

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

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State of California
 The Resources Agency
 Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
 Minutes
 November 18, 2004

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 18, 2004

The Wildlife Conservation Board met at the State Capitol, Room 112, Sacramento, California on November 18, 2004. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Mr. Jim Kellogg, Chairman. He introduced the Board members present and then turned over the meeting to Mr. Al Wright.

1. Roll CallWILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Kellogg, Chairperson
President, Fish and Game Commission
L. Ryan Brodrick, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game
Fred Klass, Program Budget Manager,
Vice, Michael Genest, Member
Interim Director, Department of Finance

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mary Morgan,
Vice, Assembly member Patty Berg
Susan Little,
Vice, Assembly member Fran Pavley

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Al Wright

Staff Present: Al Wright, Executive Director
John P. Donnelly, Assistant Executive Director
Dave Means, Assistant Executive Director
William Gallup, Senior Land Agent
Steven Christensen, Senior Land Agent
Linda Drake, Senior Land Agent
Randy Nelson, Senior Land Agent
Terri Muzik, Associate Land Agent
Marilyn Cundiff, Public Land Management Specialist
Peter Perrine, Public Land Management Specialist
Scott Clemons, Public Land Management Specialist
Bonnie Turner, Public Land Management Specialist
Tony Chappelle, Public Land Management Specialist
Roxanne Woodward, Budget Officer
Gary Cantrell, Research Analyst
Ken Morefield, Research Analyst
Jennifer Smith, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Maureen Rivera, Executive Assistant
Jan Beeding, Office Technician
Elena Salas, Secretary
Mary Grande, Secretary

Others Present: Nancy Templeton, Department of Fish and Game
Kerry Williams, Sotoyome Resource Conservation District
Karen Gaffry, Circuit Rider Productions
Lee Leslie, Leslie Salt
Ed Penny, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Jim Swanson
Tom Gamble, Gamble Ranch
John Beam, Department of Fish and Game
Terry Palmisano, Department of Fish and Game
Ray Krauss, Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area
John Hoffnagle, Napa Land Trust
Richard Warren, California Conservation Corp
John Weech, California Farm Bureau Federation

Mr. Wright reported that Mr. Jeff Arthur, staff member to Assembly member Hannah-Beth Jackson, passed away last Friday. He reflected on Mr. Arthur's many contributions to State government over the years and his strong support of the Board.

2. Funding Status as of November 18, 2004 (Informational)

(a) 2004-05 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Minor Projects..... \$500,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (35,000.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$465,000.00

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

Governor's Budget..... \$20,577,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (500,000.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$20,077,000.00

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

Governor's Budget..... \$20,620,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (2,926,000.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$17,694,000.00

(d) 2002-03 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget..... \$20,664,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (8,033,078.00)
Unallocated Balance..... \$12,630,922.00

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

Governor's Budget (2003-04 Reappropriation)
(San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$14,562,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (11,579,330.08)
Unallocated Balance..... \$2,982,669.92

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

Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)] ... \$36,100,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations (24,925,270.39)
Unallocated Balance..... \$11,174,729.61

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

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

(h) 2003-04 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$8,500,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$8,500,000.00

(i) 2002-03 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$2,500,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$2,500,000.00

Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002..... \$4,800,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (1,568,000.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$3,232,000.00

Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002..... \$19,200,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (3,793,000.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$15,407,000.00

(j) 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 (97,648,423.44)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$175,351,576.56

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

Governor's Budget..... \$13,250,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (11,400,000.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$1,850,000.00

(l) 2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)

Governor's Budget..... \$32,500,000.00
 Less Previous Board Allocations (31,425,135.00)
 Unallocated Balance..... \$1,074,865.00

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

Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572)	\$814,350,000.00
Less 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 Previous Board Allocations	(563,498,004.25)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$208,851,995.75

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

Governor’s Budget (Pursuant to Chapter 588, Statutes of 2001)	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(0.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$5,000,000.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$465,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c) and (d)	\$50,401,922.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (e) and (f)	\$14,157,399.53
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (g), (h), (i) and (j).....	\$215,990,576.56
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (k), (l) and (m)	\$211,776,860.75
Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (n)	\$5,000,000.00

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

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

Total Tax Credits Available.....	\$100,000,000.00
Less Previously Awarded Tax Credits	(33,241,234.00)
Tax Credits Awarded at August 12, 2004 Meeting	(15,000,000.00)
Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004, Tax Credits Subsequently Funded by:	
Wildlife Conservation Board(\$6,000,000.00)	
State Coastal Conservancy	(\$6,000,000.00)
Department of Parks and Recreation..	(\$3,000,000.00)
Balance of Tax Credits Available.....	\$51,758,766.00

Mr. Wright asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 - 15)

Mr. Wright reported that Item 4, Approval of Minutes, would not be considered as part of the Consent Calendar. He explained that due to the lengthy August meeting, the minutes were not ready for consideration.

Mr. Wright reported that, in regard to the items on consent, the Board received letters of support from the California Waterfowl Association for Item 9, French Valley Conservation Area; letters of support from Assembly member Fran Pavley and Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long for Item 10, Port Hueneme Fishing Pier Improvements; a letter of support from the California Waterfowl Association for Item 11, Miller Lake Wetland Restoration and a letter of support from the California Waterfowl Association for Item 15, Department of Fish and Game Land Management Plans.

Staff recommended approval of Consent Calendar Items 5 through 15, as proposed in the individual agenda explanations and including funding as noted therein.

It was moved by Mr. Ryan Brodrick that the Board approve Consent Calendar Items 5 through 15, as proposed in the individual agenda explanations and including funding as noted therein. Motion carried.

Mr. Wright welcomed Ms. Susan Little of Assembly member Fran Pavley's office.

*4. Approval of Minutes – August 12, 2004 Meeting

This item was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

*5. Recovery of Funds, November 18, 2004

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 was recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

\$0.00 to the **General Fund**
\$1,168,610.70 to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
\$67,399.98 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
\$11,859.00 to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
\$24,755.63 to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**

GENERAL FUND

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Expansion 3, Yolo County

Allocated	\$14,800,000.00
Expended	<u>-14,800,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total General Fund **\$0.00**

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

Alberhill Conservation Area, Riverside County

Allocated	\$1,845,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,337,300.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$507,700.00

Glenwood Meadows, Santa Cruz County

Allocated	\$3,130,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,532,799.80</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$597,200.20

Habitat Restoration and Public Access, Sun River Unit, Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Sacramento County

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

North Peak Preserve, Riverside County

Allocated	\$355,000.00
Expended	<u>-350,115.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,885.00

Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Salmon Falls Unit, Expansion 3, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$400,000.00
Expended	<u>-400,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Sacramento River, Jacinto Unit, Expansion 1, Glenn County

Allocated	\$5,000.00
Expended	<u>-800.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,200.00

San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Expansion 2, San Diego County

Allocated	\$5,050,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,025,597.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$24,402.50

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Expansions 3 and 4, Yolo County

Allocated	\$1,830,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,799,777.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$30,223.00

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund **\$1,168,610.70**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area, Expansions 5, 6, and 7, Yuba County

Allocated	\$3,908,000.00
Expended	<u>-3,902,231.19</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,768.81

Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$6,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,727.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,273.00

Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Salmon Falls Unit, Expansion 3, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$254,000.00
Expended	<u>-245,140.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,860.00

Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Expansion 4, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$697,500.00
Expended	<u>-693,616.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,884.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Cache Creek, Lower Reach, Yolo County

Allocated	\$595,000.00
Expended	<u>-594,999.98</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.02

Sacramento River Conservation Area (Gaines), Expansion 7, Glenn County

Allocated	\$243,000.00
Expended	<u>-213,922.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$29,078.00

San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansions 23, 24, and 25, Riverside County

Allocated	\$1,815,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,799,463.85</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$15,536.15

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$67,399.98**

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

Alberhill Conservation Area, Riverside County

Allocated	\$4,165,000.00
Expended	<u>-4,165,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Honcut Creek Wildlife Conservation Area, Expansion 3, Butte County

Allocated	\$920,000.00
Expended	<u>-908,141.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$11,859.00

Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund \$11,859.00

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

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion 27, Del Norte County

Allocated	\$368,000.00
Expended	<u>-350,972.37</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$17,027.63

South Fork American River, Lower Canyon Unit, Exp. 1, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$2,871,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,863,272.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,728.00

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 \$24,755.63

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve the recovery of funds for the projects listed on pages 7 through 10 of these minutes and close the project accounts. Recovery totals include \$0.00 to the General Fund, \$1,168,610.70 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, \$67,399.98 to the Habitat Conservation Fund, \$11,859.00 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, \$24,755.63 to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002.

Motion carried.

- *6. Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve Exchange, \$5,000.00
Orange County

This proposal was to consider a no-cost exchange of State-owned land for privately owned property, adjacent to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, in the City of Newport Beach, in western Orange County. Completion of this exchange will correct an encroachment issue now existing on State-owned land. Both the State and private lands abut the cliffs on the west side of the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve.

Approximately 30 years ago a fence was installed by the private property owner, in accordance with local building codes, at the back of their property. The fence line erroneously follows the cliff, rather than the precise property line. As a result, the fence encroaches onto the State's land. The State Coastal Commission (SCC) notified the property owner of the error and directed the property owner to correct the situation before they would grant final approval for seventeen 50 to 80 feet deep caissons which were installed prior to permit approval. These caissons were put in place to prevent the cliff and improvements from slipping into Upper Newport Bay, which has occurred on other properties in the area. The property owner desires this land exchange to continue to ensure safety of the cliff and in order to obtain final approval from the SCC for the existing caissons at the back of their property.

The State's property involved in this exchange is a wedge of land approximately 506 square feet in size, abutting the northeast corner of the private owner's property. The property is on the side of a steep cliff. Although the property is valuable for wildlife habitat and bird species, the fencing makes it difficult for the State to manage. The private property to be exchanged is a 216 square foot wedge of land contiguous to the DFG's Upper Newport Bay Ecological Bay. The property is vacant and is also valuable for wildlife habitat making the exchange a benefit to both the State and the private property owner.

Historically, the private property owner has assumed full responsibility to maintain both exchange properties, including additional cliff area within the Reserve, for erosion control purposes. As a condition of the exchange, the private landowner has agreed to maintain and water the vegetation, in perpetuity, using a state-of-the-art irrigation system to insure sufficient water for vegetation but also to minimize runoff.

Due to the similarities of the exchange properties, including their size and their like location on the side of a cliff, and because the property owner has agreed to maintain the surrounding cliff area, staff has determined that the properties are of nominal and, therefore, equal value. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including escrow, title insurance and review charges by the Department of General Services.

The proposed exchange is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of lands for wildlife conservation purposes. The project is also exempt under Section 15312, Class 12 (a) (3), as the use of the State's property and private property has not changed since the time of purchase by the public agency. Subject to approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this exchange of properties, as proposed; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a), to be applied toward project costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this exchange of properties, as proposed; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a), to be applied toward project costs; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *7. Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, Orange County \$15,000.00

This was a proposal to consider the acceptance of a 5± acre donation property, located in the City of Newport Beach, Orange County. Donation of the property to the State, a public entity, is a requirement of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) prior to commencement of a proposed dredging project in Upper Newport Bay.

The property, adjoining Jamboree Road, consists of a mix of bench lands, intertidal mudflat and submerged lands within Upper Newport Bay and identified as the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, administered by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The property is situated between Jamboree Road and the least tern island in the eastern, upper basin at the reserve.

There has been growing concern in the last several decades about the long-term health of the Upper Newport Bay estuarine environment. The most significant contributor to change in the bay estuary has been increased by sedimentation from the San Diego Creek Watershed and intensive urban and agricultural development resulting in the enlargement, creation or re-direction of channels in order to transport flows to Newport Bay. The end result is a significant increase in storm water and sediment flows into the bay.

Dredging within an ecological reserve that supports a number of endangered species requires special consideration of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the recommended plan and a final EIS/EIR was prepared which presents a detailed analysis of the impacts associated with the implementation of a future maintenance dredging plan. The State of California, the Orange County Public Facilities and Resource Department, the City of Newport Beach, the DFG, the California Regional Water

Quality Control Board, the U. S. National Marine Fisheries Service, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and many local environmental groups support the recommended plan.

As a prerequisite for the COE to perform dredging and other activities associated with the restoration of Upper Newport Bay, it is necessary that all properties surrounding the dredging project be publicly owned. With the exception of the subject property and one County-owned parcel, all necessary lands for the dredging/restoration features of the project are owned by the State, under administration of the DFG. The property, partially submerged, is an inholding located west of Jamboree Road where the San Diego Creek inlets into the bay. If the inholding remained, restoration would be of benefit to a private entity and a legal impediment to this restoration project. The agreement between the COE, DFG and the County provides that the property must transfer to the State prior to December 31, 2004.

Approximately 3 acres of the property are located within the dredge footprint of the COE dredging project. The upland portion of the subject property is improved with a 10-foot paved bicycle pathway which surrounds the bay and is operated and maintained by the City of Newport Beach. The DFG does not anticipate increased management costs or responsibilities as a result of accepting the donation parcel. All of the adjacent properties surrounding the bay and owned by the State are encumbered by the existing bicycle path and operated and maintained by the City. The DFG is able to provide for costs associated with maintenance and preservation of the existing reserve with funds appropriated from the General Fund (\$200,000.00 per year) to the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve Maintenance and Preservation Fund created in the State Treasury (Fish and Game Section 1586). The small 2± acre portion of the property, which will remain after dredging, will be incorporated into the reserve and will not increase DFG staff or management resources.

The appraised fair market value of the property is \$310,000.00; however, the property owner has offered to donate the property to the State at no cost. Staff proposes that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve an allocation of \$15,000.00 to cover administrative expenses associated with acceptance of the property including escrow fees, title insurance and Department of General Services' review costs.

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acceptance of the donated property as proposed; allocate \$15,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a) for 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve the acceptance of the donated property as proposed; allocate \$15,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79572 (a) for 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.

Motion carried.

- *8. North Warm Springs Creek Conservation Area, \$155,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider a \$150,000.00 grant to the County of Riverside, the acceptance of a State Wildlife Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the amount of \$300,000.00 and the approval of an Agreement to Subgrant those federal funds to the County of Riverside, to facilitate the acquisition of 30± acres in the North Warm Springs Creek Conservation Area, in Riverside County. Acquisition of the real property is critical to the establishment of a key habitat linkage through the Murrieta-Temecula Valley and the protection of sensitive plants and animal species. This project will further implement joint federal, State and local Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) efforts in western Riverside County.

The conservation area is located in the northeasterly section of the City of Murrieta, near a low mountainous/hillside area within the City known as the "Hogbacks". The property is located just east of Los Alamos Road, about one mile west from its interchange with Interstate 215. The subject land has no reported on-site or building improvements, and is currently raw land only. Some flower crops may be located on a portion of the 30± acres, as well as a bee farm.

The subject property is identified as a priority for acquisition in a Conceptual Area Protection Plan approved by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and referred to as the Triple Creeks Conservation Area. The site is also within the North Warm Springs area of the County's recently approved Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). This general region is rapidly developing, with a dense 1.5 mile wide band of residential and commercial development extending along most of Interstate 15 (the Cities of Temecula, Murrieta and Lake Elsinore). The development is the primary barrier to cross-valley movement of

wildlife and such wildlife movement is thus generally possible only along the northern boundary of the area. On the less-developed northeastern side of the City of Murrieta, land use is varied. There are numerous large undeveloped parcels, including the subject property, many of which are still used for grazing or winter grain crops.

In recent years, the Stephens' kangaroo rat, the coastal California gnatcatcher, San Jacinto fairy shrimp and the Quino checkerspot butterfly have been listed as threatened or endangered, along with a suite of plants such as Munz's onion, because coastal plain lowland habitats have been lost to development. As lowland habitats disappear, other species such as Swainson's hawk, ferruginous hawk, burrowing owl and smooth tarplant will become less viable in the region. In addition, future development in the valleys will create impassible barriers between other reserves.

The reservoirs of local biodiversity in the area are an important component of the region, especially the lower riparian zone on Warm Springs Creek (the Hogbacks) and the mixed coastal sage scrub, chaparral and annual grasslands to the north of the Hogbacks. In some cases, these core areas have the highest density of sensitive species in the region. Protecting them and linking them to other species-rich areas are regional planning priorities. The only remaining habitat linkage through the Murrieta-Temecula Valley is at high risk of development due to rapid urban expansion. The linkage needs permanent protection to assure viability of the reserve system and listed species populations in the area.

The County will own the property and proposes to manage the site primarily to preserve threatened and endangered species and to conserve biodiversity. Additional management objectives may include providing public access for recreational pursuits such as fishing and hiking as well as educational opportunities through interpretive kiosks and signs.

The fair market value of the subject property, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$750,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the County of Riverside at a bargain sale of \$600,000.00. To fund this cooperative project, the USFWS has awarded a State Wildlife Grant for the acquisition of the property, in the amount of \$300,000.00. Staff proposes that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) accept the USFWS grant and approve an Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County to be applied toward their purchase. The County will match a portion of the federal funds with a contribution of \$150,000.00 to be applied toward the purchase price.

Staff proposes that the Board approve an allocation of \$150,000.00 for the remainder of the purchase price. It is anticipated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover administrative expenses including the DGS' appraisal review costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$155,000.00.

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

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; authorize acceptance of \$300,000.00 from a State Wildlife Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover a portion of the purchase price and approve the Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County of Riverside; allocate \$155,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c), for the acquisition and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into agreements as necessary to carry out this acquisition as described; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; authorize acceptance of \$300,000.00 from a State Wildlife Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover a portion of the purchase price and approve the Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County of Riverside; allocate \$155,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c), for the acquisition and related expenses; authorize staff to enter into agreements as necessary to carry out this acquisition as described; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *9. French Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 1, Riverside County \$5,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the amount of \$500,000.00 and approval of an Agreement to Subgrant those funds to the County of Riverside to facilitate the acquisition of 40± acres in French Valley, Riverside County. Acquisition of the real property will preserve a regionally-significant wildlife corridor and implement joint federal, State and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in western Riverside County.

The conservation area is located in the French Valley, north and east of the cities of Temecula and Murrieta. Specifically, this area begins approximately one

mile northeast of Temecula and is bounded on the south by the Johnson Ranch Preserve. The property itself is located south of Bootleg Road within the unincorporated community of Riverside County.

The French Valley Conservation Area is strategically important to the development of the County's Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The property will preserve a regionally-significant wildlife corridor and protect threatened and endangered wildlife, native plants and special habitats. The majority of the property is dominated by Riversidean sage scrub, an important habitat for several native species such as the California gnatcatcher, Quino checkerspot butterfly and least Bell's vireo. Other upland and riparian habitats include the Diegan coastal sage scrub, chamise chaparral, riparian scrub, riparian forest, southern willow scrub and southern cottonwood willow.

The County will own the property and proposes 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 fishing and hiking as well as educational opportunities through interpretive kiosks and signs.

The fair market value of the subject property, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$1,800,000.00. The property owner has agreed to sell the property to the County of Riverside at a bargain sale of \$1,000,000.00. To fund this cooperative project, the USFWS has awarded a Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant for the acquisition of the property, in the amount of \$500,000.00. Staff proposes that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) accept the USFWS grant and approve an Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County to be applied toward their purchase. The balance of the funding will be matched by the County in the amount of \$500,000.00, for a total purchase price of \$1,000,000.00. It is estimated that \$5,000.00 will be needed for project expenses, including DGS' appraisal review costs.

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

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition, as proposed, authorize acceptance of the \$500,000.00 Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover a portion of the purchase price and approve the Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County of Riverside; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c), for related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff of the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this acquisition, as proposed, authorize acceptance of the \$500,000.00 Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover a portion of the purchase price and approve the Agreement to Subgrant these federal funds to the County of Riverside; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (b/c), for related project expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff of the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *10. Port Hueneme Fishing Pier Improvements, Phase II, \$200,107.00
Ventura County

This proposal was to consider Phase II of a cooperative project with the City of Port Hueneme to make improvements for public access at the Port Hueneme Fishing Pier, located less than 10 miles south of Oxnard, California. This phase of the project includes the replacement of an additional 35 piles (pier supports), which have been cumulatively impacted by winter storms and marine organisms over the past several years. In February 2003, the Board approved funding for the initial phase of the pier improvements which replaced the most dangerously impacted piles. The City of Port Hueneme matched these funds.

The pier has existed since 1871 when Hueneme was an important locale for coastal trade. In 1967 the Board partnered with the City of Port Hueneme and Ventura County by matching funds for the construction of an extension to the original wooden pier. The pier heads straight out from the beach, then turns left for 50 feet, then heads out straight again to the end that terminates in a wide T-shaped platform. This odd shape is a result of the pier following an existing seawall which was constructed to prevent the periodic erosion of the beach. In 1989, the Board allocated funds for repair and renovation of the pier approach section and minor repairs to the pier itself. The City of Port Hueneme operates and maintains the pier under a Lease and Operating Agreement with the State that expires on February 23, 2014.

These repairs will replace the remaining compromised piles that were discovered during a pier inspection and described in the "Pier Underwater Inspection Summary Report," completed for the Port in September, 2002. Based on the report, the Port Hueneme City Council closed the pier until repairs could be made. After the first emergency repairs were undertaken in 2003, the pier was re-opened. It is anticipated that the final repairs to the pier will be completed by the spring of 2006.

The pier is 1,400 feet long, extends out into water that is 22 feet deep, and yields the normal mix of southern California fish. Inshore, there are surfperch, while mid-pier, anglers catch halibut, white croaker, thornback skates, small perch and queenfish. The end area sees all of these species plus jack and Pacific mackerel, Pacific sardines and an occasional bonito or small barracuda. In the year 2000, over 600,000 users visited the Port Hueneme Fishing Pier, the only such structure between Malibu and Ventura. The pier draws visitors from a large regional area and has always provided excellent fishing opportunities as well as a popular visitor serving destination.

Cost estimates for this phase of the project, which have been reviewed by staff, are as follows:

Description:	Estimated Cost
Pile Replacement	\$200,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$200,000.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board, Phase II	\$200,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$200,000.00

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The City of Port Hueneme has completed the appropriate notice to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act requirements and will obtain all necessary permits.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$200,107.00 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$200,107.00 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. Motion carried.

- *11. Miller Lake Wetland Restoration, Stanislaus County \$110,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a partnership project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the North American Waterfowl Conservation Act (NAWCA), the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the landowner to restore and enhance 62± acres of wetlands and 22± acres of riparian habitat. The project is located ten miles west of the City of Modesto on privately-owned land near the confluence of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers in Stanislaus County. The site is immediately adjacent to the USFWS's San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge and two miles southwest of Caswell Memorial State Park.

There are few locations in the Central Valley with more potential for diverse wildlife habitat than the confluence of these two major rivers. Riparian habitat along the rivers is still relatively intact and adjacent lands have been farmed and grazed, but due to the flooding history have never been intensively utilized. The USFWS recognized this potential early on, and in the late 1980s began acquiring lands here to protect the existing habitats. The area is a winter home to nearly 100 percent of the Aleutian Canada geese, which until recently was a federally listed threatened species. It was removed from the list, in part, because of the prompt action that was taken to preserve their wintering grounds.

The USFWS has acquired a conservation easement on most of this 1,600-acre ranch with a goal of maintaining and increasing wildlife populations. Currently, the ranch is a mix of irrigated pasture and riparian forest with a scattering of wetlands. Wetland acreage on the ranch is in relatively short supply and Miller Lake is an ideal location for restoration. The Lake is an old oxbow that has been cut off from the Stanislaus River. Over the years it has silted in from agricultural runoff, reducing its value to waterfowl and other wetland species.

The goal of the project is to create additional wetland acreage and enhance the existing lake to once again provide high quality wetland habitat. Specifically, sediments in the 32-acre lake will be removed, once again creating permanent deep water adjacent to the riparian corridor of the Stanislaus River. Thirty acres of seasonal wetlands will be created adjacent to the lake, and an upland fallow field will be excavated to create 22 acres of riparian and upland grassland habitats. Construction activities will consist of the construction of new levees, the excavation of swales through the new wetlands, the installation of water control structures, and the development of islands and benches to create a mix of open water, emergent vegetation and riparian forest.

The animals that will benefit from this project include many species of riparian and wetland dependent species. Birds that are known to breed in the riparian forests in the area include black headed grosbeaks and red shouldered hawks. The permanent water should provide additional breeding habitat for pied billed grebes and marsh wrens. The landowners will be constructing and maintaining nesting structures for Canada geese and wood ducks, and mallards will benefit from the improved water reliability. The area is best known though for the vast

flocks of wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, numbering in the tens of thousands. In addition, mammals include resident populations of river otters and coyotes. A State and federally listed endangered species, the riparian brush rabbit, was originally thought to survive only in Caswell Memorial State Park, two short miles to the northeast. The improvements to the riparian forest at this location may provide refuge to these animals when very high winter floods completely inundate the entire park.

Cost estimates for this project have been reviewed by staff and are as follows:

Description:	Estimated Cost
Site preparation and earthmoving	\$311,000.00
Water control structures	8,000.00
Fencing	6,699.00
Water delivery pipeline	27,776.00
Site preparation and seeding/planting	4,000.00
Project design and management	29,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$386,475.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$110,000.00
NAWCA	92,675.00
Landowner	183,800.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$386,475.00

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 twenty-five years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$110,000.00 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$110,000.00 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.

Motion carried.

- *12. Scotts Flat Reservoir Day Use Area Fishing Float, \$125,214.00
Nevada County

This was a proposal to consider an allocation for a cooperative project with the Nevada Irrigation District (District) to provide barrier-free public fishing access at the District's Scotts Flat Reservoir Day Use Area located approximately five miles northeast of Nevada City in Nevada County.

Scotts Flat Reservoir is located approximately five miles northeast of Nevada City in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. With over eight miles of shoreline and 750 surface acres, the reservoir provides fishing opportunities for small and large mouth bass, rainbow trout, brown trout and kokanee. The Department of Fish and Game stocks the reservoir annually with about 10,000 pounds of catchable trout (mostly rainbow, some brown). People of all ages and abilities come to the area from all over the State to bank fish, boat fish and enjoy the many outdoor sporting opportunities available here.

The District has maintained a year-round public camping and day-use facility on the shore of the reservoir since 1964. The facility provides over 165 campsites, a boat ramp with parking lot and a marina area. The facility received over 210,000 vehicles with up to 4 people per vehicle in 2003. In 1996 the Board funded the construction of a barrier-free fishing float, fish cleaning station and restroom at the boat ramp area.

The current proposal before the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) will be to construct and place a 10' X 40' aluminum barrier-free fishing float with 6' X 40' aluminum gangway, construct a 4' X 500' barrier-free crushed granite access trail, pave and stripe an existing 40,000 square foot gravel parking area and replace a vault-type toilet facility with a flush-type bathroom. As part of this project the District will fund improvements to the Day Use Area and adjacent camping areas including group tables, ramadas, fire rings, a drinking fountain and bollard fencing.

The District has completed the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, will secure the necessary permits and will enter into a Lease and Operating Agreement with the WCB to operate and maintain the project.

Cost estimates for this proposal have been developed by the District and have been reviewed by staff as follows:

Description:	WCB	District	Total
Fishing float and gangway	\$60,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$66,000.00
Restroom	18,500.00	89,500.00	108,000.00
Parking lot paving	45,000.00	55,000.00	100,000.00
Group tables and ramada	0.00	56,500.00	56,500.00
Fire rings	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Drinking fountain	0.00	12,500.00	12,500.00
Signage	1,500.00	3,500.00	5,000.00
Access trail	0.00	6,338.00	6,338.00
Bollards, fencing and striping	0.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
Admin/engineering/design	0.00	50,450.00	50,450.00
Contingencies	0.00	24,200.00	24,200.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS:	\$125,000.00	\$323,988.00	\$448,988.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$125,000.00
Nevada Irrigation District	323,988.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$448,988.00

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$125,214.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$125,214.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *13. Eagle Lake Fishing Access Improvements, \$40,107.00
Augmentation #2, Lassen County

This was a proposal to consider a third allocation for a cooperative project with the Spalding Community Services District (District) and the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) to improve public access at the District's Eagle Lake Fishing Access located in the community of Spalding Tract in Lassen County.

Eagle Lake is located 14 miles north of Susanville in a mountainous basin in Lassen County. Situated some 5,100 feet above sea level, it is the second largest freshwater lake in California covering approximately 44 square miles. The lake is widely recognized and highly valued for its fishery, wildlife, recreational and visual resources. By far the most popular and productive sport fishery here is the Eagle Lake trout. This remarkable trout, which has a unique tolerance for high water salinity, was on the brink of extinction several decades ago and has since recovered thanks to the efforts of the Department of Fish Game (DFG) and the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). In the 1940's and 1950's the WCB funded the construction of a flow maintenance dam on Pine Creek as well as a hatchery, both of which were successful in helping recover the Eagle Lake trout population. People of all ages and abilities come to the area from all over the State to bank fish, boat fish and otherwise enjoy the many outdoor sporting opportunities available here.

In 1975, the WCB funded construction of a concrete boat ramp, boarding floats, sanitary facilities and a parking area at the Spalding Fishing Access on the north-western shore of Eagle Lake. In 1990, the WCB funded the extension of the ramp and boarding floats to facilitate launches at low water levels. The District estimates 30,000 activity days for anglers at the Spalding facility in an average year.

The current proposal before the WCB will be a second augmentation to an existing contract with the District to construct a barrier-free fishing pier, a parking lot for the pier, a public courtesy mooring, and concrete access trails which will enable mobility impaired individuals to better utilize the area and encourage others to avoid trampling the wetland vegetation along the shoreline. The first augmentation which the WCB approved in February 2004 covered a shortfall due to higher than expected construction bids. The DBW funding provided for this project is being used to replace the more than 25 year old boat ramp and parking lot and construct a second ramp, a restroom, a fish cleaning station, access road and walkways. The total contribution from DBW is \$2,580,000.00.

The District has completed the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act process, secured the necessary permits, entered into a Lease and Operating Agreement with the WCB to operate and maintain the project for 25 years and begun construction on the project. As the summer has progressed, lake levels have dropped lower than was anticipated in the initial design of the fishing pier. The area has experienced very low precipitation over the last several years. At the current lake level the end of the pier, as it was originally designed, will be sitting in fairly shallow water. The District is requesting funding to extend the pier by 40 linear feet to place it in deeper water and thereby improve the fishing opportunities for users particularly during times of low lake water levels.

Cost estimates for this proposal including the augmentations have been developed by the District and have been reviewed by staff as follows:

Description:	Estimated Cost
Engineering and Design	\$21,500.00
Environmental Studies	28,500.00
Excavation	15,000.00
Riprap	16,800.00
Fishing Platform and Access Ramp	255,240.00
Parking	33,750.00
Public Courtesy Mooring	88,900.00
Wetland Protection Walkways	32,000.00
Contingencies	8,310.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$500,000.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board (Original Project)	\$260,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board (Augmentation)	200,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board (Augmentation #2)	40,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	\$500,000.00

Staff recommended that the Board approve this augmentation as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$40,107.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this augmentation as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate \$40,107.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs and General Services' review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *14. Department of Fish and Game Land Management Plans, \$125,000.00
Northern California – North Coast Region, Phase I, Siskiyou
and Lassen Counties

This proposal was to consider a grant to the California Wildlife Foundation, Inc. to provide project administration for preparation of four land management plans for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Northern California-North Coast Region high priority wildlife areas. 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. Because of the rapid rate of acquisitions over the last decade (most due to voter-approved bonds), some properties have gone without planning and have been minimally managed. In order to assess resources, involve the public and provide guidance to the DFG's programs that relate to land management, land management plans are necessary. The Northern California-North Coast Region has selected the following four sites for this project:

Shasta Valley Wildlife Area, Siskiyou County

Shasta Valley Wildlife Area (SVWA) totals 4,657 acres and is located 8 miles east of Yreka (1.5 miles east of Montague). This area was acquired by the WCB in 1991. Based upon funding sources, the purposes of the acquisition are: to protect, restore and enhance wetland and riparian habitats; provide habitat for threatened and endangered species; provide habitat for deer and other upland dependent species and to provide for appropriate public uses.

The SVWA is rich in a variety of wildlife species. Over 230 species of birds have been documented with over 60 species confirmed as nesting on the property. Annually, up to five pairs of greater sandhill cranes (State threatened) have nested on the SVWA. Willow flycatchers (State endangered) are also confirmed nesters. Bald eagles (federally threatened) are present year-round and are especially numerous during the fall and winter months when waterfowl are abundant. The Little Shasta River is considered critical habitat for coho salmon (State and federally threatened). Steelhead trout and fall run Chinook salmon are also present.

Public use at the SVWA is estimated at about 14,000 user days/year. An outdoor teaching facility exists at Bass Lake and is utilized by local elementary schools. The area supports nearly 2,000 "nature study" user days (including schools), approximately 10,000 angler/days on the two reservoirs open to fishing and about 2,000 hunter/days for dove, waterfowl and pheasant hunting.

An approved management plan for the SVWA was completed in 1992. Recently, issues involving anadromous fish require that new information be included in the plan. The wildlife area development is nearing completion which has changed priorities from habitat development to habitat maintenance. Specific tasks for management plan development may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Evaluate current management plan to determine where information gaps exist.
- 2) Evaluate existing biological and cultural resource data to determine what type of inventory work needs completing or updating.
- 3) Evaluate and prepare protocols and plans for long-term resource monitoring.
- 4) Prepare a public use management element for the plan.

- 5) Develop resource related protocols for contract farming and livestock grazing.
- 6) Study the feasibility of rerouting the public use access road away from wildlife sensitive areas.
- 7) Prepare a fire management element for the plan.

Horseshoe Ranch Wildlife Area, Siskiyou County

Horseshoe Ranch Wildlife Area (HRWA) is 8,871 acres in size and is located 14 miles north of Yreka and 10 miles east of Interstate 5 along the Oregon border in north central Siskiyou County. The area is comprised of both DFG (4,886 acres) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (3,985 acres) properties and is jointly managed under an MOU as a State wildlife area. This area borders Oregon and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. This wildlife area was acquired by the WCB in 1977 for the purpose of protecting and enhancing deer winter range. The HRWA and surrounding lands provide winter habitat for the interstate Klamath deer herd. Although deer reside on the HRWA year round, most are migratory, with the bulk of the population summering in the Oregon Cascades. The quality and extent of deer winter range habitats on the HRWA are critical to the health of this deer herd.

Two special status plants have been confirmed as occurring on the HRWA. One is the Gentner fritillary (*Fritillaria gentneri* - federal endangered) that was recently located by BLM contract botanists within the boundaries of the HRWA. This is the first documented occurrence of this rare lily in California. Prior to that, only 1,697 flowering individual plants have been located in Oregon. The other is the Greene's Mariposa lily (*Calichortus greenei* – CNPS 1B), that can be found throughout the open grasslands on the HRWA.

Until a few years ago, most of the public use on the HRWA has been hunting for deer, turkey or quail. Public interest and use has increased since the establishment of the National Monument and includes organized birding and wildlife flower viewing field trips. A management plan was prepared for the HRWA in 1978. Several issues including livestock trespass impacts, cultural resources, threatened and endangered plant species, and increased public use require that this plan be updated. Specific tasks for management plan development may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Evaluate existing biological and cultural resource data to determine what work needs completing or updating.
- 2) Mapping and outlining vegetative communities.
- 3) Listing animal species using the HRWA.
- 4) Assessing impacts of feral horses and other trespass livestock.
- 5) Restoration/protection of cultural resource sites.
- 6) Evaluate current public use and prepare long-term plan for developing and managing a public use program.
- 7) Evaluate and prepare protocols for long term-resource monitoring.
- 8) Develop a plan for noxious weed control and management.

Honey Lake Wildlife Area, Lassen County

Honey Lake Wildlife Area (HLWA) is located in the Great Basin Desert between the Sierra Nevada (east), Diamond Mountains (to the west) and Skedaddle and Shaffer Mountains (to the north). The HLWA is comprised of two separate units (Fleming and Dakin) and totals 7,667 acres. Fleming (headquarters) is located on the north edge of Honey Lake about 20 miles southeast of Susanville. The HLWA was purchased in 1942 with the acquisition of the 2,092-acre Fleming Ranch. Subsequent acquisitions from 1951 to 1989 expanded Fleming to 3,569 acres. The Dakin Ranch was acquired in 1944 and included 980 acres. The Dakin unit is approximately 5 miles southwest of the Fleming unit. Additional purchases have expanded Dakin to 4,271 acres. The HLWA is composed primarily of more than 5,200 acres of intensively-managed wetlands, croplands and native uplands. Riparian corridors, sand dunes, sage and greasewood brushfields are also present. Fields have been laser leveled to promote efficient irrigation of cereal grains for migrating birds including the greater sandhill crane.

Approximately 4,500 acres of wetlands have been restored with additional acreage to be improved at all three units in 2005. The North American Wetland Conservation Act and WCB are providing grants for restoration work in 2004 and 2005. The majority of wetland restoration will be completed in 2005.

Specific tasks for management plan development may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Evaluate the current management plan to determine where information gaps exist.
- 2) Evaluate and incorporate new biological resource information obtained since the current plan was written. An example is the federal listing of the Carson Wandering Skipper which was discovered on both Fleming and Dakin units.
- 3) Identify and map all easements (including DFG-owned Mitigation lands) and boundaries.
- 4) Preparation of a cultural resource assessment and management element.
- 5) Evaluate and prepare protocols and plans for long-term resource monitoring.
- 6) Preparation of a fire management element for the plan.
- 7) Literature search.
- 8) Develop a management objective for noxious weed control and management.
- 9) Develop quality public use and service maps.

Willow Creek Wildlife Area, Lassen County

The 2,722-acre Willow Creek Wildlife Area (WCWA) was acquired in 1989 to preserve, protect and to restore wetlands and to provide public uses including hunting. The WCWA is 16 miles north of Susanville on Highway 139. This area is a major source of water for Honey Lake and provides important nesting opportunities for wetland birds including waterfowl and greater sandhill cranes. Habitat management has included wetland restoration and water control development and maintenance. A management plan has not been prepared for the WCWA. Specific tasks for management plan development may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Evaluate existing biological resource data to determine what work needs completing or updating.
- 2) Identify and map all easements.
- 3) Preparation of a cultural resource assessment and management element.
- 4) Literature search.
- 5) Develop a plan for noxious weed control and management.
- 6) Develop quality public use maps and service maps through GIS technology.
- 7) Evaluate and prepare protocols for long-term resource monitoring.

Cost estimates for the project, which have been reviewed by staff, are as follows:

Description:	Estimated Cost
Shasta Valley Wildlife Area Plan	\$ 35,000.00
Horseshoe Ranch Wildlife Area Plan	25,000.00
Honey Lake Wildlife Area Plan	25,000.00
Willow Creek Wildlife Area Plan	25,000.00
Project Management	15,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$125,000.00

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

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$125,000.00 from 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.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$125,000.00 from 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.

Motion carried.

- *15. Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion 32 Augmentation, \$ - 0 -
Del Norte County

This proposal was to consider an increase in the purchase price of a previously approved acquisition of a 5± acre property, from \$107,000.00 to \$170,000.00, to eliminate a now unneeded life estate, and authorize the acceptance of additional grant funds from the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), in the amount of \$63,000.00, to cover the increase. The property will be the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) newest addition to its Lake Earl Wildlife Area and will provide for the enhancement and protection of threatened and endangered species. The subject parcel is located north of Crescent City near the north shore of Lake Earl on Lower Lake Road.

The Lake Earl Wildlife Area was acquired as a result of the Keene-Nedgedly Act of 1975, which directed the DFG and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to jointly evaluate and acquire certain specified coastal lands for the purpose of protecting, enhancing and managing wetlands. Together the two agencies have acquired over 11,000 acres in the Crescent City area, extending from near Point Saint George north to the Smith River. Of the total, approximately 5,749 acres have been purchased by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and are managed by the DFG. This includes all of Lakes Earl and Talawa (under lease from the California State Lands Commission). These lakes are actually coastal lagoons that periodically breach the barrier island, thereby allowing the interchange of fresh and saltwater. This natural breaching has been replaced in recent times by artificial breaching as a means of lowering water elevations and increasing lands available for livestock grazing and urban development.

Lake Earl is a shallow estuarine lagoon that supports a variety of wetland plant communities, including submerged aquatics in deeper, relatively freshwater areas of the estuary. Freshwater aquatic plants are used extensively by migrating waterfowl. These wetland communities provide habitat for a large number of water-associated species. Sitka spruces grow to the edge of the lake shore and are used by both peregrine falcon and bald eagle. The nonnative perennial grasses in the wildlife area are managed as foraging habitat for the Aleutian Canada goose. Over 95 percent of the Aleutian Canada goose population stages in the agricultural fields on or adjacent to the wildlife area.

Over 240 species of birds have been recorded in the area since 1982. Historically, the Lake Earl complex has been an important northern California wintering, stopover and nesting area for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. Three federally or State listed endangered birds that have been sighted in the wildlife area are the bald eagle, the Peregrine falcon and the California brown pelican.

The acquisition of the subject property, which is bounded on three sides by State lands, would assist in securing these unique resources. Placement of this property in public ownership would facilitate lake level management and habitat protection and restoration, and would add a buffer for the wildlife area. The DFG has identified the subject property as being within a Significant Natural Area (Lake Earl) and has recommended the purchase of this parcel, which would be incorporated into and managed as part of the existing wildlife area. This acquisition would increase the size of the existing wildlife area by less than 1 percent and will not require additional personnel or result in an increase in managerial costs.

The Grantors had agreed to sell the property to the State at the appraised fair market value of \$107,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), while retaining a life estate on the property. Since the approval of that transaction by the WCB on May 13, 2004, one of the owners of the subject property has passed away. The remaining owner is unable to reside on the property alone. As a consequence, the premises will be vacant before or very soon after the close of escrow, giving the DFG almost immediate possession of the property, instead of after 8 years as estimated by the appraisal. Under the circumstances and since escrow has not yet closed, the WCB and the SCC agree that the surviving spouse should be paid \$170,000.00, which is the full fair market value of the property before applying a discount for the life estate. The life estate will not be part of the new transaction. The SCC has agreed to augment its \$107,000.00 grant by \$63,000.00 to cover the increase in the purchase price.

There are no claims of sovereign State land ownership within the subject property. The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of lands for wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of ownership interest in land to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resources.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the project, as now proposed without a life estate; authorize acceptance of the \$63,000.00 in additional grant funds from the State Coastal Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Ryan Broddrick that the Board approve the project, as now proposed without a life estate; authorize acceptance of the \$63,000.00 in additional grant funds from the State Coastal Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

16. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion 27 and 28, Riverside County

This item was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

17. Grasslands Ecological Reserve, Merced and Stanislaus Counties \$3,920,000.00

Mr. Wright reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of a conservation easement over 1,718± acres of land for the protection and preservation of farmland and critical riparian and wetland habitat. The easement will also protect lands currently in agricultural production from future development. Ms. Teri Muzik briefly described the proposal and its location.

The subject property is located along the east and west banks of the San Joaquin River and the north and south banks of the Merced River east of Hills Ferry Road and west of Highway 165 in the Newman/Stevinson area of southwestern Stanislaus and northwestern Merced County.

The property also lies along the northwestern edge of the San Joaquin Valley Grassland Ecological Area (GEA). The GEA is the largest contiguous block of wetlands remaining in California and consists of approximately 160,000 acres of National Wildlife Refuges, State Wildlife Areas and private wildlife habitat. The portion of the ranch under consideration borders on the southern edge of the San Joaquin River Ecological Area.

The property under consideration contains the confluence of the Merced and San Joaquin Rivers. This area contains not only vast riparian habitat but also wetland and upland habitat which has been diminished in the San Joaquin Valley ecoregion. Existing riparian and wetland acreage is 10 percent and 5 percent of historical amounts, respectively. The riparian vegetation includes valley oak, Fremont cottonwood and willow with California sycamore, box elder and Oregon ash also present.

The land also includes fields currently in agricultural production. These lands, and the crops they contain, provide forage and cover for numerous bird species. By protecting these lands from future development and maintaining them in

“wildlife friendly” agricultural production, an open space buffer will be established between wildlife habitat and ever expanding human encroachment. The wildlife compatible farming that will continue on the ranch, provides important wintering habitat for various waterbirds plus nesting cover for ground nesting birds such as mallards, short-eared owls and American bitterns.

Specific species benefiting from the protection of these lands may include migrating willow flycatchers, Swainson’s hawk, greater and lesser sandhill cranes and wintering Arctic-nesting geese. Portions of the property may also contain habitat suitable for the Giant Garter Snake, western pond turtle, tri-colored blackbird, white-faced ibis, long-billed curlew and American white pelican.

There will be limited grazing allowed on specified portions of the property to control noxious weeds and maintain the native pasture lands. The terms and conditions of the allowable grazing have been agreed upon by the parties and is set out in the conservation easement agreement.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has identified the subject property as being within the GEA and has recommended the purchase of this property. The easement will be monitored in conjunction with the San Joaquin River Wildlife Area, located directly north of the proposed acquisition. Because the property will remain in private ownership, the acquisition of a conservation easement will not require additional personnel or result in an increase in managerial costs.

This project is the first of multiple phases of acquisitions being negotiated with these landowners. The entire property was appraised and the appraisal was approved by the Department of General Services. The property owner has agreed to sell this phase of the conservation easement covering 1,710± acres for the approved, fair market value of \$4,416,920.00. The Great Valley Center is contributing \$530,000.00 toward the purchase of this property. The remaining purchase price, in the amount of \$3,886,920.00, will come from the Wildlife Conservation Board. It is estimated that an additional \$33,080.00 will be needed for administrative costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$3,920,000.00.

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

Ms. Muzik reported that Mr. John Beam from the DFG was in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Klass requested clarification regarding who would hold the easement and the cost of the management plan. Ms. Muzik explained that the DFG would hold the easement and that management costs should be minimal.

Mr. Kellogg asked if there were further questions. There were none.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,620,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP and \$2,300,000.00 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.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,620,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (d) IWCP and \$2,300,000.00 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. Motion carried.

Mr. Brodrick acknowledged the partnership efforts of the Great Valley Center.

18. Monte Rio Fishing Access Improvements, Sonoma County \$150,000.00

Mr. Wright reported that this was a proposal to consider an allocation for a cooperative project with the Monte Rio Recreation and Park District (District) and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to improve fishing access for mobility impaired individuals at the Monte Rio Fishing Access on the right bank of the Russian River in the town of Monte Rio. The Russian River is one of California's larger coastal streams with good runs of both steelhead and salmon. Located within a one hour drive from the Bay Area, the river offers considerable opportunities for fishing. However, the lower Russian River runs almost entirely through private lands so public access to this stretch of river is at a premium and is heavily used. Mr. Tony Chappelle briefly described the proposal and its location.

The proposed project is located in the center of the town of Monte Rio about nine miles upstream from the ocean. The District owns approximately ten acres and the DFG about one acre in an area which has been used for public fishing access since the 1960's. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) made the allocation for acquisition of the DFG's 0.82 acre parcel which was critical for access to the river in 1964, and made an allocation to improve the overall site, including District-owned lands, with a boat ramp, restroom and parking area in 1965. The WCB made two more allocations in the 1990's to bring the facilities at the site into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Earlier this year a lawsuit was brought against the DFG alleging violations of the ADA at the Monte Rio Fishing Access. In September 2004, the DFG entered into a settlement agreement requiring the DFG to remedy certain public

access issues at the site including multiple problems with the restroom building and approach ramp, two sets of stair railings that are too large in diameter according to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and a lack of designated ADA parking in the parking lot and at the boat ramp. In order to satisfy the settlement agreement and bring the site into compliance with the ADA, the project will replace the two sets of stair railings, construct an ADA parking space near the top of the boat ramp, stripe ADA parking spaces in the existing parking lot and either replace or retrofit the existing restroom.

The project will involve one of three possible options to bring the restroom into ADA compliance. Two options involve constructing a totally new barrier-free restroom either at a nearby location or at the present location. These first two options differ in that one includes additional amenities, such as fish cleaning stations and is a newly designed larger facility as opposed to a smaller prefabricated facility. Both options, however, require the District to contribute funds which they are currently in the process of trying to obtain. The option taken depends on how much additional funding the District is able to obtain. The District's preference would be to construct the larger facility.

Should the District not be able to contribute funding to the project, the third option would be implemented which involves retrofitting two of the rooms in the four-room restroom building so that they comply with the ADA. This would include replacing the toilets, grab bars, sinks and door handles in these rooms as well as installing hand blow dryers to replace the towels and trash cans now in use. Also the approach ramp to the restroom building and the associated railings will be replaced as part of this retrofit. Per the proposed settlement agreement, this option represents the bare minimum required by the State. The WCB has agreed to consider higher amounts of funding for Options 1 and 2, because they are superior in terms of long-term maintenance and use.

Either the District or the Department will complete the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and permitting processes for the project. The District will operate and maintain the project for 25 years if a new restroom is constructed or 15 years if the existing restroom is retrofitted.

Cost estimates have been developed by the District and the DFG for each of the three options and have been reviewed by staff as follows:

Option 1: Construct new restroom at nearby location

Description:	WCB	District	Total
Restroom	\$116,500.00	\$110,500.00	\$227,000.00
ADA parking space at boat ramp	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00
Stair railing replacement	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
Parking lot striping	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Lift station	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
CEQA and Permits	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
TOTAL	\$150,000.00	\$126,500.00	\$276,500.00

Option 2: Purchase and install a prefabricated restroom at existing location

	WCB	District	Total
Restroom	\$114,000.00	\$26,000.00	\$140,000.00
ADA parking space at boat ramp	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00
Stair railing replacement	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
Parking lot striping	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
CEQA and Permits	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
TOTAL	\$150,000.00	\$36,000.00	\$186,000.00

Option 3: Retrofit existing restroom

Description:	WCB	District	Total
Retrofit restroom	\$23,000.00	0.00	\$23,000.00
ADA parking space at boat ramp	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00
Ramp and railing replacement	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
Stair railing replacement	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
Parking lot striping	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Project Management	7,000.00	0.00	7,000.00
CEQA and Permits	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
TOTAL	\$71,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$81,000.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
WCB	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$71,000.00
Monte Rio	126,500.00	36,000.00	0.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$276,500.00	\$186,000.00	\$71,000.00

Mr. Kellogg asked if there were any questions or concerns. Mr. Wright briefly clarified the Board's options regarding the level of development of the improvements still being discussed with the District and capping the expenditures at \$150,000.00. He explained that the kind of facility developed would be dependent upon the amount of the City's contribution.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate up to \$150,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; allocate up to \$150,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Minor Capital Outlay, for project costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

19. Knoxville Ranch Wildlife Area, Expansion 1, \$7,300,000.00
Napa and Yolo Counties

Mr. Wright reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of 12,575± acres of privately-owned land located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area (BRBNA), dedicated to the conservation and preservation of over 600,000 acres of natural, wild and recreational landscapes, and the acceptance of grants from the National Park Service, the State Coastal Conservancy, the Napa Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy, totaling \$5,300,000.00 to be applied toward the purchase price. The primary purpose of the acquisition is to protect, restore and manage the large landscape of grasslands, extensive oak woodlands, serpentine chaparral, riparian and cliff habitats and watersheds in the northeastern portion of Napa County and a portion of Yolo County. Mr. Steven Christensen briefly described the project and its location.

The property is located approximately 5 miles north of Lake Berryessa, abutting the Berryessa-Knoxville Road for several miles. Portions of the property are located in the Putah and Cache Creek watersheds, both tributaries to the Sacramento River and are bounded on the east by the Capay and Sacramento Valleys, on the west by the Clear Lake basin and the Napa River watershed and the Mendocino National Forest to the north.

A substantial portion of the BRBNA is currently in public ownership under the management of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) which owns the Cache Creek Public Access and Nature Preserve. The subject property is bordered on the north by 8,078± acre Knoxville Ranch, acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in July of 2000. Adjacent to this is the 6,800± acre McLaughlin Mine property, where mine tailings, which once threatened Lake Davis, have been cleaned up and the property is now held as a Natural Reserve in partnership with U.C. Davis. To the west, the property abuts the BLM land. With this acquisition, 40,000 acres of contiguous protected land will be preserved.

The proposed acquisition area contains many complete drainage systems, including portions of the Eticuera, Zim Zim, Nevada and Toll Canyon Creek watersheds. Acquisition will serve to protect multiple species and their habitats on an ecosystem level. Wildlife species abound on the property, with a diversity of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish and invertebrates. The area is

sufficiently remote and large enough to support tule elk, bald and golden eagles, mountain lions and bears, as well as a variety of hawks, falcons, owls and other raptors. Bald eagles have been observed on the property.

The acquisition will be an expansion of the Knoxville Wildlife Area. The new property will be closed until DFG personnel can properly post the property and do an assessment to determine if there are any safety concerns. In the short term, management and maintenance of the property will be minimal and will be accomplished through reprioritizing existing funding, seeking grants and donations, and by using volunteers. Additional General Fund monies will not be used. In the long term, DFG will need to seek a permanent funding source to adequately maintain and manage all its lands.

The property has been appraised for \$12,925,000.00, a value approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the property at the bargain sale price of \$12,500,000.00. However, since the completion of the appraisal and agreed sale's price, the property was burned during the Ramsey Fire. Consequently, the value is being reevaluated by the appraiser. The WCB staff will confirm the updated value with DGS. To fund this cooperative project, the WCB has been awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant of up to \$2.3 million, a \$1,500,000.00 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, a \$1,000,000.00 Resource Legacy Fund grant for the Napa Land Trust and a \$500,000.00 grant from The Nature Conservancy, totaling \$5,300,000.00. Staff proposes that the WCB accept the grants and approve an allocation of \$7,240,000.00 for the remainder of the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$60,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses including appraisal, title, escrow and DGS' review costs, bringing the total allocation by the Board to \$7,300,000.00.

The proposed acquisition is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and under Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of ownership in land to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resources. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Mr. Wright reported that the Board received letters of support from Congressman Mike Thompson; Senator Wesley Chesbro; Mike McGowan, Chair of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors; Ray Krauss of the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Partnership; George Yandell of The Nature Conservancy and Mark Luce, Chair of the Napa County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Christensen reported that Ms. Terry Palmisano of the Department of Fish and Game was in the audience should there be any questions.

Mr. Kellogg asked if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Klass requested clarification regarding funding for the management plan. Ms. Palmisano reported that the area would be closed until the DFG could

assess safety issues and get the property ready for public use. She explained that the property is a passive use area and that they do not expect to have personnel on site. She explained that the DFG has grants from the WCB and that many other organizations are also interested in helping with grants, donations and volunteers to manage the property and keep it open for the public.

Mr. Krauss, representing the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Partnership, addressed the Board in support of this proposal and offered to answer questions.

Mr. Tom Gamble, an adjacent landowner, addressed the Board and stated that he looked forward to working with the DFG in resolving potential boundary issues outlined in letters from Congressman Thompson and the Napa County Board of Supervisors and suggested the Board proceed with the acquisition.

Mr. Wright explained that much of the property in this proposed acquisition burned during the recent Ramsey fire and that the effect of the burn does not appear to be severe. He stated that the appraiser is therefore updating the appraisal which will be completed before staff proceeds with the Board's decision.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition, as proposed; authorize the acceptance of grants directly into escrow from other funding partners to be applied toward the acquisition, as proposed; allocate \$7,300,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund (Prop. 50), Section 79565, to be applied toward the purchase and associated project costs; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

It was moved by Mr. Jim Kellogg that the Board approve this acquisition, as proposed; authorize the acceptance of grants directly into escrow from other funding partners to be applied toward the acquisition, as proposed; allocate \$7,300,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565, to be applied toward the purchase and associated project costs; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements as necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

Mr. Wright expressed his appreciation to Mr. Krauss, Mr. John Hoffnagle from the Napa Land Trust and Mr. Gamble for attending today's meeting and for their efforts in the project.

20. Russian River Watershed Riparian Habitat Restoration, \$1,389,600.00
Sonoma and Mendocino Counties

Mr. Wright reported that this proposal was to consider an allocation of a grant to Circuit Rider Productions, Inc. for a cooperative project to remove the nonnative invasive plant *Arundo donax* (giant reed) from selected portions of the riparian corridor of the Russian River and tributary streams in the Russian River Watershed, located in Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. Other partners include private and public landowners, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Sonoma County Community Foundation, Mendocino County Water Agency, Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the State Coastal Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game. Mr. Scott Clemons briefly described the project and its location.

The WCB has funded numerous salmon and steelhead restoration projects in the Russian River watershed during the 1980's and 1990's. In addition, it has also approved funding for numerous public fishing access projects in the Russian River watershed, including Lake Mendocino (1960), Monte Rio Fishing Access (1964, 1967, 1993, 1996 and at this meeting), Wohler Bridge Public Fishing Access (1988) and Steelhead Beach Fishing Access (1993 and 1996).

Circuit Rider Productions, Inc. and many other partners have mapped and inventoried the giant reed invasion in the Russian River Watershed, and have studied the effect of this invasion on native plant and wildlife communities. They have evaluated alternative control and management practices and have developed costs for eradication and management. Based on this work, the partners have determined that giant reed is having a very substantial negative effect on the native plant and animal communities of the Russian River Watershed. Specifically, giant reed suppresses the germination of native plant seedlings, including riparian vegetation. Giant reed is a rapid invader, capable of disrupting the biodiversity of large areas within the riparian corridor. In addition, giant reed has a significant negative effect on the diversity and abundance of terrestrial insects (an important food source for salmonids) in the riparian zone. If giant reed continues to spread, as it has in Southern California, the impacts to the salmonid fishery in the Russian River, and other riparian-dependent wildlife will be severe.

As of 2000, the total documented extent of giant reed in the Russian River main stem was 236 acres, with the majority of this acreage (60 percent) occurring in the Alexander Valley. Forty-three tributaries were documented as infested with giant reed, and these comprised over 750 point locations, ranging from a few square feet to over 10,000 square feet. The watershed and project sites are over 97 percent privately owned, with the majority of the land use being agriculture (predominately vineyard), followed by urban and industrial (in-stream and terrace gravel mining). Proposed worksites involve over 100 miles of riparian corridor and include over 215 private properties and 15 public properties.

In general, the project will remove giant reed and restore riparian forest habitat on approximately 236 acres of land in the riparian corridor areas of the Russian River Watershed. Specifically, this project will use an array of alternative removal and eradication techniques, including removal with heavy equipment, removal of above-ground biomass and tarping of cut stems, removal by hand or with small equipment, removal and treatment with herbicides. Landowners will be involved in many areas to conduct follow-up treatments. After the giant reed has been eradicated from sites, native plants will be restored at the sites, following protocols that are under development by Circuit Rider Productions, Inc., to be included in the Department's Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual.

In addition to the benefits for resident and migratory wildlife that use the riparian corridor, the project will significantly benefit the following threatened and endangered species: steelhead trout, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, freshwater shrimp, red legged frog and California tiger salamander.

Cost estimates for this project, which have been reviewed by staff, are as follows:

Description:	Estimated Cost
Personnel	\$1,645,000.00
Subcontractors	450,000.00
Operating expenses (disposal fees, truck rental, equipment rental)	80,000.00
Travel	36,000.00
Equipment (small tools, loppers, chainsaws weed eaters, etc.)	14,000.00
Supplies (tarps, pond liners, herbicides)	64,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$2,289,000.00

Proposed Funding Breakdown:	
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,389,600.00
State Water Resources Control Board	395,736.00
State Coastal Conservancy	503,664.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:	\$2,289,000.00

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District is the lead agency for compliance with the California Environmental Conservation Quality Act and has approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the project improvements for ten years, and each participating landowner will sign an agreement with the grantee to allow the project to occur on their property for that same time period. If at any time during the life of the project, the grantee is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

This project has wide support in the community, as evidenced by the participation of the large numbers of agricultural landowners and organizations, including the Sonoma County Grape Growers Association, United Wine Growers, North Coast Grape Growers, and both county Farm Bureaus. Landowners have committed to provide irrigation, maintenance and monitoring. Agricultural organizations have agreed to provide landowner outreach, education and technology transfer.

Mr. Wright reported that the Board received letters of support from Sonoma County Supervisors Mike Reilly and Paul Kelley; Randy Poole, General Manager of the Sonoma County Water Agency; Douglas McIlroy, Director of Grower and Vineyards Operations, Rodney Strong Vineyards; Shaun Mattio, Viticulture Lab, Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery; Nick Frey, Executive Director of the Sonoma County Grape Growers Association; Carre Brown, Administrator of the Mendocino County Farm Bureau; Philip Sales, Park Planning and Design Administrator for Sonoma County Regional Parks and Jay and Jean McMullen of Windsor.

Mr. Kellogg asked if there were any questions or concerns. Mr. Klass requested clarification regarding the probability of reinfestation in the project area. Mr. Clemons explained that the likelihood of reinfestation is small because there is an organized team to restore and monitor the area over the next ten years.

Mr. Clemons reported that Karen Gaffny of Circuit Riders Productions, Kerry Williams of Sotoyome Resource Conservation District and Terry Palmisano of the Department of Fish and Game, were in the audience and also available to answer questions.

Mr. Brodrick acknowledged the cooperative efforts of the many participants in this restoration project and expressed support for this proposal.

Ms. Mary Morgan, representing Assembly member Patty Berg, concurred with Mr. Brodrick and urged the Board to approve the proposal.

Mr. Richard Warren, representing the California Conservation Corp (CCC), expressed strong support for the proposal. He reported that their center in Ukiah is slated to be closed due to budget cuts and urged the Board to utilize CCC staff to assist in this restoration effort. Mr. Wright acknowledged the CCC and its positive work throughout the State.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,389,600.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565; 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.

It was moved by Mr. Fred Klass that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,389,600.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Prop. 50), Section 79565; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

21. Musty Buck Ridge, Butte County

This item was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

Mr. Wright provided the Board members with an update on the Hearst transaction that was considered at the August 18, 2004 meeting.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Wright
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on November 18, 2004, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$1,780,665,073.75. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

The statement includes projects completed under the 1964 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act, the 1970 Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Bond Fund, the Bagley Conservation Fund, the State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974, the General Fund, the Energy Resources Fund, the Environmental License Plate Fund, the State, Urban and Coastal Park Bond Act of 1976, the 1984 Parklands Fund, the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Bond Act, the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988, Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund of 1988, California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990, the Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Act of 1996, the Natural Resources Infrastructure Fund, the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund, Forest Resources Improvement Fund, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond, Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Protection Fund, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 and the Wildlife Restoration Fund. In addition to projects completed with the above funding sources, this statement includes tax credits awarded under the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000. The tax credits are not reflected in the total amount allocated to projects.

A. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement	24,734,257.88
Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 5,518,592.00
Stream Clearance and Improvement	14,788,961.69
Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	542,719.86
Marine Habitat	646,619.07
Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	3,237,365.26
C. Fishing Access Projects	47,539,031.65
Coastal and Bay	\$ 4,038,176.11
River and Aqueduct Access	13,299,013.84
Lake and Reservoir Access	9,616,317.52
Piers	20,585,524.18
D. Game Farm Projects	146,894.49

E. Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	1,647,521,150.65
Wildlife Areas (General)	\$363,993,746.80
Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	14,176,933.74
Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	592,500,860.73
Land Conservation Area	8,058,464.18
Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	18,892,769.96
Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	28,454,328.88
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	621,444,046.36
F. Hunting Access Projects	484,898.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	12,685,002.29
H. Special Project Allocations	1,389,820.29
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	29,610,379.80
State Owned	\$1,595,851.07
Grants	28,014,528.73
J. Sales and/or exchanges	547,419.07
K. Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded) ...	(48,241,234.00)
Statutory plans	(0.00)
Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and riparian habitat	(6,234,658.00)
Agricultural lands	(13,775,640.07)
Water and water rights	(0.00)
State and local parks, open space and archaeological resources	(28,230,935.93)
Total Allocated to Projects	\$1,780,665,073.75