

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95811
 (916) 445-8448
 FAX (916) 323-0280
www.wcb.ca.gov

NOTICE OF MEETING

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 15, 2007
 10:00 A.M.
 1/ State Capitol, Room 112
 Sacramento, California 95814

FINAL AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
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2.	Funding Status – Informational	2
3.	Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4-13)	6
*4.	Approval of Minutes – August 23, 2007 Meeting	6
*5.	Recovery of Funds	6
*6.	Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansion 6 Riverside County	\$5,000.00 10

To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to be applied toward the acquisition of 18± acres, located south of Hemet for the protection of threatened and endangered species, including the Aguanga kangaroo rat and the Los Angeles pocket mouse and also to assist in the establishment of a wildlife movement corridor. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5)

* Proposed Consent Calendar

1/ These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

- *7. Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansion 7 \$5,000.00 11
Riverside County
- To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to be applied toward its acquisition of a property totaling 352± acres for protection of threatened and endangered species and wildlife movement corridors southeasterly of the city of Temecula, Riverside County. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5)
- *8. Western Riverside County MSHCP and \$15,000.00 13
Expansions 1 and 2
Riverside County
- To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to be applied toward its acquisition of three, separate properties totaling 172± acres located along the Interstate 15 corridor for purposes of protecting threatened and endangered species, including the Stephens' kangaroo rat and the burrowing owl and also to assist in the establishment of wildlife movement corridors. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5)
- *9. Santa Rosa Mountains, Expansion 8 Augmentation \$649,140.00 15
Riverside County
- To consider an augmentation to assist in the fee acquisition of a 100-acre private property as previously approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board on May 24, 2007, together with the proposed acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Land Acquisition Grant and the approval to apply the federal funds toward the purchase of the property, located in the Santa Rosa Mountains area south of the city of La Quinta, in Riverside County, for the protection and preservation of wildlife habitat. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5)
- *10. Santa Rosa Plateau, Tenaja Corridor \$5,000.00 17
Riverside County
- To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to be applied toward its acquisition of a property totaling 30± acres for protection of threatened and endangered species and wildlife movement corridors westerly of the city of Murrieta, Riverside County. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5)

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|------|---|--------------|----|
| *11. | Triple Creeks Conservation Area, Expansion 2
Riverside County | \$5,000.00 | 19 |
| | To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to be applied toward its acquisition totaling 6± acres for protection of threatened and endangered species and wildlife movement corridors north of the city of Murrieta, in Riverside County. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5) | | |
| *12. | Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 16
Monterey County | \$641,000.00 | 21 |
| | To consider the acquisition of 7.47 acres of land as an addition to the Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, located in the town of Castroville in Monterey County, for the preservation and protection of wildlife habitat. Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) | | |
| *13. | Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve,
Edom Hill Unit, Expansion 30,
Riverside County | \$15,000.00 | 22 |
| | To consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, pending final approval, and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Center for Natural Lands Management to be applied toward its acquisition of 320± acres located southeast of the city of Desert Hot Springs, in Riverside County, for the protection of threatened and endangered species. Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(a) | | |
| 14. | Iron Mountain Wildlife Area, Monte Vista
San Diego County | \$25,000.00 | 24 |
| | To consider the acquisition of a 4,056± acre property referred to as Monte Vista Ranch, the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be applied toward the acquisition, and the assumption of a Coastal Conservancy Grant previously made to The Nature Conservancy. The property located south of the community of Ramona in central San Diego County will be an expansion to the Department of Fish and Game's Iron Mountain Wildlife Area for the protection of undisturbed grasslands, chaparral, vernal pools, and riparian habitat supporting endangered and sensitive species. Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(6) | | |

- | | | | |
|-----|--|----------------|----|
| 15. | Bluebird Preserve, Expansion 1
Los Angeles County | \$5,010,000.00 | 26 |
| | To consider the allocation for a grant to the Trust for Public Land to assist in a cooperative acquisition of 262± acres of improved property in the city of Glendora, Los Angeles County, for the purpose of preserving open space and wildlife habitat. Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund (Prop. 50), Section 79572(a) | | |
| 16. | Lower Owens River Basin Saltcedar Control
Inyo County | \$600,000.00 | 27 |
| | To consider the allocation for a grant to Inyo County Water Department for a partnership project to eradicate the nonnative, invasive plant, saltcedar (tamarisk spp.), from the channel and floodplain of the Lower Owens River on land owned and managed by the City of Los Angeles, Department of Water and Power, in Inyo County. Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786(e/f) and General Fund - CRHCP | | |
| 17. | Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Salmon Falls Unit,
Expansion 5
El Dorado County | \$110,000.00 | 29 |
| | To consider the allocation for a grant to the American River Conservancy, the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the American River Conservancy to assist in its fee title acquisition of 80± acres of vacant land in El Dorado County for the preservation of habitat for threatened and endangered species. California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, (Prop. 40) Section 5096.650 | | |
| 18. | Feather River Wildlife Area Riparian
Habitat Restoration Abbott Lake Unit
Sutter County | \$781,460.00 | 31 |
| | To consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game and Ducks Unlimited, Inc., to restore approximately 169 acres of riparian habitat and enhance an additional 250 acres of remnant riparian forest habitat on the Abbott Lake Unit of the Feather River Wildlife Area located approximately seven miles south of Yuba City on the west bank of the Feather River in Sutter County. Habitat Conservation Fund, Section 2786(e/f) | | |
| 19. | Truckee River Wildlife Area,
Gray Creek Canyon Unit
Nevada County | \$15,000.00 | 33 |
| | To consider the donation of three parcels of land, totaling 1,343± acres, by the Truckee Donner Land Trust to the Department of Fish and Game for long-term protection of vegetation, wildlife habitat, fisheries, and water quality resources, | | |

and provide important habitat and corridor connectivity for a number of wildlife species. Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(a)

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--------------|----|
| 20. | Fields Landing Public Access Improvements
Humboldt County | \$574,000.00 | 34 |
|-----|--|--------------|----|

This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

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|-----|--|----------------|----|
| 21. | Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area,
Tolay Creek Unit, Expansion 5
Sonoma County | \$3,020,000.00 | 34 |
|-----|--|----------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Sonoma Land Trust for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game, the California Coastal Conservancy, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and the Moore Foundation to assist in the fee acquisition of 1,657± acres of land located west of Highway 121, south of the city of Sonoma, in Sonoma County for the protection of wetlands, riparian, and upland habitat, including freshwater marsh, unique moist grasslands, open meadow, and oak woodlands and also to provide public recreational access and educational/interpretive opportunities. Habitat Conservation Fund, (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) (Prop. 50SF)

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---------------|----|
| 22. | Staff Report - Ecosystem Restoration on
Agricultural Lands (ERAL), Statewide | Informational | 36 |
|-----|---|---------------|----|

Report on the status of the Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands (ERAL) authorized by the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, also known as Proposition 84, Chapter 6, Section 75055(d)(4).

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---------------|----|
| 23. | Staff Report - Forest Conservation Program,
Statewide | Adopt Program | 39 |
|-----|--|---------------|----|

Report and recommend approval of the proposed Forest Conservation Program authorized pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, also known as Proposition 84.

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|-----|--|--|--|
| 24. | Executive Session (Not Open to the Public) | | |
|-----|--|--|--|

THE BOARD MAY MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 11126(e)(1) TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION TO WHICH THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD IS A PARTY, FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN SAN JACINTO VALLEY VS. CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD, ET AL., RIVERSIDE COUNTY, SUPERIOR COURT, CASE NUMBER 477696 (CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT).

(Inquiries regarding agenda items may be directed to John P. Donnelly, 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 15, 2007
10:00 A.M.
1/ State Capitol, Room 112
Sacramento, California 95814

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Richard B. Rogers, Chairman
President, Fish and Game Commission
Michael C. Genest, Member
Director, Department of Finance
John McCamman, Member
Acting Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Abel Maldonado
Senator Darrell Steinberg
Senator Patricia Wiggins

Assembly Member Jared Huffman
Assembly Member Lois Wolk
Assembly Member (Position Vacant)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

* Consent Calendar

1/ These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

2. Funding Status as of November 15, 2007 (Informational)

(a) 2007-08 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act..... \$1,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(0.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$1,000,000.00

(b) 2006-07 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act..... \$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations..... (1,306,900.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$3,693,100.00

(c) 2007-08 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act..... \$20,674,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocation.....(2,210,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$18,464,000.00

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

Budget Act..... \$20,699,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocation.....(1,790,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$18,909,000.00

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

Budget Act..... \$20,551,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(17,048,542.00)
Unallocated Balance \$3,502,458.00

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

Budget Act..... \$15,224,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(4,632,059.00)
Unallocated Balance \$10,591,941.00

(g) 2000-01 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2006-07 Reappropriation)

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$14,562,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(14,426,712.77)
Unallocated Balance \$135,287.23

- (h) 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.....(27,024,281.69)
 - Unallocated Balance \$9,075,718.31

- (i) 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

- (j) 2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2007-08 Reappropriation)
 - Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$11,000,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(0.00)
 - Unallocated Balance \$11,000,000.00

- (k) 2003-04 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget
 - Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation)
 - (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)..... \$8,500,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(2,796,413.40)
 - Unallocated Balance \$5,703,586.60

- (l) Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002 (2005-06 Reappropriation).....\$4,800,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(4,655,354.83)
 - Unallocated Balance \$144,645.17

- (m) Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002 (2005-06 Reappropriation) \$19,200,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(17,389,523.93)
 - Unallocated Balance \$1,810,476.07

- (n) 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.....(162,580,606.64)
 - Unallocated Balance \$110,419,393.36

- (o) 2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and

Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)

Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation)..... \$32,500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(20,011,970.00)
Unallocated Balance \$12,488,030.00

- (p) 2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572), including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005 \$814,350,000.00
Less 2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565(21,000,000.00)
Less 2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565(21,000,000.00)
Less 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565(4,000,000.00)
Less 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572(3,100,000.00)
Less 2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79672(17,688,000.00)
Less 2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 (5,150,000.00)
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(628,691,199.24)
Unallocated Balance \$113,720,800.76

- (q) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects).....\$10,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(0.00)
Unallocated Balance \$10,000,000.00

- (r) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055c) \$25,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(25,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$24,975,000.00

- (s) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1))..... \$14,293,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(25,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$14,268,000.00

- (t) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2))..... \$14,293,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(25,000.00)
Unallocated Balance \$14,268,000.00

- (u) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget
 - Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(3))..... \$4,762,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(0.00)
 - Unallocated Balance \$4,762,000.00

- (v) 2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget
 - Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)..... \$164,700,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(25,000.00)
 - Unallocated Balance \$164,675,000.00

 - Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055b)..... \$123,525,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(3,887,007.00)
 - Unallocated Balance \$119,637,993.00

- (w) 2003-04 Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget
 - Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation)..... \$5,000,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations.....(1,982,161.00)
 - Unallocated Balance \$3,017,839.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$1,000,000.00
General Fund (b).....	\$3,693,100.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (c), (d) and (e)	\$40,875,458.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (f), (g) and (h)	\$19,802,946.54
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (i), (j), (k), (l), (m) and (n) ...	\$130,623,101.20
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (o) and (p).....	\$126,208,830.76
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (q), (r), (s), (t), (u) and (v).....	\$352,585,993.00
Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (w)	\$3,017,839.00

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000
 Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004

Total Tax Credits Available	\$100,000,000.00
Less Previously Awarded Tax Credits	(48,598,734.00)
Balance of Tax Credits Available	\$51,401,266.00

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4-13)

*4. Approval of Minutes – August 23, 2007 Meeting

*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.

\$0.00 to the **General Fund**
\$23,634.54 to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
\$55,441.10 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
\$0.00 to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
\$16,489.85 to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
\$0.00 to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**

GENERAL FUND

Turtle Bay Boat Ramp, Shasta County

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

Total General Fund **\$0.00**

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

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Lagoon Valley Lake, Solano County

Allocated	\$220,000.00
Expended	<u>-203,308.96</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$16,691.04

Six Rivers (Iaqua), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$1,233,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,232,404.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$596.00

Six Rivers (Price Creek Ranch), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$169,000.00
Expended	<u>-169,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Six Rivers (Sunny Brae), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$620,000.00
Expended	<u>-613,652.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$6,347.50

Turtle Bay Boat Ramp (Augmentation), Shasta County

Allocated	\$137,000.00
Expended	<u>-137,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund **\$23,634.54**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Humboldt Bay Coastal Reserve, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$175,000.00
Expended	<u>-165,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

La Sierra Canyon, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$5,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,599.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,401.00

Liberty Farms Wetland Restoration, Solano County

Allocated	\$135,000.00
Expended	<u>-135,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Bobcat to Blue Oak Ranches, Yolo County

Allocated	\$542,500.00
Expended	<u>-532,818.45</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,681.55

San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansions 27 and 28, Riverside County

Allocated	\$2,780,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,840,244.95</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$29,755.05

Truckee River Canyon, Nevada/Sierra County

Allocated	\$10,000.00
Expended	<u>-9,829.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$170.50

Wheeler Ridge Wildlife Area, Mono County

Allocated	\$185,000.00
Expended	<u>-182,567.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,433.00

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$55,441.10**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Grassland Environmental Education Center, Relocation and Set-up, Merced County

Allocated	\$90,000.00
Expended	<u>-90,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Pine Creek Reservoir Public Access Improvements, Modoc County

Allocated	\$21,679.00
Expended	<u>-21,679.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Rio de Los Angeles State Park, Taylor Yard Public Access, Los Angeles

Allocated	\$77,000.00
Expended	<u>-77,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$0.00**

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

C Street Dock Fishing Access, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$500,270.00
Expended	<u>-500,107.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$163.00

Mad River Slough Wildlife Area, Expansion 1, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$53,000.00
Expended	<u>-42,429.65</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,570.35

Pine Creek Reservoir Public Access Improvements, Modoc County

Allocated	\$65,428.00
Expended	<u>-65,428.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Putah Creek North (Bobcat Ranch), Yolo County

Allocated	\$6,360,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,354,243.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,756.50

Six Rivers (Iaqua), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$1,000,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Six Rivers (Price Creek Ranch), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$314,679.00
Expended	<u>-314,679.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Turtle Bay Boat Ramp, Shasta County

Allocated	\$106,740.00
Expended	<u>-106,740.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe
Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund** **\$16,489.85**

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

New and Alamo Rivers Wetland Master Plan, Phase I, Imperial County

Allocated	\$805,000.00
Expended	<u>-805,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

New and Alamo Rivers Wetland Master Plan, Phase I Augmentation,
Imperial County

Allocated	\$450,500.00
Expended	<u>-450,500.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Santa Catalina Island Nonnative Plant Removal, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$500,000.00
Expended	<u>-500,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, Shellmaker Island Wetland
Restoration, Orange County

Allocated	\$69,000.00
Expended	<u>-69,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

**Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water,
Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002** **\$0.00**

- *6. Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansion 6 \$5,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority), to be applied toward the acquisition of a privately-owned property totaling 18.9± acres in southwestern Riverside County for the protection of threatened and endangered species.

The project area is located near the unincorporated community of Aguanga, north of State Highways 79 and 371, within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The proposed acquisition will conform to the MSHCP and will further implement joint federal, State, and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in western Riverside County. The MSHCP's purpose is to preserve and protect 146 plant and animal species by acquiring lands for a habitat reserve system, and providing open space for habitat and recreation.

The property supports a mix of natural plant communities, including coastal sage scrub and grasslands, that provides important habitat for the following endangered or threatened animal species: California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and Quino checkerspot butterfly. The following species of special concern are also found in this area: Bell's sage sparrow, Cooper's hawk, Aguanga kangaroo rat, and Los Angeles pocket mouse. The property is located in an important linkage area that connects the San Bernardino National Forest on the north side to the Cleveland National Forest on the south side. This property and the linkage area provide essential breeding and foraging habitat for the aforementioned species, as well as bobcats and mountain lions.

The Authority intends to manage the site to preserve threatened and endangered species and to conserve biodiversity. Additional management objectives may include preserving public access for recreational pursuits such as hiking and wildlife viewing. Management costs for the property will be provided by operating funds from Assessment District 161 and the Authority. There are no State funds to be used for the management of this property.

The owner of the property has agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$250,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed subgrant will provide \$161,290.00 toward the purchase price from a USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Grant. The Authority will provide the sum of \$88,710.00 as the non-federal match and the balance of the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), which includes the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant provide that staff of the WCB will review all proposed title documents, appraisal, preliminary title report, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and the instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow for the acquisition.

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

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$161,290.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5), for internal project-related 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.

- *7. Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansion 7 \$5,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the authorization to enter an agreement to subgrant the federal grant funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority), to be applied toward the acquisition of a privately-owned property totaling 352± acres, in southwestern Riverside County, for the protection of threatened and endangered species and to establish a wildlife movement corridor.

The project area is located east of Temecula and south of Hemet, north of State Highways 79 and 371, near the unincorporated community of Aguanga. Acquisition of the property will help to establish and protect a contiguous landscape linkage,

habitat nodes for wildlife dispersal, and wildlife connectivity between the Cleveland National Forest and the San Bernardino National Forest. The project also conforms to the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and will further implement joint federal, State, and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in southwestern Riverside County.

The property supports a mix of natural plant communities that are unique to this region. Although coastal sage scrub, riparian, and grassland plant communities occur elsewhere, the uniqueness of the combination has produced new and as of yet undefined communities. The desert influence on climate is very apparent by the number of plant species that make their western-most extension into the area. The mix of plant communities has resulted in habitats suitable for an abundance and diversity of species including many endemic species. Many butterfly species were identified in the area, including the federally-endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly. The area also provides breeding and foraging habitat for an abundance of wildlife including the San Diego horned lizard, orange-throated whiptail, coastal western whiptail, and the coast patch-nosed snake, all federal and State species of concern. Least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, golden eagle, and burrowing owls have also been identified in the area.

The Authority has proposed that the area be managed primarily to preserve threatened and endangered species and to conserve biodiversity. Additional management objectives may include preserving public access for recreational pursuits such as hiking and wildlife viewing. Management costs will be provided by operating funds from the 2004 Assessment District 161 (AD 161) Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan funds held by the Authority. The State will have no responsibility for management of this property.

The property owner has agreed to sell to the Authority at the appraised value of \$1,670,000.00. The appraised value has been approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed agreement to subgrant the federal grant funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant will provide \$835,000.00 toward the purchase price of the property. The Authority has agreed to provide the non-federal match, and the remainder of the purchase price in the sum of \$835,000.00, from the AD 161 funds held by the Authority. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), which includes the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$835,000.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5), for internal project-related 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.

- *8. Western Riverside County MSHCP and Expansions 1 and 2 \$15,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority), to be applied toward the acquisition of three separate properties totaling 172± acres located in close proximity to the Interstate 15 corridor in the western part of Riverside County, near the community of Lake Elsinore.

The acquisitions conform to the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and will further implement joint federal, State and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in western Riverside County. The purpose of the MSHCP is to preserve and protect 146 plant and animal species by acquiring lands for a habitat reserve system, and to provide open space for habitat and recreation. The subject properties support a variety of native plant species, including thread-leaved brodiaea, Davidson's saltscallion, Parish's brittlegrass, smooth tarplant, round-leaved filaree, Coulter's goldfields, and little mouse-tail, and provide potential suitable breeding and foraging habitat for burrowing owls, a species of special concern, as well as the threatened or endangered California gnatcatcher and least Bell's vireo.

The Authority intends to manage these sites to preserve threatened and endangered species and to conserve biodiversity. Additional management objectives may include preserving public access for recreational pursuits such as hiking and wildlife viewing. Management costs of the above parcels will be provided by operating funds from Assessment District 161 and the Authority. There are no State funds to be used for the management of these properties, described below.

Western Riverside County MSHCP: The owner of the property has agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$1,617,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). This is a proposal to subgrant \$1,043,226.00 in USFWS funds to the Authority to assist in their purchase of 58.88± acres of land located on Cajalco Road, approximately one mile west of La Sierra Avenue, in the Lake Mathews area. The Authority has agreed to provide Riverside County Transportation Commission Funds (Transportation Funds) in the sum of \$573,774.00 to provide the non-federal match and the balance of the purchase price.

Western Riverside County MSHCP, Expansion 1: The owner of the property has agreed to sell the property at the DGS approved, appraised value of \$462,000.00. This is a proposal to subgrant \$298,065.00 in USFWS funds to the Authority to acquire 32.99± acres of land located at the northwest corner of Snake Road and Garnet Drive, in the Lake Elsinore area. The Authority has agreed to provide Transportation Funds in the sum of \$163,935.00 to provide the non-federal match and the remainder of the purchase price.

Western Riverside County MSHCP, Expansion 2: This is a proposal to subgrant \$1,625,806.00 in USFWS funds to acquire 80± acres of land located at the southeast corner of Vista del Agua and Gafford Road, in the Lake Elsinore area. The owner of the property has agreed to sell the property for \$2,520,000.00, which is a \$40,000.00 discount from the DGS approved, appraised value of \$2,560,000.00. The Authority has agreed to provide Transportation Funds in the sum of \$894,194.00 to provide the non-federal match and the remainder of the purchase price.

The proposed subgrants will provide the Authority with a total of \$2,967,097.00 in federal funds to be applied toward the acquisition of the subject properties. It is estimated that \$15,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), which includes the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this project to \$15,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

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

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$2,967,097.00 and approve three agreements to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$15,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5) for internal transaction 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.

- *9. Santa Rosa Mountains, Expansion 8 Augmentation \$649,140.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider a proposed augmentation to assist in the fee acquisition of the second phase of a 100± acre privately-owned property as previously approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) on May 24, 2007, for the protection of habitat for peninsular bighorn sheep in the Santa Rosa Mountains. Subsequent to approval by the WCB, staff was informed that private funding which was anticipated for this project would not be forthcoming. The owner allowed the State to proceed with its purchase of nearly 50 acres of the property, which is currently in escrow, pending approval of a proposed augmentation to complete acquisition of the remaining 50 acres.

Staff recommends that the augmentation be provided by the WCB funds, the acceptance of two Recovery Land Acquisition Grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and proposed and pending grants from the City of La Quinta and Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, all to be applied toward the State's purchase of this second phase. If the pending grants become approved, within the time frame necessary for close of escrow, excess State funds approved as part of this augmentation will be recovered at an upcoming WCB meeting.

The subject property is located in the southwestern portion of the Coachella Valley about five miles south of the downtown area of the City of La Quinta. Lake Cahuilla is about three miles north of the subject property, and the Salton Sea located about 14 miles to the southeast.

This acquisition is part of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County. The second phase of this acquisition is part of the eighth land acquisition in the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for the protection of bighorn sheep. The project area within the CAPP is approximately 150,000 acres in size with 35,000± acres identified as candidates for possible acquisition.

The acquisition of both phases of the subject property is important because it would place nearly 100 acres of foothill, "canyon mouth", and alluvial fan lands under permanent protection. Placement of this area in public ownership will add a

significant buffer from the developing residential lands to the east and north. The subject property has multiple species values including habitat for peninsular bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, least Bell's vireo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. There is also potential habitat for several sensitive bat species including the western yellow bat, pallid bat, California leaf-nosed bat, spotted bat, pocketed free-tailed bat, and western mastiff bat. Protection of the property would also benefit many other species that inhabit the area including mountain lion, mule deer, golden eagle, and prairie falcon.

The DFG has identified the subject property as being within a Significant Natural Area and has recommended the purchase of the property, which would be incorporated into and managed in conjunction with other existing wildlife areas and ecological reserves. The property will remain in its present state as unimproved desert land maintaining connectivity from the Coachella Valley floor to the Santa Rosa Mountains, Santa Rosa Mountains National Scenic Area, San Bernardino National Forest, and the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The anticipated annual cost for monitoring and managing the land would be minimal due to the remoteness of the site and the very limited visitation by the public. The proposal being considered at this time would, if approved, bring the total number of acres protected within the area to over 110,000± acres.

The owners have agreed to sell the 100± acre property at the appraised value of \$3,240,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The first phase totaling 49.8± acres (\$1,618,375.00) is currently in escrow. The USFWS has provided three grants, under both the Habitat Conservation Planning and the Recovery Land Acquisition Programs, totaling \$924,434.00, and the WCB provided \$693,941.00, which was enough to close the first phase of the acquisition.

The second phase of the acquisition, containing 49.9 acres of land, has an appraised value of \$1,621,625.00, also as approved by the DGS. Two Recovery Land Acquisition Grants from the USFWS, totaling \$972,485.00, will provide a portion of the purchase price. Two additional yet pending grants from the City of La Quinta (\$243,121.00) and the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (\$406,019.00), if approved, could provide the balance of the purchase price (\$649,140.00). In the event that one or both of the pending grants are not approved, staff is recommending a proposed allocation by the WCB in the amount of \$649,140.00 to be applied toward the purchase. Excess State funds approved as part of this allocation, if any, will be recovered at an upcoming WCB meeting. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Class 25, Section 15325, as the transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. A Notice of Exemption for the first phase acquisition was filed with the

State Clearinghouse following approval by the WCB on May 24, 2007. Subject to approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board, a Notice of Exemption for the second phase acquisition will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the proposed acquisition of the second phase of this project as proposed; accept two Recovery Land Acquisition Grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service totaling \$972,485.00 and the use of the federal funds, as proposed; accept pending grants from the City of La Quinta in the sum of \$243,121.00, and from the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy in the sum of \$406,019.00, to be applied toward the purchase of the second phase of the property; allocate \$649,140.00.00 from the Safe Neighborhood, Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5) for a portion of the purchase price; 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.

- *10. Santa Rosa Plateau, Tenaja Corridor \$5,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority) to be applied toward the acquisition of a 20± acre privately-owned property, in southwestern Riverside County, for increased protection of the Santa Rosa Plateau and threatened and endangered species.

The subject property is located on Calle Collado, south of Tenaja Road, about ten miles west of the town of Murrieta. The property is currently vacant and undeveloped, but has the potential for subdivision to five acre parcels and residential development. Interstate Highway 15 is about eight miles easterly of the subject area and is the major connector highway between Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, and San Diego.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has recognized the importance of the property to both its Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve (Reserve) and area connectivity, and has recommended the purchase of this property as a high priority. This acquisition will allow further protection of the “plateau” and preserve the linkage between the plateau and 250,000 acres of protected public lands including the San Mateo Wilderness Area, Cleveland National Forest, and Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base to the north and to the west.

Initial acquisition of the Reserve began in 1991, and has grown through public and private acquisitions and exchanges to its current size. Development has been steady in the immediate area of the Reserve over the past ten years, with a number of homes built on privately-owned parcels near the reserve and within the corridor.

Additional construction and development within the acquisition area is considered to be detrimental to the corridor and to the free movement and migration of the many different species that live there. The DFG owns approximately 6,000 acres, and when combined with the properties owned by The Nature Conservancy, Riverside County, and the Metropolitan Water District, the total protected area is in excess of 8,200± acres.

The plateau is a biologically diverse area and supports over 450 native plant species, 27 reptiles, 35 mammals, at least 173 bird species, and an unknown number of invertebrates. The Reserve contains over 1,500 acres of oak woodland with the last remaining, naturally occurring Engelmann oak groves in southern California. There are about 3,000 acres of native grassland crossed with bands of southern sycamore and live oak riparian woodland habitat. There are numerous vernal pool areas, extensive coastal sage scrub, and chaparral habitats. The creeks that drain the plateau contain deep pools, called Tenajas, which provide a water source most months of the year. There are 50 sensitive species (endangered, threatened, rare, and species of concern) on the Reserve, including 11 plants, 26 birds, five amphibians, four reptiles, four mammals, and several invertebrates. Large mammals using the plateau include mountain lion, deer, and badger.

The Authority proposes to own and manage the property. Their primary objective will be protection and maintenance of the habitat in conjunction with other properties to form a corridor between the DFG's Reserve and other public lands. It is anticipated that the Authority will offer passive recreational uses, compatible with protection of the biologically diverse species found in the Reserve and on the property.

The owner has agreed to sell the property to the Authority at the appraised fair market value of \$830,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed agreement to subgrant the federal funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant will provide \$373,500.00 toward the purchase price of the property. The Authority has agreed to provide the non-federal match and the remainder of the purchase price in the sum of \$456,500.00 using Assessment District 161 Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan funds held by the Authority. An estimated \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), including review of the appraisal by the DGS, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish Wildlife Service in the amount of \$373,500.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$5,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650, for internal project-related 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.

- *11. Triple Creeks Conservation Area, Expansion 2 \$5,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority) to be applied toward the acquisition of a privately-owned property totaling 6± acres, in southwestern Riverside County, for the protection of threatened and endangered species and to establish a wildlife movement corridor.

The Triple Creeks Conservation Area (Conservation Area) is located north of Temecula and south of Hemet. The property is located west of State Highway 79, east of Interstate Highway 215 south of Scott Road, south of the unincorporated community of Winchester. Totalling nearly 13,000 acres, the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve is located east of the Conservation Area, and "Johnson Ranch" is located east of the subject property.

The Conservation Area is a mix of oak riparian, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, annual grasslands, and agricultural fields. The habitat complex supports a diverse native and wildlife community including a number of State and federally-listed threatened and endangered species including the Quino checkerspot butterfly, coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, Swainson's hawk, California orcutt's grass, Munz's onion, and the Stephens kangaroo rat. This acquisition, in addition to protection of the habitat and wildlife species, will help to establish and protect a contiguous landscape linkage, habitat nodes for wildlife dispersal, and wildlife connectivity within a rapidly developing area. The project also conforms to the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and will further implement joint federal, State, and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in southwestern Riverside County.

The Authority has proposed that the area be managed primarily to preserve threatened and endangered species and to conserve biodiversity. Additional management objectives may include preserving public access for recreational pursuits such as hiking and wildlife viewing. Management costs will be provided by operating funds from the 2004 Assessment District 161 (AD 161) Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan funds held by the Authority. The State will have no responsibility for management of this property.

The property owner has agreed to sell to the Authority at the appraised fair market value of \$325,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed agreement to subgrant the federal funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant will provide 100 percent of the approved, appraised value of the property, or \$325,000.00. The matching funds requirement for this federal grant has been fully met and no further matching funds will be required under the federal grant. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), which includes the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds or "in-kind" acquisitions, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$325,000.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5) for internal project-related 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.

- *12. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 16 \$641,000.00
Monterey County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of a parcel of land, totaling 7± acres, as an addition to the Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve for the preservation and protection of wildlife habitat.

Elkhorn Slough is a shallow estuary located approximately 100 miles south of San Francisco in northern Monterey County. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved the first acquisition in the Elkhorn Slough in 1979, and to date, more than 1,300± acres have been acquired by the WCB. In addition to the WCB's conservation efforts, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation (Foundation) has protected nearly 2,700± acres in the slough area. The Foundation is a community-supported land trust that works with local landowners as well as public and private partners to insure that the natural heritage and health of Elkhorn Slough is secure.

Elkhorn Slough is an integral part of the coastal arm of the Pacific Flyway and provides habitat for a large number of migratory and resident water-associated birds. Over 90 species have been identified from this area. The waters of the slough also provide an important nursery and feeding area for many sport and commercial fishes, in addition to supporting a rich fauna of bottom and mud-dwelling organisms.

Elkhorn Slough is one of the few coastal estuaries in California and harbors a remarkable diversity of wildlife, including southern sea otters, harbor seals, over 340 species of birds, 100 species of fish, and many unusual plants. These include, but are not limited to, Hooker's manzanita, Monterey ceanothus, Pajaro manzanita, Monterey spineflower, western snowy plover, the California red-legged frog, the tidewater goby, and the California tiger salamander. The Elkhorn Slough is one of 27 National Estuarine Research Reserves established in the coastal zone of the United States and has been designated a State Ecological Reserve by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and a Globally Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society. The subject parcel is very valuable as part of the overall Elkhorn Slough ecosystem. The property contains coastal marsh habitat, grasslands, and oak woodlands. In addition to the high wildlife value contained within this parcel and the fish and wildlife values of the adjoining slough, the subject property may also provide recreational potential. Potential uses may include nature study, scientific research, and bird watching. The DFG currently manages the reserve and will include this property in the reserve for management purposes.

The owner has agreed to sell the property for the appraised, fair market value of \$630,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). It is estimated that an additional \$11,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs by the WCB, including the title and escrow fees and the DGS review costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$641,000.00. The purpose of this project, the protection of threatened and endangered species and a significant natural area, is consistent with the purposes of the proposed funding.

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

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$641,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c) for the acquisition and internal project-related 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.

- *13. Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve, Edom Hill Unit, \$15,000.00
Expansion 30, Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) to be applied toward the acquisition of 320± acres in the Coachella Valley area of Riverside County for the protection of threatened and endangered species.

The project area is located in the Coachella Valley, approximately three miles north of Interstate Highway 10, and about two miles east of the City of Desert Hot Springs. Within a four mile radius of the subject property, there are a number of landowners protecting habitat including the CNLM, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, California State Parks, USFWS, and Friends of the Desert Mountains that combine to protect an area of about 20,000± acres.

The subject property is located in Edom Hill between the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve (Reserve) near Thousand Palms, and Willow Hole Ecological Reserve adjacent to Desert Hot Springs. This acquisition will allow for further protection of the desert sand habitat and the viability of the sand dependent species within the Coachella Valley.

The initial acquisition for the protection of the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and desert sand habitat began around 1982 through acquisitions by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and continues to grow through public and private acquisitions and exchanges. Development has been sporadic in the immediate area over the past 20 years and additional residential construction and development within the area is considered to be detrimental to the sand and desert habitat.

The DFG has identified this property as being critical to the protection of the Coachella Valley fringe-toed Lizard and has recommended the purchase of this property. When acquired, the acreage will be incorporated into, and managed in

conjunction with other holdings of the CNLM. It is anticipated that the area could offer passive recreational uses, as the habitat is maintained as open space. The property is currently vacant, but has the potential for subdivision and residential development.

Preservation of the property as identified within the Edom Hill area will ensure the continued success of the Reserve and enhance the habitat for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. This area also provides possible habitat for several other species that are found in the Coachella Valley including the flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley milk vetch, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Palm Springs ground squirrel, and the Coachella giant sand treader cricket.

The property owner has agreed to sell to the CNLM at the appraised fair market value of \$1,960,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed agreement to subgrant the federal funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant will provide \$1,470,000.00 toward the purchase price of the property. Additional funding contributions will be provided by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (\$418,000.00) and the CNLM (\$72,000.00). It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the WCB, including appraisal review costs by the DGS, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$5,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species where the funding is leveraged with other funds or "in-kind" acquisitions, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$1,470,000.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Center for Natural Lands Management; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5) for internal project-related 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.

14. Iron Mountain Wildlife Area, Monte Vista \$25,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the purchase of a 4,056± property in rural San Diego County to protect an expanse of relatively intact and undisturbed grasslands, upland chaparral, and riparian habitat that will promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species. The property will also provide linkages to adjacent public lands to prevent habitat fragmentation.

The property was initially purchased by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in 2005, using \$6,221,232.00 of its own funds and a \$9,700,000.00 subgrant from the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), for a total purchase price of \$15,921,232.00. The funds granted by the SCC to TNC were initially funds the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) granted to the SCC to be applied toward acquisition within approved Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs), primarily located in San Diego County. Today, to facilitate the proposed acquisition of the TNC property by the State, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has provided a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant in the amount of \$6,221,232.00 to be accepted by the WCB and applied toward the purchase of the property. Staff has requested that the SCC and TNC release any and all rights under its grant agreement for this property.

Known as the Monte Vista Ranch, the subject property is located south of the unincorporated community of Ramona, in central San Diego County, along the border with the Barona Indian Reservation. It occupies a large part of the east-west wildlife corridor along San Vicente Creek and its major tributary canyons (Daney Canyon and Long Gulch), as well as a high mesa and surrounding rocky highlands.

The property contains a diversity of vegetation types, including oak woodland, riparian forest, coastal sage scrub, vernal swales/pools, and chaparral. Biological surveys have revealed populations of the State and federally-listed least Bell's vireo, arroyo southwestern toad, and western spadefoot toad. The endangered San Diego thornmint and nine sensitive plant species, including Palmer's grappling hook, graceful tarplant, and Orcutt's quillwort have been observed on site. Mammal species detected include mountain lion, deer, bobcat, western spotted skunk, and ringtail. Numerous raptors, including golden eagle, red-shouldered hawk, and great horned owls, along with many other species of birds make their homes in the varied habitat. Preservation is critical to retaining the east-west wildlife corridor along San Vicente Creek and maintaining a linkage between Mount Gower Open Space Preserve and the conserved habitat to the west.

This property has long been identified as especially significant for preservation in conjunction with the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) NCCPs in San Diego County and the San Diego County's Multiple Species Conservation Plan. Its importance was also described in the DFG's Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for the Iron Mountain Wildlife Area. TNC purchased the Monte Vista property in 2005 with the intention of preserving the area until it could be repurchased either by the County or by the DFG. A recently approved grant from

the USFWS has now provided an opportunity for the State to purchase the property from TNC. A recent offer by the San Diego County Water Agency to acquire and donate an adjacent 392± acre improved parcel (housing and community facilities) as mitigation for work they will be performing at the nearby San Vicente Reservoir makes this acquisition particularly attractive to the DFG for the possible expansion of community outreach programs in the South Coast area.

This acquisition, along with the adjacent mitigation parcel will add a total of 4,449± acres of undeveloped land in an area threatened by continuing rural residential development. TNC will be donating back \$1,000,000.00 of the purchase price in the form of a permanent endowment, the income of which will help to support the maintenance and operation of the property. The County Water Agency will be providing an additional \$500,000.00 endowment to accompany the adjacent 392± acre mitigation lands.

The subject property was purchased by TNC in 2005 at an appraised value of \$15,921,232.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). TNC has agreed to sell the property to the State at the 2005 value. The DGS has recently re-reviewed and approved the appraisal, concluding that the value of the property remains at least as high as it was at the time of purchase, despite current fluctuations in the real estate market. TNC has offered to sell the property to the State at the 2005 appraised value, with the State compensating TNC for their investment of \$6,221,232.00. The USFWS has provided a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant in the sum of \$6,221,232.00 for that portion of the purchase price. The balance of the purchase, in the amount of \$9,700,000.00, reflects funding originally provided in a WCB grant to SCC, and which was subsequently provided in a subgrant from SCC to TNC. Staff of the WCB has requested that the SCC and TNC release any and all rights under its grant agreement for this property.

It is estimated that \$25,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses by the WCB including title insurance expenses, escrow fees, and review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$25,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of real property in conjunction with Natural Community Conservation Plans approved by the Department of Fish and Game prior to January 1, 1999, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$6,221,232.00 and use of the federal

funds toward the acquisition; allocate \$25,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(6), for internal project-related 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.

15. Bluebird Preserve, Expansion 1 \$5,010,000.00
Los Angeles County

This proposal is to consider an allocation of a grant to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for a project involving the acquisition of 262± acres of improved privately-owned land lying in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in the northeasterly portion of the City of Glendora. This acquisition abuts and links a previously acquired property to the Glendora Wilderness Park and the Angeles National Forest. Joining the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and TPL in a partnership to accomplish this acquisition are the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the City of Glendora, the County of Los Angeles, and the property owner.

The purpose of this acquisition is the protection of the coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands plant communities along with the sensitive and endangered species potentially resident within this habitat. Sensitive plant species include a large identified area of federally-listed thread-leaved brodiaea. Other federal species of concern and/or California Native Plant Society List 1B 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 that would be protected by this acquisition supports the federally-listed coastal California gnatcatcher and the State species of concern Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, cactus wren, yellow warbler, coastal rufous-crowned sparrow, coast horned lizard, and mountain kingsnake. Mountain lions, black bear, and ring-tailed cat have been observed on the property along with more common plants and animals.

It is proposed that TPL take title initially, and then convey a conservation easement to the City of Glendora, and fee title encumbered with the conservation easement to the Glendora Community Conservancy for long term management of the property.

The property is appraised at \$11,310,000.00, and that fair market value has been approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). Funding contributors to this project are the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (\$5,500,000.00), the City of Glendora (\$350,000.00), the County of Los Angeles (\$250,000.00), and the sellers (\$210,000.00). A proposed grant from the WCB, in the amount of \$5,010,000.00, would provide TPL with the funding necessary to facilitate its acquisition of the subject property. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the

WCB, bringing the total recommended allocation for the project to \$5,010,000.00. The proposed funding source for this project allows for grants to protect coastal wetlands and adjacent upland areas as identified in the State Coastal Conservancy's Southern California Coastal Wetlands Inventory and is consistent with the purposes of the project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve the property being proposed for acquisition by TPL. The grant further provides 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 directly into TPL's escrow account for the purchase of the property.

The proposed project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and has been determined to be exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as a 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$5,010,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a), for the grant and internal project-related 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.

16. Lower Owens River Basin Saltcedar Control \$600,000.00
Inyo County

This proposal is to consider the allocation of a grant to the County of Inyo Water Department for a partnership project with the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to remove the nonnative invasive plant, saltcedar, from the channel and adjacent floodplain lands of the Lower Owens River on property owned by the City of Los Angeles, and to restore native plant diversity in those areas. The project includes land from the Los Angeles Aqueduct in the north to the L.A. Aqueduct Pumpback Station located near the Owens River Delta.

The Inyo County Water Department has previously received funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and the City of Los Angeles for the removal of saltcedar from the Lower Owens River channel (2001 and augmentation in 2004). As of April 2006, the saltcedar crew completed the removal of saltcedar on and adjacent to the river channel as far as the L.A. Aqueduct Pumpback Station at Owens Lake, a distance of approximately 60 miles, and covering an area of approximately 17,000 acres. That project was a key element in preparing the Lower Owens River channel for the rewatering and restoration of 62 miles of riparian and aquatic habitat. The release of flows to the dry portion of the channel began in

December 2006.

The proposed project involves work over approximately 16,000 acres of floodplain land outside the previously treated areas. Saltcedar is the dominant vegetation type in approximately 4,000 acres of the project area. The riparian floodplain saltcedar was prioritized for removal because of the timing of rewatering and the immediate threat of increasing and spreading saltcedar with the onset of flows. While the majority of saltcedar has been removed from the floodplain immediately adjacent to the Lower Owens River channel, there remain populations of saltcedar on the Owens Valley floor that are a seed source for the reinfestation of the rewatered channel.

The goal of this project is to:

- Monitor and maintain previously cleared saltcedar worksites in and adjacent to the Lower Owens River channel.
- Reduce the remaining populations of tamarisk in the Lower Owens River Basin, prioritizing those closest to the river channel. It is anticipated that during the three-year implementation period covered by the proposed grant, the project will remove approximately 1,350 acres of monoculture saltcedar stands.
- Restore native plant diversity to cleared saltcedar monoculture sites (either through natural recolonization by natives or by active planting).
- Develop a long-term monitoring and maintenance protocol for invasives in the Lower Owens River Program area.

The project will utilize the following methods:

- Chainsaw and herbicide applications by the well-trained and proven Inyo County Saltcedar Crew.
- Mechanical mowing and chipping followed by systemic herbicide to resprouts.
- Biocontrol using the most successful of four genotypes of tamarisk beetles currently being tested in the Owens Valley.
- Appropriate management practices that favor desirable native plants over non-native species.
- Possible restoration or planting (grasses) to discourage other nonnative plant establishment.
- Any new and successful saltcedar control methods appropriate to these populations.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$600,000.00
Los Angeles Department of Water & Power	600,000.00
Inyo County	<u>150,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,350,000.00

Project costs will be for project management and labor, services, supplies, equipment, administration and contingencies. The County of Inyo has agreed to manage and maintain the project improvements for 25 years pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. If at any time during the life of the project the County of Inyo 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.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency, prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Lower Owens River Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the environmental effects of the project as shown in the EIR and prepared proposed, written findings to comply with CEQA.

This project is consistent with the uses allowed under the proposed funding sources, the Habitat Conservation Fund and the General Fund, which allow for restoration of riparian habitat.

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings, and the mitigation and monitoring plan, and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$400,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Section 2786 (e/f)] (P50) and \$200,000.00 from the General Fund (California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program); 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.

17. Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Salmon Falls Unit, Expansion 5 \$110,000.00
El Dorado County

This proposal is to consider the allocation of a grant to the American River Conservancy (Conservancy) to assist in the acquisition of 80± acres of vacant land in El Dorado County, the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to enter into an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the Conservancy to be applied toward the purchase. This proposal is also to consider the authorization to accept title to the subject property from the Conservancy on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) as an addition to the Salmon Falls Unit of the Pine Hill Ecological Reserve (Reserve).

The Reserve lies about five miles northeast of urban El Dorado Hills, six miles east of Folsom Lake, and about two miles north of the town of Rescue. The Reserve is a cooperative effort among the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), the Conservancy, the BLM, and the DFG. These partners hope that the Reserve will one day encompass as much as 5,000 acres. While most of the existing Reserve is under the ownership of BLM, the area is managed cooperatively by the partners listed above. To date, nearly 2,000 acres have been acquired at this Reserve either by action of the WCB, as mitigation through the Fish and Game Commission, or through transactions completed by the BLM or the Conservancy. The subject

property abuts BLM lands on the west. The area's unique gabbroic soil type supports an extremely rich and important ensemble of rare plants found only in this general area of the world. The predominant vegetation type in this area is chamise chaparral which is primarily composed of chamise, manzanita, redbud, and interior live oak. The property supports four rare species: Layne's ragwort (federally-listed as "threatened"), red hill soaproot, Bisbee Peak rush rose, and El Dorado mule ears. These species are all endemic to the Pine Hill area of El Dorado County and are found to grow only in very specific locations within that area. According to the DFG, wildlife in this area includes resident deer and mountain lion, as well as numerous game birds, including dove, quail, and wild turkey.

This area is seriously threatened by the building of upscale homes on small acreage lots, especially those lots on or near ridge-tops (i.e. with views), which also happen to be the areas preferred by the four endemic rare plants listed above. Few such lots are left, resulting in a fast-paced market, and therefore very little habitat is left for purchase.

It is proposed that the Conservancy complete the acquisition and hold title to the property until transferring it to the DFG, after the DFG and the BLM reach an agreement for BLM's management of the subject property. The area will be managed as an ecological reserve by the management group with limited public access and with the primary management goal of maintaining and protecting the existing populations of rare and endangered plants.

The Conservancy proposes to purchase the property from the owner at the appraised fair market value of \$520,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has approved a grant to the Conservancy providing \$95,000.00 toward the acquisition. The WCB will help to fund the balance of the purchase price with a proposed agreement to subgrant the federal grant funds provided by the USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition Grant in the sum of \$318,750.00, together with a proposed \$106,250.00 grant from the WCB. It is estimated that an additional \$3,750.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses by the WCB, including the DGS review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$110,000.00. The purpose of this project, the protection of threatened and endangered species, is consistent with the purposes of this funding.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grants to the Conservancy provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve the property being proposed for acquisition by the Conservancy. The grants further provide that staff will review all proposed acquisition-related documents prior to recommending disbursement of the USFWS funds and the WCB funds directly into escrow.

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as 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 Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$318,750.00 and approve an agreement to subgrant the federal funds to the American River Conservancy; allocate \$110,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650, for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize acceptance of title to the subject property from the Conservancy on behalf of the DFG; 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.

18. Feather River Wildlife Area Riparian Habitat Restoration, \$781,460.00
Abbott Lake Unit
Sutter County

This proposal is to consider the allocation of a grant to River Partners for a partnership project with Ducks Unlimited and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore approximately 169 acres of riparian habitat and enhance approximately 250 acres of existing riparian forest on the Abbott Lake Unit of the Feather River Wildlife Area, which is State land managed by the DFG. The project is located on the west bank of the Feather River approximately nine miles downstream from Yuba City and 0.3 miles north of the O'Connor Lakes Unit, in Sutter County.

The 439-acre Abbott Lake Unit is part of the 2,522 acre Feather River Wildlife Area, and was acquired by the Board in 1985-86. Since acquisition, the property has become very popular with local hunters and anglers, providing a quality hunting experience for quail and deer, while the lake yields bass, bluegill and crappie. The area is also popular for hiking, birdwatching, etc. Access to the property is from the parking lot at the end of Star Bend Road, and a short walk north on the levee road.

The Abbott Lake Unit's riparian habitat is fragmented and degraded. This occurred in the 1960's when the land was partially cleared for orchard development. The orchard, located in an active floodplain, proved to be unsustainable and was abandoned. During the intervening years, pockets of cottonwood, black locust and sandbar willow have reestablished themselves in part of the area that was cleared for agriculture; however, most of this self-generated habitat took place in the northern half of the Unit. This left a large area of low quality, mainly invasive weed species located between the remnant riparian forest and the self-generating new pockets of cottonwood, locust and willows. Without intervention, nonnative plants are likely to continue dominating the disturbed areas, resulting in a very long recovery period for the property.

The project will restore 169 acres of riparian habitat and enhance an additional 250 acres of existing riparian forest that was invaded by nonnative plant species. River Partners will design and install a native plant community on the disturbed areas at Abbott Lake. This design will incorporate plant species that will minimize recurring costs incurred by the Department of Water Resources for floodway maintenance.

Previous experience on the O'Connor Lakes Unit has shown that it is possible to develop a "flood-neutral" planting design that will allow for efficient water conveyance through the Abbott Lake Unit without impacting downstream properties or levees. The project includes the following objectives:

- Establish self-sustaining native plant communities within a three-year period (includes irrigation and weed control)
- Plant over 23,000 native trees, shrubs and vines
- Reduce extent of invasive weeds by planting a dense, herbaceous understory
- Remove invasive weeds from existing riparian forest areas
- Monitor plants at the end of each growing season
- Evaluate project using adaptive management

This project will provide habitat for Federal and State-listed species including, but not limited to the Swainson's hawk, western yellow-billed cuckoo, Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, and will benefit other wildlife species, with particular emphasis on neotropical birds, waterfowl and upland game birds.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$781,460.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	106,190.00
River Partners (In-kind)	<u>56,830.00</u>
TOTAL	\$944,480.00

Project costs will be for project management, planning, site preparation, irrigation system installation, planting, support of plants, monitoring administration, installation of a sign and administration.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Wildlife Conservation 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 in land and vegetation on an existing officially designated wildlife area to improve habitat for fish and wildlife. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. This project is consistent with the uses allowed under the proposed funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund, which allows for restoration of riparian habitat.

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$781,460.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund Section (Prop. 117), 2786 (e/f); 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.

19. Truckee River Wildlife Area, Gray Creek Canyon Unit \$15,000.00
Nevada County

This proposal is to consider the donation of three parcels of land totaling 1,343± acres to the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) by the Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT). Contiguous to the Union Ice Unit of the Truckee River Wildlife Area, the proposed conveyance will put the entire Gray Creek watershed into contiguous public entity ownership for long-term management of vegetation, wildlife habitat, fisheries, and water quality resources, and will provide important habitat and corridor connectivity for a number of game species. All three parcels are directly upstream and in the watershed of the Truckee River, and will contribute to improving its water quality.

Located approximately ten miles east of the town of Truckee on the California-Nevada state boundary line, the acquisition of the property was accomplished through a partnership effort of TDLT, the Trust for Public Land, and the Truckee River Watershed Council, and was made possible by a Resources Legacy Foundation Fund – Preserving Wild California grant, the Nevada County – Wilson Bequest Fund, and funds provided by TDLT.

The riparian corridor and high altitude mountain peaks and meadows support classic eastern slope Sierra Nevada flora and fauna, and mark a transition from habitats of the Sierra Nevada Range to those of the Great Basin. The property provides habitat and corridor connectivity for a number of important species, including mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, blue grouse, and California quail. The federally-listed threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout have had populations in Gray Creek and the Truckee River, both considered important waterways to the recovery of this native species.

DFG proposes to manage the property for the protection of the natural values of the Truckee River watershed by providing contiguous public lands to sustain critical deer migration and wildlife habitat; to protect and enhance the riparian resources, water quality and fisheries; and to protect and maintain angling, hunting and other recreational uses of the property. Operation and management costs of the property will be minimal because of its remoteness and limited access. The DFG plans to incorporate the costs of passive management into existing budgets and staffing. Additionally, TDLT has agreed to provide an endowment of \$10,000.00 for initial costs as a condition of the conveyance.

It is estimated that approximately \$15,000.00 will be required to cover project-related expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), including but not limited to the DGS appraisal review costs, environmental review, and transaction review, bringing the total recommended allocation for this project to \$15,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of land to protect deer and mountain lion habitat and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

There are no claims of sovereign State land ownership on the subject property. The proposed conveyance has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitats. Subject to approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board accept the donation of this property as proposed; allocate \$15,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(a) for internal project-related costs; 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.

20. Fields Landing Public Access Improvements \$574,000.00
Humboldt County

This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

21. Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, Tolay Creek Unit \$3,020,000.00
Expansion 5
Sonoma County

This proposal is to consider the allocation of a grant to the Sonoma Land Trust (Land Trust) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District), and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to assist with the acquisition of 1,657± acres of private land in Sonoma County. The acquisition will protect wetlands, riparian and upland habitat, including freshwater marsh, unique moist grasslands, open meadow, and oak woodland, and will also provide public recreational access and educational/interpretive opportunities.

The property is located in southern Sonoma County, approximately eight miles south of the City of Sonoma, six miles southwest of Novato, seven miles northwest of Petaluma and 12 miles northeast of Napa, in unincorporated Sonoma County. Direct access to the property is via a dirt ranch road from Highway 121. The property is flanked on the north and south by protected lands. To the north the property borders the newly established 1,737 acre Tolay Lake Regional Park, the largest natural freshwater lake in Sonoma County, and the only remaining one in the San Pablo Bay watershed. The Infineon Raceway property, a large portion of which is protected by a conservation easement held by the District, is to the southeast.

Acquisition of the subject property represents a unique, unprecedented opportunity to ensure essential landscape-level habitat linkages in the Baylands Ecosystem. Protection of this 1,657± acre property will connect the recently acquired 1,737± acre Tolay Lake Regional Park to the DFG's Napa-Sonoma Marsh and conservation parcels linked to San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, all part of a mosaic of over 21,000 acres of protected lands.

Acquisition of this property will provide permanent protection of wintering and refuge habitat for a variety of resident or nesting special status species, including the western burrowing owl, the California red-legged frog, Callippe's silverspot butterfly, Myrtle's silverspot butterfly, and Opler's longhorn moth, the northwestern pond turtle, white tailed kit, California horned lark, and the northern harrier. A golden eagle nesting site has also been found on the property. Several special status plant species found in the immediate vicinity include fragrant fritillary, Franciscan onion, Napa false indigo, alkali milk-vetch, Marin western flax, Jepson's leptosiphon, and Marin checkerbloom.

The DFG has identified this project as being critical to the integrity and connectivity of diverse habitats from San Pablo Bay to the headwaters of Tolay Creek in the Sonoma foothills, contributing significantly to the sustainability of adjacent conservation efforts. The Land Trust will hold title to the property for a period of two to four years, and then intends to transfer it to the Sonoma County Regional Parks for annexation to the Tolay Lake Regional Park. The District will be granted a conservation easement after the Land Trust takes title to the property.

The Land Trust has negotiated a bargain sale of the property. The property is appraised at \$14,086,000.00, and that value has been approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The landowners have agreed to sell the property for \$13,000,000.00. Funding contributions are as follows:

The Moore Foundation	\$4,750,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	\$3,000,000.00
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation And Open Space District	\$2,000,000.00
Sonoma Land Trust	\$250,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)	<u>\$3,000,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$13,000,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$20,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs by the WCB, including appraisal review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$3,020,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species and significant natural landscapes, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,020,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c) (Prop. 50SF), for the grant and internal project-related 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.

22. Staff Report - Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands (ERAL) Statewide Informational

This item is to provide information on the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands (ERAL) funding guidelines. The guidelines have been developed to guide the investment of \$5,000,000.00 in funding made available to the WCB under the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act (Proposition 84), Chapter 6 (d)(4), to "Assist Farmers in Integrating Agricultural Activities with Ecosystem Restoration and Wildlife Protection."

This funding provides an opportunity for the WCB to work with farmers to enhance wildlife habitat on their working farms, consistent with their on-going agricultural operations. WCB's goal is to identify and implement, in collaboration with the agricultural community, projects that provide long-term habitat benefits for wildlife, while maintaining the economic sustainability of the agricultural operations. In addition, the WCB is looking to identify projects that have the potential to be replicated across a variety of regions in the state.

There are nearly 30,000,000 acres of farm and ranch land in California, more than half of the private land in State. Private farm and ranch lands provide the economic foundation for many rural towns and communities, as well as significant habitat for many wildlife species and habitat connectivity between protected wildlife areas. The extent to which these lands benefit wildlife depends to a large degree on the stewardship practices undertaken by individual landowners. Many agricultural landowners want to integrate wildlife habitat benefits into their operations, but lack the capital to install, funding to manage, and in some cases, the expertise to implement and monitor wildlife-beneficial agricultural activities.

The intent of the WCB's funding is to assist landowners in developing wildlife friendly practices on their properties, practices that can be sustained and co-exist with their agricultural operations. This funding may provide a valuable complement to federal funds that will be devoted to wildlife habitat on private lands, including federal conservation programs supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Reclamation, as well as other privately funded initiatives that are under development or in early stages of implementation. In recent years, federal programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (USDA) and Landowner Incentives Program (USFWS) have become critical sources of funding to support landowner investments.

This program builds on a previous funding effort from the Resources Agency – the California Bay-Delta Authority’s 2005 grant program for “Integrating Agricultural Activities with Ecosystem Restoration”. This program was focused on specific priority areas highlighted by the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (including watersheds in the Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Bay-Delta Regions), and several key species that CALFED had a responsibility for benefiting in this area. Stakeholder input was derived through the Bay Delta Public Advisory Committee’s Working Landscapes Subcommittee, which provided extensive input and feedback to develop the program and to determine what types of restoration projects should be evaluated and considered for funding.

The Department of Fish and Game’s 2007 Wildlife Action Plan also highlights the importance of improving habitat benefits of private farm and range lands. One statewide conservation action highlighted in that plan specifically addresses the importance of wildlife improvements on private working lands:

- Federal, state, and local agencies and nongovernmental conservation organizations, working with private landowners, should expand efforts to implement agricultural and rangeland management practices that are compatible with wildlife and habitat conservation.

This grant program provides an important opportunity for the department to advance this important statewide strategy in conjunction with state and federal partners as well as non-profit conservation and agricultural organizations, and private landowners.

To develop the WCB’s objectives for his effort, the WCB worked with a number of the staff and stakeholders with intimate knowledge of wildlife habitat practices that can be successfully implemented in an agricultural context, including many involved in the development of the CALFED program. The resulting guidelines expand on the ideas, concepts and approaches developed under CALFED into a statewide funding strategy for the WCB “Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands” (ERAL) funds. WCB also sought the input of other agricultural groups and organizations involved in the research and development of multi-benefit land use practices that sustain both biodiversity and farming operations. This included the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the California Department of Conservation, along with a host of other federal, state and non-profit organizations working in the area of agricultural conservation. The overall response has been very positive and supportive, along with a general consensus that this type of state funding is needed and has been along-time in coming.

Through this collaborative effort, the WCB developed the following required criteria:

- All projects must be located on privately owned, agricultural land where agriculture is a major land-use activity, and have a willing property owner.
- All projects must provide on-site habitat benefits to wildlife.

- All projects must be durable and include a long-term management plan and agreement that ensures that habitat features will remain on the landscape for a time period commensurate with wildlife population needs (e.g., projects undertaken on lands with agricultural or conservation easements).

In addition, the following measures were identified to make projects more desirable and competitive:

- The project provides on-site habitat benefits to State or Federal listed species and/or species of special concern or species on the brink of being listed.
- The project provides enhancement of, connection to, or expansion of wildlife habitat corridors, landscapes or other protected areas.
- The project includes a long-term monitoring plan to measure wildlife benefits, and operates in an adaptive management framework where data collection guides future management actions
- The project is located on land already protected or that will be protected with a long-term contract or easement (agriculture or conservation).
- The project complements other conservation programs, plans or strategies in the area, including, but not limited to HCP or NCCP, in the area.
- The project works with multiple landowners in the same area to provide wildlife habitat benefits on a landscape scale.
- The project provides watershed benefits.
- The project employs methodologies or approaches that can be replicated, expanded and applied in multiple agricultural areas of the state, or other programs run by other federal or state entities. This includes innovative approaches or methods that can help streamline processes, such as regulatory or permit processes, and facilitate the implementation of other similar projects.
- The project is compatible with other sustainable conservation measures.
- The project includes other funding partners in the development or implementation of the project.
- Although there is no set “cap” on the amount of funding that can be requested through the application process, project funding request less than \$250,000, are more desirable, with those closer to \$100,000 or less, being the most desirable.
- The project demonstrates collaboration with other wildlife and agricultural interest groups, agencies or programs operating in the region and, if appropriate, at the statewide level.

The following list, while not intended to be all-inclusive, provides examples of the types of projects that the WCB envisions would qualify for these funds. The WCB anticipates that there may be many other types of projects submitted, and encourages innovation in the development of proposal.

- Habitat restoration and enhancement of water corridors, streams, ditches, canals, tail water and return basins and ponds on agricultural lands.
- Vegetated filter strips, hedgerows and other wildlife buffers.
- Development of wetland areas.
- Riparian and floodplain restoration.
- Fencing to protect and enhance native habitats.
- Restoration and enhancement of native grasslands.
- Cover cropping with direct wildlife benefits.
- Agricultural habitat management activities that provide significant environmental co-benefits including water quality improvements, greenhouse gas reduction, etc.

Eligible applicants will include nonprofit conservation organizations and federal, state or local governmental agencies, including eligible resource conservation districts, agricultural land trusts, county agricultural commissions and farm bureaus. The process for submittal and review of project proposals and applications will be similar to the WCB's other restoration programs, where applications are accepted and reviewed on an open and continuous process, with DFG assisting in the review and recommendation process. Project proponents will be able to apply for funding using the WCB's Restoration Funding Application, that is used for the WCB's restoration programs, including the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program, Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and the Inland Wetland Conservation Program. All the above information will be posted on the WCB's web page, along with a broadcast notice to all interested parties and stakeholders.

This is the first funding source managed by the WCB focused on working with "farmers". Considering the importance of agricultural properties in supporting wildlife species in California and the connectivity of these lands with wildlife areas, corridors and linkages, the WCB sees this funding as an great opportunity to not only develop new and innovative approaches to integrate agricultural activities with ecosystem conservation, but equally important as a way to collaborate and develop new partnerships with the agricultural community.

23. Staff Report - Forest Conservation Program
Statewide

Adopt Program

On November 7, 2006, the people of California passed the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, commonly referred to as Proposition 84 (Bond Act). As part of the people's initiative, the Act continuously appropriated \$180 million to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), for a grant program for forest conservation and protection projects.

The Bond Act (Public Resources Code Section 75055 [a]), states that the goals of the grant program are to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests for all their public benefits through forest conservation, preservation, and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests, and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands.

As reflected in the Bond Act, California's majestic forests provide a wide range of public and private benefits including recreational opportunities, habitat for fish and wildlife species, open space, scenic vistas, and commodity products crucial to California's economic wellbeing. California forestlands and ecosystems are unique and their ability to meet biological, ecological, economic, cultural, and social functions has long been a priority. Since 1864, when Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant setting aside Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias as a State Supervised Public Reserve, Californians have cherished and protected their forests. In 1906, encouraged by a group of private influential California residents, Yosemite became a National Park.

California has about 85 million acres of forestlands, of which about half are in private ownership and range in size, species, and levels of tree canopy. According to the State Department of Finance, by the year 2040, California's population is projected to increase from 35 million people to more than 50 million. Faced with projected population increases, associated urban expansion and the continual increase in the number and size of rural ranchettes, California is at risk of losing a unique resource that provides tremendous economic, social, environmental, ecological, and cultural benefits to all the people of California.

In response to increased threats, the people of California voted to authorize a \$180 million grant program to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests for all their public benefits. To help it achieve the purposes of the program, the WCB convened an advisory group to assist with the development of the Forest Conservation Program. The advisory group was comprised of registered foresters, private landowners and industry representatives, forest managers, and representatives from the following organizations: Pacific Forest Trust, Save the Redwoods League, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, UC Cooperative Extension, UC Berkeley School of Forestry, Sierra Business Council, economic forest consultants, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, California Council of Land Trusts, Resources Agency, Department of Fish and Game,

CAL FIRE, and the WCB.

The advisory group, a diverse and dedicated group of talented and passionate individuals, envisioned a Forest Conservation Program that is accountable, meets the intent of the Bond Act, and is responsive to the needs of the people of California, the forest ecosystem, private landowners and their working landscapes. To achieve this ambitious goal, four, all day workshops were convened and the advisory group worked to develop the program guidelines and selection criteria. While the workshop discussions were at times challenging and controversial, the advisory group played a critical role in assisting the WCB develop the Forest Conservation Program.

To create a grant program designed to protect, restore, and enhance forestlands and working landscapes responsive to the ecological, economic, and biological attributes of the forest ecosystem, guiding principles were developed. The principles, used in conjunction with the eligibility and selection criteria will assist applicants to prepare project proposals that are responsive to the Bond Act language and purpose of the grant program.

To further ensure the best proposals are considered for funding from the Forest Conservation Program, the WCB will accept project proposals on a continuous basis, however; the proposals will only be evaluated during defined periods. Specifically, proposals will be evaluated in late January and early June. Proposals will be evaluated by the WCB staff and an independent team of Resource Agency professionals (with biological and forestry expertise).

Project proposals will be ranked and prioritized against the program guidelines and selection criteria. If the project merits further consideration by the WCB, applicants will be notified as appropriate. Applications that are complete and meet the minimum eligibility requirements will be reviewed against the following guiding principles, guidelines and selection criteria:

Forest Conservation Guiding Principles

- Working forests/productive managed forestlands shall be the primary emphasis of the Forest Conservation Program.
- Forest reserve areas are an important component of California's diverse native forests and shall be part of the Forest Conservation Program.
- Each project must promote the restoration and/or the maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.
- The project application must articulate in sufficient detail how the project relates to an existing regional, state or local public or private planning process if applicable, and address the local priority and ecological need.
- Restoration efforts shall contribute toward the ecological integrity and economic stability of the native forest. Restoration projects must demonstrate the long-term protection of the restoration effort and be tied to the forest structure and

sustainability. A long-term agreement to manage the restoration effort must coincide with the useful life of the improvements and restoration practices.

- Projects will be evaluated based on a process that ranks and prioritizes project applications based on how the project contributes toward the program goal, guidelines, and selection criteria.
- Future management activities and or restoration investment should be from committed or clearly identified and articulated funding sources to be considered part of the project.
- Overall accomplishment of the program goals can best be achieved through projects that provide the greatest economic efficiency by using the best available tool. Applicants must clearly state the objectives of the project and describe how the project will achieve the stated objectives.

In addition to the guiding principles, eligibility and selection criteria were developed. The eligibility criteria will be used to evaluate which project proposals meet minimum qualification requirements and should be considered for further evaluation. Specifically, the following project eligibility criteria were developed:

Project Eligibility Requirements

1. Acquisition of any interest in real property must be from a willing seller, supported by an appraisal [performed by a qualified, licensed, appraiser] that utilizes private market based assumptions consistent with State and if applicable, Federal appraisal standards. The interest must be held by an eligible and qualified entity.
2. The project must meet the goals of the Forest Conservation Program.
3. Project must protect and/or restore native forests on the property.
4. Restoration efforts must demonstrate a long-term commitment and agreement to manage and protect the ecological integrity of the forest consistent with the goals and guiding principles of the program. Landowners will be required to sign a long-term agreement to manage the restoration project for the useful life of the restoration effort.

For all project proposals that meet the minimum eligibility requirements, project selection criteria will be applied to elicit additional information from the applicant that further describes the merits and value of the proposal. The project application will request information to measure the proposal's compliance with and contribution toward the minimum eligibility requirements and guiding principles. Further, applicants will be requested to explain the project goals and objectives and how the project will contribute toward each of the selection criteria, including the larger landscape, regional, and local conservation effort. In addition, the selection criteria will measure how well the project contributes toward the ecological integrity, economic stability, and efficiency of the forest. Finally, applicants will be requested to explain how they will measure and determine the success of the proposed project, and how the stated goals and objectives will be achieved.

To further assist staff and the independent review team] with the evaluation of proposed projects, applications that are complete and meet the minimum eligibility requirements will be reviewed against the following selection criteria:

Project Selection Criteria -- 2 Phase Selection Review Process

Phase I: All proposals must demonstrate the ecological integrity of the property and its surrounding landscape and discuss the economic stability and address the economic efficiency of the project.

1. Project must advance ecological integrity of the property and its surrounding landscape.
2. Project must advance economic stability of the forest.
3. Project must address economic efficiency, and in consideration of such, will be evaluated for its ability to leverage as feasible:
 - (a) Private and philanthropic investment funds to reduce overall public funding and/or underwrite the productive economic value of the property.
 - (b) Multiple public funding sources, especially non-state funding, as feasible in the project area.
4. Project applications requesting funds for the acquisition of fee interests, conservation easement interests, and/or restoration efforts shall be weighed and compared against the possible lower expenditures associated with alternative options that could achieve the proposed objectives consistent with the Guiding Principles and Eligibility Requirements that will achieve most or all of the designated program goals.

Phase II: Proposals that also address one or more factors outlined in the Bond Act (Proposition 84) will be given additional consideration.

5. An acquisition or restoration project funded from the Forest Conservation Program must demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics:
 - (a) Landscape/Habitat Linkages: Properties that link to, or contribute to linking, existing protected areas with other large blocks of protected habitat. Linkages must serve to connect existing protected areas, facilitate wildlife movement or botanical transfer, and result in sustainable combined acreage.
 - (b) Watershed Protection: Projects that contribute to long-term protection of and improvement to the water and biological quality of the streams, aquifers, and terrestrial resource of priority watersheds of the major biological regions of the state as identified by the Resources Agency.
 - (c) Properties that support relatively large areas of under-protected major habitat types. For projects funded from the Forest Conservation Program, the habitat types must be forestlands.

- (d) Properties that provide habitat linkages between two or more major biological regions of the states.
 - (e) Properties for which there is a non-state matching contribution toward the acquisition, restoration, stewardship or management costs. Matching contribution can be either monetary or in the form of services, including volunteer services. In-kind or voluntary services will be converted to a monetary value at market rates. For purposes of the Forest Conservation Program, this option is supplemental to the economic requirements outlined in the eligibility requirements and the selection criteria.
6. Project may conserve, restore or provide one or more of the following:
- (a) Rare or threatened native fish and wildlife habitat.
 - (b) Conserve or restore old growth forests.
 - (c) Protects/restores native forests, including forest producing wood and related forest products that support sustainable native forest ecosystems and local economies.
 - (d) Provides public recreation access that is compatible with forest ecosystems and economic uses.

Climate Benefits

As part of the Administration's effort to develop strategies to address the impacts of climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the WCB is working with the Resources Agency and the Forest Climate Action Team (Forest CAT) subgroup. Resources Agency and the Forest CAT subgroup is working to identify opportunities and strategies on how the forest sector can reduce and/or sequester greenhouse gas emissions.

The Forest Conservation Program may be able to contribute toward this effort. To the extent the forest grant program can facilitate opportunities that are consistent with the Forest CAT subgroup strategies, WCB will encourage such opportunities through its grant program. Working with the Resources Agency, WCB staff will continue to assist with opportunities that compliment the Administration's effort to address the impacts of climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, pursuant to the provisions of Fish and Game Code Section 1356, (Chapter 469, Statutes of 2007), the WCB, when it prioritizes the use of available funds for proposed acquisitions, with regard to the priority of a proposal to acquire forestland, may consider and take into account the potential of that proposed acquisition to beneficially reduce or sequester greenhouse gas emissions. The law further states that the WCB may use policies, protocols, or other relevant information developed by the California Climate Action Registry as a basis for determining a project's potential to reduce or sequester greenhouse gas emissions. Consistent with the provisions of the law, if the intent of a proposed project is to reduce or sequester greenhouse gas emissions, applicants will be requested to explain how the project will reduce or sequester greenhouse gas emissions.

As funded projects compliment and contribute toward the opportunities and strategies developed by the Resources Agency and the Forest CAT, the WCB will continue to assist with efforts designed to reduce and/or sequester greenhouse gas emissions.

To accomplish the intent of the grant program as authorized in the Bond Act, staff recommends the Board approve the suggested guidelines, eligibility and selection criteria; authorize staff to proceed with the development and distribution of the application package; and authorize staff to proceed with the implementation of the Forest Conservation Program substantially as proposed.

24. Executive Session (Not Open to the Public)

THE BOARD MAY MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 11126(e)(1) TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION TO WHICH THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD IS A PARTY, FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN SAN JACINTO VALLEY VS. CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD, ET AL., RIVERSIDE COUNTY, SUPERIOR COURT, CASE NUMBER 477696 (CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT).