monitoring plan that evaluates pre-implementation, construction, and post-implementation conditions. It should be noted that at the time of Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant approval, the fish passage improvements are at a conceptual design level. Once final design is achieved, Trout Unlimited will provide that design to the WCB, and the project monitoring plan will be revised so that the increased project detail can be reflected in specific monitoring locations and associated monitoring activities.

The monitoring approach presented in this monitoring plan is drawn from methods found in the following DFG manuals:

- Qualitative Monitoring of Fisheries Habitat Restoration (March 2005a)
- Monitoring the Effectiveness of Culvert Fish Passage Restoration (March 2005b)
- Photographic Monitoring of Salmonid Habitat Restoration Projects (March 2005c)

Data to be collected as part of this monitoring plan includes photographs (both fixed point/permanent as well as "opportunistic" photos), qualitative descriptions/evaluations documented on checklists developed by the DFG, and minimal quantitative data at selected project locations. Monitoring periods include pre-implementation, during construction, and post-implementation.

Upon completion of the implementation phase, effectiveness monitoring will be used to document the structural and hydraulic adequacy of the improvements, provide information as to the usage by steelhead, and determine the ability of the improvements to provide fish passage as compared to the pre-implementation conditions.

When the fishway is constructed, TU will monitor the fishway for debris and remove debris as necessary. TU will work collaboratively with the WCB, the DFG, the County of Orange and Caltrans on all monitoring activities identified in the project's monitoring plan. The DFG has developed a series of qualitative and quantitative monitoring protocols to address and document the implementation and effectiveness of fish passage improvement projects. The DFG's monitoring plan for the proposed fishway on Trabuco Creek will consist of three elements: 1) pre-treatment project location and photo documentation; 2) implementation monitoring which documents, among other things, that the as-completed treatment was built to comply with the design; and 3) effectiveness monitoring which will determine whether, and for how long, the treatment provided up and downstream habitat connectivity for the targeted species. Pre-treatment monitoring will occur just prior to treatment construction, implementation monitoring will occur just prior to treatment completion, and effectiveness monitoring will occur after the first and second winter seasons. The DFG will share the monitoring information collected with the WCB and other project proponents.

The County of Orange (County) conducts annual maintenance of the flood control structure at Trabuco Creek so that the flood capacity of the channel is not compromised. The County will continue to maintain the channel and conduct annual maintenance after the Trabuco Creek Fishway is constructed.

Caltrans is responsible for managing the state's transportation structures. This includes performing bridge inspections in accordance with federal regulations, reviewing and approving encroachment permits, delivering plans, specifications and estimates for bridge maintenance on projects. Bridge maintenance includes work such as repairing damage or deterioration in ridge components; removing debris and drift from piers, abutments, etc.; cleaning out drains; repairing expansion joints; cleaning and painting structural steel; sealing concrete surfaces.

In order to proceed with the project, TU will need to obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans. This will occur once final design work is completed. As part of this process, Caltrans will enter into a Cooperative Agreement with TU upon submittal of final design plans to Caltrans in which specific management

and maintenance responsibilities, terms, and conditions will be identified.

This project was conceived in accordance with the Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California (DFG 1996), and fulfills the objectives of the San Juan Creek/Trabuco Creek Watershed Management Plan. The project proposal has also been reviewed and recommended for funding by the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project (SCWRP), and is included in the current work-plan approved by the SCWRP Board of Governors.

The total cost of the project is \$1,337,260.00. The breakdown of funding partners is as follows:

County of Orange	\$ 27,990.00
Department of Fish and Game	102,992.00
Trout Unlimited	6,892.00
California Conservation Corps	385.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>1,199,000.00</u>
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$1,337,260.00

Project costs will be for personnel services, site reconnaissance, agency coordination/permitting, design, bidding services, construction services, capital improvements (the actual construction), capital contingency, mobilization/demobilization, and legal and administrative costs.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The County of Orange will complete the appropriate notice to satisfy CEQA requirements. Under permits to be issued by Caltrans and Orange County, the grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the project improvements for ten years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,199,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 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.

17. Bluebird Preserve, Los Angeles County \$6,910,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Glendora for a project involving the proposed acquisition of 69± acres of privately-owned land lying in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in the northeasterly portion of the City. The City hopes to eventually acquire additional land to the north that

will link the subject property to the Glendora Wilderness Park and the Angeles National Forest to the north.

The purpose of the proposed acquisition is the protection of coastal sage scrub and oak woodland plant communities along with sensitive and endangered species potentially resident within this habitat. Sensitive plant species include a large identified area of the federally-listed thread-leaved brodiaea. Other Federal Species of Concern and/or California Native Plant Society List 1-B species identified or expected to occur on the site include Plummer's mariposa lily, San Gabriel bedstraw, Robinsons's pepper grass, intermediate mariposa lily, many stemmed live-forever, southern California black walnut, San Gabriel Mountains leather oak and pitcher sage.

The type of habitat being protected by this acquisition supports the federally-listed coastal California gnatcatcher and the State Species of Special Concern Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, cactus wren, yellow warbler, coastal rufous-crowned sparrow, coast horned lizard and mountain kingsnake. Mountain lions, black bears and ring-tailed cats have been observed on the property along with more common plants and animals.

It is proposed that the City of Glendora initially purchase and take title to the property. They plan to transfer title and management responsibilities, in the near future, to the Glendora Community Conservancy.

The property owner has agreed to sell the 69± acres to the City at the appraised, fair market value of \$6,900,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Staff proposes that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve a grant to the City, in the amount of \$6,900,000.00, to facilitate its acquisition of the subject property. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$6,910,000.00 for the proposed project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the City's escrow for the purchase of the property.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of ownership of an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the City of Glendora to assist with the acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; allocate

\$6,910,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a) for the grant amount and related project 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.

18. Duarte Hills, Los Angeles County \$4,010,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Duarte for a cooperative project to assist in the acquisition of 328± acres of real property for the protection of critical habitat for five sensitive natural terrestrial plant communities, seven plant species and six animal species. The property is located in the Duarte foothills and is bordered on the eastern and western boundaries by National Forest property.

There is very little open space remaining in the Duarte foothills. It is the City's long-term goal to create a trailhead system that connects to the National Forest trails. The subject parcel will allow for a diversity of public access opportunities while maintaining the preservation of natural resources.

A field survey of the site has indicated that five sensitive plant communities and a host of other plant and animal species can be found on the property. Animal species include the Santa Ana sucker, southwestern pond turtle, Nelson's bighorn sheep, Santa Ana speckled dace and Bell's vireo. A Cooper's hawk has been sighted on the subject property.

The property owner has agreed to sell the 328± acre property to the City of Duarte at the appraised fair market value of "at least" \$7,500,000.00, an amount approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve the proposed grant to the City, in the amount of \$4,000,000.00, to assist in the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for administrative costs, including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$4,010,000.00 for the project. The remaining funds for the City's purchase will come from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that the WCB staff will review all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of land for fish

and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of ownership of an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommends the Board approve a grant to the City of Duarte Hills to assist with the acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$4,010,000.00 from Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a) for the grant amount and associated costs; 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.

19. Las Flores Creek Stream Restoration, Los Angeles County \$600,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Malibu for a cooperative project with the Department of Water Resources and the Resources Agency to restore a functioning stream channel and associated fish and wildlife habitat along approximately 2,400 feet of Las Flores Creek, upstream of the Pacific Coast Highway on private and public land within the City of Malibu in Los Angeles County.

This project seeks to implement the City of Malibu's Las Flores Creek Restoration Plan to stabilize and restore approximately 2,400 linear feet of creek banks and riparian habitat along the southern extent of Las Flores Creek. The current conditions in the subject reach of Las Flores Creek include narrow channelization of the creek bed with limited natural vegetation in many reaches and ineffective natural and man-made in-stream features. Wildlife Conservation Board funds are requested to restore approximately 1,200 feet of creek habitat identified as Reaches 1, 3 and 5. Reach 5 is located just upstream of a small emergent wetland and coastal pool/lagoon. Project specifics include exotic plant removal, replanting of native plant species, bank stabilization, slope regrading, improved flow conveyance and capacity and creation of habitat for steelhead trout and other aquatic species.

The Las Flores Canyon watershed is a 4.15 square miles, 2,646± acre coastal watershed of Santa Monica Bay located on the southeastern flank of the Santa Monica Mountains. The total restoration area is approximately 3.4 acres of the 4.6 acre City park site. The restoration plan was developed using baseline analysis which included field observations, geomorphic assessment, biological resources inventory, hydrology and hydraulic assessment, and geologic and geotechnical analysis. The findings from the baseline analysis include:

- The Las Flores Canyon watershed contains a mixture of land uses including urban development and large areas of important native habitat protected by public ownership. The land adjacent to the creek includes a mix of single and multi-family residences, small businesses, private parkland, and City roadways.

- The undeveloped portions of the canyon include riparian woodland and associated stream habitat that support sycamore, alder, bay, oak and associated sensitive under-story species. The surrounding undeveloped slopes support a mixture of other major vegetation types including northern mixed chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and annual grassland. *Arundo donax* exists in relatively small amounts at the project site and is confirmed in two small clusters in the upper watershed.
- Wildlife requiring undisturbed remote brush areas frequents the canyon, as does sensitive riparian wildlife. Native species local to the surrounding area include Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), Southern California steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*), California horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum frontale*), coastal western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), San Bernardino ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*), San Diego mountain kingsnake (*Lampropeltis zonata pulchra*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*), and the southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*). The Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for all five reaches is available upon request.
- The lower part of the creek is subject to flooding due to encroachment into the stream channel by the Rambla Pacifico slide on the western canyon slope; previous construction of flood diversion structures on the eastern bank; and the continued presence of roads and structures in the floodplain. The existing revetments, while providing temporary flood control protection, encroach significantly into the creek and consequently have altered the natural drainage patterns and damaged riparian habitat. These structures contribute to the instability of the creek, and increase the potential for stream bank erosion and sediment deposition into the emergent wetland and Santa Monica Bay. The destabilization of creek banks also increases the movement of woody debris and boulders affecting the wetland function at the creek mouth.
- Creek pools range from 6 inches to 2 feet with a deeper pool present at the mouth of Las Flores Creek. Adjacent to this pool is dense emergent wetland vegetation, present just downstream of the Pacific Coast Highway Bridge over-crossing. The restoration of channel and floodplain continuity will reduce sedimentation, protect this mix of riffle, runs and pools and increase natural upland riparian habitat beneficial to the adjacent wetland ecosystem.

In the recent Santa Monica Mountains Steelhead Habitat Assessment, David Pritchett, program director of the Southern California Steelhead Coalition, found that Las Flores Creek "shows overall good steelhead habitat" and is "well suited to in-stream enhancements for steelhead habitat restoration."

Mr. Pritchett, Camm Swift, Ph.D., Maurico Cardenas and Mary Larson of

Department of Fish and Game, and Meredith Hardy of California Conservation Corps agree that “there are no structural barriers to passage before reaching suitable pools, resting and spawning areas several miles upstream”, but in the present condition, the lower reach does not provide adequate habitat. The creek could be an ideal refuge for steelhead trout given additional rock and log habitat features for pool creation and resting, native plantings to increase habitat and improve temperature regulation, and well-stabilized streambanks to provide protection from sediment overloading.

The City of Malibu has been awarded an additional \$280,000.00 grant from the 2005 Urban Streams Restoration Program to complete the restoration of Reach 2. The project proposal has been reviewed and recommended for funding by the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project (SCWRP) and is included in the current work-plan approved by the SCWRP Board of Governors. The City has also applied for grant funding for restoration of Reach 4 through the Resources Agency’s River Parkways grant program.

The overriding goal of this project is to restore ecological function to Las Flores Creek, resulting in improved channel stability, protection of the emergent wetland downstream and increased potential habitat for steelhead trout and other native species. Proposed restoration activities include:

- Grade flood plain/terrace.
- Install rock vanes/deflectors for improved in-stream habitat and channel stability. In-stream habitat features will expand the number of current pools available to steelhead trout and create larger pools. Improved passage, resting pools and escape cover will also provide for movement of steelhead to larger upstream spawning pools.
- Install biotechnical bank stabilization (vegetated soil lifts, vegetated rock revetment, etc.) to protect against sediment loading and landslides, which are deleterious to native aquatic species as well as the downstream emergent wetland.
- Remove and manage invasive exotic plant species including a small cluster of arundo.
- Preserve and expand native tree canopy to improve in-stream and riparian habitat.
- Revegetate with native species (coastal scrub, riparian, sycamore woodland) to restore cover, vegetative structure and increase native diversity. Revegetation will result in increased physical steelhead habitat as well as improved water temperature regulation.

The total cost of the project is \$3,110,000.00. The breakdown of funding

partners is shown below:

City of Malibu	\$1,075,000.00
Department of Water Resources	835,000.00
Resources Agency	600,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>600,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$3,110,000.00

Project costs will be for hydrologic analysis, designs, permits, planning, construction (includes removal of nonnative invasive plants and revegetation with native plants), mobilization and demobilization, temporary water diversion, contingency, administration and inspection, geology/materials compaction testing, and construction surveying.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The grantee will complete the appropriate notice to satisfy CEQA requirements. The City of Malibu owns most of the land where the project will be conducted, and has negotiated individual agreements with the private landowners whose property is involved. The City of Malibu has agreed to manage and maintain the property for twenty-five years pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$600,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 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.

20. Malibu Lagoon, Los Angeles County \$2,010,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) to assist in the cooperative purchase of a 20.03± acre property with the City of Malibu, State Coastal Conservancy, Santa Monica College, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Committee, State Water Resources Control Board, Los Angeles County, Malibu Civic Center Landowners, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and others for the protection, enhancement and possible restoration of a coastal wetland/lagoon complex and riparian habitat in close proximity to Malibu Creek, Malibu Lagoon sub-watershed and Surfrider Beach in Los Angeles County.

The subject property is owned by Malibu Bay Company, a Nevada Corporation, and was once part of an extensive seasonally open coastal lagoon system known

as the Malibu Lagoon. The adjacent Surfrider Beach is recognized as one of the most polluted beaches in Southern California. The primary purpose for the acquisition of this property by the City of Malibu is to clean up the contamination of the lagoon complex by filtering stormwater and treated wastewater into a managed wetland. The proposed acquisition project will benefit species dependent upon wetlands, and should substantially reduce contamination in the lagoon, benefiting ocean and riverine species.

The site is located in the Civic Center area of the City of Malibu within the Coastal Zone. Approximately 3.14 acres of the property is occupied by 34,749 square feet of commercial development (with associated asphalt parking lots) on three sites contiguous to the Pacific Coast Highway, all of which will remain in operation upon acquisition by the City. The remaining 16.89± acres of vacant space will be used for several project purposes: retention and treatment of stormwater, dispersal of Title 22 tertiary treated wastewater, creation of riparian habitat and passive recreation.

Malibu Lagoon is renowned for its diverse and abundant bird life, and is considered a critical habitat along the Pacific Flyway that hosts more than 200 bird species. Northern harrier may nest and forage at the freshwater marsh nearby, and great blue heron have also been observed. Malibu Creek and Lagoon both provide habitat for special status birds and fish species. Special status birds that may occur at Malibu Lagoon State Beach include western snowy plover, light-footed clapper rail and California least tern. Species that are known or have the potential to occur include Cooper's hawk, southern steelhead and tidewater goby. Other native fish species using Malibu Lagoon include California killifish, topsmelt, arrow goby, staghorn sculpin, diamond turbot, longjaw mudsucker and opaleye.

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) has determined that elevated bacterial indicator densities are causing significant contamination at Malibu Lagoon and Surfrider Beach. Fecal coliform bacteria may be introduced from a variety of sources including stormwater runoff, dry-weather runoff, onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS - commonly referred to as septic systems), and bird and animal wastes. OWTS have been identified as the major contaminant source within the watershed. Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors estimates 1,500,000 - 2,000,000 annual users are affected along the 1.19 miles from Surfrider Beach to Malibu Pier. In 2004, Surfrider Beach was closed or posted with contamination advisories for a total of 137 days. Development along Malibu Creek has significantly reduced riparian habitat and some of the commercial and residential OWTS are contributing bacteria and nutrients to the impaired water bodies. Urban run-off carried to Malibu Creek and Malibu Lagoon contains an entire host of contaminants from the real property development environment and roadways into an unnaturally constrained system without any pretreatment.

The City plans to create a park on the site that will allow stormwater retention and dispersal of highly treated water from a wastewater treatment facility to be

located on a nearby property in the Civic Center area. The retention basin and re-contouring and removal of imported soil on the site will also significantly reduce potential flood impacts by increasing the water storage capacity in any storm event. The acquisition will also reduce potential commercial development by up to 106,000 square feet in the Civic Center area, providing a passive park with walking trails on the site.

The Malibu Bay Company has agreed to sell the property at a price of \$25,000,000.00. The WCB's proposed grant to the SMMC, in the amount of \$2,000,000.00, will provide a portion of the necessary funding for the purchase of the property. The proposed grant language includes a provision that allows the City of Malibu to lease or grant a leasehold or security interest in the subject property in connection with the execution and delivery of certificates of participation or lease revenue bonds. This is a necessary component of the project in order for the City to complete the proposed funding. The WCB staff believes the deed restriction that limits the use of the vacant space portion of the property, as described above, sufficiently assures that the conditions of the grant shall not be violated, and that it protects the interest of the State of California.

WCB's funding of the grant to the escrow holder to complete the purchase is contingent upon:

- Approval of the fair market value of the property by the Department of General Services (DGS) that it is "at least" \$25,000,000.00. (Note: at the time of agenda printing, the appraisal was still under review.);
- Conveyance of the property to the City of Malibu on or before December 29, 2005; and
- The City of Malibu's successful raising of additional approved and/or requested funds from the following sources:
  - Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
  - State Coastal Conservancy
  - Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission
  - State Water Resources Control Board
  - Santa Monica City College/City of Malibu Joint Powers Authority
  - City of Malibu
  - Los Angeles County
  - Malibu Civic Center landowners

It is anticipated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses, including DGS's appraisal review costs, resulting in the total proposed allocation by the WCB for this project of \$2,010,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the WCB's proposed grant agreement provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all documents pertaining to the acquisition including any appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for

purchase and sale, escrow instructions, instruments of conveyance and verification of funding sources as indicated above, prior to authorizing the disbursement of funds directly to the escrow holder for the purchase of the property.

There are no claims of sovereign State land ownership on the subject property. The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as a transfer of ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. The City of Malibu filed a Notice of Exemption with the County of Los Angeles on July 6, 2005. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve a grant to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to assist in the acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; allocate a total of \$2,010,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a) for the grant amount and related expenses; authorize staff to enter appropriate agreements as necessary to carry out this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

21. Solstice Creek Steelhead Barrier Removal, Los Angeles County      \$200,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the National Park Service (NPS) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) to remove four barriers to steelhead migration on Solstice Creek in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area located in the City of Malibu in Los Angeles County.

The proposed project is located in the 550± acre Solstice Canyon unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area which is owned and managed by the National Park Service. Solstice Creek flows through Solstice Canyon to the Pacific Ocean with a low-flow channel of approximately 10 feet in width. It drains an approximately 4.4 square mile watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains which remains relatively undeveloped except for a small number of NPS facilities and is dominated by chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitats. The creek is lined with a healthy stand of riparian woodland habitat consisting of mostly white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), California laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) and arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Common understory species along the creek include coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*), mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).

Solstice Creek is known to have historically supported steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The National Marine Fisheries Service has recently evaluated the steelhead habitat value in Solstice Creek and has determined that

there are approximately 1.8 miles of suitable habitat for steelhead between the ocean mouth and a natural barrier (waterfall) to steelhead movement 1.8 miles upstream. There are several man-made barriers including culverts, check dams and Arizona crossings between the mouth and the waterfall which prevent steelhead from utilizing the habitat in Solstice Creek. This project will remove four of these barriers. All of the other barriers either have already been removed or are scheduled for removal in the next year.

The Southern California Evolutionarily Significant Unit of steelhead has been listed by the federal government as endangered and by the State as a Species of Special Concern. One of the major contributors to the decline of this species has been loss of quality habitat for spawning and rearing. Once all of the barriers on the creek are removed, approximately 1.8 miles of freshwater habitat will become available and will presumably contribute to the eventual recovery of the species. Nearly all of this habitat falls on NPS property with the exception of a short privately-owned section of creek between Corral Canyon Road and the mouth at the Pacific Coast Highway.

This project will completely demolish and remove three stone and concrete check dams and one concrete Arizona crossing on Solstice Creek using a crane with wrecking ball, hoe-ram, and loader. The tops of the dams range in height from 3 feet to 9 feet above the water surface below. Approximately 10,000 cubic feet of demolished materials will be hauled to an appropriate offsite landfill. During construction the creek will be dewatered using electric pumps. Most of the sediment behind the structures will be flushed downstream by natural processes following removal, thus restoring a more natural stream gradient through the stream reaches. Where necessary, some sediment will be removed manually to diminish downstream sedimentation. A minimum amount of sediment will be removed because this material contains spawning gravels which will provide breeding habitat for steelhead once the finer material has flushed out of the system. Some creek side slopes will be regraded to a slightly flatter, more natural angle of repose with a small bulldozer and all disturbed areas will be revegetated with locally collected native vegetation. The Arizona crossing, which was originally constructed in the late 1940's and was rebuilt by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in 1988, will be replaced with a 40 foot-long, 22 foot-wide clear-span railroad flatcar bridge. The bridge will provide access to the NPS's Keller House which functions as a NPS employee residence.

The total project cost is \$500,250.00. The funding breakdown is as follows:

State Coastal Conservancy	\$200,000.00
National Park Service	100,250.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>200,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$500,250.00

Wildlife Conservation Board funded project items will be entirely related to the bridge replacing the Arizona crossing. This will include fabrication and installation of the bridge, bridge abutments and wingwalls, bank stabilization at

bridge abutments, pumping costs for dewatering the site, and filling and grading of the bridge approaches. NPS and SCC funds will go towards demolition of the dams and the Arizona crossing, transportation and disposal of demolished materials, and restoration and re-grading of impacted areas. NPS will cost share with WCB on bank stabilization at the bridge abutments.

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and supports the proposed improvements. The project has also been reviewed and approved by the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project (SCWRP), and is included in the current work-plan approved by the SCWRP Board of Governors. The Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District has completed an Initial Study for the project and filed a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. NPS will obtain the necessary permits, administer the construction contracts, and operate and maintain and monitor the project for 25 years.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$200,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a); authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

22. Rancho La Purisima, Santa Barbara County \$1,285,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (Land Trust) for a cooperative project with the County of Santa Barbara and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to acquire a conservation easement over 1,007± acres which was once part of the historic Rancho San Carlos de Jonata. The property, also referred to as the Rancho La Purisima, is located near the City of Buellton at the eastern end of the Purisima Hills in central Santa Barbara County. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to protect the rangeland and the wildlife habitat condition on the property, together with the continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits that occur from livestock grazing use. The subject property also provides important viewshed along State Highway 101.

The California Legislature, in September 2002, passed the Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Act and identified the WCB as the responsible entity to implement the protection program. The purpose of the program is to protect California's rangeland, grazing land and grasslands through the use of conservation easements. To implement the program, procedures were developed for accepting applications and evaluation of proposals which measure the project's contribution toward the purposes of the program. A number of projects have been approved and thousands of acres have been protected to date.

The Ranch is located in rural Santa Barbara County, approximately three miles north of the City of Buellton. Located approximately 50 miles northwest of Santa Barbara, the project area is part of the important scenic viewshed for travelers on State Highway 101 through the coastal range of California. East of the highway, grazing land and oak savanna on private ranches extend to the U. C. Natural Reserve Systems "Sedgwick Reserve" and the Los Padres National Forest/San Rafael Wilderness. West of the highway, there are large private ranch holdings as well as Gaviota State Park, La Purisima Mission State Historic Park and Vandenberg Air Force Base.

The Ranch is comprised of a variety of habitat types, including annual grasslands, oak woodland savanna and coastal sage scrub. There are small pockets of riparian scrub and wetlands that occur on two ephemeral drainages that flow to Zaca Creek, to the southeast of the property. The Ranch is also part of an important regional corridor for large mammals that links through the Purisima Hills from the San Rafael Mountains to the east to the Santa Ynez Mountains and coastal plains to the west.

The predominant oak woodland species is interior live oak with some valley oak in the southern reaches and lower elevations of the Ranch. The property has no named creeks, but the entire property is contained within the Zaca Creek watershed which flows to the south southwest and eventually drains into the Santa Ynez River near Buellton. The diversity of oak woodlands, coupled with the chaparral, grasslands and creeks, serves as important habitat for a variety of raptor species, including the northern harrier, red-tailed hawk, red shouldered hawk, American kestrel, sharp shinned hawk, great horned owl, Cooper's hawk and the common barn owl. Woodlands surround the grasslands and are important for raptors, because the birds can use the large trees as "hawking" sites to observe the activities of prey within nearby grassland habitats. A number of mammals have been seen on or near the Ranch including California ground squirrel, Botta's pocket gopher, western harvest mouse, coyote, long tailed weasel, badger, rabbit, fox, bobcat, deer and feral pigs. There are a number of amphibians and reptile species expected to occur in the woodlands and grasslands including the Pacific tree frog, black belly slender salamander, western skink, western fence lizard, southern alligator lizard, common kingsnake, western rattlesnake and the gopher snake.

The property owners have agreed to sell a conservation easement covering the 1,007± acres to the Land Trust at the appraised value of \$1,480,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Staff proposes that the WCB approve a grant to assist the Land Trust with the proposed purchase, in the amount of \$1,277,273.00. It is anticipated that an additional \$7,727.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$1,285,000.00 for this project. It is anticipated that the remainder of the funding for the project will be provided by private donors and the County of Santa Barbara.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff will

review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow for the Land Trust.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from CEQA requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of ownership or interest in land to preserve open space, habitat or historical resources. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$1,285,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f) for the grant amount and related project 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.

23. Gabilan Ranch, Monterey and San Benito Counties \$2,005,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for a cooperative project to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over 11,190± acres of land located approximately 11 miles southwest of San Juan Bautista and 45 miles from San Jose in northern Monterey County and southern San Benito County. The property, known as Gabilan Ranch, is adjacent to Fremont Peak State Park to the west and Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area to the northwest. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to protect rangeland and wildlife habitat conditions of the property, together with the continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits that occur from livestock grazing.

The California Legislature, in September 2002, passed the Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Act and identified the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) as the responsible entity to implement the protection program. The purpose of the program is to protect California's rangeland, grazing land and grasslands through the use of conservation easements. To implement the program, procedures were developed for accepting applications and evaluating proposals which measure the project's contribution toward achieving the purposes of the program. At its February 19, 2004 meeting, the WCB approved the first project proposed under the program. The project consisted of a conservation easement over a 6,983± acre portion of a 7,463± acre property known locally as the Yolo Land and Cattle Ranch. Since then the WCB has approved three additional projects and has protected a total of 8,905± acres of land under this program.

The Gabilan Ranch has been in continuous, profitable cattle production for over 200 years. Approximately 6,900 acres provide high quality cattle range while supporting blue and valley oak savanna and other valuable wildlife habitat. This rangeland supports a year-round cow-calf beef cattle operation. The remaining acreage includes extensive riparian habitat, mixed oak forest, the northernmost stands of Coulter pine in California, and a mosaic of maritime chaparral and coastal scrub, including the only known occurrence of a newly identified species of manzanita.

The landowners have incorporated methods of holistic, sustainable range management into their business plan, and manage the ranch for wildlife values as well as cattle production. In addition, the family has worked with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the Partners for Wildlife Program, to voluntarily fence off riparian areas along Gabilan Creek as part of a model steelhead trout recovery project. The family is supporting an in-stream monitoring effort for the Salinas River headwaters by the Watershed Institute of Cal State University Monterey Bay, and is cooperating with the federal Forest Stewardship Program to conduct research on forest conservation on the property. The family also supported reintroduction of a herd of tule elk in 1983 by the DFG. This herd utilizes the property as part of its range.

The conservation easement has an appraised, fair market value of \$5,040,000.00, a value approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The owners have agreed to sell the conservation easement for \$4,200,000.000, thereby making a donation in the amount of \$840,000.00. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be necessary for administrative costs including review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$2,005,000.00 for the proposed project. TNC will secure the remaining funds necessary to complete this project.

The terms and conditions of the grant provide that staff will review all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instruments of conveyance prior to the disbursement of funds.

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of ownership or an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommends that the Board approve a grant to The Nature Conservancy to assist in the acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$2,005,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f) for the grant and related project costs; 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.

24. Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 5, \$500,000.00  
Santa Cruz County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW) to assist in the acquisition of 6± acres as an expansion of the Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve in the City of Watsonville. This acquisition will protect and preserve critical habitat known to contain a colony of endangered Santa Cruz tarplant. The property is located in the City of Watsonville along the Ohlone Parkway.

The property contains the endangered Santa Cruz tarplant. This species was once thought to be extinct but was rediscovered in the early 1970's. Of the 45 colonies eventually found, all but a dozen or so have been completely removed or destroyed. Of the remaining colonies, only two are considered stable; the rest are declining. The plant is listed as State endangered and federally threatened.

The property is also one of the few locations in the Watsonville Slough that supports native grassland as well as providing an amphibian migration corridor. This critical habitat also supports the California red-legged frog and the burrowing owl. Other species likely to be found on the property are marsh harriers, short-eared owls, white-tailed kites, peregrine falcon, golden eagle and nesting cinnamon teal.

The WWW will hold title to the property and manage it in accordance with the management plan currently under development for the Watsonville Slough Ecological Reserve. The draft management plan calls for WWW to continue to perform restoration, management and monitoring at the reserve. WWW has a full-time restoration coordinator and part-time assistant on staff, with funding committed for the next two years and several grants pending to extend the position through 2008.

The property owner has agreed to sell the property at the appraised, fair market value of \$475,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Staff proposes that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve a grant to assist the WWW with the proposed purchase, in the amount of \$475,000.00. It is estimated that an additional \$25,000.00 will be needed for administrative costs including review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$500,000.00 for the project.

The terms and conditions of the grant provide that staff will review all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of ownership or an interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse upon approval by the WCB.

Staff recommends the Board approve a grant to the Watsonville Wetlands Watch to assist in acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$500,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c) for the grant and related costs; 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.

25. San Joaquin River Parkway, Habitat Restoration and Public Access, Jensen River Ranch, Phase I, Fresno County \$2,118,226.00

This proposal is to consider an interagency agreement with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to implement an ongoing cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to begin infrastructure construction at the SJRC-owned, 167± acre Jensen River Ranch property, approximately one half mile upstream of the Highway 41 bridge in Fresno County.

The project will include preparing bid specifications and securing contractors, excavating artificial oxbows, constructing a pipeline tie-in to a storm drain to deliver water via gravity to the oxbows, installing a riparian pump and an irrigation system to bring water to future restored grassland and woodland areas, providing fencing for managed grazing and to discourage public intrusion into restored areas, and performing project management and environmental compliance oversight.

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. 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 San Joaquin River Parkway. Other public access/habitat restoration projects similar to the one currently proposed that have been completed within the Parkway include the Wildwood Native Park and Camp Pashayan projects.

The SJRC's 167± acre Jensen River Ranch was acquired with the help of a WCB grant in 1997. It is predominantly irrigated pasture with a narrow belt of riparian woodland along a 0.5 mile-long stretch of river frontage. Phase I consists of work by the DWR south of the D/K storm water channel which roughly divides the property into north and south halves. Implementation of this project will include:

- Site preparation, including clearing and grubbing; demolishing a concrete barn slab foundation, shed, and flood irrigation system of below-ground pipelines and properly disposing the wastes; and grading the swale enhancement, trail slopes, ripping planting areas, and other earthwork necessary to prepare the site.
- Installation of an irrigation system, fed by a new riparian pump (the land has a riparian holding contract and has been irrigated with river water for many years).
- Diversion of nuisance flows in the storm drainage system into excavated “oxbow” wetlands. The project requires close coordination with the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District to tie into a storm drainage pipeline above the bluff and bring the water source via gravity through control valves to the oxbows. The water will be returned to the storm water treatment channel on the site via outfall culverts beneath the MacMichael Trail. The created wetlands will be designed to minimize mosquito nuisances, and allow for routine maintenance to abate mosquitoes and remove stormwater-borne sediments.
- Installation of split-rail fencing around trails throughout the site and barbed wire fencing around planting cells to discourage public intrusion into restored habitat, and facilitate long-term prescribed grazing for weed control and fire suppression.

The Conservancy, as the landowner, will be responsible for managing the property after the project is complete. For all of its properties, the Conservancy 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 total cost of Phase I is \$2,118,100.00 with the WCB funding the entire amount. In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$126.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the project to \$2,118,226.00.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been adopted by SJRC for the Jensen River Ranch Habitat Enhancement and Public Access Plan. In April 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a letter of concurrence that the project would not adversely affect critical habitat for the endangered Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the project as proposed; allocate \$2,118,226.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (b)(5) for project

costs and Department of General Services' review costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

26. Shaver Lake Boat Ramp Augmentation, Fresno County \$500,000.00

This proposal is to augment an existing cooperative project with the County of Fresno (County) and the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) to improve angling access at the Shaver Lake boat ramp on the north shore of Shaver Lake located about 45 miles northeast of the City of Fresno in Fresno County.

Shaver Lake is located in the Sierra National Forest and has a surface area of approximately 2,176 acres with 13 miles of shoreline. It was created in the early 1900's when Southern California Edison Company (SCE) built a dam on Stevenson Creek. The lake boasts two public boat ramps, one at Camp Edison on the southeastern side of the lake and this one on the north shore. The north shore ramp was constructed in 1966 and is operated by the County through agreement with SCE, the landowner. The facility basically consists of a two-lane boat ramp, a marina, a parking area and a vault restroom. It is accessed via a narrow paved road from State Highway 168 northeast of the Stevenson Creek Dam. The County does not charge a fee for parking or launching.

Shaver Lake is a very popular destination for local anglers as well as anglers from all over Fresno County and the State. At around 5,300 feet in elevation, the lake is located in a bucolic Sierra Nevada mountain setting, surrounded by pine trees and granite. While the lake can give those who visit a feeling of wildness and solitude, amenities, necessities and supplies are readily available in the nearby town of Shaver Lake. The Department of Fish and Game stocks the lake annually with kokanee and rainbow trout. The lake also supports a healthy small-mouth bass fishery.

The lake has become such a popular angling spot that during peak periods the 100 space parking lot at the north shore ramp fills to capacity and vehicles are regularly forced to park on the shoulder of Highway 168. The existing ramp and narrow access road can become backlogged with people waiting to launch their boats. The existing vault restroom is almost 40 years old and is not located in particularly close proximity to the boat ramp. In fact, the County has placed two portable restrooms near the ramp to supplement the capacity of the existing restroom.

Improvement of the launching facility on the north shore of Shaver Lake will relieve congestion and improve access, safety and overall user experience. Proposed improvements include construction of another two-lane ramp and turn-around area adjacent to the existing ramp, construction of a new parking area to accommodate fifty vehicles with trailers and twenty single vehicles, widening the access road to safely accommodate two lanes of traffic, and installation of a two-

unit vault restroom near the boat ramp.

Cost estimates for this project have risen dramatically since the original Board allocation in February 2005, for \$128,000.00. At that time the County estimated their grant from the DBW to be \$128,000.00 short of the amount needed to complete the project. Since that time, the project has been put out to bid, with bids coming in much higher than originally estimated. The total cost for this construction project is now estimated to be \$1,288,000.00. The DBW grant remains at \$660,000.00 and, with approval of this augmentation, the WCB contribution will increase from \$128,000.00 to \$628,000.00. Project costs will be for mobilization, earthwork, bank stabilization, drainage, concrete launch ramp, pavement, signage, striping, relocation of trash enclosure, electrical, water, erosion control, and the restroom.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has already approved a Sport Fish Restoration Act grant for reimbursement of up to 75% of the costs for the project. Staff will be submitting an amendment to the grant to include a reimbursement of 75% of the additional WCB costs.

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and supports the proposed improvements. The County of Fresno has completed an Initial Study for the project and filed a Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. The County will administer the construction contracts for the project and has agreed to operate and maintain the facilities for 25 years.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$500,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize the receipt of federal reimbursements from the USFWS; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

27. Fine Gold Creek, Madera County \$640,740.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to assist in the acquisition of 220± acres of privately-owned land located on the eastern slope of Hulbert Mountain, near Millerton Lake, in Madera County. The TPL proposes to subsequently transfer the subject property to the Sierra Foothill Conservancy (Conservancy) and to grant a conservation easement in favor of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for the protection and preservation of a valuable watershed as well as many special status species.

The property is located 20± miles northwest of Fresno and approximately one mile north of Millerton Lake in the Central Valley of California. Protected lands held by the Conservancy border to the south and east of the site.

The primary purpose of the proposed acquisition is to protect the San Joaquin River watershed including key tributaries such as Fine Gold Creek and Willow Creek, to preserve sensitive plant and wildlife species of the Central Valley Floor and Sierra Nevada Foothills and to maintain existing wildlife corridors. Specifically, the project is intended to preserve and enhance blue oak woodland, blue oak-foothill pine, valley foothill riparian and annual grassland habitats that provide essential breeding, migrating, wintering, roosting or foraging opportunities for a diverse abundance of species of fish, wildlife and plants. Such special status species include the vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, bald eagle, foothill yellow-legged frog and succulent owl's clover.

The TPL proposes to subsequently transfer fee title to the property to the Conservancy, subject to a conservation easement in favor of the DFG. This conservation easement is a condition of grant funding and will ensure cooperative management of the property in perpetuity. At the same time, the TPL proposes to transfer title to its 495± acres recently acquired adjacent to the subject property to the Conservancy, subject to a conservation easement in favor of the DFG. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company, as partial satisfaction of its obligations set forth in the "Pacific Gas and Electric Company Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle Conservation Program" and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion issued on June 27, 2003, will provide a \$270,000.00± endowment to the Conservancy for management of both the subject acquisition property and the adjacent 495± acres.

The property owner has agreed to sell the 220± acres to the TPL at the appraised, fair market value of \$635,740.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$640,740.00 for this proposed project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff will review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the TPL's escrow for the purchase of the property.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the Trust for Public Land to assist with the acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; authorize acceptance of a conservation easement as a condition of grant funding; allocate

\$640,740.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (a) for the grant amount and related project 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.

28. Wetland Habitat Restoration, Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, Augmentation, Alameda County \$1,300,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to augment an existing partnership project to restore approximately 570 acres of tidal wetlands and enhance approximately 126 acres of salt pan and 95 acres seasonal wetlands. The partners in this proposal include the EBRPD, the California Wildlife Foundation, Cargill, Inc., the Cities of San Jose, Fremont, and Milpitas (Cities), the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through their National Coastal Wetland Conservation Act (NCWCA) grant program and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). The project is located on the DFG's Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, which lies on the eastern shore of the San Francisco Bay in the City of Hayward in Alameda County.

This 835± acre property was acquired by the WCB from Cargill in 1996 with the expressed purpose of restoring wetland habitats. Also at that time, WCB and the Cities appropriated funds to begin the process of converting two thirds of the salt evaporation ponds to tidal marsh, and enhancing existing salt pans and seasonal wetlands on the remaining portions. In 2003 the WCB appropriated additional funds to continue the restoration activities begun five years before.

Over the years, the EBRPD and the DFG have worked closely to evaluate each step of this complicated restoration project, to determine which processes work the best, and to assess the DFG's operational needs. This has led to numerous changes in the scope of each project phase, often with an associated increase in cost. These changes have included design changes to the bridge to provide for pedestrian and bicycle access and a change in location of the large water control structures. The wet and unstable nature of the existing bay soils has resulted in additional soils engineering and modified construction methods. And finally, due to the fact that this complicated project has taken years to complete, the costs for concrete, steel, water control structures, treated lumber and, especially, fuel have all gone up significantly in the last two years.

Even so, the original restoration plan, developed early in the process, remains essentially unchanged, and most of it is complete. The two main tidal channels have been constructed; secondary and tertiary channels are complete, and most of the water control structures are in place. One of the three planned breaches has been completed, providing tidal action to the lower portions of North Creek. Remaining tasks include the replacement and installation of large structures on Pond 10, the strengthening of the new levee on the north side of Mt. Eden Creek, the removal of the old Pond 10 levee, the final two breaches to provide full tidal

restoration and placement of gravel on DFG access roads.

Once these improvements are completed, the site will provide a variety of habitats that benefit a number of different species. Tidal marshes provide habitat for three listed animals: the California clapper rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse, both federally and state listed endangered species, and the state listed threatened black rail. In addition, tidal marshes provide nursery habitat for many species of fish living in the Bay, and the adjacent mudflats provide a rich source of invertebrates for thousands of shorebirds. The salt pans that will be enhanced and maintained on site are one of the most important nesting sites in California for the western snowy plover, a federally listed threatened species. The seasonal wetlands are invaluable in winter for migrating waterfowl, such as the northern shoveler, and provide critical refuge to shorebirds during high tides when the mudflats are inundated. All in all, this is the most biologically significant restoration to date in the Bay Area, benefiting literally hundreds of species of animals.

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board (proposed)	\$1,300,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board (previous)	3,463,601.00
Cities of San Jose, Milpitas and Fremont	649,191.00
Cargill, Inc. (in-kind)	140,000.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Act grant)	<u>495,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$6,047,792.00

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Act grant of \$495,000 was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and has been received. Project costs will be for site preparation; earthmoving; water control structures; riprap; three breaches; the graveling of roads; and project design, construction supervision and administration.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. An Environmental Impact Report was completed for this project in 2002.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,300,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (c); 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.

29. Cache Creek Riparian Restoration, Capay Valley Reach, \$500,000.00  
Yolo County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Yolo County

Resource Conservation District (YCRCD) for a partnership project with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Audubon Society, Yolo County, California Conservation Corps, Rumsey Community Fund, Rumsey Rancheria, UC Davis, USDA Agricultural Research Service and several private landowners to remove nonnative invasive plants and restore native vegetation at selected sites on public and private property located along a 13 mile reach of Cache Creek and on one tributary stream in the upper Capay Valley of Yolo County.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has previously funded three similar projects within the Cache Creek watershed: 1) Cache Creek Conservancy's project on the lower reach Cache Creek below the Capay Dam; 2) the Bureau of Land Management's project on their property along Bear Creek, a tributary to Cache Creek located upstream of the proposed project in Colusa County; and 3) the American Land Conservancy's project on Sulphur Creek, a tributary to Bear Creek also located in Colusa County.

The Cache Creek watershed and riparian corridor hosts a wealth of wildlife and native habitat as it winds through publicly and privately managed wildlands and farmlands. While impressive bands of riparian and upland habitat remain along the creek, the habitat is significantly impacted by the dense stands of tamarisk and arundo. These stands completely displace native wildlife-friendly vegetation in some places, and exacerbate streambank erosion and flooding by constricting and deflecting flow in many locations on the creek. As a result, many landowners have lost substantial acreage to the erosion which has decreased valuable riparian habitat, farmable area and land supporting structures, such as homes. Considerable effort and funding has been directed towards managing these well-documented infestations throughout much of the watershed, except for the nearly untreated 33 mile middle stretch between the Yolo-Colusa county line and the Capay Dam. This band of tamarisk and arundo not only compromises the wildlife values and stability of the creek banks in Capay Valley, but also threatens the viability of the control work on the lower Cache Creek by serving as a nursery of seeds, stems and rhizomes to reinfest sites downstream. Treatment of this 'missing link' in the chain of riparian weed management and revegetation along Cache Creek represents an opportunity to not only enhance the viability of existing work and protect the resources of Cache Creek in Capay Valley, but to fully coordinate upstream and downstream vegetation management work as a unified watershed effort, ultimately the most logical and likely successful approach.

The YCRCD has secured interest from over 30 landowners in the 33 mile reach of Cache Creek that flows through the Capay Valley. The proposed project is the first of three phases of a watershed restoration program that the YCRCD and other partners are developing. Each phase will consist of weed management using integrated biological, physical and chemical techniques. WCB funding will be put towards the first phase wherein approximately 130 acres of weeds will be treated on selected properties within the upper 13 miles of the creek and on one tributary stream, and restoration will be conducted on 20 acres. This project will

involve six landowners. Project acreage could increase due to variation in weed infestation and revegetation needs, as occurred in the Cache Creek Conservancy's project downstream.

The selected project sites will serve as demonstration sites and be used for public workshops to attract new cooperators and educate those desiring to conduct their own independent revegetation and control projects. All participating landowners will be trained to monitor their project sites for revegetation progress and control success. YCRCD staff will coordinate this effort with partner organizations in the watershed to develop and pursue a regional riparian vegetation and habitat management program with emphasis on arundo and tamarisk control. The proposed work, when completed, will enhance and restore in-stream aquatic and valley foothill riparian habitats for fish and wildlife in the Capay Valley and has the long-term goal of improving flow characteristics and bank stabilization of the creek and ultimately removing the threat of tamarisk and arundo infestation into the Bay-Delta.

In general, the project involves six tasks: project management, riparian weed control, habitat restoration/bank protection, outreach, monitoring, and regional strategic vegetation management planning.

#### Project Management

The project will be directed by YCRCD staff, in coordination with other project partners.

#### Riparian Weed Control

This task will be performed by an expert in vegetation management under contract to the YCRCD. Weed control measures will include mechanical (initial grinding of plants with a flail attached to a long-arm excavator), chemical (foliar treatment with herbicides from July to November), retreatment as needed to catch resprouts or new plants, biological (possible expansion of the current USDA tamarisk leaf beetle trials), and manual (chopping and grubbing plants where chemical methods are not feasible).

#### Habitat Restoration

On selected sites, weed control work will be followed by native vegetation restoration where natural recruitment of natives is determined insufficient. Plant materials for revegetation will be selected to match site soil and hydrologic conditions, with nearby resident native vegetation. Resource materials such as the *Riparian Bird Conservation Plan* (RHJV, 2004) and the "Native Plant List for Capay Valley" in the *Capay Valley Conservation and Restoration Manual* (Howard and Robins, 2002) will be used as guides. Plant materials (especially willow and cottonwood cuttings) will be derived as locally as possible for the best plant site adaptability. Plants will be selected to provide maximum diversity in structure, cover and forage type. YCRCD and Audubon California restoration

specialists will consult with NRCS, private engineers and river restoration specialists on these matters.

### Outreach

One to two restoration sites each year will be implemented with the Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship Program (SLEWS), a program of the Center for Land-Based Learning. SLEWS works closely with local natural resource agencies and non-profit organizations including Audubon California, the Putah Creek Council, the Yolo and Solano Resource Conservation Districts, the Cache Creek Conservancy and the NRCS.

The SLEWS program engages high school students in habitat restoration projects on privately owned farms and ranches in their local watershed. In this setting, classroom learning is enhanced, students develop leadership skills, and they have a positive impact on land stewardship. With kids involved in the project, they in turn pull in parents, thus more local families become cognizant of riparian area management and protection.

YCRCD will utilize the most successful project sites as demonstrations to educate other landowners and land managers in control and restoration measures and to recruit other willing Capay Valley landowners to participate in future phases of the program. They will host at least one large public field workshop during each year of the program at project sites. Workshops will feature testimonials and demonstrations from participating landowners; presentations by vegetation management and restoration experts; site tours; and materials and training in plant/weed identification and project maintenance and monitoring.

Outreach will also include communication of project successes in regional and agricultural newspress, the YCRCD website, presentations at professional and agricultural meetings, and development of informational brochures.

### Monitoring

YCRCD staff will develop and carry out a monitoring plan based on techniques outlined in the RCD publication, *Monitoring on Your Farm* (Wrynski, 2002) and *Measuring & Monitoring Plant Populations* (Elizinga et al, 1998). Control, revegetation and natural recruitment will continue to be monitored annually for ten years by YCRCD staff and/or landowners.

The YCRCD will conduct baseline and post-treatment monitoring (photo monitoring and percent cover data) of the percent area infested with live tamarisk and arundo. Their goal is to achieve and, if possible, exceed results that the Cache Creek Conservancy has seen of 80%-90% control. The YCRCD will also monitor success of revegetation sites by recording the number of plants that survived verses the number planted. Percent cover data will be collected using

quadrat-based sampling where native perennial grasses are seeded or plug planted. Existing vegetation and natural recruitment of native vegetation will also be monitored using transects prior to and after control work.

In addition to YRCD and landowner monitoring, Yolo County and USDA ARS flyover digital imagery and other assessment tools will be used to assess changes in the entire watershed over time. This will allow monitoring to continue over many years beyond the term of this proposal.

### Cache Creek Watershed Strategic Vegetation Management Planning

The success of a riparian weed management and restoration program will depend on the ability of regional organizations within the entire watershed to coordinate efforts for planning and efficient implementation and maintenance. The Cache Creek Watershed Forum, created two years ago, has already begun this process. Through this forum and other avenues, YCRCD staff will coordinate with project and Cache Creek watershed partners to initiate development of a regional strategic plan for watershed riparian and upland vegetation management and generate resources to implement it. It is anticipated that the funding for the second two phases of the vegetation management program in the Capay Valley will be secured by the development of this strategic plan.

The total cost for this project is \$761,400.00. The breakdown of funding partners is shown below:

Yolo County Resource Conservation District	\$160,000.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	26,400.00
Landowners	18,000.00
Other local partners	57,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>500,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$761,400.00

Project costs will be for project management, design, planning, monitoring, tamarisk and arundo control, revegetation and restoration costs, bank protection, outreach expenses, permit costs, transportation and communication, minor project supplies, project signs, administrative costs and contingency costs.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The grantee will complete the appropriate notice to satisfy CEQA requirements. On the private properties affected by this project, the landowners have all signed agreements with the grantee which guarantee access to the grantee and partners for ten years. The grantee has therefore assumed the responsibility for project management and maintenance on these properties for ten years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$500,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (e/f); 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.

30. Sacramento River Riparian Restoration, Del Rio Site, \$ 511,000.00  
Phase II, Glenn County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service to restore and enhance approximately 163 acres of riparian habitat on private land that is located approximately one mile east and within the floodplain of the Sacramento River and five miles north of Butte City in Glenn County.

The initial restoration of this property was authorized by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) on May 14, 2003, with the approval of grant funds to River Partners for work on a 96± acre portion of the site that is located immediately to the east of the proposed project.

The proposed restoration project is a mile west of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) Llano Seco Unit of the Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area, and a few miles north and south of several units of the DFG's Sacramento River Wildlife Area. The Del Rio property was acquired by River Partners in February of 2002 with funding from the WCB. As part of the acquisition, the River Partners committed to restore the derelict almond and walnut orchards into riparian habitat, and provide the DFG with the option of accepting the property once restored.

Currently, the walnut orchard is managed for agricultural production providing limited wildlife habitat. Although the site floods fairly frequently (especially to the east), native plant recruitment is unlikely. Once agricultural activities cease, non-native plants could competitively exclude native plants, perhaps for decades. Restored, this unit has the potential to provide vital habitat for high priority, riparian dependent wildlife species and recreational opportunities for the public. Approximately 136 acres of the site will be restored using state-of-the-art techniques. The remaining 27 acres of existing riparian habitat will be enhanced through weed control. This approach will enable River Partners to rapidly and efficiently develop productive wildlife habitat, engage local farmers and businesses in ecological restoration, and incorporate design features to specifically benefit nine targeted wildlife species: bald eagle, Chinook salmon (winter run, spring run, fall run and late-fall run), steelhead, Swainson's hawk, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, and giant garter snake.

Specifically, this project will include the following tasks over a three year period:

- Utilize targeted weed control and potential planting of native species to enhance existing riparian habitat.

- Development of a site assessment and restoration plan that details historic and current site conditions, outlines the planting, irrigation and weed control strategies for the site, and describes the monitoring efforts.
- Application for an Encroachment Permit from the Reclamation Board.
- Development of a “Safe Harbour Agreement” for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB) with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This agreement, if approved, would be the first developed for VELB in California. Such an agreement would very likely allow the project to plant elderberry bushes within the floodplain, which has been a problem in the past, due to the possible presence of VELB, and the liability that it has caused for flood maintenance agencies and the Reclamation Board.
- Prepare the site for planting, including clearing of orchard trees and debris, disking, planning and other tasks as required.
- Installation, maintenance and operation of the irrigation system, which will include both drip and flood irrigation methods keyed to the topography and soil conditions that are found on the site.
- Decommissioning of unneeded wells on the site for public health and safety issues.
- Collection and propagation of local plant material needed for restoration; planting cuttings and potted stock in the field, including native grasses where appropriate; replant as necessary to maximize plant survival after three years; conduct routine operations to allow the plants to become established.
- Measure project performance through plant survival and growth, avian point-count surveys, and a post-project evaluation of habitat for targeted species.
- Provide community education about restoration and wildlife habitat by conducting field trips with Chico Country Day School and coordinating with the Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship Program (SLEWS) and teachers to develop lesson plans and provide some service learning opportunities (planting, making signs and identification keys, etc.).
- A final project report will be prepared summarizing project activities and monitoring results.

Using these same techniques, River Partners has successfully restored over 4,000 acres of riparian habitat, including the planting of over 500,000 trees, along

the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River since 1998.

Restoring this site to riparian habitat is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Sacramento River Wildlife Area Draft Management Plan, CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan, the federal Central Valley Project Improvement Act, the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook and Principles and the Central Valley Habitat and Riparian Habitat Joint Ventures. This project builds on restoration work already in progress by the WCB, the DFG, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, the Department of Water Resources, and River Partners.

River Partners has developed a successful public use program for the Del Rio property, including a visitor permit system for hiking, bird watching and seasonal hunting. Vehicle access is available via a county road, and a parking area has been established. It is anticipated that once the restoration efforts are done, the property will be turned over to the Department of Fish and Game for management, and that this public use will continue. The total cost for this project is \$796,182.00. The funding breakdown is as follows:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$ 47,500.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	210,999.00
River Partners	26,683.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>511,000.00</u>
Total Available Funding	\$796,182.00

Project costs will be for enhancement of existing habitat; planning; field preparation; irrigation installation; irrigation operations; planting; maintenance; monitoring and reporting; project management and contingency costs.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for twenty-five years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement for this project.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$511,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (e/f); 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.

31. Llano Seco Rancho Conservation Area, Butte County \$2,010,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT) to assist in a cooperative project with the

California Oak Foundation (COF), the Department of Conservation (DOC), the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to acquire a conservation easement over 4,235± acres of the historic Llano Seco Rancho located near the community of Durham in Butte County. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to protect the productive agricultural operation as well as the rangeland and the wildlife habitat conditions on the property, together with the continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits that occur from livestock grazing use.

The property is located approximately 50 miles southeast of Red Bluff, and seven miles west and one mile south of Durham. Of the total 18,434± acres associated with Llano Seco Rancho, approximately 10,946± acres have been protected by the DFG and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (combination of fee and conservation easements) and maintained as refuges or wildlife sanctuaries. In addition, The Nature Conservancy holds conservation easements covering 2,951± acres of the Rancho. Acquisition of the proposed conservation easement will ensure that a majority of the Rancho's 18,434± acres are permanently protected from development and preserved as a working landscape.

The primary purpose of the proposed conservation easement is to protect rangeland, grasslands, grazing land and critical agricultural operations, and provide an opportunity to conserve the largest remaining stands of valley oak woodlands and unlevelled grain fields on the Sacramento River floodplain. These woodlands, the agricultural grazing lands, alfalfa fields, row crops and orchards are consistently used by migratory waterfowl, upland birds and resident wildlife. The easement will also protect important wildlife habitat such as seasonal marsh and Great Valley mixed riparian while maintaining a critical buffer for the lands within the existing refuges and wildlife sanctuaries.

The conservation easement is broken down into three separate components. The area referred to as the "Intensive Agricultural" lands contains 1,870± acres which will be managed according to the DOC guidelines. The "Maintenance" lands contain 2,228± acres and will be managed consistent with the Rangeland Program administered by the WCB. The third component is for the "Farmstead" which contains 137± acres and will be used to support the rangeland and agricultural operations. The conservation easement will be monitored by the NCRLT. The property owner will provide a \$40,000.00 endowment to the NCRLT for management of the property.

The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement to the COF at the appraised fair market value of \$6,500,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The COF proposes to assign their option to purchase the property to the NCRLT. As a cooperative project, the DOC proposes to provide \$1,930,000.00 toward the purchase of the conservation easement. In addition, the DFG proposes to contribute \$2,570,000.00 from the CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Program. Staff requests authority to execute an Interagency Agreement with the DFG and the acceptance of the CALFED funds into a designated escrow account. Staff

also proposes that the Wildlife Conservation (WCB) approve a grant to the NCRLT, in the amount of \$2,000,000.00, for the remainder of the purchase price. It is anticipated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$2,010,000.00 for this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff will review and approve all documents pertaining to NCRLT's proposed acquisition of the conservation easement, including any title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into an escrow account for the proposed purchase of the easement.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the Northern California Regional Land Trust to assist in the acquisition of the conservation easement, as proposed; authorize acceptance of funds from the Department of Fish and Game through the CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Program, in the amount of \$2,570,000.00, and the authority to direct deposit of those funds into escrow for the easement; allocate \$2,010,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f) for the grant amount and 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.

32. Musty Buck Ridge Wildlife Area, Expansion 2, \$3,208,255.00  
Butte County

This proposal is to consider the cooperative acquisition of a 754± acre real property, located in Butte County, for the protection of critical wetland habitat and threatened and endangered species. This proposal also requests authorization to accept grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) from the Central Valley Protection Conservation Program, the USFWS from the Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program and the California State University, Chico Research Foundation (Foundation) from the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation and the approval to apply the grant funds toward the purchase price of the property.

The site is a 754± acre portion of a larger 1,150± acre property commonly known as Stone Ridge Ranch. The property is located in northeast Chico, east of the Chico Municipal Airport, along the easterly side of Cohasset Road. While the

subject site has been in use as a livestock grazing ranch for decades, it is located on the edge of the Chico Urban area and is prime for development. The City is currently working on expanding its Sphere of Influence which could encompass a major portion of the subject property.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has worked cooperatively with the Foundation for the long-term protection of wildlife habitat along Big Chico Creek and the Musty Buck Ridge area. In 2000 and 2001, the WCB approved two grants to assist the Foundation in their purchase of two properties totaling 3,950± acres, together with the granting of conservation easements over those properties in favor of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). In 2001, the WCB also approved funding for the purchase of a conservation easement in favor of the State over 3,885± acres of the original 5,000± acre Stone Ridge Ranch. This upland acreage is situated adjacent to the Big Chico Creek holdings and managed by the DFG for the protection of critical winter range for the East Tehama deer herd, the largest of the migratory deer herd in California. The subject 754± acre property is contiguous and to the west of the DFG's conservation easement holding. The proposed purchase reflects the continued partnership between the State and the Foundation and will, upon completion, place a total of 8,589± acres of critical upland and wetland habitat under permanent public protection.

The Stone Ridge Ranch connects the foothills of the Cascade Range to the Sacramento Valley. Predominant habitats on the site include blue oak woodland and annual grasslands with vernal pools and swales, clay flats and ephemeral and intermittent creeks. This wetland habitat community supports prime habitat for mountain lion, black bear and other predator species. Several special status species are known to occur on the site including Butte County meadowfoam, Ahart's paronychia, western spade-foot toad and burrowing owls. Other special-status species, such as ferruginous hawks, bald eagles and black-shouldered kites are known to use the site for foraging during winter months. In addition, the proposed acquisition will provide for protection of the rare Adobe lily (California Native Plant Society List 1-B) and the rare Butte County checkerbloom (California Native Plant Society List 1-B). The proposed acquisition would also expand the DFG's conservation holdings of habitat for the critical range of habitat for the East Tehama deer herd.

The DFG has reviewed and approved the Musty Buck Conceptual Area Protection Plan which identifies the subject property as a high priority for acquisition. Following acquisition, the DFG proposes to manage the property for the long-term protection of wetland habitat and wildlife species. Consistent with that primary objective, the DFG proposes to enter into a livestock grazing lease with the current property owner. In the early years of the lease, the DFG and the property owner have agreed that revenues generated by the lease will be reduced by the cost to the property owner to install fencing and other mutually agreed upon improvements to the property. The DFG also contemplates that the property will provide increased environmental education opportunities and programs which will be developed in conjunction with locally-based K-12

Watershed Education Project, Butte Environmental Council, and other non-governmental organizations. Students at California State University at Chico, Butte Community College and local high schools would all benefit from fieldwork in a vernal pool grassland preserve within the largest urban area north of Sacramento. A large wetland preserve could also house an interpretive center and provide opportunities for local community members and schools to enjoy photography, wildflower viewing, bird watching and hiking within the preserved areas.

The appraised fair market value of the subject property, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$5,207,787.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the State at a bargain sale of \$4,773,255.00. Four grants, totaling \$2,093,000.00, have been made available to the WCB to fund this project including the USFWS and BOR providing \$154,622.00 and \$348,378.00, respectively, from the Central Valley Protection Conservation Program, the USFWS providing \$990,000.00 in Section 6 funds from the Recovery Land Acquisition Program, and the Foundation providing \$600,000.00 from the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation. It is staff's recommendation that the WCB approve the acceptance of these grants and authorize the use of the funds to be applied toward the purchase of the property. It is also staff's recommendation that the WCB approve an allocation in the amount of \$3,183,255.00 to cover the balance of the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$25,000.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including the phase 1 report, title and escrow fees and review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$3,208,255.00 for this project.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve acquisition of the subject property, as proposed; authorize acceptance of four grants directly into escrow totaling \$2,093,000.00 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (\$990,000.00 and \$154,622.00, respectively), the Bureau of Reclamation (\$348,378.00), and the California State University, Chico Research Foundation (\$600,000.00) and the use of those grant funds to be applied toward the purchase price of the property; allocate \$3,208,255.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

33. Sierra Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 3, Plumas County \$458,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Feather River Land Trust (Land Trust) to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement on a 1,360± acre privately-owned property located in Plumas County. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to protect the rangeland and the wildlife habitat conditions on the property, together with the continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits that occur from livestock grazing use.

The property is located in the northern portion of Sierra Valley, near the town of Vinton, approximately 33 miles northwest of Reno and 65 miles north of Truckee. The property is mostly surrounded by public land and is immediately adjacent to U.S. Forest Service land to the west, north and east, and U.S. Bureau of Land Management land to the west and east. The size of the property enhances the habitat connectivity between the adjacent public lands and the watershed areas for wildlife and will help to ensure the ecological integrity of the area.

The property possess key migratory and wintering habitat for the Doyle deer herd and is located along the herd's traditional migratory route. Wildlife habitat types found on the property that are important to the herd include sagebrush, bitterbrush, montane riparian, aspen, wet meadow and montane hardwood-conifer dominated by black oak. The complex geology of the property contributes to a high diversity of habitats which, in turn, support a large number of rare and unique bird species, including Lewis' woodpecker, warbling vireo, plumbeous vireo, western scrub jay, golden and bald eagles and red-breasted sapsucker. Additional key habitat elements that support the wildlife include several perennial springs, three perennial creeks and numerous rocky outcrops and cliffs.

The Land Trust proposes to own and manage the conservation easement which will include a monitoring component. The property owner has offered \$35,000.00 to the Land Trust to provide for management of the easement.

The property owner has agreed to sell a conservation easement covering the 1,360± acres to the Land Trust at the appraised fair market value of \$896,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). A cooperative project, the Sierra Business Council has offered to provide a \$448,000.00 grant from a private source, to the Land Trust, to be applied toward their purchase of the easement. Staff proposes that the WCB approve a grant to the Land Trust, in the amount of \$448,000.00, to provide funding for the balance of the purchase. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be required for administrative expenses including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation to \$458,000.00 for this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff will review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the Land Trust's escrow for the purchase of

the property.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the grant to the Feather River Land Trust to assist with the acquisition of a conservation easement over the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$458,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 (f) for the grant amount and related project 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.

34. Montgomery Woods, Mendocino County \$1,000,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Save-the-Redwoods League (League) to assist in the purchase of 1,116± acres of privately-owned land contiguous to the Montgomery Woods State Reserve (Reserve) for the purposes of securing watershed protection and restoration opportunities for salmon-bearing tributaries of the South Fork Big River, preserving potential habitat for many sensitive wildlife species, and protecting unusual and under-represented plant communities.

The property is located approximately 11 miles northwest of the City of Ukiah in the Big River watershed. Adjacent to the northern boundary of the Reserve, it is accessed via Orr Springs Road, approximately one-half hour drive from downtown Ukiah. Montgomery Woods is an 1,142± acre State Reserve that is an excellent example of both a magnificent coastal redwood grove and a beautiful fern forest. The Reserve was originally acquired in the 1940's through the efforts of the Save-the-Redwoods League, and donated to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Together with the acquisition of two additional adjacent parcels, the proposed transactions will more than double the size of the Reserve to approximately 2,400 acres.

The acquisitions will protect habitat for 19 sensitive wildlife species that have the potential to occur on the properties, including American peregrine falcon, northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, Pomo bronze shoulderband snail, golden eagles, ring tailed cat, mountain lions, bobcats and white-tailed kites. The property is traversed by streams in which coho salmon and steelhead spawn. A botanical inventory has identified at least nine different vegetation types on the property, as well as more than 200 species of native plants, including California oatgrass perennial grasslands, Oregon white oak forests, Douglas fir, redwoods and white alder.

It is proposed that the Save-the-Redwoods League purchase the property and transfer title, together with management responsibilities to the DPR. If these lands are not protected, they would remain vulnerable to residential development and ownership fragmentation, as well as overgrazing and logging.

The fair market value of the property, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services, is \$3,750,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property at a discounted price of \$3,375,000.00. Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve an allocation for a grant to the Save-the-Redwoods League in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, to provide a portion of the necessary funding for the purchase of the property. The balance of the purchase price and all associated transaction expenses (title insurance, escrow fees, etc.) are being provided by the DPR in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, the State Coastal Conservancy in the amount of \$500,000.00, and other charitable non-profit contributors (including Save-the-Redwoods League and Resources Legacy Fund Foundation) in the amount of \$875,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that the WCB staff will review all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instruments of conveyance prior to authorizing the disbursement of funds directly to the escrow holder for the purchase of the property.

There are no claims of sovereign State land ownership on the subject property. The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25 as a transfer of ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve a grant to the Save-the-Redwoods League to assist in the purchase of the subject property, as proposed; allocate \$1,000,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant amount; 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.

35. Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Pacific Shores Unit, Phase II, \$2,000,000.00  
Del Norte County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of up to 250± acres of privately-owned land, including several tax-default parcels in a Chapter 8 sale, located in the Pacific Shores Subdivision on the north shore of Lake Earl approximately seven miles north of Crescent City in Del Norte County. The acquired parcels would be added to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) Lake Earl

Wildlife Area to preserve wildlife habitat.

During the past two years, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) staff, in cooperation and with invaluable assistance from the Smith River Alliance, has acquired approximately 527 lots in the Pacific Shores Subdivision. The proposed allocation will allow the WCB to continue to pursue its goal of preserving important habitat by acquiring as many of the remaining 940 lots as the owners are willing to sell, within the funding limits of the allocation. Acquisition of these parcels will allow for the further protection of Lake Earl and its associated coastal dune, wetland, upland and forest habitats, the continued development of the Wildlife Area, and the protection and enhancement of threatened and endangered species.

The Lake Earl Wildlife Area was acquired as a result of the Keene-Nedgedly Act of 1975, which directed the DFG and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to jointly evaluate and acquire certain specified coastal lands for the purpose of protecting, enhancing and managing wetlands. Together the two agencies have acquired over 11,000 acres in the Crescent City area, extending from near Point Saint George north to the Smith River. Of the total, approximately 6,108 acres have been purchased by the WCB and are managed by the DFG. This includes all of Lakes Earl and Talawa (under lease from the California State Lands Commission). These lakes are actually coastal lagoons that periodically breach the barrier island, thereby allowing the interchange of fresh and salt water. This natural breaching has been replaced in recent times by artificial breaching as a means of lowering water elevations and increasing lands available for livestock grazing and urban development.

Lake Earl is a shallow estuarine lagoon that supports a variety of wetland plant communities, including submerged aquatics in deeper, relatively freshwater areas of the estuary. Freshwater aquatic plants are used extensively by migrating waterfowl. These wetland communities provide habitat for a large number of water-associated species. Sitka spruce grows to the edge of the lake shore and is used by both the Peregrine falcon and the bald eagle. The nonnative perennial grasses are managed on the Wildlife Area as foraging habitat for the Aleutian Canada goose. Over 95 percent of the Aleutian Canada goose population stages in the agricultural fields on or adjacent to the Wildlife Area. Over 240 species of birds have been recorded in the area since 1982. Historically, the Lake Earl complex has been an important northern California, wintering stopover and nesting area for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. There are three federally or state listed endangered birds sighted in the Wildlife Area, including bald eagle, Peregrine falcon and the California brown pelican.

The proposed acquisitions will assist in securing these unique resources, facilitate lake level management and habitat protection and restoration, and will add significant acreage to the Lake Earl Wildlife Area. It is proposed that the newly acquired half-acre lots would be added to the Wildlife Area at the rate of about 75 to 100 acres per year. Additional costs to the DFG for management and operation of the parcels are expected to be negligible.

The fair market value must be established by an appraisal report which has been reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The WCB has applied for a \$1,000,000.00 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which if awarded, would be applied toward the 's proposed purchase of the parcels. It is staff's recommendation that the WCB approve the acceptance of the USFWS grant and authorize the use of the grant funds to be applied toward the purchase of the property. It is also staff's recommendation that the WCB approve an allocation in the amount of \$2,000,000.00. The allocation would provide for the required non-federal match to the USFWS grant, costs associated with the project including the appraisal reports, phase 1 reports, title and escrow fees and review charges by the DGS, and \$1,000,000.00 to cover the grant funds in the event they are not awarded. In the event the funding is available from the USFWS grant, as proposed, staff would recommend recovery of the \$1,000,000.00 from the proposed allocation at a future WCB meeting.

The acquisition of the parcels, as proposed, is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act requirements under Section 15313, Class 13 as the acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25 as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the acquisition project, as proposed; authorize acceptance of the grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, if awarded, and the use of the grant funds to be applied toward the purchase price of the property; allocate \$2,000,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and related project 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.

#### Other Business