

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

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**NOTICE OF MEETING**

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

May 31, 2012  
10:00 AM  
1/ State Capitol, Room 112  
Sacramento, California 95814

**FINAL AGENDA ITEMS**

<b>ITEM NO.</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>
1. Roll Call	1
2. Funding Status – Informational	2
3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4 – 25)	7
*4. Approval of Minutes – February 23, 2012	7
*5. Recovery of Funds	7

\* Proposed Consent Calendar

1/ These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*6.	North Coast Interagency Visitor Center Del Norte County	\$283,500.00 11

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Crescent City Harbor District (District) for a cooperative project with the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Crescent City Chamber of Commerce for planning and design, CEQA compliance and permitting of a North Coast Interagency Visitor Center, to be located on District property at the corner of Citizens Dock Road and Highway 101, in Crescent City, Del Norte County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources, which allow for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance; and California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

*7.	Little Shasta Conservation Easement (Townley) Siskiyou County	\$1,332,900.00 13
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to acquire a conservation easement over 3,104± acres of land for protection of critical winter range for elk and other regional California wildlife and protection of grasslands that sustain working landscapes, located east of the City of Yreka and the town of Montague in Siskiyou County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the protection of grazing land pursuant to the California Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Act (Public Resources Code Section 10330 et seq.). [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(1)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*8.	Charles Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement, Phase II Humboldt County	\$1,200,000.00 17

To consider an allocation for a grant to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to acquire a working forest conservation easement over 4,437± acres located eight miles southeast of Bridgeville in Humboldt County, wherein the State proposes to administer federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funds to protect forest land, important scenic, fish, wildlife, riparian and other ecological values under the California Forest Legacy Program (Public Resources Code section 12240 et seq.). The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that promotes the conservation and protection of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

*9.	Doyle Wildlife Area (Utility Easement) Lassen County	\$0.00 21
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To consider a grant of easement to the Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative (PSREC) over 0.51-miles on the Doyle Wildlife Area, necessary to construct a portion of a utility transmission line as part of the PSREC's - Fort Sage to Herlong 120KV Interconnect Project that will address regional power capacity limitations, located in Lassen County.

*10.	Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Enhancement Butte County	\$700,000.00 24
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance and restore 711± acres of wetland and upland habitat on the DFG's Gray Lodge Wildlife Area located approximately 6 miles west of the City of Gridley in Butte County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood corridor or bypass in the Central Valley. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*11.	Little Chico Creek Oak Woodland Conservation Easement Butte County	\$0.00      26

This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

*12.	Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory Facility Improvements Mono County	\$1,412,000.00      26
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California to construct a new classroom/lecture hall, install underground utilities, improve existing roadway and parking areas, and replace water control structures at the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory, located approximately 8 miles east of Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. The proposed funding source for this project provides for grants to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for the construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055 (b)(3)]

*13.	Point Pinole Fishing Pier Improvements Contra Costa County	\$234,000.00      28
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District to replace an existing vault toilet with an ADA accessible restroom, construct an ADA parking space, improve an ADA path, and conduct a structural engineering inspection of the Point Pinole Fishing Pier, located in Point Pinole Regional Shoreline Park in Contra Costa County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*14.	San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Pond Isolation, Planning and Design Madera County	\$232,000.00      31
	<p>To consider the allocation for a grant to the Department of Water Resources for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (Conservancy) to complete preliminary and final design, prepare analyses and environmental review in compliance with CEQA, and prepare permit documents to allow for the enhancement of habitat and stabilization of ponds on the Conservancy's Sycamore Island property in Madera County adjacent to the San Joaquin River. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Conservancy. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5)]</p>	
*15.	San Joaquin River Parkway, Camp Pashayan #2 Fresno County	\$190,000.00      35
	<p>To consider the acquisition of 11± acres of land by the San Joaquin River Conservancy for the protection of riparian and oak woodland habitats and provide future public use opportunities, located along the San Joaquin River, just east of State Highway 99 in the City of Fresno, in Fresno County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for river parkway projects identified by the San Joaquin River Conservancy. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f)]</p>	
*16.	San Joaquin River Parkway, Spano River Ranch, Habitat Enhancement, Planning and Design Fresno County	\$207,000.00      38
	<p>To consider the allocation for a grant to San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (Conservancy) to complete preliminary and final design, prepare analyses and environmental review in compliance with CEQA, and prepare permit documents to allow for habitat restoration on the Conservancy's River West Fresno (Spano) property, located immediately west of State Highway 41 in Fresno County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Conservancy. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5)]</p>	

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*17. Shaver Lake Boat Launch Parking Lot Fresno County	\$268,000.00	41

To consider the allocation for a grant to the County of Fresno for a project to enhance the upper parking lot, replace an existing storm drain with an integrated grease and sand separator, and restore the launch ramp maneuvering area at the Shaver Lake Boat Launch Facility on property owned by the Southern California Edison Company in Fresno County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance]

*18. Marks Ranch Phase II Monterey County	\$552,076.00	43
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Monterey County Parks Department to acquire 113± acres to protect native grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian woodlands and seasonal wetlands that serve as an import wildlife corridor, located west of Salinas, adjacent to the Toro County Park, along Highway 68, in Monterey County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection habitat to protect rare and endangered species, wildlife corridors and significant natural landscapes and ecosystems. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

*19. Quiota Creek Fish Passage Santa Barbara County	\$398,000.00	46
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game to replace a low-water Arizona crossing with an arched culvert at Refugio Road crossing #7 of Quiota Creek approximately 4 miles south of Highway 246 in Santa Barbara County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*20.	Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve, Expansion 4 Riverside County	\$25,000.00 49

To consider the acquisition of 21± acres of land as an expansion to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve for a cooperative project with The Nature Conservancy, for protection of riparian and coastal sage scrub habitat providing habitat protection for the endangered California gnatcatcher, orange-throated whiptail, and coast horned lizard, located within the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, southwest of the City of Temecula, in Riverside County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the restoration or acquisition of habitat for threatened and endangered species or for the purpose of promoting recovery of those species. [Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(3)]

*21.	Santa Rosa Mountains (Blixeth 1), Expansion 16 Riverside County	\$10,000.00 52
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To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Habitat Conservation Planning grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to acquire 1,342± acres of land for the protection of Peninsular bighorn sheep habitat, and to provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*22.	Upper Mission Creek / Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, Expansion 5 Riverside County	\$5,000.00      55

To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to acquire 9± acres of land for the protection of core habitat linkages, fluvial and aeolian sand transport corridor, alluvial fan habitat, and mountainous habitat important for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, Peninsular bighorn sheep, and other species addressed in the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan and provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities, located north of the City of Palm Springs in Riverside County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)]

*23.	Rose Creek Watershed Invasives Control Project San Diego County	\$330,000.00      58
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To consider the allocation for a grant to The Chaparral Lands Conservancy for a project to remove the non-native invasive plants Pampas Grass and Giant Reed on 22± acres to restore riparian habitat on public and privately-owned land in the Rose Creek watershed in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal)]



<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
*24.	San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (El Cajon) San Diego County	\$5,000.00      60

To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy to acquire in fee 47± acres of land for the protection of land that will greatly enhance the existing San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat located east of the City of El Cajon in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)]

*25.	San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (Michelsen) San Diego County	\$5,000.00      63
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To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy to acquire in fee 92± acres of land for the protection of land that will greatly enhance the existing San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat located east of the City of El Cajon in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055 (c)]

26.	Working and Learning Among the Oaks San Luis Obispo County	Special Presentation      66
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Students from the Santa Margarita School will be making a special presentation on Learning Among the Oaks. In 2005 and again in 2008, the Board allocated funds to implement the Learning Among the Oaks program, a unique and very successful oak education program for K through 6th grade students. The presentation, given by one of the student Oak Ambassadors, will highlight the unique partnership between the landowners of the historic Santa Margarita Ranch and the school.

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
27.	Chalk Mountain Conservation Easement, Phase II Humboldt County	\$2,000,000.00      69

To consider an allocation for a grant to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to acquire a working forest conservation easement over 4,024± acres located two miles southeast of the community of Bridgeville in Humboldt County, wherein the State proposes to administer federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funds to protect forest land, important scenic, fish, wildlife, riparian and other ecological values under the California Forest Legacy Program (Public Resources Code section 12240 et seq.). The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that promotes the conservation and protection of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]

28.	Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area, Expansion 13 Yuba County	\$0.00      72
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This project was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

29.	Suisun Marsh, Denverton Legacy Project Solano County	\$1,510,000.00      73
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to acquire fee title of 763± acres of land for the protection of bay area wetlands and associated upland areas supporting migratory waterfowl and shorebirds and threatened and endangered species, including the fully-listed salt-marsh harvest mouse, located south of Suisun City, north of Grizzly Bay, in Solano County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and wetland habitat areas within the San Francisco Bay Area. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
30.	Suisun Marsh, Grizzly Ranch Legacy Project Solano County	\$2,010,000.00      77

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to acquire fee title of 982± acres of land for the protection of bay area wetlands and associated upland areas supporting migratory waterfowl and shorebirds and threatened and endangered species, including the fully-listed salt-marsh harvest mouse, located south of Suisun City, north of Grizzly Bay, in Solano County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and wetland habitat areas within the San Francisco Bay Area. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay)]

31.	Rockville Trail Estates Solano County	\$2,887,000.00      81
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Solano Land Trust for a cooperative project with the California Coastal Conservancy, Moore Foundation, City of Fairfield, Resources Legacy Fund and the Syar Foundation to acquire 1,165± acres of land to protect significant natural landscapes and wildlife corridors, running north to the Blueridge open space areas near Lake Berryessa, including oak woodland, grassland, wetland and riparian habitats, and provide access and passive recreational opportunities to the public, located in the hills north of Cordelia Junction, in Solano County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat to protect rare and endangered species, wildlife corridors and significant natural landscapes, ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
32.	Eden Landing Ecological Reserve Wetland Restoration Construction Alameda County	\$8,000,000.00      85

To consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore approximately 230 acres of coastal wetlands and to construct public access improvements at ponds E12 and E13 at the DFG's Eden Landing Ecological Reserve approximately 5.5 miles west of Union City in Alameda County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands within the San Francisco Bay Area. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c)]

33.	Mission Creek Fish Passage Project Santa Barbara County	\$775,000.00      90
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Santa Barbara for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game, the County of Santa Barbara Flood Control District, Southern California Wetland Recovery Program and private foundations to modify a channelized portion of Mission Creek to improve fish passage for steelhead trout on approximately 0.8 miles of stream channel in western Santa Barbara County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
34.	Angeles Linkage (Nominn) Los Angeles County	\$2,480,000.00 93

To consider the allocation for a grant to Riverside Land Conservancy to acquire 1,030± acres of land that will provide a significant contribution to the landscape level connection that serves two expansive core areas, and to assist in the movement of wildlife species within the upper Santa Clara River watershed, an important stream for the Southern California steelhead and the three-spine stickleback, located near the unincorporated community of Agua Dulce and approximately eight miles east of Santa Clarita, in Los Angeles County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SoCal)]

35.	Jamul Creek Watershed Riparian Restoration San Diego County	\$1,696,000.00 97
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To consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Resources Legacy Fund, San Diego City Water Department and TransNet to restore 178± acres of riparian and oak woodland habitat on the DFG's Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve and Hollenbeck Wildlife Area located three miles southeast of Jamul in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E)]

<b>ITEM NO.</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
36.	Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration Various Counties	\$400,000.00      100

To consider the allocation for a grant to the State Coastal Conservancy for a cooperative project with the Earth Island Institute to assist with the implementation of the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program that provides funding for community-based restoration projects in coastal wetlands and watersheds in the Southern California region. Projects are located in the five coastal counties from Point Conception to the U.S. Mexico border, including portions of Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California. [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal)]

37.	Appraisal Review and Disclosure Statewide	Informational/Action      104
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To consider a new Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) policy governing the review and disclosure of appraisal information and to require an independent, third party review of appraisals for acquisition projects comprised of 5,000 or more acres or for which the Board proposes to allocate five million dollars (\$5,000,000) or more of State funds.

38.	Strategic Planning Update	Informational      121
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To provide the Board with an update on undertaking a strategic planning process.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

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**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**

May 31, 2012

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Charlton H. Bonham, Chair  
Director, Department of Fish and Game

Ana Matosantos, Member  
Director, Department of Finance

Daniel W. Richards, Member  
President, Fish and Game Commission

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Jean Fuller  
Senator Fran Pavley  
Senator Lois Wolk

Assembly Member Michael Allen  
Assembly Member Richard Gordon  
Assembly Member Jared Huffman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

WCB Final Agenda for May 31, 2012 Board Meeting

2. Funding Status – Informational

(a) 2011-12 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$1,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-259,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$741,000.00

(b) 2011-12 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-292,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$20,371,000.00

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

Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-3,228,284.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$17,439,716.00

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

Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-18,035,739.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$2,632,261.00

(e) 2007-08 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget  
(2011-12 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	\$20,674,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,568,306.08</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$7,105,693.92

(f) 2006-07 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget  
(2009-10 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	\$20,699,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,213,358.30</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$8,485,641.70



WCB Final Agenda for May 31, 2012 Board Meeting

(g)	2006-07 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$15,224,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,877,941.50</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,346,058.50
(h)	1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund Capital Outlay Budget	
	Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]	\$36,100,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-29,797,243.45</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$6,302,756.55
(i)	2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$11,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,090,302.94</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$6,909,697.06
(j)	Chapter 983, Statutes of 2002, Oak Woodlands Conservation Act	
	Budget Act (2009-10 Reappropriation)	\$4,800,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,586,689.51</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$213,310.49
(k)	2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund Capital Outlay Budget	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650)	\$273,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-219,873,842.05</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$53,126,157.95
(l)	2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$32,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-21,681,299.35</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,818,700.65

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

Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572), including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005	\$814,350,000.00
2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-4,000,000.00
2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-3,100,000.00
2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-17,688,000.00
2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-5,150,000.00
2008-09 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-1,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-660,530,654.65</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$80,881,345.35

(n) 2010-11 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$3,380,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$3,380,000.00

(o) 2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$10,000,000.00

(p) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,666,000.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$7,334,000.00

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(q)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$10,000,000.00
	2010-11 Budget Act Reversion	-3,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-7,000,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$0.00
(r)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	\$24,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,097,646.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$19,902,354.00
(s)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2011-12 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-7,968,109.50</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$17,031,890.50
(t)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-14,063,156.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,936,844.00
(u)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1)),	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-11,682,786.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,610,214.00

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(v)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2)),	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-11,628,437.48</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,664,562.52
(w)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(4))	\$4,762,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,585,339.78</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,176,660.22
(x)	2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	\$164,700,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-74,201,078.50</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$90,498,921.50
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	\$123,525,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-78,344,544.53</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$45,180,455.47

**RECAP OF FUND BALANCES**

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$741,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)	\$56,034,312.62
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (g) and (h)	\$7,648,815.05
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (i), (j) and (k)	\$60,249,165.50
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (l) and (m)	\$91,700,046.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t), (u), (v), (w) and (x)	\$211,715,902.21
<b>TOTAL – ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$428,089,241.38</b>

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

Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004  
 Tax credits awarded through June 30, 2008 \$48,598,734.00

Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective January 1, 2010)  
 Tax credits awarded \$0.00

**SUMMARY OF BOND CASH**

The following summary provides the status of the up-front general obligation bond sale proceeds that the Wildlife Conservation Board has received since the spring of 2009.

<b>Bond Fund</b>	<b>Authorized GO Bond Proceeds</b>	<b>Expenditures through 04/27/12</b>	<b>Encumbrances through of 03/31/12</b>	<b>Cash Balances Includes Encumbrances</b>
Proposition 12	\$12,621,973.31	\$7,264,420.87	\$311,864.25	\$5,045,688.19
Proposition 40	\$52,763,470.74	\$42,047,066.56	\$21,582,497.89	-\$10,866,093.71
Proposition 50	\$99,161,920.79	\$40,174,166.32	\$37,743,279.53	\$21,244,474.94
Proposition 84	\$185,719,637.97	\$177,364,287.23	\$31,398,395.37	-\$23,043,044.63
Proposition 1E	\$37,485,238.22	\$25,580,812.71	\$9,608,897.33	\$2,295,528.18
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>\$387,752,241.03</b>	<b>\$292,430,753.69</b>	<b>\$100,644,934.37</b>	<b>-\$5,323,447.03</b>

3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 4—25)

\*4. Approval of Minutes – February 23, 2012

\*5. Recovery of Funds

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

**\$3,128.00** to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**

**\$19,840.18** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**

**\$12,482.50** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**

**\$6,933.46** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**

**\$58,659.00** to the **Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006**

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

Saddle Creek, Orange County

Allocated	\$3,371,881.00
Expended	<u>-3,371,881.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Western Riverside County MSHCP, Expansion 5, Riverside County

Allocated	\$72,000.00
Expended	<u>-68,872.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,128.00

**Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund \$3,128.00**

**HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND**

Heart K Ranch, Plumas County

Allocated	\$1,090,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,089,229.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$771.00

Honey Lake Wildlife Area Pipeline, Lassen County

Allocated	\$308,000.00
Expended	<u>-308,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Los Banos Wildlife Area Lift Pumps, Merced County

Allocated	\$250,000.00
Expended	<u>-249,988.82</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$11.18

Wheeler Ridge, Expansion 4, Mono County

Allocated	\$730,000.00
Expended	<u>-720,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

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Yuba Highlands, Phase I, Yuba County

Allocated	\$15,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,942.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,058.00

**Total Habitat Conservation Fund \$19,840.18**

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

Escondido Creek, San Diego County

Allocated	\$200,000.00
Expended	<u>-187,517.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$12,482.50

**Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe  
Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund \$12,482.50**

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

Devereux Slough Restoration, Santa Barbara County

Allocated	\$261,000.00
Expended	<u>-260,998.59</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1.41

Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Enhancement, Imperial County

Allocated	\$438,000.00
Expended	<u>-431,067.95</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$6,932.05

**Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal  
and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 \$6,933.46**

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

Arroyo Toad, Long Potrero (2006 RLA), San Diego County

Allocated	\$46,000.00
Expended	<u>-36,897.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,103.00

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Central Coast Corridor Restoration, Santa Cruz County

Allocated	\$184,600.00
Expended	<u>-184,600.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

East Elliott and Otay Mesa Regions (Sunroad), San Diego County

Allocated	\$5,000.00
Expended	<u>-4,560.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$440.00

Hedgerows for Habitat and Restoration, Santa Cruz/Madera/Fresno County

Allocated	\$117,000.00
Expended	<u>-117,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Saddle Creek, Orange County

Allocated	\$8,288,119.00
Expended	<u>-8,279,133.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,986.00

San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (Gibson), San Diego County

Allocated	\$885,000.00
Expended	<u>-876,368.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,632.00

Western Riverside County MSHCP (2006), Expansions 2-6, Riverside County

Allocated	\$35,000.00
Expended	<u>-19,968.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$15,032.00

Western Riverside County MSHCP (2006), Expansions 6-9, Riverside County

Allocated	\$1,704,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,688,184.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$16,466.00

**Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006** **\$58,659.00**



- \*6. North Coast Interagency Visitor Center \$283,500.00  
Del Norte County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Crescent City Harbor District (District) for a cooperative project with the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Crescent City Chamber of Commerce for planning and design, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance and permitting of a North Coast Interagency Visitor Center.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The proposed North Coast Visitor Center is to be located on harbor district property at the corner of Citizens Dock Road and Highway 101, in Crescent City, Del Norte County in northern California. The harbor at the south end of Crescent City's commercial district serves both commercial fishing vessels and many private small ocean water craft. Several restaurants dot the harbor district property and a popular surf and swim beach is immediately south of the harbor.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The District envisions the North Coast Interagency Visitor Center will accommodate fourteen entities that own land, have facilities, or in some way provide services or recreation amenities along the north coast. These entities include the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and several other public agencies, local Native American tribes, and other visitor-oriented entities such as the Crescent City Chamber of Commerce.

This grant will fund the site schematic design, the preliminary (30%) construction plans, and theme and design exhibits. The 30% plans are sufficient in scope and detail to allow the District to prepare and complete environmental review to comply with the CEQA and to apply for the necessary Coastal Development Permit (CDP). Also during this phase construction funding will be identified, pursued and secured.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Public Access Program and meets the program's goal of providing public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Tourism is Del Norte County's largest private sector employer and a critical component of the area's economy. Different agencies and organizations provide visitor information and interpretive services at a number of scattered locations throughout the area. This project will provide the necessary planning and environmental review to allow 14 different entities to be consolidated into one building to provide tourism information to the public. This facility will provide a

one-stop destination to all public and many private recreational properties on the north coast. The National Park Service has agreed to staff and maintain the facility when constructed.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$283,500.00</b>
Redwood National Park	12,000.00
Six Rivers National Forest	7,500.00
Crescent City Chamber of Commerce	3,200.00
Crescent City Harbor District	<u>5,625.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$311,850.00</b>

The funding from the participating partners is an estimate of staff time needed to assist in developing the planning documents. Project costs will be for preliminary planning and design documents and the preparation and completion of environmental review and CDP application for the proposed North Coast Visitor Center.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding sources for this project are the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance, and the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and the Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a). The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding sources, which allow for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The project calls for the preparation and completion of preliminary planning and design documents, environmental review and CDP application for the proposed North Coast Visitor Center, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$239,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance, and \$44,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*7. Little Shasta Conservation Easement (Townley) \$1,332,900.00  
Siskiyou County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) to acquire a conservation easement over 3,104± acres of land for protection of critical winter range for elk and other regional California wildlife and protection of grasslands that sustain working landscapes. The project will allow dry land farming and livestock operations to continue under the terms of the conservation easement while at the same time protecting the property's natural resource values.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located east of the City of Yreka and six miles northeast the town of Montague in Siskiyou County, at the junction of Ball Mountain and Townsend Roads. The general terrain is characterized by rolling hills within flat valley bottoms containing vast rangeland and grasslands, interspersed with wetland and riparian areas. The Property is intersected by two ephemeral streams, Webb Gulch and Hovey Gulch and includes several ponds on the site. The Property is part of the upper eastern watershed of the Shasta River, a major tributary to the Klamath River. Protection and conservation of both the Shasta and Klamath river watersheds are important contributors to the recovery salmonid species.

The Property is located approximately two miles southwest of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Shasta Valley Wildlife Area and approximately two miles to the east are portions of the Klamath National Forest. The property is also within the view shed and watershed areas of the north side of Mount Shasta, thereby providing excellent views of Mt. Shasta to the south and the Shasta Valley to the west.

The project area and surrounding properties currently support agricultural livestock grazing and/or dry farming operations, suitable for growing annual crops that employ dry farming on a summer fallow basis. Approximately four miles to the north, several sections of grazing land have been subdivided into single-family dwellings or ranchettes, demonstrating the subdivision potential and habitat fragmentation that could occur on the property if left unprotected.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property topography ranges from a relatively flat to moderately steep terrain utilized for dry farming and agricultural grazing. The land supports both irrigated and non-irrigated pastures, as well as farming for hay, wheat and barley used to feed and support the Property's natural range fed beef operation. To the east of the property lies the seasonal migration path of Roosevelt elk. As such, the Property provides crucial winter habitat for the elk and other wildlife species such

as coyotes, foxes, pronghorn antelope and deer. Numerous other migratory and local species including eagles, raptors, quail, dove, pheasants and Canadian geese also frequent the property throughout the year and several aquatic species (pond turtles and amphibians) are dependent upon the gulches, ephemeral streams and ponds found on the Property.

The Property is an open space component of the Shasta River and Klamath River watersheds, absorbing rainfall and providing seasonal inflow. Furthermore, the landowners have actively improved the watershed and water quality conditions on the Property through the construction of in-stream structures, streamside plantings, and developing and maintaining buffer/filter strips along its gulches. These restoration enhancements along with protection of the land provide water quality and habitat benefits downstream for both the Shasta and Klamath rivers and their dependent species.

This project also denotes the first large conservation easement in the Shasta Valley and represents the first easement project for the RMEF as part of the Siskiyou Initiative Focus Area Landscape, an effort to protect and conserve large ranch and landscape properties from future fragmentation. It is contemplated that if this conservation easement is successful, additional large acreage landowners may also be interested in pursuing agricultural or conservation easements on their properties to help further expand and protect open space and rangeland properties in the Shasta River watershed in perpetuity.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria. The Program provides funding for the acquisition of conservation easements on private properties for the protection of rangeland, grazing land and grasslands. The Program seeks to prevent the conversion of rangeland, grazing land and grassland to nonagricultural uses, protect the long-term sustainability of livestock grazing and ensure continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open-space benefits to the State of California from livestock grazing.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

RMEF, a non-profit conservation organization committed to conserving natural habitats for the protection of wild free-ranging elk, will be responsible for monitoring and managing the property according to the terms of the "Deed of Conservation Easement" with the property owners. Allowable uses include cattle grazing, dry land grain production, a 5% (150 acre) set aside for more intensive agriculture, and three building envelopes, one 10-acre ranch headquarters, one five acre existing residence, and one five acre set-aside for a future residence.

All these uses were considered and taken into consideration in the appraisal and valuation of the conservation easement. A baseline report will have been completed by the Grantee and approved by the WCB. The conservation easement does not convey a general right of access to the public but allows access to both RMEF and WCB for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The property owners have agreed to sell the conservation easement to RMEF for its appraised fair market value of \$1,327,900.00, which has been approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary reports, documents connected with the purchase and sale, including escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds into the established escrow account. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance or require that title to the conservation easement be transferred to WCB or another qualifying entity. The project lands are encumbered by Land Conservation Contracts under the Williamson Act will not be affected by the terms of the conservation easement.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB proposes to make a grant to RMEF for the \$1,327,900.00 for the purchase price:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$1,327,900.00</b>
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Total WCB Allocation</b>	<b>\$1,332,900.00</b>

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

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(1). The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of the conservation easements on agricultural properties for the protection of rangeland, grazing land and grassland protection and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,332,900.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(1) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*8. Charles Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement, Phase II  
Humboldt County \$1,200,000.00

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to acquire a working forest conservation easement over 4,437± acres, and to assist CAL FIRE in administering matching federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funds. This project will help to protect forest land, important scenic forest landscape, fish, wildlife, riparian and other ecological values under the California Forest Legacy Program.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Charles Mountain Ranch is located in the southeastern region of Humboldt County, southeast of Bridgeville, past the junction between State Highway 36 and Alderpoint Road in Blocksburg. The subject property (Property) is 0.25 miles from the U.S. Forest Service Six Rivers National Forest and Black Lassie Late Seral Forest Reserve, borders the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Butte Creek Reserve, and is located approximately 10 miles east of the Humboldt Redwoods State Park. The Property lies within a forest and grassland biological corridor. In terms of ecological protection priorities, it is situated within one of The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) priority eco-portfolio protection areas and is designated as a priority conservation area for the Save-the-Redwoods League and BLM.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On February 24, 2011, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved Phase I of the Charles Mountain Ranch conservation easement project, a grant to the Northcoast Regional Land Trust to acquire a 2,903± acre conservation easement comprised of the northernmost portion of the Charles Mountain Ranch. In the proposed second phase of this project, CAL FIRE will purchase a conservation easement over the majority of the remaining areas on the Ranch, located adjacent and south of Phase I. Phases I and II will encumber the entire Ranch property with a conservation easement resulting in 7,340± acres of protected land.

The Property includes some of the largest intact stretches of privately-owned forestlands that include true oak forests, natural Douglas fir and mixed conifer-hardwood forest ecosystems in Humboldt County. The Property's sustainable timber contributes to the local timber industry, and its rangeland and riparian corridors support and protect wildlife habitat and endangered fish populations. Numerous wildlife species can be found on the ranch including the western pond turtle, mountain lion, bald and golden eagles, red-tailed hawk, red tree vole, Columbian black-tailed deer and Roosevelt elk. The Property is also part of the Larabee Creek and Van Duzen River drainage systems that comprise two of the

most productive and largest salmonid spawning tributaries on the northcoast for both Coho and Chinook salmon and steelhead.

### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, in most cases utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry expertise and including the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the Property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

The matching federal FLP funds provided for this project have been approved through both the State and federal Forest Legacy Program project selection processes, and have been further reviewed by WCB for compliance and consistency with State program and funding requirements. CAL FIRE has entered into an agreement with the WCB to assist in the administration of this project according to Public Resources Code Section 12840, which establishes the California Forest Legacy Program. Once approved by the WCB, the project will undergo review and processing by the Department of General Services (DGS) for consideration and approval by the State of California, Public Works Board (PWB), which approves CAL FIRE property acquisitions.

### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Consistent with the purposes of the WCB's Forest Conservation Program and the FLP guidelines, the conservation easement will prevent the future conversion of forest land and forest resources from development in Humboldt County. The conservation easement allows the continuance of existing forestry operations, ranching, agricultural uses and hunting activities and will: (i) protect water quality and supplies; (ii) protect wildlife habitat and maintain habitat connectivity to ensure biodiversity; (iii) protect riparian areas and associated ecosystems; and (iv) maintain forest sustainability. More specifically, the easement area can continue to operate as a sustainable working timber forest and cattle ranch.

Although CAL FIRE will hold, manage and be responsible for the monitoring of the easement, the conservation easement allows engaging a locally based agent



(“Local Stewardship Agent”) with the ability to establish and maintain community trust and involvement with the Property as a means of monitoring the terms of the conservation easement. Since the NRLT monitors Phase I of the project and has an established relationship with the property owners, CAL FIRE has engaged NRLT as Local Stewardship Agent for Phase II of the project through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to assist in monitoring the Property for compliance with the terms of this easement.

A baseline report will be completed by the CAL FIRE and approved by the WCB prior to close of escrow. The conservation easement deed permits access to the Property by CAL FIRE, NRLT and WCB staff for monitoring purposes.

**TERMS**

The conservation easement has a fair market value of \$4,885,000.00 based on an independent appraisal of the Property, reviewed and approved by the DGS. The property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement at less than its approved appraised value, for \$3,700,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance. Furthermore, the project will require additional transaction review by DGS staff in preparation for approval by the PWB prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the conservation easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$1,200,000.00</b>
2009 FLP grant award	500,000.00
2010 FLP grant award	<u>\$2,000,000.00</u>
Purchase Price	\$3,700,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB Allocation</b>	<b>\$1,200,000.00</b>

CAL FIRE will be responsible for all administrative and internal project-related costs pertaining to appraisal, appraisal review, title and escrow.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a). This funding source allows for forest conservation and protection projects to promote the ecological

integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,200,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a) for the grant to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; 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.

- \*9. Doyle Wildlife Area (Utility Easement) \$0.00  
Lassen County

This proposal is to consider a grant of a permanent easement to the Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative (PSREC) over 6± acres (a strip ±0.51-mile long by 100 feet wide) on the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Doyle Wildlife Area (Wildlife Area) in Lassen County. The easement will be used to construct a portion of a utility transmission line as part of the PSREC's Fort Sage to Herlong 120kV Interconnect Project that will address regional power capacity limitations.

#### PSREC PROJECT OVERVIEW

PSREC plans to construct a 120 kilovolt transmission line known as the Fort Sage to Herlong 120kV Interconnect Project (Project) that originates from PSREC's Fort Sage Substation in the state of Nevada to a new proposed Herlong Substation in Lassen County, California. The transmission line will cross lands belonging to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California State Lands Commission, the Doyle Wildlife Area (Wildlife Area) and various private property owners. All aspects of this undertaking were reviewed and approved by: Bureau of Land Management Core of Engineering, California State Lands Commission (CSLC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Assessment Team under the National Environmental Policy Act (Parties) to ensure that all required State, federal and local requirements have been met.

The Wildlife Area that was originally acquired as wintering range for the Rocky Mountain mule deer. DFG has worked with PSREC to develop a Mitigation Plan (Plan) to avoid adverse impacts to the mule deer and other species found in the Wildlife Area. The Plan and the Environmental documents completed for this project ensure there will be no significant impacts on the Wildlife Area and area consistent with all State and federal law and regulations. The Plan has been approved by DFG.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The utility easement as it crosses the Wildlife Area will be ±0.51-mile long by 100 feet wide covering approximately 6 acres of land situated in an area north of the intersection of Turtle Mountain Road and Fort Sage Road in Section 8, T26N, R17E, MDM, in Lassen County. The transmission line will be placed in an area on the Wildlife Area that poses the least amount of disturbance to critical mule deer winter range and avoids the antelope bitterbrush shrubs located in the area. The easement does encompass portions of riparian habitat along Long Valley Creek located within the Wildlife Area.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construction of transmission lines will be supported by three tower structures along the easement area. To minimize surface disturbance and cause minimal impact to the wildlife and vegetation in the area, the Plan requires the hand drilling of poles to enable the use of a helicopter for pole placement. This method omits the need to drive heavy equipment along the entire length of the easement and to require additional temporary access routes into the Wildlife Area. Furthermore, the time necessary to complete the project will be reduced to 10 to 15 hours of flight time as opposed to standard construction methods that could require 10 to 15 days.

### WCB PROGRAM AND AUTHORITY

Granting of the proposed permanent utility easement is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) and the WCB is authorized to transact real property or rights in real property on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game. Section 1348(c)(2) of the Fish and Game Code authorizes the WCB to sell or transfer any interest in real property acquired by or held under the jurisdiction of the Board or the Department of Fish and Game and requires the proceeds from this transaction to be deposited to the Wildlife Restoration Fund.

### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Plan provides that PSREC will be responsible for periodic ground maintenance patrols to inspect and maintain the transmission line on the Wildlife Area. PSREC is required to coordinate its pole access with DFG for purposes of routine maintenance that includes replacing damaged insulators, tightening nuts and bolts, and general line and structure repair. This type of maintenance would be intermittent and under most conditions accomplished from existing roads or on foot. No new permanent access routes will be required for line operations or maintenance.

### TERMS

The utility easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$925.00. PSREC has agreed to acquire the utility easement for the appraised fair market value of \$925.00 plus an administrative fee of \$500.00, representing the staff time attributed to the project. The terms and conditions of the proposed utility easement provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve the appraisal, title documents, preliminary title reports and instruments associated with the transfer of interest in State property required for the Project.

The CSLC served as the lead State Agency responsible for reviewing and approving the Plan, completing all CEQA requirements on behalf of the State,

and for the filing of the Notice of Determination for the Project. The Project was presented to the CSLC Board on September 1, 2011, and approved as presented.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Sale of Easement Interest in Property	\$925.00
Documentation/Administrative Fee	\$ 500.00
TOTAL TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND	\$1,425.00

The Administrative Fee represents the cost to cover administrative staff charges in connection with the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The State Lands Commission, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration for the Fort Sage to Herlong 120kV Interconnect Project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Environmental Impact Report and has prepared proposed, written findings as a responsible agency documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal and findings by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; accept payment of \$1,425.00 from Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative for the utility easement; authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*10. Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Enhancement \$700,000.00  
Butte County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance and restore 711± acres of wetland and upland habitat on the DFG's Gray Lodge Wildlife Area.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The project is located within the 9,100 acre Gray Lodge Wildlife Area located approximately 6 miles west of the City of Gridley in Butte County. The Wildlife Area is located just north of the Sutter Buttes, and consists of a mixture of habitats including wetlands, riparian habitat, uplands and wildlife friendly agricultural practices including grazing and rice. The surrounding lands are a mix of privately owned wetlands and rice and other agricultural crops.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Over the last few years, Gray Lodge Wildlife Area has worked diligently with partners to successfully complete the construction of a master water delivery system. The new infrastructure has dramatically increased management capability to deliver water supplies with increased efficiency and control to the entire wildlife area. Now that the water delivery infrastructure is complete, the deficiencies with the individual wetland units on the property have become clear. Every year, the Wildlife Area staff disk or mow up to a third of the entire wetland acreage on the 9,000 acre wildlife area to provide the wetland benefits necessary to support the hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl that descend on the area each winter. Eventually, these manipulations are not sufficient to manage the habitats, and a different type of manipulation is needed. At that time, shallow swales are developed through the wetland units to provide better water management, existing berms are renovated and new structures are installed.

This current project will help to improve habitat conditions at the wildlife area by installing suitable wetland infrastructure (i.e. weirs, culverts, swales, ditches, levees, etc.); this will allow for increased management capabilities of desired habitat types by DFG managers. The project will enhance and restore 711± acres into wetland and upland habitats. The project will improve wetland topography to provide wetland diversity and improve water management, install water control structures, and restore native grasses. The project will benefit waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife by providing wintering and migratory wetland habitat.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint

Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project will be on a portion of DFG's Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. The improved water management capabilities associated with this wetland enhancement will allow the DFG managers to provide improved wetland habitat through more efficient water delivery and drainage, with less staff time.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$700,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for surveys, earthwork, water control infrastructure, signage, and project management and administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding sources for this project are the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program and the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program. These funding sources allow for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands within a floodplain or flood corridor in the Central Valley, and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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 WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$132,081.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program and \$567,919.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*11. Little Chico Creek Oak Woodland Conservation Easement Butte County \$0.00

This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

- \*12. Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory Facility Improvements Mono County \$1,412,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California to construct a new classroom/lecture hall, install underground utilities, improve existing roadway and parking areas, and replace water control structures at the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory (SNARL).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The SNARL is a unit in the University of California Natural Reserve System (NRS) administered by UC Santa Barbara (UCSB) and located approximately 8 miles east of Mammoth Lakes, California, along the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The station was established in 1935 and has served as an experimental site and as a base of operations for research across eastern California and western Nevada, including large parts of the Sierra Nevada. Researchers from throughout the United States are regular users of the facilities, and the studies range widely among the life and physical sciences.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will consist of replacing aging water control infrastructure, reconstructing and repaving the existing asphalt roadway and parking areas, extending utilities under the roadway, and constructing a new classroom/lecture hall.

WCB PROGRAM

Under Proposition 84, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the UCNRS for land acquisitions, and construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources. The mission of the UCNRS is to contribute to the understanding and wise management of the earth and its natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected areas throughout California. To implement this funding, the WCB and the UCNRS developed guidelines for selecting eligible projects. This also included establishment of a UCNRS Ad Hoc Advisory Subcommittee to review and set priorities for project proposals prior to submittal to the WCB.



PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$1,412,000.00</b>
National Science Foundation	657,106.00
Private Donations	342,818.00
University of California, Santa Barbara	487,470.00
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$2,899,394.00</b>

Project costs will be for water control infrastructure replacement, road reconstructions and utilities, classroom design and construction, and project management.

FUNDING SOURCE

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The Regents of the University of California, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA as a responsible agency. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project was vetted through the UCNRS's Ad Hoc Subcommittee and recommended for funding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,412,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*13. Point Pinole Fishing Pier Improvements \$234,000.00  
Contra Costa County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to replace an existing vault toilet with an ADA accessible restroom, construct an ADA parking space, improve an ADA path, and conduct a structural engineering inspection of the Point Pinole Fishing Pier.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Point Pinole Fishing Pier is located in Point Pinole Regional Shoreline Park in the City of Richmond in Contra Costa County. The park is a short drive west from Interstate 80 via Hilltop Drive. The park serves western Contra Costa County including the cities of Richmond, Pinole, San Pablo and El Sobrante.

The 2,147-acre park has a rocky, driftwood littered shoreline. To the east is a salt marsh area known as Whittell Marsh. Near the pier is a large blue gum eucalyptus forest, planted by the Hercules Powder Plant, a former owner of the peninsula. The park contains many miles of popular hiking trails through a variety of habitat types, including grasslands with native needle grasses and coastal scrub and dunes.

Besides hiking and nature viewing, the most popular attraction at the park is the fishing pier. The pier is one of the most heavily utilized fishing piers on the San Francisco Bay. The 1,225 foot-long pier juts out from Point Pinole into a deep water channel in the bay. It is a well designed pier that provides excellent fishing opportunities in an attractive location.

The pier was initially constructed in the mid 1970's, with financial assistance from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing restroom at the Point Pinole Fishing Pier is old and dilapidated, and does not meet current ADA accessibility standards. A new ADA accessible restroom with an ADA accessible parking space and pathway to the pier will be constructed adjacent to the existing restroom. Not only will the new vault toilet meet ADA standards and have a sink for hand washing, but the new vault restrooms have a vent system that removes excess water from the vault. The vent system keeps the restroom fresh and reduces the need for sanitary service, which will lower maintenance costs. The existing restroom is under a wood lattice structure. The old restroom will be removed, but the lattice structure will be repurposed as a picnic area and/or kayak storage area.

Finally, the support braces for the water line under the pier will be replaced, and a structural engineering inspection of the pier itself will be performed. Being on

the bay, the pier is exposed to corrosion and structural failure. Several of the brackets supporting the water line serving the pier are corroded and have failed. These will be replaced. An engineering inspection will be performed on the pier to determine if the pier is structurally sound or in need of future structural retrofits.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Public Access Program and meets the program's goal of providing public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The EBRPD will provide the long-term management of the project. The District has maintained and operated Point Pinole Regional Park since 1976. The park currently has a staff of 7.5 full-time employees. This includes a park supervisor, 5.75 rangers and 0.75 gate attendant. All of their time is allocated to the operations and maintenance of the park and this project. The EBRPD's police and fire departments patrol and respond to emergencies in the park.

The EBRPD manages and operates over 110,000 acres of park land in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties with 65 regional parks, recreation areas, wilderness, shorelines, preserves and land bank areas. The EBRPD manages 6 other fishing piers on the San Francisco Bay, many of which were funded by WCB. All the EBRPD parks and outdoor facilities, including the Point Pinole Pier, are open from 5:00 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The new restroom building will be constructed entirely from precast concrete, an extremely durable material requiring minimal repairs, maintenance and upkeep. The project site as a whole will be maintained by the rangers at the park who will provide daily operation and cleanup of the facility and address all graffiti and maintenance issues. The project improvements are expected to last at least 25 years, which is the life of this project. If at any time during the life of the project the EBRPD does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires them to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$234,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for engineering, permits, project construction of the restroom, parking and travel paths, pier work and construction management.

The EBRPD will submit a grant application for federal reimbursement under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. If LWCF reimbursement is approved, the WCB will be reimbursed for 50% of its project costs.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is the WCB's Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15302, Class 2, replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities at the same site and with substantially the same purpose and capacity; Section 15303, Class 3, new construction or conversion of small facilities or structures; and Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land, water and/or vegetation, which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$234,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*14. San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Pond Isolation, \$232,000.00  
Planning and Design  
Madera County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to complete preliminary and final design alternatives, prepare analyses and conduct environmental review to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and prepare permit documents to allow for the enhancement of habitat and stabilization of ponds on the Conservancy's Sycamore Island property in Madera County adjacent to the San Joaquin River.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The San Joaquin River Parkway is approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two mile long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam in the east and State Route 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The SJRC's mission includes both public access and habitat restoration within the Parkway.

The proposed project is within the 347± acre Sycamore Island Fishing Access site, acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 2004 and located within the Parkway, approximately two miles west of Highway 41, north of the San Joaquin River and south of Avenue 7½.

Prior to public acquisition, the Sycamore Island site had supported a privately-operated public fishing and camping area. Six large ponds, former gravel mining pits on the site were used for a fee by local anglers fishing for bass and other warm water fish since the early 1960's. Once acquired by the SJRC in 2005, the area was closed pending the implementation of public safety and environmental protection improvements. In 2006 the WCB and the SJRC approved funding to make improvements necessary to protect the environment and public health and safety while continuing to accommodate public fishing access. Improvements consisted of signage, eight picnic tables, a restroom and re-grading of the entrance road. Once these improvements were implemented, the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust operated the facility on an interim basis. Currently, the SJRC manages the site and collects user fees to cover the costs of providing waste management, sanitation, area oversight, and visitor information.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project became necessary as the result of a failure of a berm on SJRC property. The berm separated the San Joaquin River from a warm water fishery

pond, which was formed from an abandoned gravel pit, resulting in the river's "capture" of the pond. Both the SJRC and the DWR have identified the need to re-create a stable berm within the breach between the abandoned gravel pit and the San Joaquin River. Replacing the breach with a stable berm and gravel access road and restoring native vegetation and habitat along the berm will meet objectives of both entities.

The DWR's involvement stems from the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP), the result of the settlement of the *Natural Resources Defense Council v. Rodgers* lawsuit, which has the stated goal of maintaining fish populations in "good condition" in the main stem of the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam. The settlement identifies the DWR as a party to the implementation of the settlement. Among the improvements contemplated by the settlement is "filling and/or isolating the highest priority gravel pits". Restoring the berm would keep native fish species out of the pit, protecting them from warm water predators, facilitating migration, and otherwise helping meet SJRRP goals for salmon habitat restoration.

The grant will provide funding to complete preliminary and final design alternatives, prepare analyses and environmental review to comply with CEQA, and prepare permit documents. Among the project goals will be to improve property management, facilitate emergency response and improve public safety, as well as help the SJRC fulfill its mandate for habitat enhancement, public access and recreation. The project will identify ways to isolate the pond from the river channel, which will have the potential for creating a warm-water fishery off-channel to maintain or improve recreational fishing.

Project objectives include:

- Fully integrate the planning, design, and implementation of the project to serve both San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan and SJRRP goals and objectives. Recreate and enhance a breached berm between the San Joaquin River and a "captured" gravel pit to:
  - Provide a gravel road between the SJRC's public fishing access site at Sycamore Island and its Proctor-Broadwell-Cobb property, for the purposes of emergency and property management vehicle access/egress.
  - Provide design, structural measures, and revegetation to minimize future erosion and failure of the berm under design conditions.
  - Improve stream bank vegetation and associated habitat to improve floodplain habitat to the extent feasible.
  - Isolate the captured gravel pit from the river channel to reduce predation by warm water fish species on reintroduced salmon,

- reduce the pond's effect on river water temperature, and improve salmon migration.
- Isolate the gravel pit to provide additional off-stream recreational fishing, to partially mitigate the SJRRP's potential impacts on in-stream recreational fishing.

Re-creating and enhancing the berm and access road is important to provide alternate egress from the site for 6,500 annual visitors to Sycamore Island in the event of an emergency. A safe, stable berm will provide access between the SJRC's 262-acre Proctor Broadwell Cobb and the 347-acre Sycamore Island properties. This will enhance the SJRC's ability to oversee public use and service of the picnic grounds, temporary restrooms, and garbage cans; allow the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Game Wardens and Madera County Sheriffs to patrol and respond to emergencies and river rescues; and provide emergency access for fire protection agencies to contain and put out wildfires and to protect adjacent urban residential and commercial development.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The WCB's Public Access Program provides the basis for WCB's ability to provide public access statewide. In addition, funds were allocated to the WCB within the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5), which provides for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the SJRC and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The SJRC has an immediate need for the berm improvement and has capital improvement funding available for habitat enhancement, public access and recreation projects. Since the DWR South Central Region Office has primary authority, responsibility, and expertise for state capital improvements associated with the SJRRP, the SJRC has requested DWR to develop a proposal to provide environmental compliance and design services for the proposed project.

Once constructed, it is expected that the saddle will provide safe access between the SJRC's Proctor Broadwell Cobb and Sycamore Island properties on the San Joaquin River for recreation, patrolling, monitoring, and emergency responses. This will allow for easier and more effective long-term management of the property.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$232,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for reviewing restoration and equalization saddle alternatives, completing design and conducting environmental review and permitting.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5), which allows for acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the SJRC and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed project calls for the preparation and completion of environmental review for the enhancement of habitat and stabilization of ponds on the SJRC's Sycamore Island property, within the Parkway. The proposed project is included among the high priority projects recommended by the Interagency Project Development Committee, whose role is to evaluate projects to be considered by the SJRC Board. The project was accepted by the SJRC Board, which includes a representative with the DFG, on March 14, 2012.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$232,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.



- \*15. San Joaquin River Parkway, \$190,000.00  
Camp Pashayan #2  
Fresno County

This proposal to consider the acquisition in fee of 11± acres of land by the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) for the protection of riparian and oak woodlands habitat, and to provide future public use opportunities. The acquisition of the subject property (Property) from the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) was approved by the SJRC on January 11, 2012 for expansion of open space and river access within the San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway). The Parkway is a 22-mile regional greenspace and wildlife corridor along both sides of the river extending from Friant Dam to Highway 99, with an interconnected trail system and recreational and educational features.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Property is located at 7695 N. Weber Avenue, along the south bank of the San Joaquin River, just east of State Highway 99. The Property is adjacent to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) 20-acre Camp Pashayan Unit (Reserve Unit), part of the San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve. The State acquired the Reserve Unit in 1995 to provide for preservation and restoration of riparian habitat, and for inclusion in the Parkway.

The site is situated within the Parkway boundary at its downstream western terminus. The immediate area is rural in nature. The Fresno County Peace Officers Association shooting range and PG&E land leased to the Ram Tap equestrian center are adjacent south of the site. Other nearby land uses within the floodplain include livestock grazing, farming, rural residences, gravel extraction and some limited commercial development, including golf courses. Outside the floodplain on the nearby river bluff there is a substantial number of residential subdivisions developed with both production and custom homes, and interspersed with small commercial retail stores.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property has a rolling, unimproved topography with river frontage and is zoned for agricultural use. In the recent past the Property has been used as a recreational campground area for local community youth and is partially developed including a gravel parking area, picnic tables, trails and a large restroom structure with a septic system. Recreational fishing is available from the Property's river frontage. Domestic water is available on-site, provided by a well and pump, both of which are in service. The Property contains woodland, riparian, riverine and grassland habitats. Wildlife known to frequent and forage on the site includes deer, waterfowl, songbirds, coyotes, and raptors.

One of the intended uses of the Property will be the continued management by the Trust in cooperation with DFG Reserve Unit. Both the Property and the

adjoining DFG Reserve Unit are well-developed for low-intensity recreation. The adjoining DFG Reserve Unit has a stabilized boat launch suitable for small trailer-launched or hand-carried boats, a lagoon for off-stream paddling, and a picnic shelter.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The purposes of the proposed acquisition are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), that allows for river parkway projects identified by the SJRC.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Trust, in cooperation with the DFG and its adjoining property, opened and managed Camp Pashayan for public access on weekends during the summer from 1995 to 2009. The Trust closed the site the past two years due to budget limitations. To maintain operations on the property and enhance public use, the Trust has submitted to the SJRC and DFG a detailed proposal to provide basic operations and maintenance services for opening the entire site to the public seasonally.

The Trust proposes to open the site eight hours per day on weekends and State holidays from May through September using seasonal employees or subcontractors. They would be responsible for all costs of opening and closing the site, garbage collection, chemical toilets or restrooms, visitor information, graffiti removal, etc. They may collect day use fees at rates to be approved by the State agencies and not greater than the rates at the SJRC's Sycamore Island property. Ten percent of net proceeds (if any) would be paid to the SJRC and DFG. The Trust's responsibilities under the proposed agreement will be limited to a net cost of \$15,000.00 per year. If the Trust's net costs exceed this amount, the schedule, duties, and obligations will be adjusted through an amendment to the agreement, or the agreement terminated.

Since the ultimate Camp Pashayan managed area will combine the subject property and the DFG Reserve Unit, both the SJRC and DFG must be parties to the operations agreement(s). At a future San Joaquin Conservancy Board meeting authorizing an operations agreement will be considered, possibly in the form of a pilot project concession agreement. The operations agreement will recommence public recreational use of the area, which was last open in 2009. Before approving any agreement to reestablish that use, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) must be considered by the SJRC and DFG. It is likely a CEQA Categorical Exemption will be appropriate.

#### TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$180,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by

the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB acquisition provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. Once approved by the WCB, the transaction must also be reviewed and approved by the DGS.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)</b>	<b>\$180,000.00</b>
Other Project-Related Costs	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
<b>WCB TOTAL ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$190,000.00</b>

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

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), that allows for river parkway projects identified by the SJRC.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the CEQA requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project has been approved by the SJRC during its January 11, 2012 Board meeting.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$190,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(f) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*16. San Joaquin River Parkway, Spano River Ranch, \$207,000.00  
Habitat Enhancement, Planning and Design  
Fresno County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC) to complete preliminary and final design alternatives, prepare analyses and conduct environmental review to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and prepare permit documents to allow for habitat restoration on the SJRC's River West Fresno (Spano) property, located immediately west of State Highway 41 in Fresno County.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two mile long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam in the east and State Route 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the local communities. The SJRC's mission includes both public access and habitat restoration within the Parkway.

The proposed project is within the 360±-acre Spano property (Property), located within the Parkway, west of Highway 41 and Woodward Park and south of the San Joaquin River. The purchase of the Property was approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) at its August 2001 Board meeting; one of six Parkway property acquisitions approved on that date for a total of 1,000± acres. The Property was purchased for preservation, restoration and enhancement of habitat and to provide appropriate public recreational and educational opportunities.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The grant funds will assist the Trust to develop a plan to enhance and restore riparian, wetland, and woodland habitat on 34± acres within the Property. The first phase of the project will provide for design and environmental review to comply with CEQA. Once the SJRC has complied with its obligations as lead agency under CEQA, the SJRC's Board may approve the restoration project and consider authorizing and/or seeking funding for construction and revegetation.

The Property is within the floodplain of the San Joaquin River. Over many years, changes in river flows and floods, construction of Highway 41, agriculture, and gravel mining have altered the habitat values of the site. The project will be a plan to establish diverse types of riparian, upland, wetland and open water habitats on the Property. The SJRC's statutory mission and the San Joaquin

River Parkway Master Plan provide for conserving, enhancing, and restoring floodplain habitat, improving the diversity of habitat, and creating a contiguous habitat corridor for wildlife movement. The project will seek to identify suitable low-impact public access and recreation opportunities. Restoring habitat at the site will contribute to future nature observation, environmental education, community involvement, shade, and aesthetic values.

The project will include plans for grading and planting the slopes of the "H" pond on the site to create riparian terraces, and planting woodlands on the upland area between the pond and the river. The project will also identify planting methods, plant selection, and irrigation methods that will to allow the plants to become self-sustaining within a few years.

The irrigation system, grading plan, and planting plan will be designed to enhance and not interfere with the River West Fresno, Lewis S. Eaton Trail Extension Project being planned by the SJRC. Further, the project planning and design team will consult with the San Joaquin River Restoration Program and other resources management and regulatory agencies to ensure the project is compatible with other programs' goals.

The workplan for this phase includes completing conceptual and preliminary design, analyses and environmental review to comply with CEQA, permit documents, final engineering design, an engineer's cost estimate, a summary report and other deliverables. Design elements include a grading plan, irrigation plan, and planting plan. Permits will include floodway encroachment, streambed alteration, and discharges of fill to waters of the U.S. (404 permit).

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration, restoration of fresh water and riparian habitats, threatened and endangered species habitats, and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions. In addition, funds were allocated to the WCB within California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and the Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5), which provides for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the SJRC and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

Developing the River West Fresno area for public access and recreation is among the SJRC's highest priorities. Habitat restoration will contribute to the values of the site for wildlife and for public use, and is consistent with the goals and objectives of the San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan and the statutory mission of the SJRC. The project will identify the most cost effective plan for the long-term management of the Property.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$207,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for developing restoration and public access plan alternatives for the Property, completing design and conducting environmental review and permitting.

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5), which allows for acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the SJRC, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed project calls for the preparation and completion of environmental review for the restoration of 34 acres within the SJRC's 360± acre Spano property, within the Parkway. The proposed project is included among the high priority projects recommended by the Interagency Project Development Committee, whose role is to evaluate projects to be considered by the SJRC Board. The project was accepted by the SJRC Board, which includes a representative with the DFG, on May 9, 2012.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$207,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(b)(5); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*17. Shaver Lake Boat Launch Parking Lot \$268,000.00  
Fresno County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the County of Fresno for a project to enhance the upper parking lot, replace an existing storm drain with an integrated grease and sand separator, and restore the launch ramp maneuvering area at the Shaver Lake Boat Launch Facility (SLBLF).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Shaver Lake is located approximately 50 miles northeast of Fresno County in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The SLBLF lies adjacent to the Sierra Marina, on the north end of the lake on property owned by the Southern California Edison Company. The property is surrounded mainly by lands owned and managed by the U.S Forest Service.

Shaver Lake is a reservoir owned and managed by the Southern California Edison Company, a regional power generating company that manages several reservoirs for recreation and power generation in the area.

The SLBLF is the primary boat launching area for the general public at Shaver Lake. Many types of boating activities take place on the lake such as fishing, water skiing, sailing, and house boating. The boat launch area also provides foot traffic access to shoreline fishing. Based on numbers provided by the Sierra Marina, the SLBLF provides access to over 25,000 launches per year.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will provide a safe and environmentally sound boat launching facility. There will be three main components to the project:

- In 2008, a slope failure occurred, caused by surface and spring water run-off. The failure deposited rock and sand onto a portion of the upper parking lot, forcing the closure of the lot for safety concerns. The slope needs to be stabilized and the debris removed, making the parking lot once again available to the public.
- The lower vehicle parking area has an open storm drain that needs to be replaced with an integrated oil/sand separator, to prevent oil and debris from flowing into Shaver Lake. This will improve water quality in the lake.
- Lastly, the easterly launch ramp maneuvering area is in need of concrete asphalt pavement improvements and repairs. This includes new vehicle parking stop barriers, stripping, slurry seal and repair of degraded and damaged concrete asphalt at the entry. These repairs and improvements will improve boating access to the lake, improve water quality and create a safer environment for the public to put in their water craft.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Public Access Program and meets the program's goal of providing public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The SLBLF is the primary boat launching facility for the general public at Shaver Lake, providing over 25,000 launches per year. Fresno County is responsible for the long term management of that property per the Grant Agreement between the County and the WCB. If at any time during the life of the project, Fresno County does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires the County to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The project will be funded entirely by the Wildlife Conservation Board:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$268,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for design, permits, construction, and contract management.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance, which allows for the development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The project qualifies for a federal Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFRA) grant that will reimburse the WCB for 75% of project costs.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) Section 15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities at the same site and with substantially the same purpose and capacity as the facilities replaced and Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this project and recommends the Board approve it.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$268,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, Local Assistance; authorize acceptance of a Sport Fish Restoration Act grant; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.



- \*18. Marks Ranch \$552,076.00  
Phase II  
Monterey County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Monterey County Parks Department (County) to acquire a fee title to 113± acres to protect native grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian woodlands and seasonal wetlands that serve as an important wildlife corridor in the region, as well as to provide future opportunities to enhance local wildlife-oriented public access and use.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located approximately 3.5 miles west of the City of Salinas, adjacent to Toro Park, along Highway 68. The Land Acquisition Evaluation from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) (Marks Ranch Acquisition Project) was completed in 2007 and the project was recommended for acquisition by DFG in 2008. Without protection, this Property would likely be developed because of its close proximity to Highway 68, which connects the Salinas Valley to the Monterey Peninsula. Further evidence of development potential is the large residential development that has occurred just a quarter-mile east of the Property.

The Property is directly adjacent to Toro Park which is owned by the County. This acquisition would help provide habitat connectivity between Fort Ord to the north and west and the Santa Lucia Range via the Dorrance Ranch and Hastings Reserve in the south of the range. Fort Ord is virtually surrounded by urban lands and agriculture, creating a high degree of isolation of habitat and wildlife populations. The Santa Lucia Mountain range is the largest protected core area most proximate to Fort Ord. Without at least occasional wildlife exchange between these two areas, the unique biodiversity of Fort Ord will diminish. Just recently, in April of 2012, Fort Ord was designated as nation's newest national monument. This designation recognizes and protects its important natural resources, while allowing a variety of outdoor recreational uses by outdoor enthusiasts. The Marks Ranch provides an anchor point to establish baseline data for an increasingly constrained section of the Fort Ord-Santa Lucia-Ventana corridor that can help inform and develop future wildlife and land use decisions in the areas, and at the same time where appropriate help expand public use trail access throughout the region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2006, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved the allocation of a grant to the County to assist with the acquisition of 624± acres of the Marks Ranch owned by the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT). This proposed acquisition is adjacent to that property and will further expand the acreage of Toro Park.

The subject property is characterized by four basic habitat types: valley/purple needlegrass grassland, oak woodland and oak savanna, riparian woodland and seasonal wetlands. The property also contains several sensitive plant species,

including Monterey manzanita, Monterey ceanothus and Eastwood's goldenbush. Among the wildlife species found on the property are gray fox, bobcat, coyote, raccoons, turkeys, deer and mountain lion. The North American badger, a species of special concern, has also been found on the Property.

Ongoing passive recreational activities take place on a regular basis on Toro Park and the Phase I property. The BSLT leads nature hikes during the spring, summer and fall months. The Ventana Wildlife Society, a local wildlife research, restoration and education non-profit organization, has carried out year-round environmental education programs at the property since 2005. For the past 15 years, the Monterey Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society has hosted an annual spring wildflower hike.

The subject property has also served as a grazing property for over 100 years. The Property has become a mainstay for a multi-generational, family run cattle business, providing grazing land for up to 30 head of cattle.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The County is working with the BSLT to develop management concepts to divide the Property into three zones, relating to topography, access and habitat. The County intends to add the subject property to the management plan for Toro Park.

Public access to the subject property will be available through the current Toro Park gate. Vehicle access to the Property will be limited to security and emergency vehicles, education program vehicles and possibly tours for physically challenged persons. Continued grazing will be allowed on portions of the Property to help manage vegetation.

#### TERMS

The Property was appraised in August 2011. The appraisal was submitted to the Department of General Services (DGS) and the appraised value of \$800,000.00 was reviewed and approved by the DGS. The BSLT has agreed to sell the property for \$542,076.00, less than the approved appraised value. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to the County provide that staff of the WCB

will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. The WCB is also applying for a \$270,000.00 Natural Park Service, Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for reimbursement of up to 50% of the acquisition costs.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The WCB proposes to make a grant to the County for the full amount of the purchase price (\$542,076.00).

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board grant</b>	<b>\$542,076.00</b>
Total Purchase Price	\$542,076.00
Other Project-Related Costs	10,0000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$552,076.00</b>

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

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002, (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650 (2) that allows the protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species and provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$552,076.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650 to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; accept reimbursement of \$276,000.00 LWCF grant, if approved; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*19. Quiota Creek Fish Passage \$398,000.00  
Santa Barbara County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB) for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to replace a low-water Arizona crossing with an arched culvert at Refugio Road Crossing #7 of Quiota Creek in southern Santa Barbara County.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The project is located approximately four miles south of Highway 246 on Refugio Road. The nearest town is Santa Ynez, located approximately five miles north of the project site. Refugio Road is a county road, open to the public and maintained by the County of Santa Barbara (County). Quiota Creek is a tributary to the Lower Santa Ynez River (LSYR) below Lake Cachuma and is located in an area zoned for agriculture.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The LSYR watershed has been identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as a Core 1 watershed for the southern California steelhead, a species listed as endangered by the NMFS. A Core 1 classification of a stream means that the stream would support significant populations of steelhead if any barriers to migration were removed. Quiota Creek is a major tributary of the LSYR and the quality of the riparian corridor in this creek is high.

Initial fish passage and hydrologic analyses for the Quiota Creek drainage were completed by COMB through a stakeholder driven and community based watershed planning effort. The Quiota Creek Watershed Fish Passage Enhancement Plan (Plan) identified nine crossings of Quiota Creek by Refugio Road, each of which was a partial barrier to steelhead migration during at least some flow regimes. The Plan generated the supporting documentation that determined the type of fix for each crossing as well as prioritization of construction for each of the nine crossings. The Plan utilized DFG criteria to prioritize each crossing by barrier severity with the objective of producing a guidance document for a long-term restoration and road safety effort that is currently underway.

The two highest priority crossings, Crossing 2 and 6, have been replaced with arch culverts that allow passage under all flow regimes. The objective of this project is to improve steelhead passage at Crossing 7. The project proposes to remove the passage impediment at Crossing 7 and replace it with a 60-foot bottomless-arched culvert, similar to those at Crossings 2 and 6, with two in-stream weirs installed below the culvert for grade control. The structures are designed to enable full fish passage while meeting County road safety standards

and flood conveyance criteria. The stream length affected by the project will be approximately 100 feet with a project area of less than 0.3 acres. The project area will be re-vegetated with native plants and seeds that have been approved by DFG. Specific de-watering, fish relocation, erosion control, road access, maintenance and monitoring, and re-vegetation plans have been approved by DFG and the NMFS.

The planning process undertaken to develop these projects created stakeholder and landowner collaboration for all the proposed projects. Hence, there is a high level of support for the project among regulators, public representatives, the County, landowners, and the community. In addition, the completed projects have shown immediate ecological improvements, with spawning and over-summer rearing of steelhead/rainbow trout the following years. When all projects are completed, more than four miles of outstanding steelhead habitat will be useable by these fish in all years and at all flow rates.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goals of providing for native fisheries restoration and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

COMB has conducted a long-term steelhead/rainbow trout monitoring program throughout the LSYR watershed since 1993. This includes snorkel surveys, migrant trapping, water quality and flow monitoring. COMB is well positioned to track facility performance of the project over the short- and long-term.

Monitoring and maintenance plans have been approved by NMFS and DFG for this project. COMB staff will perform all of the tasks outlined in those plans and will be responsible for annual performance reports which will be distributed to all parties of interest. In order to assess the overall effectiveness of this project in terms of fish passage, snorkel surveys will be conducted three times a year at the end of the spring, summer and fall. Monthly surveys of steelhead spawning nests (redds) will be conducted below, within and above the project site during the steelhead spawning season (January-May).

Long-term management and maintenance will be performed by the County for the road, guardrails and arched culvert while COMB will be responsible for maintaining the instream elements. COMB's maintenance tasks will be funded through the annual COMB budget.

If at any time during the life of the project, COMB or the County does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires COMB to

refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$398,000.00</b>
Department of Fish and Game	442,736.00
COMB	<u>159,250.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING:</b>	<b>\$999,986.00</b>

Project costs will be for construction of the bottomless-arched culvert including dewatering, excavation, footings, installation of the 60-foot arch, backfill and compaction, fencing, erosion control and revegetation.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the WCB's Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E). This source provides funding for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

COMB, as lead agency, prepared an EIR for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$398,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*20. Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve, Expansion 4, Riverside County \$25,000.00

This proposal is to consider the acquisition in fee of 21± acres of land as an expansion to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve in a cooperative project with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) with the purpose of protecting riparian and coastal sage scrub habitat within the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located about a quarter of a mile west of Interstate Highway 5 at the southwest corner of the intersection of Camino Estribo and Camino Potro in the community of Santa Rosa in unincorporated southwestern Riverside County just outside the city limits of Temecula.

The Santa Margarita River flows through a canyon area on the Property. Numerous studies document the Santa Margarita River as the single largest, finest example of a riparian system and estuary in southern California. The watershed is the least disturbed along the Southern California coast, and the Santa Margarita River is the longest free flowing, undammed river in this region. The Santa Margarita River and its estuary have largely escaped typical development and channelization of its lower 27 miles such that it supports the largest populations of several federally or State-listed endangered and threatened riparian species. The relatively intact functioning physical features of the river's floodplain and estuary make this diversity of habitats and abundance of wildlife possible. The general terrain in the area is mostly undisturbed coastal riparian corridor flanked by chaparral and coastal sage-covered hillsides.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Though the Property is unimproved, zoning allows residential and agricultural uses. It is irregularly shaped and the topography ranges from gently rolling to steep sloping as one approaches Temecula Canyon in the southeasterly portion of the Property, where the Santa Margarita River flows through the Property.

The chaparral and coastal sage-covered hillsides on the Property provide habitat that support numerous rare and sensitive species, including the endangered California gnatcatcher, orange-throated whiptail and coast horned lizard. The Property also serves as part of a vital corridor for numerous wildlife species and helps provide landscape connectivity which allows not only short-term movements of wildlife, but will also allow longer-term shifts and distributions of plant and animal species to favorable sites within the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve and other MSHCP conservation lands in response to potential climate changes impacts.

The Property is included in the Santa Ana-Palomar Mountain Linkage Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) approved by the DFG and Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 2005, as well as in the Western Riverside County MSHCP. It adjoins several other parcels owned by the State and managed by the DFG and San Diego State University Foundation (SDSU) as part of the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve and will be owned and managed as part of the Reserve.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the DFG, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB acquires lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The DFG will manage the Property on a temporary basis. The SDSU manages the majority of the surrounding lands within the Reserve. It is intended that SDSU will ultimately take over management of the Property. In the meantime, the DFG will incur minimal management costs, estimated at approximately \$700.00 a year, which will be funded by currently held endowment funds for the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve. Public access will be subject to evaluation and agreement between the DFG and the entity that manages the Property.

#### TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$800,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner, The Nature Conservancy, has agreed to sell the property for \$20,000.00. The \$20,000.00 essentially equates to a recovery of disposal related costs incurred as part of this acquisition.



PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$20,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	5,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review, escrow and title insurance.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(3), that allows for the acquisition or restoration of habitat for threatened and endangered species or for the purpose of promoting recovery of those species.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$25,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(3) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*21. Santa Rosa Mountains, \$10,000.00  
Expansion 16  
Riverside County

This project is to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) to acquire 1,342± acres of land for the protection of Peninsular bighorn sheep (PBS) habitat, and to provide potential future wildlife oriented public use opportunities.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located south of the City of La Quinta and west of Interstate 10 in the Santa Rosa Mountain, southern alluvial fans near Thermal, California. The Property is irregularly-shaped, with terrain varying from mountainous to lower elevation, alluvial fans and desert floor areas. Acquiring the Property would further a conservation strategy by USFWS, Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and CVCC to link together public and private lands to create a landscape-scale preserve that will provide sheep foraging corridors and prevent habitat fragmentation. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) previously approved a number of grants for Expansions 1 through 15 within the Santa Rosa Mountains. With this acquisition, the total area protected within the Santa Rosa and Santa Jacinto Mountains National Monument area would be approximately 120,000 acres.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed acquisition is undeveloped vacant land totaling 1,342± acres. The acquisition of the Property will provide core habitat, linkages, and foraging corridors which are important for the PBS. Placement of this area in public ownership will add a significant buffer from the nearby developing residential lands to the east and north. The Property has multiple species values including habitat for desert tortoise, least Bell's vireo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. There is also potential habitat for several sensitive bat species including the western yellow bat, pallid bat, California leafnosed bat, spotted bat, pocketed free-tailed bat, and western mastiff bat. Protection of the Property would also benefit many other species that inhabit the area including mountain lion, mule deer, golden eagle, and prairie falcon.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed acquisition is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the DFG, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real

property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB acquires or provides funds to assist with acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The project has been reviewed and approved by the DFG under its Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by DFG as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**

The Property would be owned and managed by the CVCC and will be managed in conjunction with existing DFG wildlife areas and ecological preserves in the region. It is anticipated that the subject properties will offer potential future opportunities for both passive and consumptive recreational uses.

**TERMS**

The owners have agreed to sell the Property for \$1,785,785.00. The appraised fair market value of the land, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$2,952,900.00. The USFWS will provide Habitat Conservation Land Acquisition Program grant funding, in an amount not to exceed \$1,795,785.00, with \$1,785,785.00 to be applied toward the purchase price of the Property and \$10,000.00 for reimbursement of other project-related costs, including appraisal, appraisal review and closing costs. CVCC will contribute the non-federal match portion needed for the federal funds in the amount of \$769,600.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grants provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

USFWS Section 6 Grant (total purchase price)	\$1,785,785.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>

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

allocation for this proposal to \$10,000.00. WCB intends to invoice and seek reimbursement of project-related costs from USWFS.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of NCCPs.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of a portion of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant from USFWS in the amount of \$1,785,785.00, and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission for the purchase of land and reimbursement of internal project-related costs; allocate \$10,000.00 to cover internal project-related reimbursable expenses from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055 (c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*22. Upper Mission Creek / Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, Expansion 5 Riverside County \$5,000.00

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) to acquire in fee a property totaling 9± acres. This acquisition will allow for the protection of desert dune and blow-sand habitat which is essential for recovery of the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, a California State endangered and federal threatened species, by encroaching development that is occurring in the southern and western reaches of the Coachella Valley. The properties will also help expand on efforts to protect habitat linkages, fluvial and aeolian sand transport corridors, alluvial fan habitat and mountainous habitat areas.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located within the sphere of influence west of the City of Desert Hot Springs, north of Interstate Highway 10, east of State Highway 62 and approximately 5 miles north of the City of Palm Springs. The surrounding topography is mostly desert dunes, with blow-sand habitat areas, found specifically within the Coachella Valley. Historically these habitat areas have been eliminated or degraded by the direct and indirect effects of urban and residential growth that has occurred throughout the Coachella Valley. This includes ongoing building and related infrastructure development, off-road vehicle use and invasive species. The inclusion of structures and non-native plant species with the Coachella Valley restrict what were once free-moving sand deposits, thus preventing replenishment of the blow-sand habitats.

The Property is identified for protection within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, a designated conservation area within the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan approved for the Coachella Valley portion of Riverside County (Coachella Valley MSHCP). Protection and placement of the subject property into public resource stewardship will expand on and provide habitat buffer areas from the surrounding residential and agriculture lands. With the support of other resources partners, the State and the federal government have helped conserve approximately 48,000 acres within the Coachella Valley MSHCP.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is vacant desert land zoned for residential development. The acquisition will protect the property from residential subdivision, providing core habitat, linkages, and fluvial and aeolian sand transport corridors which are important for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. The land also provides

habitat for several endemic species, including the Palm Springs pocket mouse, Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, flat-tailed horned lizard, Barrow's dune beetle, Coachella giant sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley grasshopper, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and the Coachella Valley milk-vetch.

### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The project has been reviewed and approved by the DFG under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for acceptance for this project has also been reviewed and approved by DFG as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

When acquired, the Property will be managed by the CVCC in conjunction with other properties managed by the CVCC and located within the immediate area and the Coachella Valley MSCHP. Potential future Property uses may include passive recreational uses where appropriate and compatible with resource values and protection.

### TERMS

CVCC proposes to purchase the Property at the appraised fair market value of \$70,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds provided by the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant will provide the entire purchase price. The non-federal funds requirement will be provided by the CVCC through the encumbrances of in-kind match properties, with a minimum appraised value \$70,000.00 or more, as approved by DGS. The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant to the CVCC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the

WCB can require the grantee to encumber the property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

USFWS Section 6 Grant:	\$70,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00</b>

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review costs. Escrow and title insurance expenses will be paid by CVCC. WCB intends to invoice and seek reimbursement of project-related costs from USFWS.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; authorize the acceptance of the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$70,000.00 and approve subgrant of these federal funds to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission for the purchase of land and reimbursement of internal project-related costs; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*23. Rose Creek Watershed Invasives Control Project \$330,000.00  
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Chaparral Lands Conservancy for a project to remove the non-native invasive plants pampas grass and giant reed on 22± acres to restore riparian habitat on public and privately-owned land in the Rose Creek watershed in San Diego County.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Rose Creek Canyon is located in western-central San Diego County and provides a riparian corridor linking Mission Bay to more interior floodplain and upland habitats—notably the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and undeveloped lands in the upper watershed to the east. The Rose Creek Canyon is currently open space and includes Marian Bear Memorial Park and Mission Bay Park; however, one third of the watershed is developed and includes housing and commercial development, including much of the University of California San Diego campus.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project calls for the control of non-native invasive species in the riparian areas of the Rose Creek watershed downstream of the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Species targeted for removal include pampas grass, giant reed, eucalyptus, and tamarisk. Consistent with the Biological Resources Assessment for the Rose Creek Watershed Invasive Non-Native Plant Control Program (Resources Assessment), prepared for the State Coastal Conservancy in 2009, areas will be surveyed prior to treatment for sensitive and listed species and avoidance measures taken.

Project implementation will be guided by the Resources Assessment. Sensitive plant and wildlife species are being increasingly impacted by colonization of invasive weed species in the watershed. The removal of exotic invasive plant species will result in improvement to these habitats, enhancing its use by several rare species including coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and southwestern willow flycatcher.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project is part of a comprehensive program to control invasives in the watershed and includes numerous cooperating agencies in the area including U.C. San Diego, San Diego Earthworks, and the Rose Creek Watershed Alliance. Long-term removal, control, maintenance and management will occur over time as funding becomes available to ensure success into the future. The



project also supports the goals of the San Diego Multi-Species Conservation Program and falls within lands that are part of the preserve system identified in that plan. If at any time during the life of the project The Chaparral Lands Conservancy does not manage and maintain the project site, the Grant Agreement requires the County to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

An outreach program has been in effect for several years to increase awareness and gain cooperation with private landowners in San Diego County in reducing impacts from importation and planting of invasive exotic species. Landowners living adjacent to the treatment area are being contacted regarding their participation in the program to reduce seed source and recruitment of nuisance species from nearby areas.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$330,000.00</b>
The Chaparral Lands Conservancy	<u>182,959.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$482,959.00</b>

Project costs include permitting, planning, public outreach, biological monitoring, and project implementation.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal), which provides funding for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The City of San Diego, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings, and approve the project as proposed; allocate \$330,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish the project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*24. San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (El Cajon) \$5,000.00  
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant (Grant) from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to subgrant the federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC) to facilitate the acquisition of 47± acres of property in San Diego County. This project will greatly enhance the existing San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) by expanding key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located along Suncrest Boulevard, east of Camino Monte Sombra and west of South Lane within the western limits of the Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills Subregional Plan area of San Diego County. The property is approximately 15 miles east of the City of El Cajon and south of Interstate 8.

The Property is located within the San Diego MSCP, which is a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program that addresses multiple species habitat needs and preservation of natural communities for an approximate 900 square mile area in southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP creates a process for the issuance of federal and State permits and other authorizations under the State and federal Endangered Species Acts and the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991, which provides for mitigations of impacts to plants, wildlife and their habitats from authorized development activities. In addition to the 65,200 acres already conserved to date, 12,246 acres of private land has been committed for conservation through the MSCP and will be dedicated to the County as development permits are processed.

The Property will be added to the Crestridge Ecological Reserve (Reserve), a 3,000± acre open space preserve jointly managed by EHC and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Reserve is a large island of habitat almost entirely surrounded by residential development. The Reserve consists of existing blocks of habitat that are connected to form a larger preserve with corridors and regional linkages to other preserve areas. Onsite vegetation includes Diegan coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodland (including many specimens of the rare Engelmann Oak) and riparian habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The northern two-thirds of the Property comprises a gently rolling to sloping elevated mesa/ridgetop; the southern third of the site is steep sloping and mountainous with numerous rock outcroppings and an elevated knoll/peak that is afforded panoramic view potential to the west, northwest and southwest over the El Cajon Valley.

The Property and the Reserve are home to many sensitive and endangered species, including the California gnatcatcher, the San Diego horned lizard, the orange-throated whiptail lizard, the Hermes copper butterfly and Lakeside ceanothus, a rare wild lilac. Other larger species such as bobcat, raptors and coyote frequent the Property as well.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed subgrant for this project is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) and enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions on behalf of the DFG and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to other governmental entities and nonprofit organizations to assist with the acquisition of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the DFG under its Natural Community Conservation Plan program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for this project has also been reviewed and approved by DFG as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

EHC presently manages several properties in the vicinity of the Property totaling approximately 4,000 acres, including properties within the Reserve. These properties are managed to MSCP (NCCP) standards for covered species and reserve function, including wildlife corridor function. Biological management and monitoring activities include habitat restoration, invasive plant control, species-specific and rare plant monitoring, corridor use, and environmental education. Maintenance and baseline stewardship activities include public access control, security, trail maintenance and repair, and fencing, signage, and community outreach. As a condition of the subgrant, EHC must make a written commitment to fund management of the Property in perpetuity in accordance with the purposes of the subgrant.

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$468,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$468,000.00. The non-federal match required by USFWS is being provided through in-kind match property owned by EHC and valued at \$163,800.00. The value of the land used for the match has been established by a fair market value appraisal and along with the Property, the match property will be encumbered by the terms of the subgrant. The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant to EHC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to

disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms, the WCB can require EHC to encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breaking for the project is as follows:

Subgrant of USFWS funds	<u>\$468,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$468,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$5,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review. EHC will fund the environmental site assessment, appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$468,000.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- \*25. San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (Michelsen) \$5,000.00  
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant (Grant) from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the authorization to subgrant the federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC) to facilitate the acquisition of 92± acres of property in San Diego County. This project will greatly enhance the existing San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located south of Dehesa Mountain Lane, east of the Eucalyptus Drive junction within the Crest/Dehesa/Harbinson Canyon/Granite Hills Subregional Plan area of unincorporated eastern San Diego County. The Property is approximately 15 miles east of the City of El Cajon and south of Interstate 8.

The MSCP is a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program that addresses multiple species habitat needs and preservation of natural communities for an approximate 900 square mile area in southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP creates a process for the issuance of federal and State permits and other authorizations under the State and federal Endangered Species Acts and the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991, which mitigates impacts to plants, wildlife and their habitats, and allows development activities to proceed. In addition to the 65,200 acres already conserved to date, 12,246 acres of private land has been committed to be conserved through the MSCP and will be dedicated to the County as development permits are processed.

The Property will be added to the Crestridge Ecological Reserve (Reserve), a 3,000± acre open space preserve jointly managed by EHC and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The reserve is a large island of habitat almost entirely surrounded by residential development. The Reserve consists of existing blocks of habitat that are connected to form a larger preserve with corridors and regional linkages to other preserve areas.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is steep sloping and mountainous in character and bisected by an ephemeral blue-line stream that flows southeasterly off-site into Dehesa Valley. Onsite vegetation includes Diegan coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodland (including many specimens of the rare Engelmann Oak) and riparian habitat. The Property and the Reserve are home to many sensitive and special status species, including the California gnatcatcher, the San Diego horned lizard, the orange-throated whiptail lizard, the Hermes copper butterfly and Lakeside

ceanothus, a rare wild lilac. Other larger species such as bobcat, raptors and coyote frequent the property as well.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed subgrant for this project is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board' original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) and enables the WCB to pursuant acquisitions on behalf of the DFG and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with the acquisition of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the DFG under its Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant proposed for this project has also been reviewed and approved by DFG as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

EHC presently manages several properties in the vicinity of the Property totaling approximately 4,000 acres, including properties within the Reserve. These properties are managed to MSCP (NCCP) standards for covered species and reserve function, including wildlife corridor function. Biological management and monitoring activities include habitat restoration, invasive plant control, species-specific and rare plant monitoring, corridor use, and environmental education. Maintenance and baseline stewardship activities include public access control, security, trail maintenance and repair, and fencing, signage, and community outreach. As a condition of the subgrant, EHC must make a written commitment to fund management of the Property in perpetuity in accordance with the purposes of the subgrant.

#### TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$905,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$905,000.00. The non-federal match required by USFWS is being provided through in-kind match property owned by the EHC. The value of the land used for the match, \$316,750.00, has been established by a fair market value appraisal and along with the Property will be encumbered by the terms of the subgrant. The terms and conditions of the proposed subgrant to EHC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the subgrant terms, the WCB can require EHC to encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breaking for the project is as follows:

WCB-Subgrant of USFWS funds	<u>\$905,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$905,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 5,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00</b>

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review. EHC will fund the environmental site assessment, appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; authorize acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$905,000.00 and approve the subgrant of these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy; allocate \$5,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

26. Working and Learning Among the Oaks  
San Luis Obispo County

Special Presentation

Students from the Santa Margarita School located in San Luis Obispo County will be making a special presentation to the Board to express their appreciation and thank the Board for enabling the school to implement the Learning Among the Oaks program. In 2005 and 2008, the Board approved two grant proposals and allocated funds to the Regents of the University of California, Berkeley for an oak woodland public education and outreach project. The project is designed to communicate the social, economic, agricultural and biological benefits associated with the conservation of oak woodlands in San Luis Obispo County.

Consistent with the provisions of the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, the project "Working and Learning Among the Oaks/Phase I and Phase II" represents a two-part educational effort designed to (1) provide an outdoor learning experience for K-6 grade students to understand and appreciate oak woodland ecology and conservation, and (2) provide local landowners and ranchers with tools and information to integrate oak woodland conservation practices into a working landscape.

The presentation before the Board will focus on the Learning Among the Oaks program and the unique partnership established with the landowners of the historic Santa Margarita Ranch, located directly adjacent to the Santa Margarita School.

Nestled among majestic oaks about 8 miles north of San Luis Obispo, the 14,000 acre Santa Margarita Ranch, a former Mexican land grant, is located within the small town of Santa Margarita. Initially founded by Franciscan Fr. Junipero Serra in the mid-1770s, the ranch supplied the agricultural needs of Mission San Luis Obispo, as the ranch was a perfect site for raising cattle and growing grapes, wheat and a variety of other crops needed by the missionaries. During the mid-1800s, the land took on yet another role and became known as the "Queen of the Cattle Ranchos" for its elaborate fiestas and rodeos. This was a time when cattle roamed the countryside and life was simple. Today the Santa Margarita Ranch produces award-winning wine, prime natural beef and is the outdoor classroom for the Santa Margarita School K-6 grade students and home to the Learning Among the Oaks Program.

Learning Among the Oaks provides hands-on environmental, conservation and oak woodland educational opportunities for students attending the Santa Margarita School. The program has taken root and grown beyond initial expectations. A public elementary school surrounded by oak woodlands of the historic California cattle ranch has provided a golden opportunity to develop an innovative oak education program that has become a source of great pride for everyone involved. A strong network of partner agencies, university interns and volunteers has enabled the program to flourish. Cal Poly State University San



Luis Obispo and their "Learn by Doing" approach has been a tremendous asset to the program. Cal Poly's Biological Sciences and Natural Resource management departments have shared their expertise, tools, and wildlife specimens. Also, they have provided a reliable source of committed university interns to serve as trail docents and special project leaders.

The program has attracted the collaboration and commitment of the landowners of the Santa Margarita Ranch, Cal Poly staff, student interns, University of California staff, community organizations, the local community 4-H Youth Development program, the California Conservation Corps, the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, parents, grandparents, teachers and most important of all, the students of the Santa Margarita School.

With minimal staffing and maximum reliance on the use of existing resources, collaborative opportunities and volunteers, the following accomplishments have been achieved to date:

- Over 700 students, teachers, parents, youth leaders and grandparents have participated in the outdoor trail classroom.
- The private landowners have donated access to a 15-acre hiking trail for supervised, public educational opportunities. The California Conservation Corps constructed a 1/4 mile trail for grades K-3 and a 1/2 mile trail for grades 4-6.
- To maximize correlations with State Science Standards, study themes for grades K-6 provide a full range of oak learning experiences. Through collaboration with 4-H members and Cal Poly students, instructional materials for use on the trail and in the classroom provide trail activity booklets, one for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and one for 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. These booklets have provided a fun way to prepare students for hikes and to enrich their learning experiences.
- Installed a trail entrance sign and gate with donated labor and materials.
- A Cal Poly internship program, supported by stipends paid by Santa Margarita Community Forestry has been established. Cal Poly students serve as trail guides, present lessons and assist with the development and organization of curriculum resources.
- A partnership with the Coyote Road School naturalist/interpretive specialist has been established to train student interns and volunteer docents to provide field lessons; e.g. wildlife tracking/observation skills. In partnership with Pacific Wildlife Care, USDA-NRCS, Santa Margarita Ranch, 4-H, Farm Bureau Ag Education Committee, Central Coast Natural History Association/State Parks Docents, and others provide curriculum materials and oak woodland enrichment activities.

- In collaboration with the Native Tree Committee, oak seedlings were planted along the trail along the trail and each of six 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms planted their own grove of seedlings in celebration of Arbor Day; installed seven songbird nest boxes and developed two trail “camps,” one for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes and one for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Working with a Cal Poly student, a classroom nature journal provides a place for classes to record their trail discoveries and to track the development of their oak seedlings.
- Thematic oak trail teaching trunks provide touchable learning tools that can be transported and shared with other schools. The trunks include an extensive collection of special topic/classroom aids covering a variety of subjects such as; (1) Oak Woodland Wildlife --- numerous oak woodland specimens, scat, tracks, skins, etc.; (2) People and Oaks --- Native tribes and cultural artifacts, native plants, historic uses of oak resources; and (3) The Land Where Oaks Grow --- rocks, soil, fossils, land survey tools, etc.
- Through special "talk on the trail" events, students and their families, ranching and non-ranching families are brought together for informal discussions on a variety of oak conservation and ranching topics.
- In partnership with the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, a trail map was developed. The California Conservation Corps continues to provide trail maintenance and install informational trail markers. An online trail nature journal, including photos and discovery notes in school newsletter has been created. Also, native vegetation has been planted in the trail entrance area showcasing native grasses and perennials valued by Native tribes and ranchers.
- In collaboration with the Cal Poly Biological Sciences Department, a wildlife camera project has been installed in the oak trail area.

While the Board provided the initial start up funds necessary to initiate the program, the community at large has come forward to memorialize this unique opportunity and to help ensure the continued success of oak woodlands, working landscapes and the students of the Santa Margarita School.

In summary, the program's success is best described by a parent of a Santa Margarita School Oak Ambassador who had this to say about the program in April of 2011:

*"Thank you and all the other wonderful volunteers and community members who have worked so hard over the years to build something so special. I am grateful you've provided opportunities for kids and adults alike to learn about the environment, develop an appreciation for nature, and share this love with others. We're truly privileged to be a small part of it and we'd love to continue our involvement next year as well."*

27. Chalk Mountain Conservation Easement, Phase II  
Humboldt County \$2,000,000.00

This proposal is to consider an allocation for a grant to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to acquire a working forest conservation easement over 4,024± acres located two miles southeast of the community of Bridgeville in Humboldt County and assist CAL FIRE in administering federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funds. The project will help to protect forest land, important scenic forest landscape, fish, wildlife, riparian and other ecological values under the California Forest Legacy Program.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The project, known as Chalk Mountain II, is located in the coastal range mountains of south-central Humboldt County. The subject property (Property) is accessed from State Highway 36 and Aldercreek Road. The Property abuts both public and protected lands that include the Humboldt Redwoods State Park, located five miles southwest and the Six Rivers National Forest located 7.5 miles to the east. The project also connects Bureau of Land Management's Larabee Buttes Conservation Area with the Humboldt Redwoods State Park via the Headwaters Forest Habitat Conservation Plan lands, currently owned by the Humboldt Redwood Company. The Chalk Mountain property is one of the original tracts identified in the Six Rivers to the Sea FLP Initiative, which combined with nearby National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, State Parks and other protected properties, contributes towards a protected corridor from the Six Rivers National Forest to the Pacific Ocean.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project represents Phase II of the Chalk Mountain conservation easement project. Phase I was approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) on November 17, 2009, to acquire a conservation easement over the northern 3,268± acres of the Chalk Mountain property using FLP funds. The 4,024± acres proposed in Phase II represent the remaining southern portion of the Chalk Mountain property. The combined acreage will result in 7,292± acres of working forest lands protected under a conservation easement, both held by CAL FIRE.

The Property contains three distinct habitat zones: forestland, rangeland and riparian corridors. The forestland is comprised of managed areas of Douglas fir, including areas of late seral state oak woodlands on its ridge tops and south slopes, and late seral state coast redwood habitat that stretches along Larabee Creek. The rangeland areas contain natural rangeland, grazing land and perennial grassland ecosystems currently used for grazing livestock. The

riparian forest areas are located along the numerous streams and tributaries found on site.

The Property includes numerous streams and tributaries that drain into the Eel and Van Duzen Rivers. Many of these streams and tributaries provide important salmonid habitat and spawning areas for steelhead, Coho and Chinook salmon, the two major streams being Larabee Creek and Burr Creeks. The Property provides both nesting and foraging habitats for peregrine falcons and the Northern spotted owl, with active nests producing fledglings every year since 1994. Other special status mammal species found on the Property include the mountain lion, red tree vole, flying squirrels, Pacific fisher and ring-tailed cats.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry expertise and including the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the Property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

The matching federal FLP funds provided for this project has been approved through both the State and federal Forest Legacy Program project selection processes, and has been further reviewed by WCB for compliance and consistency with State program and funding requirements. CAL FIRE has entered into an agreement with the WCB to assist in the administration of this project according to Public Resources Code Section 12240 which established the California Legacy Program. Once approved by the WCB, the project will undergo review and processing by the Department of General Services (DGS) for consideration and approval by the State of California, Public Works Board (PWB), which approves CAL FIRE property acquisitions.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Consistent with the purposes of WCB's Forest Conservation Program and FLP guidelines, the conservation easement will prevent the future conversion of forest land and forest resources from development in Humboldt County. The terms for

the conservation easement include the continuance of existing forestry operations, ranching, and agricultural uses and hunting activities which will protect: (i) water quality and supplies; (ii) wildlife habitat and maintaining habitat connectivity to ensure biodiversity; (iii) riparian areas and associated ecosystems; and maintain forest sustainability.

CAL FIRE will hold title to conservation easement and be responsible for administering and monitoring the terms and conditions of the easement. CAL FIRE currently holds title to and/or administers other conservation easements in Sonoma, Mendocino, and Humboldt Counties. As grantee, CAL FIRE will enter into an agreement with the North Coast Regional Land Trust (NRLT) to provide onsite monitoring of the Property to comply with both the terms of the conservation easement and federal FLP laws. CAL FIRE and the NRLT will utilize an approved monitoring protocol, and compare the findings to a baseline conditions report completed for this easement.

TERMS

The conservation easement has been approved as having a fair market value of \$4,000,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff, and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owners have agreed to sell the conservation easement to CAL FIRE for \$3,600,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant to the Grantee provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance. Furthermore, the project will require additional transaction review by DGS staff in preparation for approval by the PWB prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance or require that the conservation easement be transferred to WCB or another qualifying entity.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$2,000,000.00</b>
2009 FLP grant award	<u>\$1,600,000.00</u>
Purchase Price	\$3,600,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$2,000,000.00</b>

CAL FIRE will be responsible for all administrative and internal project-related costs pertaining to appraisal, appraisal review, title and escrow.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a). This fund allows for forest conservation and protection projects to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,000,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a) to cover the grant amount; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 28. Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area,<br>Expansion 13<br>Yuba County | \$0.00 |
|--|--------|

This project was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

29. Suisun Marsh, Denverton Legacy Project \$1,510,000.00  
Solano County

This project is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to acquire fee title of 763± acres of land for the protection of bay area wetlands and associated upland areas supporting migratory waterfowl and shorebirds and threatened and endangered species, including federally endangered and California fully-listed salt marsh harvest mouse.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located on the northeastern portion of the Suisun Marsh in unincorporated Solano County. The Property lies just to the south of State Route 12 which is the primary link for the City of Fairfield and Suisun City. The Property consists of approximately 763± acres of land dominated by managed seasonal wetlands with smaller grassland areas. The Property lies adjacent to managed wetland habitat, tidal sloughs, and other navigable waterways and is part of the primary management zone of the Suisun Marsh as defined by the Suisun Marsh Plan of Protection.

The Suisun Marsh is a 116,000-acre natural wetland complex made up of tidal sloughs, bays, managed wetlands and uplands and represents the largest contiguous estuary on the west coast of the United States, containing about 12% of all the remaining natural wetlands in California, and one of the largest contiguous brackish marsh on the west coast. This is a diverse area that supports a wide variety of wildlife, including over 220 bird species, 20 species of mammals, and over 50 species of fish. During winter migrations, the marsh regularly supports over 200,000 waterfowl along with several hundred thousand shorebirds. In addition to providing wintering habitat to large numbers of waterfowl, uplands in Suisun Marsh have been shown to be some of the most productive waterfowl nesting habitat in all of North America. The sloughs and bays of the Marsh also provide important tidal rearing areas for juvenile salmonid species migrating through the bay.

The project area is also contained within the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals (Goals) report, a collaborative report started in 1995 and completed in 2000 by a large contingency of natural resource specialists, scientists and resource agencies to identify habitat protection and restoration goals and projects in the Bay Area. The Suisun Marsh is recognized as one of the major subregions within the Goals report, targeted for protection and restoration.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregular in shape, and the site topography is mostly level with native vegetation. The zoning classification is MP (marsh preservation). The

primary intent of the zoning classification is “to assure the preservation of tidal marshes.”

The marsh habitat areas on the Property support 11 federally threatened and endangered species including birds, mammals, and fish. Of these, the salt marsh harvest mouse is consistently found on the site. Other special status species found in the Suisun Marsh that may frequent the Property include the greater sandhill crane, Swainson’s hawk, and the California black rail.

The acquisition of the Property will provide a number of recreational and educational opportunities. Up until recently, the Property has been operated as a private duck club with no public access. In 2011, CWA, in collaboration with the new owners, began offering waterfowl hunting to the general public and developed youth outdoor education and environmental outreach programs. The Property is also used for retriever training and field trial events. Denverton has a clubhouse and several miscellaneous outbuildings around the main compound.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CWA, a non-profit, hunter-supported conservation organization, will be responsible for managing the Property according to terms of the grant, which provides that the Property will be used to further protect and manage the wildlife habitat, facilitate public access, recreation and outreach through conservation programs primarily administered by CWA. Management of the Property will be implemented through the adoption of a mutually agreeable management plan agreed to by the DFG and CWA. The grantee is also working out a long-term arrangement with California Retriever Training Association (CRTA) to allow for continued retriever training, retriever trialing, and retriever competition events, consistent with agreed upon management plan.

CWA is working with the Property owner to develop a stewardship fund (Fund), to be funded by the proceeds from this acquisition. The Fund will establish and



help guarantee that baseline funding levels are available to meet future operating and maintenance costs. Additionally, the Fund will be tied to the land, not the fee title holder. If for some reason CWA ceased to exist, the Fund would remain intact and be usable by either DFG or a conservation minded non-profit organization.

**TERMS**

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,900,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the grant between the WCB and CWA provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$1,500,000.00</b>
Joseph and Vera Long Foundation	<u>\$ 400,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$1,900,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$1,510,000.00</b>

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

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and wetland habitat areas within the San Francisco Bay Area.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an

ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,510,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

30. Suisun Marsh, Grizzly Ranch Legacy Project \$2,010,000.00  
Solano County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to acquire fee title of 982± acres of land for the protection of wetlands as well as threatened and endangered species including the federally endangered and California fully-listed salt marsh harvest mouse.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located on the northern portion of Grizzly Island in unincorporated Solano County. The Property is approximately 15 miles south of State Route 12 which is the primary link for the City of Fairfield and Suisun City. The Property lies adjacent to managed wetland habitat, tidal sloughs, and other navigable waterways and is part of the primary management zone of the Suisun Marsh as defined by the Suisun Marsh Plan of Protection.

The Suisun Marsh is a 116,000 acre natural wetland complex made up of tidal sloughs, bays, managed wetlands and uplands and represents the largest contiguous estuary on the west coast of the United States, containing about 12% of all the remaining natural wetlands in California, and one of the largest contiguous brackish marsh on the west coast. This is a diverse area that supports a wide variety of wildlife including over 220 bird species, 20 species of mammals, and over 50 species of fish. During winter migrations, the marsh regularly supports over 200,000 waterfowl along with several hundred thousand shorebirds. In addition to providing wintering habitat to large numbers of waterfowl, uplands in Suisun Marsh have been shown to be some of the most productive waterfowl nesting habitat in all of North America. The sloughs and bays of the Marsh also provide important tidal rearing areas for juvenile salmonid species migrating through the bay.

The project area is also contained within the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals (Goals) report, a collaborative report started in 1995 and completed in 2000 by a large contingency of natural resource specialists, scientists and resource agencies to identify habitat protection and restoration goals and projects in the Bay Area. The Suisun Marsh is recognized as one of the major subregions within the Goals report, targeted for protection and restoration.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Grizzly Ranch consists of approximately 982± acres dominated by managed seasonal wetlands with smaller grassland areas. The Property is irregular in shape, and the site topography is mostly level with native vegetation. The zoning classification is MP (marsh preservation). The primary intent of the zoning classification is “to assure the preservation of tidal marshes.”

The marsh habitat areas on the Property support 11 federally threatened and endangered species including birds, mammals, and fish. Of these, the salt marsh harvest mouse is consistently found on the site. Other special status species found in the Suisun Marsh that may frequent the Property include the greater sandhill crane, Swainson's hawk, and the California black rail.

Up until recently, Grizzly Ranch has been operated as a private duck club with no public access. In 2009, CWA, in collaboration with the new owners, began conducting youth outdoor education and outreach programs including youth waterfowl hunts, hunter education camps, and classroom fieldtrips during the school year. Grizzly Ranch has several structures and improvements around the main compound. These include three separate houses, an equipment garage, classroom, full sporting clays course with ten shooting stations, and two boat docks. These improvements are in good condition and are assets to the planned recreation and outreach programs described above. The acquisition of the Property will provide a number of recreational and educational opportunities, including the sporting clays course which will be open to the public on advertised scheduled days.

#### WCB PROGRAM

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

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CWA, a non-profit, hunter-supported conservation organization will be responsible for managing the Property according to terms of the grant which provides that the Property will be used to further protect and manage the wildlife habitat, facilitate public access, recreation and outreach through conservation programs primarily administered by CWA. Management of the Property will be guided by and implemented through adoption of a mutually agreeable management plan agreed to by the DFG and CWA. The grantee is also working out a long-term arrangement with California Retriever Training Association to allow for continued retriever training, retriever trialing, and retriever competition events, consistent with the agreed upon management plan.

CWA is also working with the Property owner to develop a stewardship fund (Fund), to be funded by the proceeds from this acquisition. The Fund will establish and help guarantee that baseline funding levels are available to meet future operating and maintenance costs. Additionally, the Fund will be tied to the land, not the fee title holder. If for some reason CWA ceased to exist, the Fund would remain intact and be usable by either DFG or a conservation minded non-profit organization.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$3,250,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$2,100,000.00, which is \$1,150,000.00 less than the DGS approved fair market value. The terms and conditions of the grant between the WCB and CWA provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$2,000,000.00</b>
Joseph and Vera Long Foundation	<u>100,000.00</u>
Total Purchase Price	\$2,100,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$2,010,000.00</b>

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

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and wetland habitat areas within the San Francisco Bay Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,010,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SF Bay) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

31. Rockville Trails Estates \$2,887,000.00  
Solano County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Solano Land Trust (SLT) for a cooperative project with the California Coastal Conservancy, Moore Foundation, City of Fairfield, Resources Legacy Fund and the Syar Foundation to acquire 1,165± acres of land to protect significant natural landscapes and wildlife corridors, running north to the Blueridge open space areas near Lake Berryessa, including oak woodland, grassland, wetland and riparian habitats. The project may also provide for future public access and passive recreational opportunities to the public.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located north of Cordelia Junction along the Interstate 80 corridor, due north of Rockville Road, and bounded by Green Valley Road on the east and the Suisun creek watershed and Suisun Valley Road on the west, in an unincorporated area of Solano County. Low to higher density residential development has occurred to the south, east and west, with noticeable increase in development pressure extending north up both the Green Valley and Suisun creek corridors. Farther up these corridors residential development tends to give way to agricultural use.

Immediately south of the Property is the 600-acre Rockville Hill Regional Park, and north of the Property there is a relatively undeveloped range of hills, a portion of the Vaca Mountains, extending north 15 miles up into the undeveloped 800,000-acre Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural area. Protecting the Property will help establish a significant habitat corridor going north to south and help sustain habitat corridor and linkages for species to travel between the lower Suisun creek areas up into the Vaca Mountains.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is currently owned by a development company, with approved plans for a 185 unit rural residential development. Its topography ranges from a relatively flat to moderately steep terrain, and elevations ranging from 160 feet in the southwest corner to nearly 800 feet in the northwest portion of the site. The Property has a series of mesas bound by near vertical cliffs that cap a steep ridge of hills. The central portion of the site is characterized as having a broad, northwest oriented gently sloping valley. The eastern portion of the site is comprised of rolling hills with steep sided valleys.

Last year the SLT acquired 330 acres from the property owner adjacent to the Property as part of a lawsuit settlement involving local homeowners and the Sierra Club, attempting to curtail development of the Property. Under the settlement SLT agreed to acquire the 330 acres for \$3,000,000.00 and received

the option used to acquire the remaining 1,165 acres of the Property, which is now being considered under this proposal.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) recently completed a Land Evaluation of the Property chronicling many of its resource values. Habitats found on the site include oak woodland, oak woodland savanna, grassland, wetland, mixed chaparral, freshwater marshes, ephemeral and vernal pools and habitats. The Property supports multiple intermittent and ephemeral streams, 13 seasonal wetlands, 21 seeps, 5 springs, 3 vernal pools and 3 stock ponds. Numerous bird, mammal and aquatic species are dependent upon the habitats found on the Property, including waterfowl, California quail, greater yellowlegs, killdeer, brown towhee, acorn woodpecker, American robin, great horned owl, white-tail kite, deer, bobcat, grey fox, mountain lion, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California newt, California slender salamander, ensatina, and the western toad. Many of the larger mammal species use the Property as the southern portion of their range extending south from the Vaca Mountains. This project also contains four archaeological sites, two of which are recommended as significant resource site.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the DFG, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed and operated by the Solano Land Trust, as open space with passive recreational public uses allowed. The Solano Land Trust is a non-profit conservation organization with a mission to permanently protect and preserve farmland, rangeland and open space in Solano County through the acquisition of land and agricultural conservation easements, education, and land



management. The acquisition of this Property may also allow for future public access and passive recreational uses.

**TERMS**

The property owners have agreed to sell the Property to the Solano Land Trust for \$10,500,000.00, less than its appraised fair market value of \$10,900,000.00, which has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that WCB staff must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary reports, documents connected with the purchase and sale including escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds into the established escrow account. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

**PROJECT FUNDING**

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$2,877,000.00</b>
California State Coastal Conservancy	3,000,000.00
Moore Foundation	1,900,000.00
City of Fairfield - CSD	1,000,000.00
Resources Legacy Fund	250,000.00
Syar Foundation	75,000.00
<u>Solano Land Trust</u>	<u>1,398,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$10,500,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$ 2,887,000.00</b>

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

**FUNDING SOURCE**

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), that allows for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of habitat to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, to provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. The WCB has applied to the Department of Parks and Recreation for a Land and Water Conservation grant through the National

Parks Service. If the grant is approved, the WCB will seek a reimbursement in the amount of \$877,000.00 once the transaction has recorded.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,887,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a) for the grant and to cover internal project - related expenses; accept reimbursement of \$877,000.00 from the National Park Service, Land and Water Conservation fund; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

32. Eden Landing Ecological Reserve \$8,000,000.00  
Wetland Restoration Construction  
Alameda County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to restore approximately 230 acres of coastal wetlands and to construct public access improvements at ponds E12 and E13 at the DFG's Eden Landing Ecological Reserve (ELER).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The approximately 230-acre project site is made up of Ponds E12 and E13, which are part of the 5,500 acre ELER owned by DFG, and were acquired in 2003 as part of the 16,500± acre South Bay Salt Pond (SBSP) acquisition, which also included the Alviso and Ravenswood pond complexes. ELER is located on the eastern shore of the South San Francisco Bay west of the City of Hayward and Union City in Alameda County, between the San Mateo Bridge and the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel.

This project is considered part of the SBSP Restoration Project, the largest wetland restoration project on the west coast. The following are SBSP Restoration Project Objectives:

1. Create, restore, or enhance habitats of sufficient size, function, and appropriate structure to:
  - a. promote restoration of special-status plants and animals that depend on South San Francisco Bay habitat for all or part of their life cycles;
  - b. maintain current migratory bird species that utilize existing salt ponds and associated structures such as levees; and
  - c. support increased abundance and diversity of native species in various South San Francisco Bay aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem components, including plants, invertebrates, fish, mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians.
2. Maintain or improve existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay Area.
3. Provide public access and recreational opportunities compatible with wildlife and habitat goals.
4. Protect or improve existing levels of water and sediment quality in the South Bay, and take into account ecological risks caused by restoration.
5. Implement design and management measures to maintain or improve current levels of vector management, control predation on special status species, and manage the spread of non-native invasive species.
6. Protect the services provided by existing infrastructure (e.g. power lines, railroads).

The entire SBSP restoration project and associated actions are expected to be accomplished in multiple phases over the next 50 years. A subset of habitat improvements was prioritized as Phase 1 actions, including the proposed habitat enhancements in Ponds E12 and E13.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To ensure that the waterbird species that have become dependant on salt ponds still have adequate habitat, and that the ecological value of that habitat is enhanced, this project proposes to re-configure the levees and water management infrastructure of Ponds E12 and E13 in order to create shallow water foraging habitat of consistent depth for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl with a range of salinities, and islands for nesting bird habitat. The goal of the proposed E12-E13 project is to provide the ecologic functions and values of particular aspects of the former salt production ponds within a reduced area by specifically managing habitat attributes (i.e. water depth, salinity, and availability of island refuge habitat) for target species, especially migratory shorebirds and waterfowl, as well as nesting terns and shorebirds, while also providing ecologically sensitive public access. Researchers will monitor bird response to these reconfigured ponds, and results from this and other SBSP Phase I projects will help determine whether a greater proportion or potentially all of the remaining area of ELER will be restored to tidal wetlands, while intensively managing reconfigured ponds retained for waterbird management in a smaller pond "footprint". The E12-E13 ponds are expected to be maintained as ponds managed for waterbird needs under all alternatives of the SBSP Restoration Project.

In the reconfigured and intensively managed E12/E13 Ponds, paired but separate groups of three pond cells will each have salinity progressively increase from "low" to "moderate" to "high" in two parallel systems (of three ponds each), totaling six reconfigured cells. Intake will occur from Mt. Eden Creek and North Creek marsh areas and channels and be stored in a forebay system, then will flow into each cell for concentration to desired salinity ranges. Within each of the salinity cells, one habitat island will be created using onsite material from within the ponds to provide nesting and refuge habitat. The water depths within each cell would be managed to provide optimal shallow water habitat for shorebird foraging.

The proposed project also contains a public access component, including interpretive and viewing areas for the historic salt works and Archimedes screws, a viewing area near the bay shore along the recently completed tidal restoration project at Ponds E8X, E8A, and E9, hand powered watercraft access to Mt. Eden Creek and the S.F. Bay Water Trail and a seasonal loop trail around Ponds E12 and E13.

The project is consistent and directly supports the following local or regional plans:

- South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project (SBSRP): This proposed project is a Phase I action of the SBSRP, and in addition to achieving habitat enhancement objectives, also provides much needed information about specific shorebird foraging needs with respect to salinity and water depth, which will inform SBSRP Phase II design objectives.
- Baylands Species and Community Profiles Report: calls for maintaining mid and high salinity ponds to support 300 breeding snowy plovers. The salt pond enhancement will provide habitat to continue support of breeding snowy plovers.
- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's Implementation Strategy for Restoring the Estuary has set a goal for enhancing former salt pond habitat. The goal is to acquire 6,000 acres of salt pond habitat, restore 1,000 acres and enhance 7,500 acres. The proposed project will help accomplish these goals by providing approximately 230 acres of enhanced salt pond habitat towards achieving this goal.
- The Southern Pacific Regional Shorebird Plan (SPRSP) identifies the snowy plover as a conservation priority and calls for an increase in the breeding populations to 2,750 breeding adults, as recommended in the draft USFWS Snowy Plover Recovery Plan. The proposed salt pond enhancement project will provide habitat to continue support of breeding snowy plovers.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program such as coastal habitats, and threatened and endangered species habitats.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Long-term management and maintenance will be provided by DFG. Long-term maintenance will be dependent on the rate of settlement due to fill placement and sequence for the preliminary design. Levee, berm, and island maintenance may be required to address settlement within 10 years unless the lower, subsided elevations function adequately.

Potential long-term management needs also includes vegetation management along levees and control of invasive species. Some mowing and periodic weed control may be required. The DFG, which manages the property, will be responsible for performing or coordinating the efforts. Mosquito control requirements will be minimal due to higher salinity concentrations than standard

tidal area and because of the deterioration of larva production due to wind wave action.

In consideration of global climate change events, the project is well suited for adaptability. The project is designed to provide greater water management capability and flexibility and, therefore, would be resilient to increase in precipitation and the ability to drain water. The levees will be taller and stronger than existing levees on the site, and have been designed to withstand expected sea level rise over the next several decades. At some point in the future, additional material may be needed to raise levee height to accommodate substantial increases in sea level.

Costs of long-term maintenance would be part of normal operations and maintenance for the ELER. Long-term science support, public outreach, and coordination required by the Adaptive Management Program is funded by the SBSP Project partners, including the US Geological Survey, State Coastal Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Resources Legacy Fund.

#### PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$8,000,000.00</b>
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Project costs will be for professional services including project management and construction management; construction of habitat and public access improvements; monitoring; and project administration.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c). This source provides funding for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands within the San Francisco Bay Area and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. All permits for this project have been completed and approved.

DFG, as lead agency, prepared a programmatic/project EIR for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the EIR and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this

proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$8,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c); authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

33. Mission Creek Fish Passage Project \$775,000.00  
Santa Barbara County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the City of Santa Barbara for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game, the County of Santa Barbara Flood Control District, Southern California Wetland Recovery Program and private foundations to modify a channelized portion of Mission Creek to allow fish passage for steelhead trout on approximately 0.8 miles of stream channel in western Santa Barbara County.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Mission Creek flows to the ocean through the City of Santa Barbara from its headwaters in the Los Padres National Forest, located approximately five miles upstream of the city. The project site lies adjacent to the Pacific Coast Highway between Velerio and Canon Perdido Streets, approximately one mile upstream from its mouth at East Beach.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mission Creek is designated critical habitat for the Southern California Steelhead under the California and federal Endangered Species Acts, and is identified as a Core 1 stream in the Southern California Steelhead Recovery Plan developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. A Core 1 classification of a stream means that the stream would support significant populations of steelhead if any barriers to migration were removed. The upper portions of the creek are relatively pristine, with many miles of excellent steelhead spawning habitat.

The creek at the project site was channelized in 1961 by Caltrans, creating a complete barrier to migratory steelhead, so that they cannot reach good quality spawning habitat further upstream. The water in the channel is too shallow and moves too fast for fish to migrate through the area. The proposed modifications will create a 0.8 mile low flow channel interspersed with resting areas within of the streambed. The project is designed to provide transition areas between channelized portions of the creek and more natural areas, slow water flow, and provide a low-flow channel during drier times. The project also includes planting approximately 200 native trees on the banks above the channel to provide shade and nutrients, critical needs for steelhead.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing instream restoration for endangered native fish species including the removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.



MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

As part of the adaptive management of the project, the primary maintenance need will be for removal of sediment and vegetation blocking the fishway in the event that future monitoring shows that fish passage is compromised. These obstructions will be removed by the City of Santa Barbara Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Division during late spring or summer. If at any time during the life of the project City of Santa Barbara does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires the City to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The City conducted a baseline biological assessment for steelhead trout in 2011, and will continue to monitor the site after construction of the fishway is completed using visual surveys, and reporting of spawning nests (redds) to determine project success.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$775,000.00</b>
Department of Fish and Game	1,735,000.00
City of Santa Barbara	750,000.00
County Flood Control District	250,000.00
Southern CA Wetlands Recovery Program	442,000.00
Other Grants	<u>250,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$4,202,000.00</b>

Project costs will be for project management, channel demolition and reconstruction, installation of the fishway, channel dewatering, and restoration planting and irrigation.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding sources for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal), which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3 Section 15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of an existing structure and Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land.

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Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$775,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

34. Angeles Linkage (Nominn) \$2,480,000.00  
Los Angeles County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Riverside Land Conservancy (RLC) to acquire 1,030± acres of land that will provide a significant contribution to the landscape level connection that serves two expansive core areas, the San Gabriel and Castaic ranges, which together form the Angeles National Forest, and to promote recovery of threatened and endangered animals and plants.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Nominn property (Property) is located in the Santa Clarita Valley south of Highway 14 on the east and west sides of Agua Dulce Canyon Road in the unincorporated community of Agua Dulce, approximately 8 miles east of the City of Santa Clarita and 14 miles southwest of Palmdale in Los Angeles County. The community of Agua Dulce is located in a small alluvial valley nestled in rugged sagebrush covered hills. The community's setting is distinctively rural, being completely surrounded by hills.

The Property is located within the Santa Clara River Watershed, which lies within the California South Coast ecoregion. With a 1,600 square mile watershed, the Santa Clara River Watershed is the second largest in the South Coast ecoregion and the last to remain in a relatively natural state. Elevations in the watershed range from nearly 9,000 feet at Mt. Pinos down to sea level. The Property also lies within the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Angeles Linkage Conceptual Area Protection Plan which encompasses a total of 8,503 acres.

The Property is adjacent to other publicly held lands, including parcels held by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Vasquez Rocks County Park, and property held by the Bureau of Land Management. Additionally, the Property is located between two large sections of the northwest portion of the Angeles National Forest. Acquisition of the Property will greatly enhance wildlife connectivity in the area.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property lies immediately north of the Santa Clara River and is comprised of two parcel groupings and two freestanding single parcels for a total of twenty parcels. The Property's topography consists generally of steep terrain. Elevations range from approximately 2,000 to nearly 3,000 feet. There are no improvements on the Property other than a 360 square foot uninhabitable shack. Other than for minor areas of disturbed land or roads, the subject Property reflects a large area of undisturbed natural terrain and habitat. Major plant and terrestrial communities identified within the Santa Clarita Valley and found on the Property include coastal and desert scrub and chaparral.

Although detailed surveys of the Property have not been conducted, the following California threatened and endangered species have been reported in the vicinity of the Property: unarmored threespine stickleback; slender-horned spinyfin; California orcutt grass; Nevin's barberry; San Fernando Valley spinyfin; and Western yellow-billed cuckoo. Additionally, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has designated critical habitat for the following threatened and endangered species in the Santa Clara River Watershed: spreading navarretia; Braunton's milk-vetch; steelhead; red-legged frog; Arroyo southwestern toad; least Bell's vireo; Coastal California gnatcatcher; and California condor.

#### WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant is being considered under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the DFG, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the DFG, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE)/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

#### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be owned and managed by RLC. RLC currently owns and manages over 1,256± acres in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Additionally, RLC manages over 739± acres held in conservation easement. Management of these lands is overseen by RLC's Land Manager/Biologist, assisted by contract services as needed.

The Property is natural open space and will be maintained as such. It is the intention of RLC to eventually transfer ownership of the Property to another, preferably local, conservation entity for long-term stewardship and the potential possible future development of controlled public access and appropriate recreational opportunities. These public uses would primarily be day use with designated trails for hiking and equestrian use.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$4,470,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value of \$4,470,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to RLC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$2,470,000.00</b>
City of Santa Clarita	800,000.00
County of Los Angeles	<u>1,200,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$4,470,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$10,000.00
<b>TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$2,480,000.00</b>

It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review. The grantee will fund appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SoCal), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The acquisition has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal

habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,480,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 50 SoCal) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

35. Jamul Creek Watershed Riparian Restoration \$1,696,000.00  
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to River Partners for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Resources Legacy Fund, San Diego City Water Department and TransNet to restore 178± acres of riparian and oak woodland habitat on the DFG's Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve and Hollenbeck Wildlife Area.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The project site is located on both sides of Highway 94, approximately three miles southeast of Jamul in southern San Diego County. These properties were once part of the 11,000± Otay Ranch, which supported cattle grazing and dryland farming from the time of Spanish colonization through the late 1990s. Calcium limestone deposits on the property were historically used by the native Kumeyay and later by Franciscan missionaries to whitewash their adobe buildings. When a development boom began in San Diego in the late 1880s, a lime burning kiln and cement plant were constructed on the site, but were abandoned by 1906 when higher quality limestone was located nearby.

Beginning in 1998, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) and other conservation organizations and agencies began acquiring portions of the ranch for conservation purposes. To date, 9,891± acres of land have been protected by the WCB and are managed by the DFG as the Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (HCWA) and the Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve (RJER). The RJER and HCWA are surrounded by a mix of privately-owned ranches and public lands. They are also an important component of the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan, which includes the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Otay Mountain Wilderness, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's San Diego-Sweetwater National Wildlife Refuge, San Diego County lands, and the Cleveland National Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property was heavily grazed for generations prior to acquisition for conservation purposes, and the riparian corridors suffered as a result. In addition, the Otay Fire of 2003 burned approximately 80% of the preserve, including much of the riparian habitat. These areas are being colonized by non-native weedy species that favor disturbed area. Management of the reserve is currently focusing on recovery and restoration of the burn areas, especially the riparian corridors. The project will restore riparian and adjacent oak woodland habitats within the floodplain of Jamul Creek (60 ac.) and Dulzura Creek (118 ac.), which is a tributary of Jamul Creek. The project involves site assessment to determine species composition from reference sites, ground preparation and weed abatement, irrigation installation, planting of an appropriate riparian/oak

woodland species mix, and long term maintenance and monitoring. Biological monitoring will occur to determine irrigation needs, plant survival, wildlife species use, and project success.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program’s goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The DFG owns and manages both the RJER and the HCWA. The Management Plans for the two properties provide for public use within the larger conservation and restoration goals. Public uses include environmental education and research, horseback riding, birding, hiking, and special hunts for upland game. Species focused for conservation include coast horned-lizard, Quino checkerspot butterfly, Otay tarplant and San Diego thornmint. Controlled burns are part of the management strategy to increase burn frequency, decrease fuel load and fire intensity, and promote recruitment of native plant species. Control of non-native invasive weeds is an important part of these conservation efforts—native riparian vegetation is more resistant to fire than exotics. The proposed project will create a more resilient riparian habitat, which will resist future invasions of exotic vegetation, and will make the management of the property easier and more effective.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$ 1,696,000.00</b>
River Partners (In-Kind)	\$ 10,200.00
San Diego City Water (In-Kind)	\$ 25,000.00
Resources Legacy Fund	\$ 24,985.00
TransNet SANDAG Grant	\$ <u>76,159.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$ 1,832,344.00</b>

Project costs will be for site assessment, ground preparation, irrigation installation, planting, long-term maintenance and monitoring of restoration sites to determine plant survival and ensure project success.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E), which allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat to



protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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 WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,696,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E); authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game 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.

36. Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration Various Counties \$400,000.00

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the State Coastal Conservancy for a cooperative project with the Earth Island Institute to assist with the implementation of the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program that provides funding for community-based restoration projects in coastal wetlands and watersheds in the Southern California region.

#### LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Community Wetlands Restoration Grant Program (CWRGP) encompasses the Southern California coastal region from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County to the United States border with Mexico. This region includes portions of Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties. Coastal watersheds that drain to the Pacific Ocean are included in the geographic scope of the program. Project locations include coastal wetlands, tidal marshes, rivers, streams, vernal pools as well as buffer zones including dunes, river banks and coastal sage scrub habitats.

Many of the project locations were historical flood plains, streamside riparian corridors and extensive wetland ecosystems that have been degraded and fragmented over the past 100 years. Others are discreet pocket wetlands that, while small and sometimes isolated from other habitat, cumulatively comprise a critical natural resource for native flora and fauna in a highly urbanized environment.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CWRGP is a program of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (SCWRP) jointly managed by the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) and Earth Island Institute, providing funding for community-based restoration projects in coastal wetlands and watersheds in the Southern California region. The purpose of the CWRGP is to further the goals of the SCWRP Regional Strategy; build local capacity to plan and implement wetland restoration projects; promote community involvement in wetland restoration activities; and foster education about wetland ecosystems. Projects funded through the program must include educational and community involvement elements as strong components of the project.

Southern California has lost approximately 90 percent of its historic wetlands due to urban development, in-fill, flood control practices, and habitat type conversion. The SCWRP funds projects that seek to recover fully functioning wetland ecosystems that include wetlands, and upland areas surrounding the wetlands. Typical projects funded through the CWRGP include the removal of invasive

species, planting of native plant species, trash abatement, trails and interpretive element construction, and other efforts to restore or enhance wetland habitats.

The CWRGP typically funds about 10-12 projects per year. Each January, the CWRGP solicits proposals from nonprofit organizations, university departments, and local agencies eligible to apply to the program. Proposals are reviewed by a technical advisory committee that includes staff from the SCC, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the WCB. Projects are selected by early summer and the work begins. Most projects funded through this program are designed to be completed in one or two years. The SCC is responsible for oversight of all projects permit requirements, work plans, schedules and project completion. All the projects are small, typically under five acres in size and independent of each other and of any larger efforts.

Provided below is a list of the projects, by county, currently under review for funding. The list of projects is subject to change until the final selection of projects is made, and additional projects similar to those identified below may be added.

Santa Barbara County

UC Santa Barbara Campus Lagoon Salt Marsh Restoration  
Devereux Slough Margin Enhancement  
Mission Canyon Cape Ivy Eradication Project  
Refugio Creek Mouth Restoration Project  
Splash 2 Trash Abatement

Ventura County

Ventura River Restoration and Watershed Education Program  
Ormond Beach Native Plant Restoration

Los Angeles County

Lower Topanga Creek Restoration Project  
Arroyo Wetlands Recovery Program  
Revitalizing LA Backyard: Riparian Weed Eradication

Orange County

Invasive Removal in Bell Creek at Audubon Starr Ranch  
Bolsa Chica Dune Habitat Enhancement Initiative

San Diego County

Chollas Creek Communities: Saving Our Streams  
Ocean Connectors Wetland Restoration Project  
Reforestation of Upper Marsh and Transition Zone in Kendall Frost Reserve  
Los Laureles/Goat Canyon Preservation Project

Watershed Avengers at Swan Canyon  
Citizens Restoring Coastal Habitat

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for native fisheries restoration, restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program such as coastal, tidal, riparian or fresh water habitats, and in-stream restoration projects including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The SCC is the Grantee under this project, and therefore has general oversight of the projects funded under the CWRGP. CWRGP are typically small scale projects taken on by an agency or organization with a direct connection and commitment to the project location. Long-term care and oversight of project maintenance are the responsibility of the project leads, and will be addressed in Memorandums of Understanding developed between the WCB and SCC. The time period for long term management of the project will be 25 years.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

<b>Wildlife Conservation Board</b>	<b>\$400,000.00</b>
State Coastal Conservancy	200,000.00
Earth Island Institute	<u>900,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$1,500,000.00</b>

Typical projects funded through the CWRGP include the removal of invasive species, planting of native plant species, trash abatement, trails and interpretive element construction, and other efforts to restore or enhance wetland habitats.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal), which allows for the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout in coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4), as a minor alteration to the land, water and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$400,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal); 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.

37. Appraisal Review and Disclosure  
Statewide

Informational/Action

During its February 24, 2011 and September 13, 2011 public meetings, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board/WCB) discussed and requested information about appraisals for the acquisition of interests in real property, appraisal reviews, and public disclosure of appraisal information. At the February 24, 2011, meeting the Board requested a written summary of the appraisal review process and directed staff to provide recommendations regarding public disclosure of appraisal information for proposed acquisition projects involving large acreages of land.

In response to the Board's February 2011 request, a summary of the appraisal review process was provided to each member of the Board and each Joint Legislative Advisory Committee member. The Agenda and Minutes for the September 13, 2011 Wildlife Conservation Board meeting include copies of this summary as well as background information regarding professional appraisal standards.

Staff prepared recommendations regarding appraisal review and disclosure for Board consideration at the September 13, 2011, public meeting. However, no action was taken. Instead, the Board requested staff to continue to work on an appraisal policy.

ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO BOARD DIRECTIVES

In response to the Board directives, staff surveyed appraisal disclosure practices of other California State entities that acquire or fund real property acquisitions. Staff conducted similar discussions with two federal entities and surveyed a number of other states to determine how they approach appraisal disclosure. Further, staff analyzed historic acquisition project data (fee title and conservation easement) to ascertain any relationship between the size and cost of acquisition projects previously funded by the Wildlife Conservation Board. Finally, staff convened a public/private stakeholder working group comprised of representatives of the land trust community, private conservation funders, private landowners, appraisers, and conservancy and other State entity staff. These efforts provide the basis for the draft appraisal review and disclosure policy being presented to the Board for consideration at this meeting.

OTHER CALIFORNIA STATE ENTITY APPRAISAL DISCLOSURE PRACTICES

Staff contacted representatives of the following State entities: Department of General Services (DGS), including staff for the Public Works Board; Department of Water Resources; State Coastal Conservancy; Department of Conservation; Sierra Nevada Conservancy; CALTRANS; and the California Tahoe Conservancy. Each entity reported that it provides information to the public prior

to taking any official action on a proposed acquisition project. While the level and specificity of the information varies, prior to formal approval each entity supplies the public with descriptive project information consistent with applicable open meeting laws and its unique operational mission and authority. However, no State entity contacted releases acquisition project appraisals to the public until after the close of escrow. This practice is consistent with the California Public Records Act, under which appraisals made by or for the State are exempt from public disclosure "until all of the property has been acquired" (Government Code Section 6254 (h)). It also reflects the confidentiality standard that is part of the Ethics Rule of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). Under that standard an appraiser may not disclose confidential information or assignment results prepared for a client to anyone other than the client and persons specifically authorized by the client without the client's consent.

All the State entities interviewed acknowledged the importance of providing the public with information necessary for it to understand the nature of a proposed project including how and why the proposal qualifies for public funding and support. However, there was a strong consensus (among the government entities as well as the majority of the stakeholder working group including the appraisers who participated) that release of the acquisition appraisal prior to a project being formally approved by the acquiring or funding entity, and subsequent close of escrow, could conflict with professional appraisal standards; infringe upon a landowner's rights (including the right to privacy); hamper an appraiser's access to relevant data; potentially frustrate and delay, rather than facilitate, the public decision-making process; and jeopardize the completion of the acquisition project.

#### FEDERAL AGENCY AND OTHER STATES APPRAISAL DISCLOSURE PRACTICES

According to staff from the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, federal entities authorized to acquire interests in real property generally do not disclose the contents of appraisals prior to the close of escrow. As is the case here in California, public information laws in six of the seven states surveyed (Oregon, Washington, Massachusetts, Utah, Texas and Georgia) provide that appraisals relating to the purchase of real property are not subject to public disclosure until an acquisition has been completed. However, in New Mexico conservation easement appraisals submitted to the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department as part of the state tax credit application are considered a "public document" and available for release to the public.

#### ANALYSIS & SUMMARY OF HISTORIC ACQUISITION PROJECT DATA

Major acquisitions of conservation lands are defined, and subject to the requirements for appraisal, appraisal review and public disclosure set forth, in

Public Resources Code Section 5096.500 et seq. Public Resources Code Section 5096.501 defines a "major acquisition" as an acquisition project that contemplates or includes an expenditure of more than \$25 million of State funds. In response to the Board directive, staff analyzed acquisition data in an attempt to identify projects that do not meet the definition of major acquisition in Public Resources Code Section 5096.501 but might also be considered major (e.g., projects involving large acreages). Staff reviewed data covering projects approved by the Board between August 2000 and February 2012. Based upon that review, staff has made the following observations:

Fee Title Acquisitions:

- A total of 545 projects were approved protecting 461,548 acres
- The Board allocated \$1.2 billion (various funds)
- Total acquisition costs were \$2.3 billion (including non-State funders)

The majority (77%) of the fee title acquisition projects involved properties of 500 acres or less (416 projects). The next largest group of projects (12%) included properties ranging in size from 500 to 1,500 acres (65 projects), followed by a smaller percentage (8%) of projects ranging in size between 1,500 acres to 5,000 acres (46 projects). The remaining fee title acquisition projects (3%) included properties greater than 5,000 acres (18 projects).

Conservation Easements:

- A total of 153 projects were approved protecting 567,881 acres
- The Board allocated \$295 million (various funds)
- Total acquisition costs were \$492 million (including non-State funders)

The largest single category of projects (61%) ranged in size between 9 and 2,000 acres (95 projects). The second largest block of projects, (about 22%) ranged between 2,000 acres and 5,000 acres (34 projects). The remaining conservation easement projects (17%) were comprised of 5,000 acres or more (24 projects).

RECENT TRENDS

A closer review of the above data revealed an interesting trend. For both fee title and conservation easement acquisitions, more large projects were approved from 2000 through 2006 than from 2007 through February 2012. Specifically, from 2000 to 2006, 29 projects met or exceeded 5,000 acres in size. However, from 2007 through February 2012, only 13 projects met or exceeded the same 5,000 acre threshold.

Looking at the data by Board allocation, the trend is similar. Specifically, using Board allocations of \$5 million or more as criteria, 52 projects were approved



from 2000 through 2006. However, from 2007 through February 2012, there were only 21 projects approved for which the Board allocated \$5 million or more. A possible explanation for the downward trend from 2007 to February 2012 could be attributed to the economic and fiscal pressures impacting the nation and the State of California during that time. Coupled with the partial collapse of the California real estate market, landowners of large acreages were unwilling to sell their properties and interested buyers did not have the cash on hand to purchase land that may have otherwise been available for sale.

Further compounding the problem and contributing toward the downward trend, starting in December of 2008, State departments were prohibited from spending any bond funds on projects (Budget Letter 08-33). In February of 2009 departments were instructed to initiate an orderly shut down of all bond-funded projects except for those that could continue with non-State funds (Budget Letter 09-05). In April of 2010, departments were notified that new projects could proceed (Budget Letter 10-09).

Starting in 2010 and continuing through 2011, the data shows a slight increase in the number of large acquisition projects comprised of 5,000 acres or more or with a cost of \$5 million or more. While still early in what many call a slow recovery cycle, staff anticipates the slight upward trend to continue as national and state economies improve and people become more willing to sell and purchase large tracts of land.

Based upon the historic data, there was no direct relationship between the size of the project and its cost. Location by itself was not determinative either. In general, projects located in the southern and coastal regions of the State tended to cost more than those located in the north or the central valley. However, if a project in the north consisted of prime soils and was targeted for rural expansion or development, those acres tended to cost more than open space acreage located in or near southern California. The diversity of acquisition projects, both fee and easement, coupled with the complexities associated with appraisals, make it very difficult to identify any commonality, general trend, or relationship between the number of acres and the cost of a project.

#### PROPOSED POLICY THRESHOLDS

The policy being presented for consideration would apply to “major acquisitions” of “conservation lands” (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5096.501) as well as projects involving a grant or use of State bond funds to acquire an interest in land comprising 5,000 acres or more or for which WCB proposes to allocate \$5 million or more (referred to below as a “substantial acquisition”).

Based on the historic acquisition project data, the 5,000 acre or more threshold represents about 6 percent of the total number of projects approved from August

of 2000 to February of 2012. These same projects accounted for approximately 60.4 percent of the total acres protected in fee and conservation easement and about 23.1 percent of the total dollars allocated by WCB.

The \$5 million or more policy threshold accounted for about 10.4 percent of the total projects approved from August of 2000 to February of 2012. These projects accounted for approximately 42 percent of the acres protected in fee and conservation easement and about 65.3 percent of the total WCB dollar allocation.

### PROPOSED POLICY

To address the Board's interest in expanding public access to information supporting appraised values and maintaining public confidence in the quality and reasonableness of appraisers' opinions of value, staff propose the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt a policy for proposed projects involving a "substantial acquisition" or a "major acquisition" of "conservation lands" that would direct staff to do all of the following:

1. Contract for an independent appraisal of the fair market value of the property or interest;
2. Contract for an independent technical review of the appraisal (except as noted);
3. Provide the independent review report to the DGS during its review of the appraisal; and
4. To facilitate the public's understanding of appraised values, post the independent review report on the Board's website not less than 30 days in advance of the public meeting at which the project will be considered for approval by the Board.

The proposed policy is set forth on page 114 of this Agenda. The proposed policy is robust and, if adopted, will provide not only additional, independent quality control of appraisals but also a narrative report for public disclosure containing information that should facilitate a better and more thorough understanding of how an opinion of fair market value was determined for a proposed acquisition project.

As shown below, Table 1 compares the type of information currently required from an appraisal review report (Public Resources Code Section 5096.512 (b)) and one that would be provided under the proposed policy.

**Table 1  
Comparison of  
Independent Appraisal Review Requirements  
Proposed WCB Appraisal Review Policy**

APPRAISAL REVIEW, REVIEWER & REVIEW REPORT REQUIREMENTS	Public Res. Code Sec. 5096.512	WCB Policy
<b>THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS</b>		
WCB must retain independent review appraiser	✓	✓
\$25 million or more in State funds	✓	✓
\$5 million or more WCB allocation		✓
5,000 acres or more		✓
<b>REVIEW APPRAISER REQUIREMENTS</b>		
Did not prepare original appraisal	✓	✓
Licensed pursuant to Business & Professions Code	✓	✓
No interest in proposed project	✓	✓
Desk review allowed	✓	
Field review of subject property (& comps if appropriate) required		✓
Confirm data contained in appraisal report is accurate & complete		✓
<b>APPRAISAL REVIEW REPORT REQUIREMENTS</b>		
Checklist allowed	✓	
Narrative format required		✓
Summarize appraisal	✓	✓
Describe standards used to prepare appraisal	✓	✓
State basis on which land value was established	✓	✓
State appraiser's conclusion of highest & best use		✓
Comply with USPAP Standard 3		✓
If applicable, review of specialty interest valuation such as timber, water or mineral rights		✓
<b>OPINIONS REQUIRED OF APPRAISAL REVIEWER</b>		
Appraisal compliance with USPAP	✓	✓
Appraisal compliance with DGS & State standards		✓
Adequacy & quality of appraisal		✓
Reasonableness of analysis & conclusions		✓
Comprehensiveness & accuracy of researched data		✓
Appropriateness, reasonableness & credibility of appraisal		✓

### ANTICIPATED EFFECTS OF POLICY

The recommendation to obtain independent appraisals and third party appraisal reviews for acquisition projects consisting of 5,000 acres or more or for which the Wildlife Conservation Board proposes to allocate \$5 million or more reflects a delicate balancing act that takes into consideration the interests in additional public disclosure, fiscal resources, staff workload, and the complexity of the project and appraisal. Given the significant variations among acquisition projects, staff estimates that if the Board adopts the recommended policy, the Wildlife Conservation Board will need to obtain an independent appraisal and a third party appraisal review for approximately ten additional projects per year. Staff estimates that the cost to implement the policy could range anywhere from approximately \$40,000 to \$400,000 per year, as described below.

The cost of an independent appraisal varies depending on a multitude of factors such as size and location of the subject property, its current condition, access, and current and projected use. Appraisal costs typically run between a low of \$3,000 to \$10,000. However, appraisals can also cost as much as \$20,000 to \$30,000 or more. Accordingly, staff estimates the additional cost for ten appraisals could range from approximately \$30,000 to approximately \$300,000 per year.

The estimated cost of a third party appraisal review varies between \$1,000.00 and \$10,000.00 per review. As such, the total cost for ten additional independent appraisal reviews could range from a low of approximately \$10,000.00 to a high of approximately \$100,000.00 per year.

In addition to the increased costs associated with the proposed policy, staff estimates an additional three to four months of internal processing time would be needed for most projects before a proposed acquisition or grant subject to the policy could be presented to the Board for consideration. This additional time would be used to contract for and obtain the independent appraisal; contract for and obtain an appraisal review, present the appraisal to DGS for approval and post the appraisal review report on the WCB website.

### STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP

As previously mentioned, staff convened a public/private stakeholder working group to review and provide comments on the proposed policy. The working group met at the WCB offices on December 12, 2011 and again on May 4, 2012. Before, during and after the December meeting, the working group reviewed and provided comments to drafts of the proposed policy. The working group provided additional comments at the May meeting. Many of the comments pertained to the proposed thresholds for application of the policy. The working group also provided valuable suggestions regarding the scope, content and organization of the appraisal review report.

For the most part, the working group was supportive of a policy that increases transparency. However, there were objections to the proposed policy. Some participants believe that absent the release of a full appraisal prior to a formal review by DGS or formal action on the part of the Board, the public could not be assured of a fair price for the acquisition.

Others were concerned the release of an appraisal and/or the appraisal review report would generate so much uncertainty in the negotiation process that landowners may not participate in WCB-funded acquisition projects. Still others mentioned that the proposed policy is costly, both in terms of time and money.

Stakeholders also raised concerns regarding the release of a technical appraisal review report to the public in advance of a public meeting. It was expressed that people not schooled or trained in the technical aspects of appraisal practices, techniques and methodologies could misinterpret information and arrive at incorrect conclusions as to the opinion of fair market value in an appraisal.

Concerns were also raised that appraisers may be hesitant to produce an appraisal for WCB if their work product would be subject to further review by an independent review appraiser and that review report posted on a public website. Others suggested that review appraisers may also be hesitant to contract for review assignments where the technical review report would be posted on the WCB website and subject to misinterpretation by non-appraisers.

The stakeholder comments and suggestions were informative and helpful in understanding the perspectives and concerns of interested parties. In an attempt to balance the competing interests and concerns staff prepared several iterations of a proposed policy. The proposal now being presented to the Board includes a number of changes (such as the proposed \$5 million threshold and the exemption described below) that grew out of discussions with and input received from the stakeholder group.

#### POLICY EXEMPTION

The proposed policy includes an exemption for projects involving a proposed Wildlife Conservation Board allocation of less than \$5 million. This exemption responds to concerns raised by some stakeholders regarding the additional time necessary for staff to obtain an independent appraisal and appraisal review where the Board is a lesser participant in funding a proposed project.

To address stakeholder concerns, the proposed policy would not apply to a project of 5,000 acres or greater if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) At least one State department, board or conservancy has held a public meeting to consider, and authorized funding for, the proposed project; and

(2) WCB proposes to allocate less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000.00) of state funds for the proposed project; and

(3) At least one State department, board or conservancy has authorized funding for the proposed project in an amount greater than the proposed WCB allocation; and

(4) The purchase price of the property or interest to be acquired does not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by DGS no more than six months before the WCB holds a public hearing to consider the proposed project.

#### MONITOR AND EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICY

This policy is intended to provide additional disclosure and transparency with respect to acquisitions and demonstrate that WCB conducts business in accordance with prescribed statutory requirements, professional industry standards and with fiscal responsibility and accountability.

It is the goal of the proposed policy to obtain independent review and additional public disclosure of appraisal information for 6 – 10 percent of the total number of acquisition projects approved by WCB, representing 40 – 50 percent of the acquisition funding allocated by WCB and about 30 – 35 percent of the acreage for which WCB has authorized such funding. If implementation of this policy does not meet these goals, subject to approval of the Board, the Executive Director may recommend changes to assist in achieving these policy goals.

Staff recommends that the Board require staff to report on the effectiveness of the appraisal review process after this policy has been in effect for at least 12 months, but no longer than 18 months. At a minimum, the report shall include data such as the number of projects impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of WCB acquisition projects approved during the 12 – 18 month time period, the WCB dollar allocations impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of the total dollars allocated by the Board during the 12 – 18 month time period, and the number of acres impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of the total acquisition acres approved by the Board during the 12 – 18 month time period.

The report shall also include a cost benefit analysis of the policy and include at a minimum, such information as the cost associated with implementing the policy, any impact the policy has had on staff workload, any impact the policy has had on the appraisal industry, as well as the Board's ability to commission appraisers and independent reviewers, and any indicators of public satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the independent appraisal reviews.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Should the Board wish to contract for an independent appraisal, an appraisal review and provide appraisal review information to the public for transactions in addition to those that are “major acquisitions” subject to Public Resources Code Section 5096.500 et seq., staff suggests the following draft policy for Board consideration. The proposed policy is intended to address the Board's directive and encourage/support public confidence by providing additional appraisal review information regarding selected acquisition projects.

The proposed policy will have an impact upon the Board's staff and fiscal resources. The workload will increase for those projects covered by the proposed policy and it will require more time and cost more money to process these transactions for Board consideration. However, the policy will provide the benefit of additional disclosure and maintain public confidence in amounts allocated for larger acquisition projects. This confidence will come from a knowledge that the Board is conducting the business of acquiring, and granting funds to acquire land, in accordance with criteria that incorporates statutory requirements, professional industry standards, is transparent and fiscally accountable.

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the policy as proposed and if adopted, the policy become effective immediately as to all projects not yet approved by the Board.

DRAFT POLICY

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) is authorized by statute to acquire, and make grants for the acquisition of, interests in real property to preserve and protect fish and wildlife and provide suitable recreation throughout the State. The purchase price for the real property must not exceed fair market value as established by an approved appraisal.

To ensure public confidence in amounts paid and procedures used for the acquisition of real property, while also ensuring that transactions can proceed efficiently and expeditiously, before approving an acquisition project where an agency proposes to spend more than \$25 million of State funds WCB must also have the appraisal reviewed by a qualified independent appraiser and make the independent review report available to the public.

To continue to ensure public trust and confidence in the WCB acquisition process and provide additional transparency in the purchase of real property, independent review and disclosure of appraisal information as provided for in the following policy is deemed appropriate.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Wildlife Conservation Board that:

For proposed projects involving a “Substantial Acquisition” (as defined below) or a “major acquisition” of “conservation lands” (as defined in Public Resources Code section 5096.501<sup>1</sup>),

1. WCB staff shall contract for an independent appraisal of the fair market value of the property or interest to be acquired (unless the project is a proposed grant under the California Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Program<sup>2</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> “*Major acquisition*” is defined in Public Resources Code section 5096.501 (c) as an acquisition where an agency proposes to spend more than twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000.00) of state funds. “*Conservation lands*” is defined in Public Resources Code section 5096.501 (b) as any land or interest therein to be acquired by an acquisition agency, or that is owned by the state. (“*Acquisition agency*” is defined in Public Resources Code section 5096.501 (a) as the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Department of Parks and Recreation or a state conservancy.)

<sup>2</sup> Under Public Resources Code section 10338 (b) each application for a grant under the California Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Program must include “an independent and impartial appraisal prepared by a real estate appraiser who is licensed pursuant to the Real Estate Appraisers' Licensing and Certification Law (Part 3 (commencing with Section 11300) of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code).”



The independent appraisal must be:

(a) prepared by a licensed appraiser<sup>3</sup> (or, for a major acquisition of conservation lands, a qualified member of the Appraisal Institute who is licensed pursuant to the Real Estate Appraisers' Licensing and Certification Law<sup>4</sup>); and

(b) prepared in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP); the Department of General Services ("DGS") regulations in California Code of Regulations, Title 2, Section 1880; and any other applicable State standards (together, "Applicable Requirements").

For purposes of this policy, "Substantial Acquisition" means the grant or use of State bond funds to acquire an interest in real property comprising 5,000 acres or more or for which the WCB proposes to allocate five million dollars (\$5,000,000.00) or more of State funds.

2. WCB staff shall contract for an independent technical review ("independent review") of the appraisal for each Substantial Acquisition and major acquisition of conservation lands unless, in the opinion of staff, the appraisal fails to meet Applicable Requirements. The independent review must be performed by a qualified independent appraiser who is licensed pursuant to the Real Estate Appraisers' Licensing and Certification Law,<sup>5</sup> did not conduct the appraisal under review and has no financial interest in the proposed project.<sup>6</sup>

The independent review must include a field review<sup>7</sup> and meet the requirements of Standard 3 of USPAP and written instructions issued by staff.

The written instructions shall call for an independent review consistent with this policy that includes the reviewer's opinions about the quality of the entire appraisal report under review (without the reviewer's own opinion of value), the reasonableness of the fair market value conclusion and whether or not the appraisal conforms to Applicable Requirements, all of which must be provided in a written narrative report. The narrative review report shall contain at least the information and opinions in Appendix A to this policy, including a summary of the

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<sup>3</sup> Fish and Game Code section 1348.2

<sup>4</sup> Public Resources Code section 5096.511

<sup>5</sup> Public Resources Code section 5096.512 (a)(2)

<sup>6</sup> Public Resources Code section 5096.512 (a)(1)

<sup>7</sup> A "field review" must include a field inspection of the subject property (and, if improved, an inspection of the exterior and interior of the improvements) as well as independent verification and analysis of the appropriateness and completeness of market and other data. Such verification and analysis may also require field inspection of properties used as comparable sales.

appraisal, a statement of the basis on which the value of the land was established, the conclusion of highest and best use, a description of the standards used to prepare the appraisal, and a determination of whether or not the appraisal meets the relevant standards established under USPAP.<sup>8</sup>

3. WCB staff shall provide the independent review report to the DGS during its review and evaluation of the appraisal for any Substantial Acquisition or major acquisition of conservation lands that staff anticipates recommending to the WCB for approval. If DGS approves the appraisal and staff will be recommending the proposed project to the WCB for approval, then not less than 30 days in advance of the WCB holding a public hearing to consider such recommendation, staff shall post the independent review report on the WCB website ([www.wcb.ca.gov](http://www.wcb.ca.gov)). The independent review report may omit any proprietary information provided by or on behalf of the seller or that is otherwise exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).

4. A proposed Substantial Acquisition project comprising 5,000 acres or more that meets all of the following conditions shall be exempt from this policy:

(a) At least one State department, board or conservancy has held a public meeting to consider, and authorized funding for, the proposed project; and

(b) WCB proposes to allocate less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000.00) of state funds for the proposed project; and

(c) At least one State department, board or conservancy has authorized funding for the proposed project in an amount greater than the proposed WCB allocation; and

(d) The purchase price of the property or interest to be acquired does not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by DGS no more than six months before the WCB holds a public hearing to consider the proposed project; and

(e) If the total amount of state funding for the proposed project is \$25 million or more, the Department of Parks and Recreation and/or a State conservancy has authorized funding for the proposed project and, before taking that action, complied with the conservation lands acquisition procedures governing appraisal, appraisal review and public disclosure in Public Resources Code section 5096.511 - 5096.513.

5. This policy is intended to provide additional appraisal review and public disclosure of appraisal information for 6 – 10 percent of the total number of acquisition projects approved by WCB, representing 40 – 50 percent of the acquisition funding allocated by WCB and about 30 to 35 percent of the acreage for which WCB has authorized such funding. If implementation of this policy

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<sup>8</sup> Public Resources Code section 5096.512 (b)

does not meet these goals, subject to approval of the Board, the Executive Director may recommend changes to assist in achieving these policy goals.

WCB staff shall report to the WCB on the effectiveness of the appraisal review process after this policy has been in effect for at least 12 months, but no longer than 18 months. At a minimum, the report shall include data such as the number of projects impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of WCB acquisition projects approved during the 12 – 18 month time period, the WCB dollar allocations impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of the total dollars allocated by the Board during the 12 –18 month time period, and the number of acres impacted by the policy represented as a percentage of the total acquisition acres approved by the Board during the 12 – 18 month time period.

The report shall also include a cost benefit analysis of the policy and include at a minimum, such information as the cost associated with implementing the policy, any impact the policy has had on staff workload necessary to complete a project, any impact the policy has had on the appraisal industry and availability of WCB to commission appraisers and independent reviewers and any indicators of public satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the nature of the appraisal reviews.

## Appendix A

### Appraisal Review Report Contents

The independent review report shall be a written narrative report that meets the requirements of Standard 3 of USPAP, including certification, and contains at least the information and opinions set forth in this Appendix A. The independent review report shall also include an explanation or supporting rationale for any opinions rendered by the reviewer.

1. **IDENTIFICATION OF APPRAISAL PROBLEM:** Identification of the appraisal report under review, the appraiser who performed the appraisal under review, the property and ownership interests appraised, the date of the report under review and the effective date of the value estimate reported.
2. **REVIEW APPRAISER QUALIFICATIONS:** Statement of the knowledge and experience that qualifies the review appraiser to perform the scope of work performed in the review. These qualifications may include, depending on the review assignment's scope of work and without limitation, familiarity with the specific type of property or asset, regional real estate market, geographic area, analytic method, appraisal process and laws, regulations and guidelines.
3. **REVIEWER'S SCOPE OF WORK:** Description of the scope of work performed in the independent review and a reasoning for why the scope of work is sufficient to produce credible assignment results in accordance with USPAP Standards Rule 3-1 (c).
4. **APPRAISAL SUMMARY:** Summary of the appraisal report.<sup>9</sup> The summary shall be a synopsis that addresses significant data, facts and conclusions, including the conclusion of the highest and best use and the opinion of fair market value in the appraisal under review. If the appraisal under review includes proprietary information provided by or on behalf of the seller (e.g., trade secrets or confidential income, lease or other financial data) or information that is otherwise exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act, the review report may omit such information.
5. **COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS:** Description of the standards used to prepare the appraisal under review<sup>10</sup> and the reviewer's opinion as to whether or not the appraisal under review meets the relevant standards established under

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<sup>9</sup> Public Resources Code § 5096.512 (b)(1)

<sup>10</sup> Public Resources Code § 5096.512 (b)(3)

USPAP<sup>11</sup>; the Department of General Services regulations in California Code of Regulations, Title 2, Section 1880; and any other applicable State standards.

6. **APPRAISER'S ANALYSIS:** The reviewer's opinion as to whether or not the appraiser properly identified and inspected the subject property, researched sufficient relevant data, and analyzed and applied the data to arrive at credible and reasonable opinions or conclusions.
7. **APPRAISAL METHODS:** The reviewer's opinion as to the appropriateness of the appraisal methods and techniques used, including an explanation of the reason(s) for any disagreement(s).
8. **ADEQUACY AND QUALITY OF APPRAISAL:** Within the scope of work applicable to the appraisal review assignment, the reviewer's opinion as to the adequacy and quality of the entire appraisal report under review, including the completeness of the appraisal report under review, given the laws, regulations, and client instructions and specifications applicable to the report under review. The independent review report shall include a copy of the client instructions and specifications for the appraisal under review.
9. **SPECIALTY INTERESTS:** An appraisal report that attributes more than a nominal value to specialty interests, such as but not limited to timber, water or minerals, may require a separate review prepared and signed by a certified or registered professional qualified in the field of the specialty interest.
10. **DATA QUALITY:** The reviewer's opinion as to the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the comparable sales, lease and other data on which the appraiser's estimate of fair market value was based, including the accuracy of mathematics.
11. **BASIS OF VALUE:** Statement of the basis on which the value of the land or interest was established, including the conclusion of highest and best use and the actual comparable sales data (including ranges for sales price and acreage and other comparable sales information the review appraiser deems appropriate and necessary) but excluding any matrices or tables showing adjustments to comparable sales.
12. **APPRAISAL CREDIBILITY:** The reviewer's opinion as to the appropriateness, reasonableness and credibility of the analysis, opinions and conclusions in the appraisal report including the reason(s) for any disagreement(s).
13. **AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT:** Discussion of any area(s) of disagreement including the reason(s) for any disagreement(s).

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<sup>11</sup> Public Resources Code § 5096.512 (b)(4)

14. **CONTACT WITH APPRAISER:** Discussion of any contact with the appraiser to answer any questions the independent reviewer may have.
15. **CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES:** If during the appraisal review process the independent reviewer became aware of circumstances arising after the date of value of the appraisal under review that might have changed the actual current value of the subject property, the review report should note the outcome of any communications between the review appraiser and the appraiser (either directly or through the client) regarding such circumstances and possible impacts to the opinion of value as well as any additional analysis on the part of the appraiser that was performed or might be needed to revise or update the appraisal as a result of any such changed circumstances.

*Proposed for Approval May 31, 2012*

38. Strategic Planning Update

Informational

This item is to provide a brief update on a Strategic Plan for the Wildlife Conservation Board and to solicit feedback and direction from Board members on how they see our planning process advancing forward.