

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

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NOTICE OF MEETING**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

May 24, 2007

10:00 A.M.

1/ State Capitol, Room 113
 Sacramento, California 95814

FINAL AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM NO.	PAGE NO.
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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 County of Riverside to be applied toward its acquisition of two separate properties totaling 354± acres for the protection of threatened and endangered species including the San Diego horned lizard, orange-throated whiptail, coastal western whiptail, and the coast patch-nosed snake and to establish a wildlife movement corridor located east of Temecula, south of Hemet near State Highways 79 and 371, in the County of Riverside. [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.

- *8. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion 29, \$211,000.00 10
Riverside County

To consider the acceptance of a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in an amount not to exceed \$211,000.00 for the acquisition of 16± acres of land, as an addition to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, for the protection of wildlife habitat located southeasterly of the City of Moreno Valley near Mystic Lake, in Riverside County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) (Prop. 50)]

- *9. Department of Fish and Game Land \$221,000.00 12
Management Plans, Inland Deserts Region, Phase II, Riverside County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation to provide oversight for the completion and delivery of a land management plan for Department of Fish and Game's 21,000-acre San Jacinto Wildlife Area, located in Riverside County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

- *10. La Sierra Canyon, Los Angeles County \$5,000.00 15

To consider 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 County of Los Angeles, Parks and Recreation, to be applied toward its acquisition of 30± acres of vacant land for the protection of valuable wildlife habitat, in Los Angeles County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c) (Prop. 50)]

- *11. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, \$550,000.00 17
Expansion 12, Monterey County

To consider the acquisition of 42± acres of land as an addition to the Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve for the preservation and protection of wildlife habitat located south of the City of Watsonville, in Monterey County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c)]

- *12. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, \$325,000.00 19
Expansion 13, Monterey County

This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

- *13. San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch \$66,000.00 19
Site Enhancement, Fresno County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy to demolish and remove old, uninhabitable, dilapidated structures and debris to enhance public use and habitat conservation opportunities at the Conservancy's Ball Ranch located in Fresno County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe

Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40),
Section 5096.650(b)(5)]

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|------|--|--------------|----|
| *14. | San Joaquin River Parkway, Lost Lake
Regional Park Master Plan, Fresno County | \$400,158.00 | 21 |
|------|--|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a cooperative project with the County of Fresno to develop a master plan for improving Lost Lake Regional Park and to perform an environmental review of the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5)]

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|------|---|-------------|----|
| *15. | Ingomar Ranch Wetland Restoration,
Merced County | \$70,000.00 | 23 |
|------|---|-------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the Landowner, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore 237± acres of seasonal wetlands and 13± acres of associated uplands located on privately-owned property one mile east of the intersection of Ingomar and Cottonwood Roads, approximately five miles southeast of the City of Gustine in Merced County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) IWCP]

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|------|---|--------------|----|
| *16. | San Pedro Creek Fish Passage
Improvement, San Mateo County | \$300,000.00 | 25 |
|------|---|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Pacifica for a cooperative project to improve passage for steelhead in San Pedro Creek by removing a box culvert and existing log booms, and installing rock vane weirs and a new bridge structure across the creek, located on city-owned property approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County. [General Fund (CRHCP)]

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|------|---|--------------|----|
| *17. | Loch Lomond Marina, Intertidal
Enhancement, Marin County | \$207,775.00 | 27 |
|------|---|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to The Bay Institute to support its Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW) project in eradicating an introduced non-native snail species (Japanese Mud Snail) at two locations at Loch Lomond Marina in San Rafael, Marin County. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572(c)]

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|------|---|-------------|----|
| *18. | North Sutter Bypass Ranch Wetland
Enhancement, Sutter County | \$45,000.00 | 30 |
|------|---|-------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the Landowner, the Department of Fish and Game, the North

American Wetlands Conservation Council, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enhance 177± acres of seasonal wetlands and associated uplands located on privately-owned property in the Sutter Bypass at the western terminus of Lincoln Road, approximately eight miles west of the City of Yuba City in Sutter County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) IWCP and Section 2786(d) IWCP (Prop. 50)]

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|------|--|--------------|----|
| *19. | Battle Creek Wildlife Area Bridge Replacement, Shasta County | \$154,550.00 | 32 |
|------|--|--------------|----|

To consider a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game to remove the dilapidated foot bridge and replace it with a new foot bridge for pedestrians, vehicles, and equipment use. The new bridge will be placed 300 feet west of the current bridge located approximately 15 miles southeast of the town of Anderson, east and upstream from the Sacramento River, in Shasta County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop 40), Section 5096.650]

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|------|--|--------------|----|
| *20. | Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Yolo County | \$470,000.00 | 33 |
|------|--|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for the restoration of 350± acres of agricultural lands within the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area to semi-permanent and seasonal wetlands and to upgrade an existing pump station to improve water supplies for the management of 810± acres of wetlands and nearly 2,800 acres of wildlife-friendly agricultural fields located approximately 1.5 miles south of Highway 80, and just west of West Sacramento, in Yolo County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) IWCP]

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|-----|---|----------------|----|
| 21. | Santa Ana – Palomar Mountain Linkage (Department of Defense – Margarita Peak), San Diego County | \$1,580,000.00 | 35 |
|-----|---|----------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to The Trust for Public Land for a cooperative project with the Department of Defense, the Fallbrook Land Conservancy, and the Department of Fish and Game to assist with the acquisition of 1,206± acres of land to protect significant open space corridors and provide connectivity to the Cleveland National Forest, located south of the Cleveland National Forest and north of Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base, in San Diego County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

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|-----|---|--------------|----|
| 22. | Santa Rosa Mountains, Expansion 8, Riverside County | \$726,000.00 | 37 |
|-----|---|--------------|----|

To consider the acquisition of 100± acres of land as an expansion of the Santa Rosa Mountains and the acceptance of two grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service totaling \$924,424.00 to be applied toward the purchase of the property for the protection of critical habitat for peninsular bighorn sheep located south of Avenue 62 and west of Jefferson Street, in the city of La Quinta, in

Riverside County. [Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5) and Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop.117), Section 2786(b/c)]

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|-----|---|----------------|----|
| 23. | Topanga State Park Rodeo Grounds Stream Restoration, Los Angeles County | \$1,591,300.00 | 39 |
|-----|---|----------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Department of Parks and Recreation for the removal of a berm and structures, and revegetation of the site known as the Rodeo Grounds at Topanga Creek in Topanga State Park, located in Los Angeles County, just upstream from the Pacific Coast Highway and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572(a)]

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|-----|---------------------------|----------------|----|
| 24. | Parker Ranch, Kern County | \$1,515,000.00 | 41 |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over 9,576± acres of land for the protection of rangeland, grazing land, and grasslands, located near Caliente, in the County of Kern. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(f) Rangeland]

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|-----|--|----------------|----|
| 25. | California Fisheries Restoration Projects – 2007, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Del Norte Counties | \$1,153,073.00 | 43 |
|-----|--|----------------|----|

To consider approval of an interagency agreement with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for funding to assist in the restoration of fisheries habitat and to improve fish passage at four locations identified by the DFG’s Fisheries Restoration Grant Program. The projects will be implemented on private and public property in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Del Norte Counties. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

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|-----|--|----------------|----|
| 26. | San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara County | \$4,730,000.00 | 46 |
|-----|--|----------------|----|

To consider the acquisition of a 2,899± acre real property for the protection of sensitive plant and animal species and valuable habitat linkages to adjacent public lands, located approximately 20 miles east of San Jose and 25 miles south of Livermore, in Santa Clara County. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

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|-----|--|--------------|----|
| 27. | Bahia Wetland Restoration, Phase I, Marin County | \$835,800.00 | 48 |
|-----|--|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Marin Audubon Society to fund Phase I of a tidal wetland restoration project on 386± acres owned by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) known as the Bahia Unit of the Petaluma Marsh Wildlife Area, and on 39± acres controlled by the State Lands Commission

and managed by DFG, known as Mahoney Spur, and to restore upland and wetland habitat on East Bahia, a 58± acre parcel owned by the Marin Audubon Society adjacent to DFG lands in Marin County. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572(c)]

28. Putah Creek Fishing Access Improvements, \$562,606.00 51
Yolo County

To consider the allocation for a cooperative project with the County of Yolo to make extensive improvements to the Department of Fish and Game's Putah Creek Fishing Access sites 1, 2, 3, and 4 located east of the town of Winters between Lake Solano Park and Lake Berryessa. The project will include constructing barrier-free trails and fishing platforms, restrooms, and informational kiosks. Interpretive and informational signage will be installed and the existing parking areas, access roads, and park host area will be improved. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

29. Putah Creek North (Bobcat Ranch), \$6,360,000.00 54
Yolo County

To consider the allocation for a grant to Audubon California to assist in the acquisition of 6,810± acres of vacant land, together with the acceptance of a conservation easement over the property by Department of Fish and Game, for the protection of native grasslands, oak woodlands, and riparian habitat located north of State Highway 128, approximately three miles west of Winters, in Napa and Yolo Counties. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

30. Martis Valley, Nevada and Placer Counties \$6,510,000.00 56

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Truckee Donner Land Trust to assist in a cooperative project with The Trust for Public Land for the acquisition of 1,481± acres of vacant land for the protection of a critical deer migration corridor, mountain lion and wetland habitats, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public located approximately one-half mile east of the Truckee-Tahoe Airport, in Martis Valley, in Nevada and Placer Counties. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(a) and California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650]

31. Eel River Wildlife Area (Salt River Unit), \$920,000.00 58
Humboldt County

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Western Rivers Conservancy and the acceptance of a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service together with the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant those federal funds to the Conservancy, in a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy to assist in the acquisition of a 443± acre real property for the protection of wildlife habitat and coastal wetlands located northwest of the community of Ferndale

along the Salt River, adjacent to the Eel River, in Humboldt County.
[Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c)]

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|-----|---|--------------|----|
| 32. | Eel River Wildlife Area Wetland
Enhancement, Humboldt County | \$335,000.00 | 60 |
|-----|---|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance 140± acres of seasonal wetlands on the DFG's Eel River Wildlife Area, Ocean Ranch Unit, located approximately 10 miles southwest of the City of Eureka in Humboldt County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d), Other]

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|-----|--|--------------|----|
| 33. | Humboldt Bay Coastal Reserve,
Humboldt County | \$175,000.00 | 62 |
|-----|--|--------------|----|

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Friends of the Dunes Land Trust in a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy, Humboldt County, and the Pacific Coast Joint Venture, to assist in the acquisition of 38± acres of land for the protection and preservation of beach, dune, wetland, and remnant maritime forest habitat on the north spit of Humboldt Bay, about three miles southwest of Arcata and four miles northwest of Eureka, in Humboldt County. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c)]

(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

May 24, 2007

10:00 A.M.

1/ State Capitol, Room 113
Sacramento, California 95814

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

- Richard B. Rogers, Member
President, Fish and Game Commission
- Michael C. Genest, Member
Director, Department of Finance
- L. Ryan Brodrick, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM 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. Election of Chair.
- 3. Funding Status as of May 24, 2007 (Informational)

(a) 2006-07 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(1,006,900.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$3,993,100.00

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

Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocation	(1,775,000.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$18,924,000.00

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

Budget Act	\$20,551,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(2,028,542.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$18,522,458.00

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

Budget Act	\$20,577,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(14,177,856.50)
Unallocated Balance	\$6,399,143.50

(e) 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.....	(4,189,125.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$11,034,875.00

(f) 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.....	(14,451,512.52)
Unallocated Balance	\$110,487.48

(g) 1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)] ...	\$36,100,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(27,028,521.80)
Unallocated Balance	\$9,071,478.20

(h) 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

(i) 2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood
Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$11,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(0.00)
Unallocated Balance \$11,000,000.00

(j) 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.....(2,205,776.28)
Unallocated Balance \$6,294,223.72

(k) Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002 (2005-06 Reappropriation) ... \$4,800,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(4,660,999.23)
Unallocated Balance \$139,000.77

(l) Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002 (2005-06 Reappropriation) . \$19,200,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(15,878,035.43)
Unallocated Balance \$3,321,964.57

(m) 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.....(141,067,605.69)
Unallocated Balance \$131,932,394.31

(n) 2004-05 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach
Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)

Budget Act \$13,250,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....(13,089,784.38)
Unallocated Balance \$160,215.62

(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 Previous Board Allocations.....	(625,051,937.24)
Unallocated Balance	\$121,831,862.76

(q) 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.....	(0.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$164,700,000.00

Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055b)	\$123,525,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(50,000.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$123,475,000.00

(r) 2003-04 Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation)	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations.....	(2,009,701.00)
Unallocated Balance	\$2,990,299.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

General Fund (a).....	\$3,993,100.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c) and (d)	\$43,845,601.50
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (e), (f) and (g)	\$20,216,840.68
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (h), (i), (j), (k), (l) and (m)...	\$154,232,583.37
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (n), (o) and (p).....	\$134,480,108.38

Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
 River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (q)..... \$288,175,000.00
 Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (r)..... \$2,990,299.00

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

- 4. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 5 – 20)
- *5. Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 15 and March 15 and 28, 2007
- *6. Recovery of Funds

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

- \$18,915.11** to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
- \$24,599.09** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
- \$15,686.00** to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
- \$8,959.55** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
- \$15,813.00** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**
- \$0.00** to the **Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund**

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

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Carmel River Lagoon, Monterey County

Allocated	\$752,260.00
Expended	<u>-752,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$260.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Sacramento River, Del Rio Site, Glenn County

Allocated	\$428,000.00
Expended	<u>-424,019.89</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,980.11

Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansion 1, 2, and 3, Riverside County

Allocated	\$15,000.00
Expended	<u>-325.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$14,675.00

**Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water,
Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund** **\$18,915.11**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Stanislaus River (Mohler Tract), San Joaquin County

Allocated	\$125,000.00
Expended	<u>-100,400.91</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$24,599.09

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$24,599.09**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Monte Rio Fishing Access Improvements, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$150,000.00
Expended	<u>-134,314.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$15,686.00

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$15,686.00**

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

Cache Creek Conservation Area, Colusa County

Allocated	\$880,000.00
Expended	<u>-876,488.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,511.50

Lassen Foothills, Expansion 5, Tehama County

Allocated	\$670,299.00
Expended	<u>-664,879.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,420.00

Wetland Habitat Restoration, Moss Landing, Wildlife Area, Monterey County

Allocated	\$655,000.00
Expended	<u>-654,971.95</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$28.05

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe
Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund** **\$8,959.55**

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

Bluebird Preserve, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$6,910,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,900,050.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,950.00

Carrizo Plain Ecological Reserve, Expansion 5, San Luis Obispo County

Allocated	\$6,000,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,998,033.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,967.00

Los Osos Dunes and Wetlands, Montana de Oro Unit, San Luis Obispo County

Allocated	\$1,555,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,551,104.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,896.00

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 \$15,813.00

OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION FUND

Lassen Foothills, Expansion 5, Tehama County

Allocated	\$839,701.00
Expended	<u>-839,701.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund \$0.00

- *7. Wilson Creek Riparian Corridor, Expansions 4 and 5, \$10,000.00
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 two Agreements to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority), to be applied toward its acquisition of two privately owned properties totaling 354± 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, located north of State Highways 79 and 371, near the unincorporated community of Aguanga. Acquisition of the two properties 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 properties support 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 providing public access for recreational pursuits such as hiking and wildlife viewing. Upland game hunting opportunities may be available with adequate space for safe separation of public users. 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 County. The State will have no responsibility for management of these properties. jjjjjjddd

The property owner of the Expansion 4 property, containing 120± acres, has agreed to sell to the Authority at the appraised value of \$500,000.00. The property owner of the Expansion 5 property, containing 234± acres, has agreed to sell to the Authority at the appraised value of \$1,300,000.00. The appraised values have been approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed Agreements to Subgrant

the federal grant funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant will provide 50 percent of the approved appraised value of each property, or \$250,000.00 for Expansion 4 and \$650,000.00 for Expansion 5. The Authority has agreed to provide the remainder of the purchase price for both properties, totaling \$900,000.00, from the AD 161 funds held by the County.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the acceptance of the USFWS grant and the approval of two proposed Agreements to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Authority to be applied toward the purchase of the two properties. It is estimated that \$10,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses, which includes DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$10,000.00. 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 Board 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 accounts established for these properties.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant, in the amount of \$900,000.00, and the approval of two Agreements to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Authority to be applied toward its acquisition of two properties totaling 354± acres; allocate \$10,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5), for project related-expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *8. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion 29 \$211,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of 16± acres of privately owned land, located in western Riverside County, as a cooperative project with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) as an expansion of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) San Jacinto Wildlife Area established for the protection and preservation of Mystic Lake and its associated floodplain habitat.

The project area is located in the San Jacinto Valley of southern California, approximately 18 miles southeast of downtown Riverside and just north of the community of Lakeview. To the northwest is the city of Moreno Valley, whose corporate limits reach the northern boundary of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. Initial land acquisitions for the wildlife area were completed during the period of 1981-1982, as part of a mitigation package developed to compensate for wildlife habitat losses resulting from the construction of the State Water Project. As opportunity and circumstance allowed, the Board has acquired additional properties. Since 1995 the Board has acquired 3,000± acres adjacent to or within Mystic Lake for the wildlife area. The western boundary of the 9,000± acre wildlife area is contiguous with the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, placing a total of approximately 18,000 acres under public ownership and protection.

The acquisition of the subject property is important to the wildlife area as it will place nearly all of the easterly shoreline of Mystic Lake under public ownership. Placement of this area in public ownership will facilitate possible restoration of former farm land and add land area contiguous to the existing wildlife area. The westerly edge of the property within Mystic Lake is also an excellent candidate for a future wetlands restoration project.

The upland areas and hills surrounding the lowland floodplain of Mystic Lake are dominated by Riversidian sage scrub. There are areas of intermixed patches of non-native grasslands which are found in both the upland and alkali flat areas. There are numerous sensitive plants associated with Mystic Lake area, including the thread-leaved brodiaea (state-listed endangered and federal-proposed threatened), San Jacinto saltbush (federal-proposed endangered), and spreading navarretia (federal-proposed threatened). The wildlife area and adjoining lands support 38 species of amphibians and reptiles. Mammal species are well represented and range from the desert shrew to the southern mule deer. The Stephens' kangaroo rat (state-listed threatened and federal-listed endangered species) is a resident mammal of the wildlife area.

Over 240 species of birds have been recorded on or adjacent to the wildlife area since 1982. Twenty-two over-wintering raptor species are known to utilize the San Jacinto Valley, including the osprey, ferruginous hawk, golden eagle, and short-eared owl. The San Jacinto Valley consistently ranks in the top one to two percent in species diversity for the North American Christmas Bird Counts. Historically, the San Jacinto Valley has always been an important southern California wintering and nesting area for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. There have been three federal or state-listed endangered

birds sighted on the wildlife area including the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, and the California brown pelican.

The DFG has recommended that the subject property would be a significant addition to the wildlife area and has identified the site as a high priority for acquisition by the state. The land will be incorporated into and managed as part of the existing wildlife area. The net increase of land to be managed is approximately 16 acres and will offer additional recreational uses as the habitat is restored, maintained, and developed in conjunction with the wildlife area.

The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the state at the appraised value of \$192,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). Project-related costs, including the appraisal, environmental assessment, title and escrow fees, and review charges by the DGS, have been estimated at \$19,000.00, bringing the total cost for this project to \$211,000.00. The NFWF has approved a grant to the Board which would provide funding for this project in an amount not to exceed \$211,000.00. As provided in the NFWF grant, the Board has been requested to accept the funds payable to the Wildlife Conservation Board, in lieu of an escrow established at a title company. It is proposed that the Board accept these funds into its Wildlife Restoration Fund and, in turn, approve an allocation of \$211,000.00 to cover the purchase of the subject property and project-related costs. The proposed funding source allows for the purchase of properties to protect threatened and endangered species, and significant natural areas statewide, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, of approximately \$211,000.00, payable to the Wildlife Conservation Board and deposited into the Wildlife Restoration Fund; allocate \$211,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) (Prop. 50) for the purchase price and related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish the project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *9. Department of Fish and Game Land Management Plans,
Inland Deserts Region, Phase II, Riverside County \$221,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation, Inc., to provide project administration and oversight for preparation of a land management plan for the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, one of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Inland Desert Region's high priority wildlife areas in Riverside County. The DFG is the public trust steward of properties acquired throughout the State by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) for various purposes, and as such, follows policies relating to management and enhancement of wildlife and the habitats on which they depend, while providing appropriate public use on those lands. Because of the rapid rate of acquisitions over the last decade (most due to voter-approved bonds), some properties are in need of management planning updates to include newly acquired units. Updated land management plans are necessary in order to assess newly acquired resources, involve the public, and provide guidance to DFG's programs that relate to land management.

Property Description

San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA) totals about 18,000 acres in central Riverside County, near the city of Lakeview, California. The Davis Unit begins at Lake Perris Drive/Ramona Expressway, east eight miles to Bridge Street, north three miles to Gilman Springs Road, north five miles to Alessandro Boulevard, two miles west on Alessandro Boulevard to Davis Road, and then south along the east boundary of the Lake Perris Recreation area.

The Potrero Unit is located in the southern portion of the City of Beaumont, southwest of the City of Banning and directly east of the City of Moreno Valley. It is generally to the east of Lamb Canyon Road, northwest of Gilman Springs Road at the south end of Highland Springs Road.

The two major units are separate and dissimilar in nature. The Davis Unit contains Mystic Lake, a large, natural, ephemeral lake, and the Potrero Unit, a 9,100 acre parcel, consists of rolling foothills. The SJWA supports a wide variety of terrestrial species and is utilized by a wide variety of game and non-game species. SJWA contains several habitat types classified by the wildlife habitat relationships program as listed below:

Davis Unit:

Annual Grassland
Alkali Desert Scrub
Coastal Scrub
Desert Riparian
Evergreen Orchard
Fresh Emergent Wetland
Lacustrine
Valley Foothill Floodplain

Potrero Unit:

Chaparral
Riversidean Sage Scrub
Agricultural
Annual Grassland
Riversidan Alluvial
Riparian Scrub
Southern Cottonwood/Willow Riparian
Lacustrine

Scope of Work

SJWA is large and has a diverse assemblage of habitat types and wildlife species. The complexity and length of the plan will be determined by the property's management requirements. A management plan was prepared for SJWA in the early 1980's but the Area has since expanded.

The Management Plan (Plan) is to be prepared per DFG guidelines, A Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans (Guide), and other local or Federal agency requirements as necessary. The Plan is to be written to fulfill CEQA and CESA requirements. The product will be suitable for CEQA review and approval. Depending upon individual plan circumstances, tasks that may be required to complete the plan, are, but are not limited to:

- Evaluate existing biological and cultural resource data to determine what type of inventory work needs completion or updating;
- Conduct resource inventory and mapping, including soils, sensitive plants and animals, and wildlife resources;
- Habitat mapping;
- Identify and map all leases and easements that may occur on or pass through DFG Lands;
- Prepare a noxious weed management component;
- Prepare a cultural resource assessment and management element for the plan;
- Conduct a literature search;
- Prepare a fire management component, including past fire history;
- Prepare a public use component which shall include a discussion of current public uses and their potential impact on the resources of the SJWA, including a conceptual educational component, and scheduling of hunting and no-take uses;

- Prepare a restoration component, including mapping areas in need of restoration, a priority ranking, and a proposed timeline for completion;
- Evaluate the existing DFG water rights on the SJWA;
- Address the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of nutrients on the WA in accordance with RWQCB requirements.

An important part of the land management planning process is to invite public input. The SJWA recreational user days increase annually as surrounding urban areas expand. This Plan must present to the public the Department's objectives for management and describe in some detail the potential conflicts between wildlife management, including threatened and endangered species, a substantial hunting program, conservation easement issues with the Lockheed cleanup area, and public use. Because the Potrero Unit was recently acquired and has a particularly complex conservation easement agreement with Lockheed-Martin Corporation, a significant part of the Plan will address these issues.

The scope of work with this agreement will include delivery of a finalized CEQA-compliant management plan and all related environmental documents which meet the needs of the Department no later than two fiscal years from contract start date. The proposed funding source allows for funding of management plans for properties acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$221,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood parks and Coastal protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

*10. La Sierra Canyon, Los Angeles County \$5,000.00

This proposal is to consider 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 County of Los Angeles, Parks and Recreation, to be applied toward its acquisition of 30± acres of vacant land in Los Angeles County. The primary purpose of this acquisition is for the protection of plant and wildlife habitat, preservation, restoration and management, wildlife-oriented education and research, and for compatible public uses.

The property is located approximately 40 miles west of Los Angeles and 10 miles southeast of Thousand Oaks. More specifically, the subject property is on the west side of Mulholland Highway just south of Seminole Drive, in the unincorporated section of Los Angeles County known as Cornell.

Unprecedented proliferation of single-family homes, fuel modification zones, invasion of non-native species, and propagation of feral domestic animals are all major threats to the overall biodiversity of the Santa Monica Mountains. To preserve this unparalleled biodiversity, large tracts of undisturbed wildlife habitat need to be put into protective stewardship. This proposed 30± acre acquisition is part of the 91-acre La Sierra Preserve. The project site is within a largely undisturbed habitat area on the north side of the Santa Monica Mountains. The mountain range links major park holdings from Topanga State Park in the east to Point Mugu State Park in the west. In 2002 the National Park Service (NPS) acquired 180± acres adjacent to the project site and is in negotiations for additional nearby properties in the La Sierra Significant Ecological Area. The NPS property is immediately adjacent to Malibu Creek State Park and is the axle of the north-to-south wildlife corridor that connects the Santa Monica Mountains through the Simi Hills to the San Gabriel Mountains.

The prime wildlife habitat found on this property is biologically diverse and rich in willow riparian woodland, oak woodland, mixed riparian woodland, wetlands, coastal sage scrub, grassland, and chaparral. In addition, four state-listed bird species, the Swainson's hawk, gilded northern flicker, American peregrine falcon, and Gila woodpecker, as well as two state- and/or federally-listed plant species, Lyon's pentachaeta and Santa Monica Mountains dudleyea, will be protected.

Wetlands, seeps, springs, ponds, lakes, and meadows are critical components of the functioning of the stream systems that connect to the Pacific Ocean; water sources must be preserved so that year-round streams can continue to support life within the riparian corridors. The perennial La Sierra Creek tumbles off the 2,824-foot Castro Peak and its clear, clean water flows into the impounded waters of La Sierra Lake. Three additional blue-line streams, as well as several fresh-water seeps, enter the subject property and feed the La Sierra Lake in this little-disturbed, north-facing watershed of the Santa Monica Mountains in Los Angeles County.

When the acquisition is complete, the property will be owned by Los Angeles County and managed by Mountains Restoration Trust as a natural preserve. Although the majority of the property will be managed for low-impact activities, the upper reaches of

the property include the proposed alignment of the Zuma-Ridge Trail, a cross-mountain trail mapped on the Los Angeles County Regional Trail Map. This trail plan complements intra-park trails and connects units of state, national, and private trails throughout the Santa Monica Mountains.

The appraised value of the property is \$1,485,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The property was recently purchased from a private property owner by the Mountains Restoration Trust. They have agreed to sell the property to Los Angeles County for a bargain sale of \$800,000.00. Los Angeles County proposes to approve an allocation in the amount of \$372,320.00 to apply toward the purchase price. The proposed Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds provided by the USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition Grant will provide \$427,680.00 to cover the balance of the purchase price. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for the 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 and significant natural areas statewide and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant to the County provide that Board staff 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 an escrow account established for the property.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve this acquisition project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in the amount of \$427,680.00, and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to Los Angeles County to be applied toward its acquisition of a 30± acre property; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) (Prop. 50) to pay for project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *11. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 12, \$550,000.00
Monterey County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of 42± acres of land as an addition to the Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve. The Elkhorn Slough is located approximately 100 miles south of San Francisco in Monterey County. The subject property is located approximately six miles south of the town of Watsonville. A portion of the funding for this acquisition will come from a federal grant from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, accepted by the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) at the August 17, 2006 meeting.

Elkhorn Slough is a shallow estuary located in northern Monterey County. The Board approved the first acquisition in the Elkhorn Slough in 1979 and to date more than 1,300± acres have been acquired. In addition, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation has protected nearly 2,700± acres in the slough area. The Elkhorn Slough 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 coenothus, Pajaro manzanita, Monterey spineflower, western snowy plover, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, and 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 vegetation found on the subject property consists primarily of grassland and oak woodlands. The property is also adjacent to the wetlands of the slough. In addition to the high wildlife value contained within this parcel and 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 the subject property as part of the overall estuarine reserve.

The Board accepted a grant from the Federal Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, in the amount of \$1,484,216.00 at the August 17, 2006 meeting. The purpose of the grant is to protect the habitat within and around the Elkhorn Slough. The proposed

acquisition will use a portion of the remaining funds and efforts will be made to acquire additional properties from willing sellers in the area.

The owners have agreed to sell their property for the appraised value of \$1,070,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The federal CELCP grant will cover 50 percent (\$535,000.00) of the purchase price and the State's share will be 50 percent (\$535,000.00). It is estimated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed to cover project costs including the appraisal, the DGS review charges, title and escrow fees, and policy of title insurance, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$550,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of real property to protect threatened and endangered species, and significant natural areas, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and is proposed as exempt under 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 or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the acquisition as proposed; authorize the expenditure of previously accepted grant funds from the federal Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program administered by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, in the amount of \$535,000.00; allocate \$550,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) for the acquisition and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project as proposed; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *12. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansion 13, Monterey County \$325,000.00

This item has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

- *13. San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch Site Enhancement, Fresno County \$66,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the San Joaquin River Conservancy (Conservancy) to demolish and remove old, uninhabitable, dilapidated structures and debris to enhance public use and habitat conservation opportunities on the Conservancy's Ball Ranch property. The project is adjacent to and north of Little Dry Creek between Friant Road and the San Joaquin River, about two miles north of the Fresno city limits. The Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Willow Unit of the San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve is immediately south and west of the property.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) acquired the 358 acre Ball Ranch property in 2000, and DFG transferred the property to the Conservancy in 2002 for inclusion in the San Joaquin River Parkway. The WCB at the Conservancy's request funded the Ball Ranch Master Development Plan which was completed in February, 2005. This plan describes how river access, low-impact recreation, public education, and habitat conservation will be provided at Ball Ranch. This project will be a first step in moving towards providing these elements.

The proposed project will demolish an uninhabitable house, an old dairy barn foundation, an unsafe barn, and an outbuilding at Ball Ranch. The project will also remove and dispose of existing debris as well as debris to be created by the demolition of the buildings. These dilapidated structures and debris are an attractive nuisance, fire hazard and potential risk for stewardship groups who wish to bring volunteers onto the site. The small house has damaged walls, roof, and windows. The metal roof of the barn is deteriorating. Termite damage and decay is widespread, and the barn contains a large volume of waste materials. Large concrete slabs are all that remain of a second barn. The demolition will be conducted using an existing gate and access road and will not involve the removal of native trees or shrubs. Incidental to the project, non-native eucalyptus and invasive tree of heaven may be removed if necessary for efficient access to the residence and debris piles. The Conservancy will work with DFG to take measures to protect any owls or bats occupying the barn.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$66,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$66,000.00

Project costs will be for demolition of house, barn, outbuilding and foundation and removal and disposal of debris. The Conservancy has filed a Notice of Exemption to satisfy CEQA requirements. CEQA provides a categorical exemption that allows

demolition of one single family residence and accessory structures and minor cleanup actions to prevent or eliminate the release of hazardous wastes or substances.

The San Joaquin River Conservancy Board authorized this request at its March 8, 2007 meeting. The Wildlife Conservation Board's budget contains Proposition 40 monies with control language directing that these funds be used for Conservancy programs.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$66,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *14. San Joaquin River Parkway, Lost Lake Regional Park Master Plan, Fresno County \$400,158.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a cooperative project with the County of Fresno (County) and the San Joaquin River Conservancy (Conservancy) to develop a master plan for improving Lost Lake Regional Park and to perform an environmental review of the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project is located on the left bank of the San Joaquin River just downstream of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) San Joaquin River Hatchery near the town of Friant.

Lost Lake Park is operated by the County and consists of 76 acres owned by DFG and 197 acres owned by the County. It is the largest contiguous area open to the public within the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) and is the most heavily used of all the County's parks. The Parkway Master Plan, adopted by the Conservancy in 1997, sets forth the following policy: "Rehabilitate and improve existing recreation areas and facilities, particularly Lost Lake, on a priority basis. The Conservancy's Interagency Project Development Committee and Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) have placed a high priority on improving Lost Lake Park.

There are a number of factors creating a pressing need for development of a master plan, including increased growth in the towns of Friant and Rio Mesa, burgeoning tourism destinations in the foothills, and the potential for public-private partnerships. The plan will be coordinated with DFG's planned improvements at the adjacent fish hatchery, Cemex's reclamation of mined lands to the south for wildlife and potential Parkway uses, and neighborhood trail connections in planned developments. The plan will evaluate integrating the Conservancy's Beck property into the park. The plan will address the proposed nine-hole golf course presented in concept to the Conservancy Board in November 2006, the potential for water reclamation from a future community wastewater treatment plant, and whether mineral resource mining could improve contours at the site while reducing the costs of grading. The plan will help the region capitalize on the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Central Valley Vision, which supports efforts to increase river-oriented recreation, day-use facilities, and camping for Valley residents.

The County has prepared a comprehensive scope of work for the master plan and environmental review and plans to assess the environmental constraints and opportunities at the site, determine the community's recreational needs and vision for the park, plan future uses and improvements, and create a plan for phased development, with extensive stakeholder and public involvement. The County's goal is to create a plan for improving services, facilities, and habitat at Lost Lake Park that can be developed in phases with long term enhanced operations and maintenance resources. The County will be required to ensure that any improvements implemented as a result of the plan are operated and maintained for a minimum 25-year period.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$400,000.00
County of Fresno	\$20,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$420,000.00

Project costs will be for resources assessment, interagency meetings, public workshops, a draft and final plan, and a CEQA study. In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$158.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the Board's portion of the project to \$400,158.00.

The San Joaquin River Conservancy Board authorized this request at its March 8, 2007 meeting. The WCB's budget contains Proposition 40 monies with control language directing that these funds be used for Conservancy programs.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$400,158.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

*15. Ingomar Ranch Wetland Restoration, Merced County \$70,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) for a partnership project with U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the landowner to restore approximately 237 acres of seasonal wetlands and 13 acres of associated uplands. This privately owned property is protected with a FWS conservation easement and is located one mile east of the intersection of Ingomar and Cottonwood Roads, approximately five miles southeast of the City of Gustine and two miles north of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG), Volta Wildlife Area in Merced County.

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

The property has long been part of a much larger working cattle ranch. While this particular portion of the ranch floods regularly and has never been very productive, the landowner wishes to continue to graze the property. The FWS conservation easement allows for grazing. The site has also been approved for funding under a NRCS ten-year restoration agreement that also allows wildlife friendly grazing practices. The landowner and all the interested agencies and partners have met to develop an acceptable grazing plan. The resultant grazing regime should provide ideal winter waterfowl habitat and may even increase forage for cattle. The plan could become a model for some similar restorations in the future.

DU and FWS biologists have designed a project that would create wetland swales through the property with water control structures to enable the landowner to flood and drain the property. Most of the property will be managed as seasonal wetlands, flooded in winter, and irrigated occasionally in summer. This regime is ideal for producing watergrass, which should provide plenty of cattle forage in spring and early summer, and produce an abundance of seeds for waterfowl to use in the fall and winter. The eastern portion of the area will be managed to provide summer water for breeding waterfowl and many other species and the southern boundary will be planted to upland grasses.

The resulting wetlands should provide ideal habitat for a number of wetland dependent species including such waterfowl as mallards, northern pintails, and green-winged teal. Shorebirds that will benefit from these wetlands include greater yellowlegs, black-necked stilts and long-billed curlews. A host of other species will also benefit, from swallows and garter snakes to river otters and beavers.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 70,000.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	120,200.00
Fish and Wildlife Service	36,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	18,480.00
Landowner	<u>11,500.00</u>
 TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	 \$256,180.00

Project costs will be for earthmoving; water control structures; ditch cleaning; pipeline; fencing; riparian and upland planting; and project design, construction supervision and administration. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of inland valley wetlands and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$70,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Section 2786(d)) IWCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *16. San Pedro Creek Fish Passage Improvement, \$300,000.00
San Mateo County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Pacifica for a cooperative project to improve fish passage for steelhead in San Pedro Creek by removing a box culvert and existing log booms, installing rock vane weirs and a new bridge structure across the creek. The project is located in the city-owned property approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County. Other funding partners include the California Coastal Conservancy.

San Pedro Creek provides habitat for the state and federally threatened steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), and is the only stream with a steelhead population along a 30-mile reach of coast between the Golden Gate Bridge and Half Moon Bay. The City of Pacifica has been working since 1989 to restore and improve the habitat and fish passage in the creek as a result of urban development occurring in the lower reaches of the creek. Problems include fish barriers, eroding banks and non-native invasive vegetation. The steelhead fishery still exists in the watershed in large part because the cool springs in the headwaters – prime steelhead spawning and rearing habitat are protected within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) supports the City's planning and restoration activities, and has also provided funding to the City to assist with some of the earlier projects through the DFG's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program.

The lower reaches of the creek are crossed by several bridges that utilize box culverts. Most of these structures create impediments to steelhead passage and have been identified for corrective action by the City of Pacifica. The proposed project will remove a box culvert at the Adobe Bridge that is an impediment at low flows to juvenile steelhead movement to upstream spawning and rearing habitat. The City previously installed a wooden beam on the floor of the culvert to enhance fish passage during the low flow season. This was largely ineffective because there is a 4 to 6 foot jump from the downstream plunge pool to the culvert base. At low flows the box culvert presents a velocity and jump barrier to most fish. Whenever flows in the creek exceed the culvert's maximum flow capacity, the creek back-floods and overflows its banks into the adjacent neighborhood, before making its way back into the creek.

The box culvert will be replaced with a free-standing bridge that will increase hydraulic capacity in the channel to the 100-year flood interval and will provide low flow velocities for steelhead passage. In addition, the project will also install a series of cross-vane rock weirs in the channel, which will create deep pools for cover and resting habitat, further reducing flow velocities for steelhead passage. The city of Pacifica will monitor the effectiveness of the new structures in achieving the desired results, both for fish passage and flood flow management.

It is anticipated to take about three months for the construction of this project. The City of Pacifica will be responsible for monitoring and maintenance of the structures that will be installed. Monitoring will continue at least through the period of the grant agreement,

until October 2010. The City will be responsible for maintenance of the structures for 25 years, beginning with the date of Board approval.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$300,000.00
Coastal Conservancy	282,000.00
City of Pacifica	110,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$692,000.00

Project costs will be for mobilization and demobilization, stream bypassing and fish and amphibian removal, excavation, concrete and metal work, installation of rock weirs, place bridge slab, paving, utility encasing, installation of a sign, project design, construction supervision, and administration. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration and enhancement of riparian habitat throughout the state and is consistent with the purposes of this grant.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The city of Pacifica has filed the appropriate notice to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The City has also agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

The San Pedro Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project is consistent with the *San Pedro Creek Watershed Assessment and Enhancement Plan (2002)*, prepared by the San Pedro Creek Watershed Coalition in conjunction with the City of Pacifica for DFG. This plan identifies the removal of migratory barriers at the bridge culverts as the highest priority work to restore steelhead habitat.

The proposed project has extensive support from local residents and community groups, including the Pacifica City Council, Pacifica Open Space Committee, Pacifica Flood Control Committee, Pedro Point Surf Club, Native Plant Society, Pacifica Environmental Family, Pacifica Land Trust, and a number of others.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$300,000.00 from the General Fund – California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program (GF-CRHCP); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *17. Loch Lomond Marina, Intertidal Enhancement, \$207,775.00
Marin County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Bay Institute to support its Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW) project in eradicating an introduced, non-native snail species (Japanese Mud Snail) at two locations at the Loch Lomond Marina in San Rafael, Marin County. The project site is bordered by the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve at China Camp State Park two miles to the north, the Marin Islands, a National Wildlife Refuge 0.5 miles offshore (east) and Angel Island National Park/State Park 7.5 miles to the southeast.

Adjacent land use is residential housing along the perimeter of the Bay. The marina and adjacent marsh supports over 90 species of birds, including large numbers of migratory water fowl and shorebirds. It is not unusual to see 25 species on an average day at the marina breakwater. The California clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris obsoletus*), an endangered species, is an occasional winter visitor to the marina shoreline.

In the summer of 2005, the non-native Japanese mud snail *Batillaria attramentaria* was discovered in Loch Lomond. This snail, which has very similar ecological requirements to its native counterpart *Cerithidea californica*, has been documented in other estuaries in central and northern California since the 1930s and can be found as far north as Boundary Bay in Canada and as far south as Elkhorn Slough, California. It was accidentally introduced to the West Coast in shipments of Japanese oyster aquaculture spat. In estuaries to the north (e.g., Tomales Bay) and south (e.g., Elkhorn Slough) of San Francisco Bay, this snail can reach densities of greater than 10,000 individuals per square meter. Without proper checks on the Loch Lomond population, the snail could spread throughout San Francisco Bay, affecting native snail populations and significantly altering the open mudflat habitat and community. The effort at Loch Lomond is the first, soft sediment invertebrate eradication attempt on record. Thus, the project adds significantly to the understanding of successful eradications in marine systems, which is very important for both the advancement of scientific literature and to help managers make important decisions about which invasive species are worth eradicating.

The Japanese mud snail has for the most part stayed confined within the bays to which it was introduced because it is a direct developer, releasing crawl-away juveniles rather than planktonic larvae. In these bays the native snail has declined and, in a few areas where Japanese mud snail has attained high abundances, the native may have disappeared entirely. For example, in parts of Tomales Bay the native snail used to be "seen by the thousands" along the west bank. Since the arrival of the invasive snail 50–70 years ago, only one small, isolated marsh in Tomales Bay now contains *C. californica*. The effects of the invasive snail ripple through the food web. The native snail is a food source for birds and fishes, while the invasive does not appear to be a major prey item. The parasite carried by the invader uses native fishes and birds as secondary hosts. In addition, the enormous population growth the invasive snail has been able to attain in many California estuaries transforms mudflats into "shell pavement." The shells facilitate colonization by yet more non-native organisms that rely on hard substrate and, thus, would otherwise not be able to inhabit the mudflats.

After resurveying Loch Lomond in May 2006, researchers from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) and UC Davis determined that the population was small enough to be successfully eradicated. With the support of the marina and local businesses, SERC, UC Davis, The Bay Institute, and the Marin Conservation Corps joined forces to organize a community response to *B. attramentaria*. Over five days in July, August and September, dozens of volunteers turned out to handpick the snails. More than 69,000 snails were removed. Eradication efforts focused in the section of the marina with the highest population density. Monthly sampling indicated that at least half of the snails were removed from the project area. The Bay Institute continues to coordinate the community effort to eradicate *B. attramentaria* inside the marina and to work with the project team monitor nearby mudflats. Unfortunately, in August 2006, a second population of *B. attramentaria* was discovered in a channel just north of Loch Lomond Marina. Population densities were similar to those in the marina, but the area over which snails were found was relatively small, about 350 square meters. This discovery underscores the necessity of a rapid and aggressive response to control the spread of this invader in San Francisco Bay.

The Japanese mud snail emerges from the mud and moves into the high intertidal zone during the summer and early fall. These months also coincide with some of the lowest tides of the year, making the snails easily accessible for handpicking over a four to six hour period during low tide days. In 2007, 2008, and 2009 six to eight half-days of eradication events are being planned using volunteers. The major eradication effort will be focused on the same area that was targeted in 2006. This area is easily accessible to the public and the mud is fairly firm into the low intertidal zone.

A complementary project is underway in the National Estuarine Research Reserve just north of Loch Lomond Marina to determine the feasibility of restoring the native horn snail *Cerithidea californica* to San Pablo Bay. If this project is successful, *C. californica* could also be re-established in Loch Lomond Marina. With the non-native snail eradicated, the possibility of successful restoration for the native snail increases substantially.

The effectiveness of the eradication effort will be continuously evaluated, using methods developed in 2006. Each May the marina will be thoroughly surveyed by scientists from SERC and UC Davis. For these surveys, the marina is broken down into seven areas, each of which will be searched for snails from the high to low intertidal zone during a low spring tide. Population estimates will be made by counting snails on the mud's surface and from 2.5 centimeters below the surface in standardized quadrants. Changes in the population structure of the snails will be evaluated by measuring, weighing, and examining the collected snails for parasites. Scientists will also conduct surveys of the areas immediately adjacent to the marina beginning in 2007. Monitoring efforts by volunteers for the area outside of the marina will also continue for three years, as described above.

The Loch Lomond Marina is a heavily used area for recreational activities including fishing, boating, walking, and birding. The local community of businesses surrounding the project site supports the eradication of *B. attramentaria* and the efforts of this

project. Community support is also evidenced in the work of the hand picking of the snails. In 2006, 10 to 20 volunteers supported eradication efforts each day of hand picking. In 2007 the project team will conduct community outreach to increase volunteer numbers to a minimum of 30 per day. Volunteers consist of youth and adults and will be managed by The Bay Institute, in partnership with SERC to ensure that eradication and monitoring protocols are followed as planned.

Currently, there is no special permitting process for eradication of exotic marine invertebrates within non-habitat areas. Scientists from SERC and UC Davis have consulted with the Invasive Species Coordinator at Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and have DFG permits to collect marine invertebrates.

The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$207,775
California State Coastal Conservancy	52,000
Marin Community Foundation STRAW General Operating Funds	36,000
The Fred Gellert Family Foundation	15,000
Unrestricted Individual and Event Donations	20,004
The Bay Institute Community Volunteers	<u>19,872</u>
Total Funding	\$350,651

WCB project costs will be for project management, volunteer coordination, eradication efforts, public awareness efforts, and monitoring. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of coastal wetlands within the San Francisco Bay area and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$207,775.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572(c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

*18. North Sutter Bypass Ranch Wetland Enhancement, Sutter County \$45,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the Landowner, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the North American Wetland Conservation Council, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to enhance 177 ± acres of seasonal wetlands and associated uplands, located in the Sutter Bypass, approximately eight miles west of the City of Yuba City in Sutter County. The privately owned property is protected by a FWS conservation easement and is located immediately north of the FWS's Sutter National Wildlife Refuge.

This proposal is the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) third wetland restoration project considered in the Sutter Basin (Basin). This Basin is centrally located in the Sacramento Valley and hosts hundreds of thousands of wintering waterfowl every year. Most of these birds use the thousands of acres of winter-flooded rice fields that are found in the Basin, which while important, do not provide the habitat diversity of native wetlands. This project will assist the Central Valley Joint Venture's (CVJV) goal of restoring and protecting 11,000 acres of wetlands in the Basin. To date, the CVJV's partners have achieved less than 10 percent of this goal.

The FWS has funded some restoration work on the project site, but much of the area is still set up for the original farming operations. Old berms, established to allow previous landowners to irrigate pasturelands, are inadequate for flooding wetlands. A portion of the site at the lowest corner cannot be drained and has turned into a sea of tules and cattails. Existing water control structures have rusted away and much of the existing uplands are covered with weeds.

The proposed project will result in the development of infrastructure to allow for the creation and management of seasonal wetlands and adjacent uplands. Berms will be removed, levees will be strengthened, swales will be cut through existing wetland areas to facilitate drainage, a new drainage canal will be constructed, and a pipeline installed to provide water where it is needed. These improvements will allow the landowner to efficiently manage the area to establish and maintain these valuable habitats.

Seasonal wetland habitats provide reliable feeding areas for wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, including such species as green-winged teal, mallards, and long-billed dowitchers. Mallards and gadwalls will nest in the uplands, which should also provide nesting habitat for such species as northern harriers and western meadowlarks. Special status species that should benefit from the proposed project include tri-colored blackbirds and white-faced ibis, both of which nest on the adjacent Sutter National Wildlife Refuge and use wetlands to forage.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$45,000.00
Fish and Wildlife Service	10,268.00
North American Wetland Conservation Council	87,552.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	11,586.00
Landowner	<u>10,268.00</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$164,674.00

Project costs will be for site preparation; drainage canal excavation; earthmoving; water control structures; pipeline; erosion protection rock; and environmental permitting, project design, construction supervision, and administration. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of inland valley wetlands and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$45,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117) (Section 2786(d)) IWCP and Section 2786(d) IWCP (Prop. 50); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *19. Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Bridge Replacement, \$154,550.00
Shasta County

This proposal is to consider the allocation of funds for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to replace a dilapidated public access footbridge with a new bridge, at the Battle Creek Wildlife Area. The project is located 15 miles southeast of the town of Anderson, east and upstream from the Sacramento River, in Shasta County.

The Battle Creek Wildlife Area was acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board in different phases starting in 1966 and is located next to the Coleman Fish Hatchery. Previous Board actions were for the acquisition of property, public access, habitat restoration, and fish habitat screens. The Battle Creek Wildlife Area has a current public access bridge that is out of service due to its unsafe dilapidated nature. The bridge allows the public and the workers to access the Battle Creek Wildlife Area. The area is often utilized by school children and visitors to the fish hatchery, as well as the general public. The current bridge is well past its useful life and this proposal is to consider a replacement bridge that would be designed to accommodate pedestrians, vehicles and equipment. The proposed site of the new bridge is 800 feet west of the present location adjacent to recently developed wetlands and riparian projects.

In general, the project will remove the existing footbridge and install a new bridge to once again allow the public to safely access the Battle Creek Wildlife Area.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$154,290.00
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An additional \$260.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the project to \$154,550.00. The proposed funding allows for projects pursuant to the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947, which is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$154,550.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

*20. Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Yolo County \$470,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for the restoration of 350± acres of agricultural lands within the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area to semi-permanent and seasonal wetlands and to upgrade an existing pump station to improve water supplies for the management of 810± acres of wetlands and nearly 2,800 acres of agricultural fields. The project is located within the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, just west of the city of West Sacramento and south of Interstate 80, and will provide two distinct benefits to the wildlife area.

The first task will be the reconstruction and upgrade of Pump Station 8NE. The new pump station will increase and significantly improve water supplies for the management and operation of existing seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands and wildlife-friendly agricultural fields. The proposed enhancement of the pumping station will help reduce annual maintenance costs required to keep the system functioning. The existing submersible pumps are past their life expectancy. Installing modern lift pumps elevated above the high water levels that occur will provide dependable and efficient use.

This portion of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area receives water from the eastern toe drain. Pump Station 8NE lifts water out of the drain and provides water for the entire acreage affected by this project. The water supply is a prescribed supply which is tied to the property. Long term benefits will come in the actual savings that will result from the reduced annual costs of repairs to the existing pumps. In addition, the water supplies will provide flexibility for the management and establish a year-round dependable supply for all management practices. Staff will be able to better control and fine tune the water supply to meet the demands on the ground.

The second task will be the restoration of 350± acres of existing rice fields to seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands and associated uplands and will be managed primarily for migratory and breeding waterfowl and shorebirds. Because of the tremendous loss of historic wetlands in the Central Valley and specifically the Yolo Basin, the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) has identified the Yolo Basin as a designated focus area in need of habitat protection, enhancement, and expansion. Since the wildlife area was created, there have been a total of 220 bird species identified. Migratory birds including waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, raptors, and neotropical migrants will benefit from this project. Approximately 26 species of waterfowl, 33 species of shorebirds, 10 species of wading birds, and 16 species of raptors are expected to directly benefit. Approximately 40 acres will be managed as uplands and will be planted to perennial grasses in close proximity to a new brood-rearing, semi-permanent wetland unit. The preliminary design has identified an appropriate area, and once topographic surveys are completed, the final location will be delineated and the uplands seeded. The enhancement of the agricultural fields and restoration of the wetlands will provide significant improvements and expansion of foraging, roosting, and some nesting habitat.

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area is a state-owned wildlife area which supports a public hunting program along with wildlife viewing and many year-round, outdoor recreational

opportunities. The project will seek to restore habitat conditions that once existed prior to the conversion of this area to agriculture some 80+ years ago. The resulting wildlife benefits and restoration results will contribute directly to CVJV, DFG, WCB, and California Waterfowl Association habitat improvement objectives. The project does not conflict with any local plans, and is greatly supported by the general public who will benefit from the improved wildlife viewing and recreational opportunities that will result from its completion.

The Sacramento-Yolo County Mosquito and Vector Control District has been made aware of the project during the planning phase. The proposed project will allow DFG staff to completely drain wetland units, reducing mosquito production. All necessary environmental permits are being obtained and all required environmental documents are being completed by either DFG or the California Waterfowl Association.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$470,000.00
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Project costs will be for earthmoving, lift pump installation, pump stand retrofitting, water control structures, native plant revegetation, and project design, engineering, and management. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of inland valley wetlands and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$470,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) IWCP; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

21. Santa Ana-Palomar Mountain Linkage, \$1,580,000.00
(Department of Defense – Margarita Peak), San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Trust for Public Land (TPL) for a cooperative project with the Department of Defense, Department of Navy (DOD), the Fallbrook Land Conservancy (FLC), and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to assist with the acquisition of approximately 1,206± acres of land located within the DFG's Santa Ana-Palomar Linkage that will enhance wildlife connectivity between the Cleveland National Forest to the north and the surrounding unimproved land, including Camp Pendleton.

In November, 2004 the DOD and the Resources Agency entered into a partnership agreement to implement the acquisition of lands to protect critical habitat and to provide buffer zones around military installations and military airspace. The DOD will hold restrictive use easements over properties acquired. Pursuant to the agreement, the parties will work cooperatively to develop and implement a process for evaluating and acquiring properties that meet the objectives of both parties. At the August 25, 2005 Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) meeting, the Board approved the first project undertaken under this partnership agreement.

The subject property is located south of the Camp Pendleton Marine Base in San Diego County. The Cleveland National Forest is north of the subject property. The remaining area around the subject property is unimproved land.

The Santa Ana-Palomar Linkage (Linkage) provides critical wintering, breeding, and migratory habitat for numerous species. Five federally listed species have been sighted in the Linkage. These include the Quino Checkerspot butterfly, arroyo toad, Least Bell's vireo, Coastal California gnatcatcher, and the Riverside fairy shrimp. Some winter residents in the Linkage include Northern harrier, Lewis' woodpecker, and the American robin. Species utilizing the breeding habitat found in the area include the Western pond turtle, golden eagle, and cooper's hawk. The subject property also contains significant natural resources, including water (Roblar Creek), native grasslands and oak woodlands, chaparral, and scrub brush.

In addition to providing habitat and open space for recreation and wildlife conservation, the property will serve as a buffer zone to Camp Pendleton (Pendleton). Pendleton is the Marine Corps' premier amphibious training base and the only west coast amphibious assault training center. Its mission is to operate an amphibious training base that promotes the combat readiness of operating forces by providing facilities, services, and support responsive to the needs of Marines, sailors, and their families. Pendleton is one of the busiest DOD installations within the United States, with 40,000-45,000 training events scheduled annually.

The TPL will acquire the property and transfer fee title, subject to the easement in favor of the Navy, to the FLC. The FLC will retain ownership and will manage the property in accordance with the terms of the Navy's easement.

The property has been appraised and the appraisal has been reviewed and approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The owners have agreed to sell their property for the approved, fair market value of \$3,140,000.00. DOD has represented that the easement value is 50 percent of the fee value or \$1,570,000.00. The Board will be contributing the remaining 50 percent toward the fee purchase. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses, bringing the total proposed allocation by the Board for this project to \$1,580,000.00. DOD will be contributing the value of their easement or \$1,570,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect significant natural landscapes and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve the project as proposed; allocate \$1,580,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant and associated costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

22. Santa Rosa Mountains, Expansion 8 \$726,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal is to consider the proposed acquisition of 100± acres of privately owned land for the protection of habitat for the peninsular bighorn sheep in the Santa Rosa Mountains, and the acceptance of three grants from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), under both the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Program and the Recovery Land Acquisition Program, to be applied toward the state's purchase. 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 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 Cauhilla is about three miles north of the subject property, and the Salton Sea located about 14 miles to the southeast.

The acquisition 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. It is anticipated that the area will offer both passive and consumptive recreational uses. The proposal being considered at this time would, if approved, bring the total number of acres protected within the project area to over 110,000 acres.

The owners have agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$3,240,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The USFWS has provided three grants, under both the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Program and the Recovery Land Acquisition Program, in an amount not to exceed \$924,434.00 to be applied toward the purchase price of the property. A private contributor has agreed to provide funds in the amount of no less than \$1,620,000.00 to assist in this acquisition, leaving a balance not to exceed \$696,000.00 needed to complete this purchase. It is estimated that an additional \$30,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs for appraisal, escrow and title insurance fees, and the DGS review charges, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$726,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of real property 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 and is proposed as exempt under Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Class 25, Section 15325, as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; accept a private contribution of no less than \$1,620,000.00, and three grants from the USFWS under both the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Program and the Recovery Land Acquisition Program, not to exceed \$924,434.00 to be applied toward the purchase of the property; allocate \$283,275.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c); and \$442,725.00 from the Safe Neighborhood, Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350 (a)(5) for the purchase price and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this projects; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

23. Topanga State Park Rodeo Grounds \$1,591,300.00
Stream Restoration, Los Angeles County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Department of Parks and Recreation to restore the natural floodplain, creek channel and sediment transport systems at the southern end of Topanga Creek, approximately 2,500 feet upstream from the Pacific Ocean, in Los Angeles County.

The project is designed to provide additional passage opportunities, summer rearing for juveniles and greater connectivity for endangered southern steelhead trout. Topanga Creek is one of only three watersheds in the Santa Monica Bay with a reproducing population of these fishes. The project consists of the removal of a berm that was installed by the former tenants of the Rodeo Grounds homes in order to divert flood waters from Topanga Creek and protect the residences. Existing structures on site must also be removed.

The Rodeo Grounds Berm is located in Topanga State Park, owned by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Angeles District. It is part of the 1,640 acres acquired in 2001 which connects the upper portion of Trippet Ranch to the ocean. This protects the entire reach of Topanga Creek, which still supports endangered steelhead trout (*Oncyhorhynchus mykiss*). Following the acquisition in 2001, an effort was made by an inclusive stakeholder process to identify critical restoration projects for the entire Topanga Creek Watershed. Removal of the Rodeo Grounds Berm is considered to be one of the key actions needed to restore suitable passage for steelhead.

The project's total area of direct impact encompasses an estimated 1.81 acres, which includes the 80,000 sq. ft. (1.8 acres) of berm and 0.01 acres of delineated wetlands. These acreages are intended as maximum areas of impact for CEQA analysis purposes. As the purpose of the project is to benefit Topanga Creek, these impacts are temporary, and the restoration effort is designed to impact the affected areas of waters and wetlands to the minimal amount necessary to accomplish the berm removal and restoration process.

The project is expected to take approximately 40 working days, and will incorporate a plan for soil testing to ensure that any non-contaminated fill is disposed of locally, rather than transported to the hazardous waste facility. Of the 27,000 tons of fill material, approximately 17,000 tons have been estimated to be lead-contaminated, and the remaining 9,000 tons appear to be non-contaminated.

Adjacent to the berm is 12± acres of floodplain area that has been disturbed and developed with residences and driveways. These residences have been vacated by DPR and the improvements will be removed as part of this project. WCB funds are not contributing to the removal of these improvements. Once the berm is removed this will allow for a natural re-adjustment of the creek channel through this floodplain area and allow for riparian restoration of the disturbed areas. These actions are anticipated to result in direct benefits to endangered steelhead trout which will be able to access 3.3 miles of suitable habitat that is now seasonally restricted due to the sub-surface flows

associated with the berm. Revegetation will be initiated in November 2007 and make use of on site plant materials.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,591,300
California Department of Fish and Game	240,048
Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission	499,917
Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority	90,000
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration	500,000
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains	26,769
Department of Parks and Recreation	<u>330,094</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$3,278,128

WCB project costs will be for berm excavation, and project management. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of 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 this project.

The project has been reviewed and included in the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Plan and is supported by the *Topanga Creek Watershed Management Plan (2002)*, and the *Santa Monica Mountains Steelhead Habitat Assessment Report (2006)*. The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board.

Permits to accomplish this restoration have been submitted to the California Coastal Commission, California Department of Fish and Game (1601), US Army Corps of Engineers (404), and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (410). A California Department of Transportation permit will also be requested, incorporating the traffic plan provided. All documents related to the removal, restoration and revegetation are included in the completed mitigated negative declaration prepared pursuant to CEQA.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,591,300.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50) Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

24. Parker Ranch, Kern County \$1,515,000.00

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for a project involving the acquisition of a conservation easement over 9,576± acres of privately owned land in Kern County for the purposes of preventing the conversion of rangeland, grazing land, and grassland to nonagricultural uses, protecting the property from encroaching residential development, and to sustain the open space benefits attributable to continued livestock grazing use.

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

The southernmost point of the subject parcel lies two miles east of the city of Caliente. From there it extends seven miles northward. Certain westerly portions of the property front on Caliente Bodfish Road. Walker Basin Road runs through the extreme northerly portion of the parcel. Located in the Tehachapi Mountains, Parker Ranch varies in elevation from 1,500 feet along Caliente Creek in the southwest, to 5,800 feet at Harper Peak in the northeast.

The Parker Ranch has been used for grazing for at least the 150 years the property has been in the family. The ranch is generally divided into eight fenced pastures; a fact that has helped to facilitate optimal management practices that have resulted in a sustainable grazing regime. The conservation easement will ensure the economic viability of the ranch, the continuation of the cattle grazing on the land, and the protection of 9,576± acres of open space.

Many plant and animal species will benefit from the conservation easement over Parker Ranch. Due to its large size, the ranch provides large amounts of unfragmented habitat for black bears, mountain lions, bobcats, deer, and golden eagles. Over two miles of Caliente Creek to be protected by the easement may support the yellow-blotched salamander and the state-threatened Tehachapi slender salamander. The ranch supports a population of the state and federally endangered Bakersfield Cactus as well as the calico monkey flower, Piute mountain navarretia, and aromatic canyon gooseberry.

The appraised value of the easement interest, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS), is \$3,000,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the easement at a discounted price of \$2,500,000.00. The National Audubon Society will contribute \$1,000,000.00. Staff recommends that the Board approve an allocation for a grant to TNC in the amount of \$1,500,000.00 to provide the remaining balance of the funding required for the purchase of the conservation easement. It is anticipated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be required to cover project-related expenses

including the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$1,515,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect California's rangeland, grazing land, and grasslands through the use of conservation easements and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and the instruments of conveyance prior to authorizing the disbursement of funds directly to the escrow holder for the purchase of the conservation easement. In addition, staff will have the ability to access the property for the purpose of monitoring validation no less than every three years.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve the project as proposed; allocate \$1,515,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650(f) (Rangeland) for the grant and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

25. California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2007 \$1,153,073.00
San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Del Norte Counties

This proposal is to consider the approval of an interagency agreement with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for funding to assist in the restoration of fisheries habitat and improvement of fish passage at four locations: El Capitan Creek in Santa Barbara County, Chorro Creek and Santa Rosa Creek in San Luis Obispo County, and the Terwer Creek watershed in Del Norte County. The projects are on private and public property, and have all been selected as high priority projects by DFG's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program.

The Board has approved similar cost-share projects with DFG in May of 2005 and 2006, allocating a total of \$2,851,956.00 toward a total of 25 individual projects located on the south coast, north coast, and in the Klamath basin of Northern California. These cost-share projects have allowed the DFG to implement additional worthwhile projects from their available list of qualified projects that would otherwise be unfunded.

In general, this proposal would result in improved fish passage for migrating steelhead in coastal streams, and would restore or enhance in-stream habitat for all aquatic life in those streams. Each project is summarized below, and the project administrator is identified in parentheses.

Chorro Creek Floodplain & Riparian Restoration, San Luis Obispo County
(The Bay Foundation of Morro Bay – Morro Bay National Estuary Program)

Chorro Creek drains into Morro Bay located on the California central coast. This project will increase habitat complexity for steelhead through installation of in-stream log and/or rock structures to encourage formation of resting and jumping pools and escape habitat, improve embryonic steelhead survival through improved aeration of gravels used for spawning and rearing habitat (reduced sediment and increased hydraulic scouring of cobbles and gravels), increase food sources for steelhead and improve water temperatures through enhancement of 1.5 miles of riparian corridor and wetland areas, increase watershed function through removal of agricultural levees and reconnection with enhanced floodplain and wetland areas. This project will improve water quality and quantity available to steelhead through improved aquifer re-charge by increased inundation floodplain and wetland areas, and protect habitat and biological diversity of aquatic species (fresh/marine) in Chorro Creek and Morro Bay through bioengineered expansion of the riparian corridor including floodplain and wetland creation. This project will also provide benefits to the estuarine habitats of Morro Bay, by trapping sediment and other pollutants on the restored floodplains before they reach the Bay. Eelgrass beds in the estuary are especially valuable habitats which provide the majority of winter forage for migrating black brant geese and valuable nursery habitat for marine invertebrates and fishes. Eelgrass habitat is especially vulnerable to the sedimentation of the Bay.

Terwer Creek Upslope Implementation Project, Del Norte County
(Yurok Tribe)

Terwer Creek is one of the first tributaries to the Klamath River upstream from the Pacific Ocean. Terwer Creek is prioritized for immediate restoration in the Lower Klamath Sub-basin Watershed Restoration Plan. The watershed preserved some of the best remaining anadromous fish habitat left within the Lower Klamath River Sub-basin. This project will implement the recommendations of the Terwer Creek Assessment Report (Rhode 2004) by decommissioning high priority road segments to reduce road-related sediment impacts to the watershed and their anadromous fisheries. A total of 18 stream crossings and one mass wasting site will be removed and remediated, preventing an estimated 18,541 cubic yards of sediment from making its way into Terwer Creek.

Ferrasci Road Bridge (Santa Rosa Creek), San Luis Obispo County
(Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust)

This project eliminates steelhead passage problems on Santa Rosa Creek at the Ferrasci Road Crossing, located just east of Cambria, and is the highest ranked barrier removal project in San Luis Obispo County. The project will replace the Ferrasci Road Crossing barrier with a clear-span bridge designed to be free of the 100-year flood event. The completed project will provide unrestricted steelhead passage to 10 miles of creek, and as much as 8 miles of tributaries to spawning and rearing habitat above the project site. It will eliminate costly, often weekly, maintenance during the wet season of the existing barrier and the poorly designed and narrow fish ladder and stabilize and enhance the channel through the project area and improve fish habitat by strategic placement of woody debris and boulder clusters as recommended in the California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual.

El Capitan Creek Culvert Modifications, Santa Barbara County
(California Department of Transportation)

El Capitan Creek flows to the Pacific Ocean after passing under Highway 101 approximately 13 miles north of the City of Goleta. The successful restoration of a steelhead population in the El Capitan Creek watershed is dependent upon adequate migration upstream from the Highway 101 culvert. No other impassible anthropogenic barriers exist on the mainstream and most of the West Fork of El Capitan Creek. A high quality of steelhead habitat exists in the upper watershed. This project facilitates fish passage within the culvert through the installation of weirs and resting pools within the culvert.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,152,915.00
Department of Fish and Game	<u>1,102,914.00</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$2,255,829.00

Project costs vary for each project, but will generally include project planning and design, development of floodplains and removal of levees, restoration of wetland and riparian habitats, fencing installation, concrete work, log and rock installation, labor, materials, administration and contingency. In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$158.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the Board's portion of the project to \$1,153,073.00. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration projects that promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. DFG has also approved a programmatic document for these projects in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,153,073.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

26. San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara County \$4,730,000.00

This proposal is to consider the fee title acquisition of 2,899± acres of vacant land in eastern Santa Clara County, to be managed by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for the purposes of protecting the property from encroaching development, providing habitat linkages to adjacent public lands and protected conservation properties, and protecting sensitive plant and animal species that may occur on the property. The proposed acquisition is a cooperative project with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which purchased the property in May, 2006.

The property is located approximately 20 miles east of San Jose and 25 miles south of Livermore on San Antonio Valley Road in eastern Santa Clara County, and is contiguous to the northern boundary of Henry W. Coe State Park. Located in TNC's Mt. Hamilton project area, the property features outstanding valley oak woodlands and native wildflower fields as well as the headwaters of creeks leading to Lake Del Valle, a major source of water for the greater San Francisco Bay Area. The property is loaded with rolling foothills and rugged canyons that provide year-round habitat for tule elk, blacktailed deer, valley quail, golden eagles, and mountain lions. Other species likely to benefit from the protection of the property include wild turkey, feral pigs, bobcats, San Joaquin kit fox, bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, California tiger salamander, red-legged frog, western pond turtle, rainbow trout, foothill yellow-legged frog, and bay checkerspot butterfly.

The DFG plans to passively manage the property at the outset, keeping the property closed to the public for the first year to allow time for signage and to assess the ecological values. During this time, a management plan will be developed to determine how the property will be used, and the guidelines for making it available as a public resource for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts.

TNC has agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$5,218,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). TNC's Central Coast Opportunity Fund has provided a \$500,000.00 grant for this transaction, which will be credited to the purchase price in escrow, resulting in a net acquisition price of \$4,718,000.00 to the state. Staff recommends that the Board approve an allocation in the amount of \$4,718,000.00 for the purchase of the property. It is estimated that an additional \$12,000.00 will be required to cover project-related expenses including appraisal review costs, title and escrow fees, and the DGS review charges, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$4,730,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of real property to protect significant natural landscapes and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,730,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the purchase and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

27. Bahia Wetland Restoration, Phase I, Marin County \$835,800.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Marin Audubon Society to fund Phase 1 of a tidal wetland restoration project on 386 acres owned by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) known as the Bahia Unit of the Petaluma Marsh Wildlife Area and on 39 acres controlled by the State Lands Commission and managed by DFG, known as Mahoney Spur, and to restore upland and wetland habitat on East Bahia, a 58-acre parcel owned by the Marin Audubon Society adjacent to DFG lands, due east of Novato, in Marin County.

The Bahia site consists of diked and filled historic baylands owned by DFG and the Marin Audubon Society (MAS), located south of Black John Slough, west of the Petaluma River in Marin County. The subsided baylands are bordered on the southern, landward side by intact terrestrial soils of hill slopes dominated by Blue Oak woodlands. Because this is the only known Blue Oak woodland adjacent to tidal marsh, the restoration of this property will restore a significant heritage landscape.

Acquisition in 2003 of the entire 632-acre Bahia property was made possible by the extensive efforts of many people from the local community. Support in the form of major funding for the purchase of the property came from many government sources: the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Coastal Conservancy, CALFED, Marin County Open Space District, NAWCA, Caltrans, and NOAA through The Bay Institute, as well as private foundations, including the Marin Community Foundation, many small foundations, and many private individuals.

The site is on both sides of an artificial channel owned by the Bahia Homeowners Association (HOA). Since it was last dredged, sedimentation has returned this channel to tidal brackish marsh, now supporting the largest population (15 to 20 pairs) of endangered California Clapper Rail (CCR) on the Petaluma River and second largest in San Pablo Bay. The project site on the western side of the HOA channel is owned by DFG and is described as: West Bahia (217 acres), separated by an internal cross-levee, with ground surface elevations subsided below sea level; Central Bahia (117 acres), between HOA and the West Bahia cross-levee, lies mostly at low inter-tidal elevations; a 6.7-acre seasonal wetland formed from brackish tidal marshes by the placement of dredge material; a one-acre former decant pond, now a fresh-water pond; a 5-acre filled area formerly used by Bahia residents as a parking lot for recreational vehicles; and the 39-acre "Mahoney Spur," adjacent and north of Central Bahia, partially filled with dredged materials in the 1970's. Mahoney Spur is owned by State Lands and is managed by the DFG.

On its northern and eastern tidal sides, the site is bordered by a relatively mature historic fringe tidal brackish marsh that accreted over former mudflats of Black John Slough and the Petaluma River during the 20th Century. Mahoney Spur is at a generally higher elevation than the adjacent Central and West Bahia cells, and is dominated by a mosaic of pickleweed, grasses, and salt-tolerant plants.

Shortly after the DFG acquired the property in June of 2003, the pump house collapsed. The basins created by the dikes have remained ponded since that time due to heavy

rains, lack of drainage, and overtopping of some levees. In November of 2006, Bahia residents and others began to complain about a strong “rotten egg” odor that was subsequently determined to be originating in the West Bahia. Airborne concentrations of hydrogen sulfide were measured by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District at levels as high as 330 ppb. Depending on wind direction, the Air District detected the odor in San Rafael, Novato, and as far away as the city of Richmond. DFG treated the pond with a microbial agent (AQ-4) as a means to control the odor and is planning to cut two notches in the northern perimeter levee around West Bahia. The notches are expected to improve on-site water mixing and increase dissolved oxygen. The longer term remedy is installing culverts and tide gates that will provide greater water exchange at lower levels, greater mixing of lower water levels, and increase dissolved oxygen at lower levels of the pond.

The project site on the eastern side of the HOA channel is known as East Bahia (58 acres) and is owned by MAS. It consists of high artificial levees and fill platforms made of drained bay mud and soil (generated from grading of nearby hills and excavation of adjacent tidal marshes) placed on tidal marshes. The fill was placed to form three peninsulas, known as the Western, Central, and Eastern Peninsulas, and connects with lands to the south. The peninsulas were created as building pads for a housing development. MAS’s property includes an approximately five-acre pond and several areas of seasonal wetland that have developed on the Western Peninsula. Ruderal vegetation dominates the upland areas with some native species, such as *Baccharis pilularis*, and several native oak trees.

Once completed the project will establish up to 375 acres of tidal wetland and associated habitat, including new successional brackish tidal marsh. It will retain existing seasonal wetlands, and create a new terrestrial transition zone, connected to upland hill slope oak woodland and grassland habitat.

The project goal is to restore an ecosystem, similar to the historic tidal marsh communities of the Petaluma River, including associated nontidal seasonal wetlands and uplands. This would support species recovery goals of significantly expanding habitat for resident and migratory wetland wildlife species, particularly the endangered California clapper rail, the salt marsh harvest mouse, and other special status species as well.

The project will also restore slough and channel habitat to benefit estuarine fish and transitional habitat structure similar to those of antecedent, prehistoric marshes that will also benefit other special status species including the San Pablo song sparrow and salt marsh yellowthroat. During the years shortly after breaching, the open water habitat will favor diving ducks and other diving birds. Migratory waterfowl and shorebirds will benefit from shallow intertidal habitats and channels. Special status fish species, such as steelhead, will benefit greatly from the increased channel network and shallow wetlands and ponded areas.

Habitat of an existing pond will be enhanced as will an existing seasonal wetland on a former dredge disposal site on the Western Peninsula. These seasonal wetlands

will particularly benefit migratory shorebirds and dabbling ducks. Uplands on MAS's property will be vegetated with native oaks, shrubs, and grasses to enhance habitat.

An Environmental Impact Report was prepared and certified in August 2006. All applications for regulatory permits have been submitted. The user permit from the city of Novato is nearly complete, after which state agencies can issue permits. The USFWS Office of Endangered Species is processing a Section 7 Consultation at this time. All required environmental documents will be completed before construction begins.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$835,800
CalFed	768,850
USFWS Private Stewardship Program	100,000
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	100,000
San Francisco Foundation	20,000
North American Wetlands Conservation Council	159,000
Forrest Lattner Foundation	36,000
Mead Foundation	<u>20,000</u>
Total Available Funding:	\$2,039,650

Project costs will be for earthmoving, including levee lowering, excavation of channels, and grading, installation of water control structures, staking and surveys, revegetation, and construction oversight. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of coastal wetlands within the San Francisco Bay area and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$835,800.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572(c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

28. Putah Creek Fishing Access Improvements, Yolo County \$562,606.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a cooperative project with the County of Yolo (County) to make extensive public access improvements to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Putah Creek Fishing Access sites 1, 2, 3, and 4 located east of the town of Winters between Lake Solano Park and Lake Berryessa, adjacent to Highway 128. The project will include construction of barrier-free trails and fishing platforms, restrooms, and informational parking areas, access roads and improvement of a park host area.

The Putah Creek Fishing Access is located within a biologically important riparian corridor surrounded by oak woodlands, farmland, ranchland, and open space. This area not only provides access to Putah Creek's exceptional fishing opportunities but other passive public recreational and educational opportunities as well. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) acquired the subject property for DFG in two phases (1963 and 1972) and the County has operated and maintained the area since 1963. In 1963 the WCB not only funded the acquisition of 60 acres but also the construction of parking areas and installation of basic amenities like sanitary facilities and trash cans at three discreet sites spread along the three mile stretch of creek. An additional 22 acres adjoining the 60-acre parcel was acquired in 1972 and improved for public access with WCB funding in 1974. In 1989 WCB funded the reconstruction and paving of the access roads and parking areas.

No improvements have been made to the four access sites since 1989 and they are now in need of rehabilitation and improvement. Bollard fencing around the parking areas is falling down; parking lot and access road surfaces are cracked and marred with potholes; there are no permanent restrooms on site; the existing parking layout is very diffuse which results in people creating their own trails to Putah Creek and impacting the riparian and upland areas more than is necessary; two of the parking areas are on or below the floodplain thus posing a maintenance and public safety problem; there is little or no barrier-free access beyond the parking lots; there is little or no interpretive/informational signage at the sites.

This project will make improvements to each of the four access sites along the property. All of the sites will have a new informational/educational kiosk, fee collection station, and monument entrance sign installed. They will all have trash cans and educational and directional signage placed along newly constructed access trails. Informal or incidental trails will be blocked off and removed from all of the sites. All of the new and refurbished parking areas and entrance roads will be repaved with 2 inches of asphalt-concrete (AC) including extruded AC curbing around the perimeters. Large boulders will also be placed around the perimeters of the parking areas and entrance roads to keep automobiles out of sensitive areas. Appropriate directional signage and striping will also be installed.

Each site will also have its own specific treatment according to the individual needs and constraints there. At Site #1 a permanent vault restroom will be installed, both ADA and non-ADA trails will be constructed and an observation/fishing platform will be built on the stream bank. Two of three parking areas will be removed and the remaining lot will

be refurbished as described above. A picnic area will be graded and surfaced with decomposed granite and picnic tables installed.

At Site #2 the existing parking lot is in the floodplain and will be removed and a new parking lot constructed near the highway. Access trails will be constructed but will not be barrier-free. A barrier-free portable restroom will be located near the parking area since space constraints do not allow for a permanent facility.

At Site #3 a permanent vault restroom will be installed, the two existing parking areas and access roads will be refurbished; both ADA and non-ADA access trails will be constructed along with a barrier-free fishing/observation platform. This site has an old park host area which will be renovated to attract and accommodate a resident host who will live on site and perform maintenance and stewardship duties as needed including distributing the informational brochure which will be produced as part of this project. The work on the park host site will include demolition and removal of old outbuildings and debris, upgrading of the electrical system, improvement of the existing septic system, installation of a potable water well, replacement of the old concrete trailer pad with a larger one to accommodate a larger trailer, and installation of a water line to the picnic area with irrigation stub outs. Picnic tables will be added to the existing picnic area.

At Site #4 two of three parking areas will be removed and the third will be refurbished. A permanent vault restroom will be installed. ADA trails with interpretive signage, a picnic area, and a switch-back trail to the creek will be constructed. Three barrier free observation platforms will be constructed. There will be no fishing access from these platforms due to their elevation and distance from the creek as dictated by the geography of the site.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$562,290.00
Yolo County	\$165,170.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$727,460.00

Project costs will be for engineering and design; CEQA and permitting; demolition and site clean-up; mobilization; parking lot and road work; trails and platforms; restrooms; renovation of park host area; fencing, gates and iron rangers; signage and educational materials; picnic areas; and trash receptacles. In addition to the costs listed above, an additional \$316.00 will be required for Department of General Services' review costs, bringing the allocation necessary for the Board's portion of the project to \$562,606.00. It is anticipated that the project will qualify for Federal participation under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Staff has filed the appropriate application with the Department of Parks and Recreation, which, if approved, will provide the Board with a 50 percent reimbursement of its portion of the project costs. The proposed funding

source authorizes grants for projects pursuant to the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947 that allows for development of public access and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The Department of Fish Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The County has filed a Negative Declaration according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County has agreed to manage and maintain the project for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Operating Agreement.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$562,606.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

29. Putah Creek North (Bobcat Ranch), Yolo County \$6,360,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the National Audubon Society, Inc. DBA Audubon California (Audubon) for the fee title acquisition of 6,810 ± acres of privately owned land in southwestern Yolo County, commonly referred to as Bobcat Ranch, for the purposes of protecting the property from encroaching development, protecting habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species, providing corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and protecting significant natural landscapes and ecosystems. This proposal also requests consideration for the acceptance of a conservation easement over the property by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) as a condition of the grant to Audubon.

The Bobcat Ranch is located on the north side of State Highway 128, approximately one mile east of the Napa County line, immediately north of Putah Creek and the Solano County line, and approximately three miles west of Winters in unincorporated Yolo County. The property is adjacent to numerous conservation land holdings, including the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area, the DFG's Putah Creek Wildlife Area, a 2,700-acre block of Bureau of Land Management lands, and the University of California's Stebbins Cold Canyon Reserve.

Elevations on Bobcat Ranch range from approximately 300 feet on the northeastern area to over 1,600 feet in the western portion, and the topography includes a number of ridgelines, canyons, hillsides, and valleys. Wildlife species that have been observed on the property include bobcat, mountain lion, bear, badger, coyote, golden eagle, osprey, bald eagle, as well as migrating neo-tropical birds. The property contains important unfragmented habitat consisting of natural grasslands, including at least eight species of native bunch grass, blue oak, valley oak and interior live oak woodlands, chaparral, riparian forest, natural springs and watercourses, wildlife ponds, and restored seasonal wetlands. The Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) approved a grant to Audubon in 2004 for a riparian and wetland habitat restoration project that included work on a portion of Bobcat Ranch.

The appraised value of the property, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$11,500,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property at a discounted price of \$7,000,000.00, and to credit \$1,000,000.00 back to Audubon as an endowment for long-term stewardship, restoration, and environmental education programs. It is proposed that the Board approve an allocation for a grant to Audubon in the amount of \$6,350,000.00 to provide a portion of the funding for the property. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be required to cover project-related expenses including the DGS appraisal review costs, title insurance, and escrow fees, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$6,360,000.00. The balance of the purchase price, in the amount of \$650,000.00 is being provided by a \$610,000.00 grant to Audubon from the Great Valley Center, and a \$40,000.00 contribution from Audubon. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect significant natural landscapes and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the Board will review and approve all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, conservation easement, escrow instructions, and

the instruments of conveyance prior to authorizing the disbursement of funds directly to the escrow holder for the purchase of the property. In addition, staff will have the ability to access the property for the purpose of monitoring validation no less than every three years.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve the project as proposed; authorize acceptance of a conservation easement over the property; allocate \$6,360,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

30. Martis Valley, Nevada County and Placer County \$6,510,000.00

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to the Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) to assist in the fee title acquisition of 1,481± acres of privately owned land, commonly referred to as Waddle Ranch, for the purposes of protecting the property from encroaching development, protecting habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species, providing corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, protecting significant natural landscapes and ecosystems, providing habitat necessary to protect deer and mountain lions, and contributing to recreational opportunities for the public. The proposed acquisition is a cooperative project involving a number of partners, including the Trust for Public Land, Placer County, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board), the Truckee Tahoe Airport District, the Resources Agency, the Mountain Area Preservation Foundation, and private donors.

Waddle Ranch is located approximately three miles southeast of downtown Truckee, and one-half mile due east of the Truckee-Tahoe Airport in the Martis Valley. It is contiguous to the approximately 2,000-acre Martis Creek Lake National Recreation Area, and adjacent to public lands managed by the Tahoe National Forest. Its protection will contribute to the creation of a 10-mile open space corridor for wildlife movement.

Elevations on Waddle Ranch range from approximately 5,800 feet to 6,900 feet, and the property contains a significant diversity of wildlife habitat, including sagebrush and grasslands, bitterbrush, approximately two miles of riparian corridors, seasonal wetlands and vernal pools, and old growth pine forests. The property contains the entire lower reaches of the East Martis Creek watershed, which flows into Martis Creek Lake, a primary outlet of the watershed into the Truckee River. A man-made, earth-fill dam created Dry Lake in the 1960's at the northeast corner of the property, which also flows into Martis Creek Lake. Wildlife species that have been observed on the property include mule deer, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, bald eagle, sandhill crane, and numerous waterfowl species. The property is also considered to be suitable habitat for Sierra Nevada red fox, wolverine, pine marten, fisher, Western white-tail jackrabbit, Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare, and Sierra Nevada mountain beaver.

The appraised value of the property, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS), is \$23,500,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the TDLT at the approved, appraised value. Staff recommends that the Board approve an allocation for a grant to TDLT in the amount of \$6,500,000.00 to provide a portion of the funding required for the purchase of the property. It is anticipated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be required to cover project-related expenses, including but not limited to the DGS appraisal review costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$6,510,000.00. The balance of the purchase price is being provided by Placer County open space mitigation fees (\$10,000,000.00), the Truckee Tahoe Airport District (\$2,000,000.00), the Resources Agency (\$2,000,000.00), the Mountain Area Preservation Foundation (\$1,500,000.00), and private donors (\$1,500,000.00). The proposed funding sources allow grants to protect deer, mountain lion, oak habitat, and significant natural landscapes and are consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the Board will review and approve all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to authorizing the disbursement of funds directly to the escrow holder for the purchase of the conservation easement. In addition, staff will have the ability to access the property for the purpose of monitoring validation no less than every three years.

At the close of escrow, TDLT will hold fee title to the property. Upon completion of a stewardship and management plan, anticipated to occur within two to three years, fee title interest of Waddle Ranch will subsequently be conveyed to the Truckee Tahoe Airport District, with TDLT to hold a conservation easement over the property. The proposed grant agreement also provides for approval of said conveyance, subject to final review of all transaction documents by Board staff prior to said subsequent recording.

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

Staff recommends that the Board approve the project as proposed; allocate \$2,916,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650, and \$3,594,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (a) for the grant and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

31. Eel River Wildlife Area (Salt River Unit), Humboldt County \$920,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Western Rivers Conservancy (Conservancy) for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the State Coastal Conservancy, and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to assist in the acquisition of 443± acres of private property. This proposal also recommends acceptance of a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant from the USFWS and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Conservancy to be applied toward the purchase of the property. Once acquired, the property will be transferred to the DFG for inclusion in the Eel River Wildlife Area, in Humboldt County, for the protection, retention, and possible restoration of the Salt River and adjacent properties.

The subject property is located on Riverside Road, northwest of State Highway 211, three miles north of Ferndale and five miles southwest of Loleta in Humboldt County. The city of Fortuna is about eight miles east of the subject property.

As a result of human settlement after 1850, much of the Eel and Salt Rivers' estuary and salt marsh were reclaimed for agricultural purposes. Levees, dikes, and drainages were installed to increase productivity for farming and grazing activities. Natural creeks and drainages were channelized or diverted and much of the native riparian plant community was removed. The upper watershed produces significant water and sediment flows into the remaining bed of Salt River drainage and as a result of the man-made changes much of the river's carrying capacity is reduced. The reduced capacity causes flooding on an annual basis and disturbs not only the agricultural activities, but natural resources as well. The Eel River Wildlife Area totals approximately 2,000 acres with the first acquisitions occurring in the 1980's. With the acquisition of this 443-acre property the wildlife area will grow to about 2,450 acres and will have not only significant frontage on the Eel River, but approximately two and one-half miles of frontage on the Salt River.

There are multiple purposes for this acquisition including conservation, protection, and possible restoration of the project area by expanding the tidal prism, restoring estuarine/palustrine wetlands, and improving routing of sediment through the watershed. The project will improve wetland habitat for many species of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, and other wetland associated wildlife. It is estimated that over 200 bird species, including 80 kinds of water birds regularly feed, rest, or nest in the greater Eel/Salt River estuary. The subject property has multiple species value including habitat for three federally listed types of salmon, coho, Chinook, and steelhead. The federally listed tidewater goby will also benefit as well as other endangered or threatened species including the brown pelican, bald eagle, peregrine falcon and the snowy plover. Year round visitors to this area include waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, harbor seals, cormorants, egrets, herons, and river otters.

The DFG has identified the subject property as being within a Significant Natural Area and has recommended the purchase of this property, which would be ultimately be managed by the DFG. The property is proposed to be passively managed, thus

minimizing operation and personnel costs. It is anticipated that the area will offer consumptive and passive recreational uses.

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

The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the Conservancy at the appraised value of \$2,140,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The State Coastal Conservancy has provided the Conservancy with a grant in the amount of \$250,000.00 to assist in the acquisition. The USFWS has provided the state with a \$1,000,000.00 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant. Staff recommends that the Board accept the USFWS grant and approve an Agreement to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Conservancy to be applied toward the purchase. Staff further recommends that the Board approve an allocation for a grant to the Conservancy, in the amount of \$890,000.00, to provide for the remainder of the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$30,000.00 will be needed for project related costs including the appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs, and the DGS review costs bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$920,000.00. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; approve the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant under its National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Western Rivers Conservancy to be applied toward its acquisition of the 443± acre property; allocate \$920,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c) for a portion of the purchase price and project-related costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

32. Eel River Wildlife Area Wetland Enhancement, Humboldt County \$335,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance approximately 140 acres of seasonal wetlands at DFG's Eel River Wildlife Area, Ocean Ranch Unit, located approximately 10 miles southwest of the city of Eureka in Humboldt County.

The Eel River estuary, in combination with the adjacent Humboldt Bay, is the second largest estuarine system in California, behind San Francisco Bay. The Ocean Ranch Unit of the Eel River Wildlife Area was acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 1986, and through subsequent WCB actions has grown to more than 2,000 acres. In 1988, the WCB was asked to assist with restoration activities at the area through the renovation of existing levees, the construction of new interior levees, and the installation of water control structures. For many years these structures allowed DFG to efficiently maintain the area for a variety of wildlife species.

In the winter of 1994, an exterior levee outside the project area failed and saline tidal waters backed up to the interior levee constructed by the Board in 1988, damaging that levee as well. Saline water worked its way into the managed wetland units, killing freshwater marsh and riparian vegetation and reducing the value of these units to waterfowl and many other waterbirds. To alleviate this problem, DFG asked DU and WCB to repair the breach and raise the interior levee to withstand tidal action; WCB approved this project in February 2001. Unfortunately, due to federally endangered species concerns, DFG was unable to acquire the necessary permits in a timely fashion to repair the interior levee, and the project could not be completed as envisioned.

Subsequently, the DFG has been able to address endangered species concerns and obtain the necessary permits and authorizations to move forward with implementation of the project. Specifically, this project will upgrade the interior levees that were constructed in 1988 to make them able to withstand the higher, saline tidal waters, thereby protecting 140 acres of managed freshwater wetlands. In addition, one worn-out water control structure will be replaced, a second structure installed, and a road base will be placed on all the levees to allow DFG staff to access and manage the area in all weather conditions.

The project will restore the value of the managed wetland units to provide habitat for a wide variety of resident and migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds and other wetland-associated wildlife as well as meeting the ERWA management goals of providing wetland habitat diversity. Over 250 bird species are known to visit the site, including such species as northern pintail, northern shovelers, bufflehead, green-winged teal, double-crested cormorant, long-billed marsh wren, long-billed curlew, black-bellied plover, and horned grebe. Other species found here include black-tailed deer, river otter, and western garter snake. Great blue herons from an adjacent nesting colony forage in the wetlands. The project will directly benefit several listed species by providing roosting and foraging habitat for brown pelicans and foraging habitat for peregrine falcons, bald eagles, western snowy plovers (which nest on the adjacent beaches on the Wildlife Area), and recently de-listed Aleutian cackling geese.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$335,000.00
Department of Fish and Game	15,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	<u>27,020.00</u>
 TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	 \$377,020.00

Project costs will be for earthmoving; water control structures; erosion protection; road base; and project design, construction supervision and administration. DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. DFG has completed a negative declaration to satisfy CEQA requirements and all permits are acquired. The proposed funding source authorizes grants for restoration of wetlands outside the central valley and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$335,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) Other Wetlands; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

33. Humboldt Bay Coastal Reserve, Humboldt County \$175,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Friends of the Dunes Land Trust (Land Trust) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), to assist with the acquisition of 38.22± acres of private land as the initial acquisition for an education center and preserve, in Humboldt County. The acquisition will allow for the protection, retention, and possible restoration of beach area, dunes, wetland, and remnant maritime forest habitat.

The subject property is located off State Highway 255, known as New Navy Base Road, about one-fourth mile north of the community of Manila, on the Somoa Peninsula, in Humboldt County. The city of Arcata is about four miles northeast and the city of Eureka is about five miles southeast.

Placement of this 38± acre in Land Trust ownership will add a significant buffer from potential development of residential and agricultural use on the Somoa Peninsula. There are multiple purposes for this acquisition by the Land Trust including conservation of one of the very few remaining large, undeveloped, contiguous tracts of coastal dune habitats. It is the primary objective of the Land Trust to ensure that the regional continuity of lands on the peninsula are managed for conservation and provide a visitor center for information about Humboldt Bay. The property would also provide recreational opportunities and public access linkages with adjacent publicly owned property.

The subject property has multiple species values including habitat for the Humboldt Bay wallflower, beach layia, western snowy plover, northern-legged frog, black-capped chickadee, yellow warbler, Swainson's thrush, native dune grass, seashore bluegrass, beach bursage, and the sea-rocket. There is also the potential for restoration of the multiple habitats including the beach, dunes, wetlands, and remnant maritime forest areas.

The DFG has identified the subject property as being within a significant natural area and has recommended the purchase of this property which would be owned and managed by the Land Trust. It is anticipated that the area will offer only passive recreational uses with the exception of surf fishing.

There are no claims of sovereign state land ownership within the property. The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act requirements and is proposed as exempt under Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes and Class 25, Section 15325, as the transfer of an ownership or interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearing House.

The property owner has agreed to sell to the Land Trust at the appraised value of \$750,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). Other funding partners include the State Coastal Conservancy (\$505,000.00), Humboldt

County (\$5,000.00), and Pacific Coast Joint Venture (\$75,000.00 - Small Grants Program). The proposed \$165,000.00 grant by the Board would provide the balance of the purchase price required by the Land Trust to purchase the property. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs, including appraisal review charges by the DGS. 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.

Staff recommends that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$175,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(b/c), for the grant and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this projects; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.