

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

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NOTICE OF MEETING

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 29, 2012
10:00 AM
1/ State Capitol, Room 112
Sacramento, California 95814

FINAL AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM NO.	PAGE NO.
1. Roll Call	1
2. Funding Status — Informational	2
3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 3—17)	7
*4. Approval of Minutes — August 30, 2012	7
*5. Recovery of Funds	7

* Proposed Consent Calendar

1/ These facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
*6.	Lake Earl Wildlife Area Trail Improvements Del Norte County	\$147,500.00 13

To consider the allocation for a grant to the Smith River Alliance for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and Tolowa Dunes Stewards to make trail improvements on the DFG's Lake Earl Wildlife Area in Del Norte 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]

*7.	Shanghai Bend River Access Sutter County	\$10,000.00 15
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To consider the acquisition of 13± acres by Quitclaim Deed from Sutter County for the purposes of clarifying title to accreted land bordering the Department of Fish and Game's Feather River Wildlife Area Shanghai Bend Unit located along the west bank of the Feather River in southeast Sutter County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition and development of public access facilities for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

*8.	Conaway Ranch Conservation Easement (Change of Scope) Yolo County	\$10,000.00 18
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To consider a Change of Scope for a project previously approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board at its August 30, 2012 meeting allocating funding and authorizing the acquisition of four friendly agricultural conservation easements (three outside and one within the Yolo Bypass) by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), located east of the cities of Davis and Woodland. This change of scope proposes to redirect a portion of the funding and authorize a grant to the California Waterfowl Association to acquire the easement inside the Yolo Bypass in-lieu of the DFG.

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
*9.	Hudeman Slough Fishing Access CEQA Sonoma County	\$50,000.00 21

To consider the allocation for a grant to Sonoma County Regional Parks to complete preliminary design and analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reconstruction of the Hudeman Slough Boat Launch Facility, located in Sonoma County on property owned by the Department of Fish and Game. 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]

*10.	Napa Sonoma Marsh, Napa River Unit (Giovannoni) Napa County	\$35,000.00 24
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To consider the acquisition of 12± acres of land by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) as an expansion to DFG's Napa Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area (NSMWA) for the protection of wetlands and associated wildlife species, located south of Highway 12 off Buchli Station in Napa 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 bay wetlands. [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Public Resources Code Section 79572(c)]

*11.	Quail Ridge UC Davis Natural Reserve System Napa County	\$70,000.00 27
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To consider the allocation for a grant to The Regents of the University of California to acquire 10± acres for expansion of the UC Davis Natural Reserve System used for research and training to improve the management and preservation of natural resources, including high-quality native grassland, oak and chaparral habitats, located approximately 14 miles west of the City of Winters. The purposes of the project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition of lands to support the UC Natural Reserve System. [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)]

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
*12.	Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Crescent Unit Water Conveyance Solano County	\$350,000.00 30

To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and three private landowners to enhance and restore 500± acres of wetland habitat on the DFG's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and adjacent private wetlands, located approximately 9 miles south of the City of Suisun in Solano County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection 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]

*13.	East Contra Costa NCCP/HCP (Alaimo) Contra Costa County	\$0.00 33
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This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

*14.	Lake Temescal Fishing Access Improvements Alameda County	\$250,000.00 34
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District to replace two fishing piers, improve bank erosion control, and improve access pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act at Lake Temescal Regional Recreation Area in Oakland, Alameda 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]

*15.	San Joaquin River Parkway, Riverbottom Park and Schneider Property Habitat Restoration Madera and Fresno Counties	0.00 37
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This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
*16.	San Antonio Valley Ecological Reserve Expansion Santa Clara County To consider the acquisition of 339± acres of land as an addition to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) San Antonio Valley Ecological Reserve for the protection of sensitive plant and animal species and valuable habitat linkages to adjacent public lands, located approximately 20 miles east of San Jose in eastern Santa Clara 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 to provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat area. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]	\$868,000.00 38
*17.	Santa Cruz Sandhills, Zayante (Zolezzi) Santa Cruz County To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board grant to LTSCC for a cooperative project with the Resources Legacy Fund to acquire a conservation easement over 25± acres of land for the protection of habitat essential to the long term recovery of several state and federally endangered species, located in the City of Ben Lomond in Santa Cruz County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source which provides matching funds for the acquisition and protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened, endangered, or fully protected species. [Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(5)]	\$87,921.00 42
18.	Crescent City Harbor Restroom and Fish Cleaning Station Del Norte County To consider the allocation for a grant to the Crescent City Harbor District for a project to construct a new ADA accessible restroom and enclosed fish cleaning station at the Crescent City Harbor in Crescent City, Del Norte 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]	\$527,000.00 46

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
19.	Yolo County HCP/NCCP Development Yolo County	\$600,000.00 49

To consider the allocation for a grant to Yolo Natural Heritage Program Joint Powers Authority to complete a first draft of a Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) covering the entire County of Yolo. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for grants that implement or assist in the establishment of NCCPs for areas in or around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)(SB8)]

20.	East Sacramento County Blue Oaks Legacy Area, Expansion 2 Sacramento County	\$2,713,514.00 52
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To consider the allocation for a grant to the Mother Lode Land Trust for a cooperative project with the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, United States Army Corp of Engineers and the County of Sacramento to acquire 375± acres of land for the protection of grassland, vernal pool, oak woodland and riparian habitat areas, providing habitat linkages and corridors between existing protected lands, located on Scott Road approximately three miles north of Rancho Murieta in southeast Sacramento County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat to provide corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and to protect significant natural landscapes and ecosystems and other significant habitat areas. [California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)]

21.	Clos du Bois Vineyard Habitat Restoration Sonoma County	\$500,000.00 56
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To consider the allocation for a grant to The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship for a cooperative project with Clos du Bois Vineyard to restore and enhance wildlife and pollinator habitat and provide landowner workshops on sustainable and wildlife-friendly farming practices on 556± acres of privately owned land, along the Russian River, approximately 22 miles north of the City of Santa Rosa, located in Sonoma County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for projects to assist farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(4)]

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
22.	Campstool Ranch Calaveras County To consider the allocation for a grant to the Pacific Forest Trust for a cooperative project with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to acquire a working forest conservation easement on 2,175± acres of mixed conifer forest lands, located near the community of Railroad Flat in Calaveras County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order 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. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]	\$2,761,055.00 59
23.	Los Banos Wildlife Area, Island Wetland Enhancement Merced County To consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance 335± acres of wetlands and associated uplands by recontouring the habitat areas, removing debris, and improving water deliver infrastructure on the DFG's Los Banos Wildlife Area in Merced County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding sources, which allow for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands and associated upland habitat to protect or enhance a flood protection 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]	\$859,000.00 63
24.	Star Creek Ranch Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties To consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County to acquire 1,210± acres of land for the protection of habitat linkages and working forest property, located in Pajaro Hills in Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order 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. [Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a)]	\$2,510,000.00 66

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
25.	Joshua Tree North Linkage - Section 33 San Bernardino County To consider the allocation for a grant to the Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT) to acquire 624± acres of land for the protection of desert habitat corridors leading south to the Joshua Tree National Park, located west of the community of Joshua Tree, in San Bernardino County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, which allows for the 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 Section 5096.350(a)(3)]	\$685,000.00 70
26.	Upper Mission Creek / Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, Expansion 6 (Palmwood) Riverside County To consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Friends of the Desert Mountains, and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains, to acquire 883± acres of land for the protection of critical habitat, benefiting covered species addressed in the Coachella Valley MSHCP located near Desert Hot 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 Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c)]	\$2,012,000.00 73
27.	Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center Renovation San Diego County To consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California to construct additional enclosed building space, a small storage building, patio, outdoor staging and parking area at the Steele Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center, located in Borrego Springs in San Diego County. The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source that allows 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 of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(b)(3)]	\$2,833,000.00 77

ITEM NO.		PAGE NO.
28.	Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit and San Luis Rey Watershed Exotic Invasives Removal, Phase II San Diego County	\$952,000.00 79

To consider the allocation for a grant to the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to restore 180± acres of habitat in the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit and the San Luis Rey Watershed in San Diego County. The proposed funding source for the project allows for the restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat 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)]

29.	2013 Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting Schedule	Informational 85
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The Board will consider and possibly adopt its 2013 meeting schedule.

February 28, 2013
May 30, 2013
August 22, 2013
November 21, 2013

30.	Strategic Planning	Informational 86
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Staff will provide an update, answer questions and receive direction regarding our Strategic Plan efforts. Based upon discussion and approval from the Board during its August 2012 meeting, staff has initiated an Invitation for Bid process for completion of the Plan. Six companies have been invited to submit bids. A contract package will be assembled for the selected contractor and work is anticipated to begin in early January.

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 29, 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

Jim Kellogg, 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

2. Funding Status – Informational

The following funding status depicts Capital Outlay appropriations by year of appropriation and by fund source and fund number.

(a)	2012-13 Wildlife Restoration Fund, (0447)	
	Budget Act	\$1,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-5,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$995,000.00
(b)	2012-12 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-35,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$20,628,000.00
(c)	2011-12 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-3,217,487.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$17,445,513.00
(d)	2010-11 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,192,559.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$7,475,441.00
(e)	2008-09 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2012-13 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,668,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-15,644,079.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$5,023,921.00
(f)	2007-08 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2011-12 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$20,674,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-15,828,457.08</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,845,542.92

WCB Final Agenda for November 29, 2012 Board Meeting

(g)	2006-07 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, (0005) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act	\$15,224,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,990,131.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,233,869.00
(h)	1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, (0005)	
	Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]	\$36,100,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-29,763,847.45</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$6,336,152.55
(i)	2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (6029) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$11,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,623,302.94</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$6,376,697.06
(j)	2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (6029)	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650)	\$273,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-227,168,260.43</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$45,831,739.57
(k)	2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, (6031) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 79568)	\$32,500,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-21,681,299.35</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$10,818,700.65

(l)	2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, (6031)	
	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>-668,496,370.19</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$72,915,629.81
(m)	2010-11 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$3,380,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-0.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$3,380,000.00
(n)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	\$10,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,866,000.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$7,134,000.00
(o)	2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)	
	Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	\$24,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,491,401.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$19,508,599.00
(p)	2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051), (2011-12 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-7,928,436.50</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$17,071,563.50

WCB Final Agenda for November 29, 2012 Board Meeting

(q)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	\$25,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-20,888,920.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$4,111,080.00
(r)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 , (6051) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1))	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-13,013,422.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$1,279,578.00
(s)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2))	\$14,293,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-12,238,437.48</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,054,562.52
(t)	2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2010-11 Reappropriation)	
	Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(4))	\$4,762,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-2,533,156.54</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$2,228,843.46
(u)	2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)	
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	\$164,700,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-77,399,279.00</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$87,300,721.00
	Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	\$123,525,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	<u>-80,829,544.53</u>
	Unallocated Balance	\$42,695,455.47

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$995,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)	\$55,418,417.92
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (g) and (h)	\$8,570,021.55
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (i) and (j)	\$52,208,436.63
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (k) and (l)	\$83,734,330.46
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t) and (u)	\$186,764,402.95
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$387,690,609.51

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.

Bond Fund	Authorized GO Bond Proceeds	Expenditures through 10/30/12	Encumbrances through 09/30/12	Cash Balances Includes Encumbrances
Proposition 12	\$12,621,973.31	\$7,275,935.38	\$160,569.75	\$5,185,468.18
Proposition 40	\$58,555,210.88	\$42,599,331.37	\$16,288,765.55	-\$332,886.04
Proposition 50	\$99,161,920.79	\$40,327,275.84	\$41,462,865.00	\$17,371,779.95
Proposition 84	\$202,673,069.95	\$177,473,974.13	\$28,189,578.66	-\$2,990,482.84
Proposition 1E	\$37,491,090.20	\$25,586,561.34	\$11,130,311.88	\$774,216.98
Grand Totals	\$410,503,265.13	\$293,263,078.06	\$97,232,090.84	\$20,008,096.23

- 3. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 3—17)
- *4. Approval of Minutes – August 30, 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.

- \$0.00** to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
- \$596,892.89** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
- \$147,878.58** to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
- \$301,666.71** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
- \$2,175,461.08** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**
- \$691,117.00** 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

San Joaquin River Parkway, Friant Cove Public Access, Fresno County

Allocated	\$351,000.00
Expended	<u>-351,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

San Joaquin River Parkway, Friant Cove Public Access Augmentation, Fresno County

Allocated	\$5,900.00
Expended	<u>-5,900.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

San Joaquin River Parkway, Friant Cove Public Access, Augmentation #2,
Fresno County

Allocated	\$1,328,309.00
Expended	<u>-1,328,309.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund \$0.00

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2006, Siskiyou, Santa Barbara, Mendocino, Marin, Los Angeles, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties

Allocated	\$493,542.00
Expended	<u>-391,178.14</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$102,363.86

California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2008, Mendocino, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties

Allocated	\$947,416.00
Expended	<u>-736,003.16</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$211,412.84

Laguna de Santa Rosa Middle Reach Restoration, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$150,133.22
Expended	<u>-150,133.22</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Laguna de Santa Rosa Middle Reach Restoration Fund Shift, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$49,866.68
Expended	<u>-49,866.65</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.03

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, Napa Plant Site Restoration, Ponds 9, 10, and Wash Ponds Construction, Napa County

Allocated	\$968,000.00
Expended	<u>-968,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Santa Rosa Creek Ferrasci Road Fish Passage, San Luis Obispo County

Allocated	\$907,490.00
Expended	<u>-624,373.84</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$283,116.16

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **\$596,892.89**

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Fields Landing Public Access Improvements, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$574,000.00
Expended	<u>-426,121.42</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$147,878.58

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund **\$147,878.58**

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

California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2006, Siskiyou, Santa Barbara, Mendocino, Marin, Los Angeles, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties

Allocated	\$933,023.00
Expended	<u>-913,216.63</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$19,806.37

California Fisheries Restoration Projects - 2008, Ancestor Creek Migration Barrier, Mendocino County

Allocated	\$269,756.00
Expended	<u>-114,497.18</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$155,258.82

Rockville Trail Estates, Solano County

Allocated	\$2,887,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,879,275.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,725.00

San Joaquin River Parkway, Friant Cove Public Access, Augmentation #2, Fresno County

Allocated	\$336,500.00
Expended	<u>-336,500.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

San Joaquin River Parkway, Habitat Restoration and Public Access, Jensen River Ranch, Phase II Planning and Design, Fresno County

Allocated	\$385,176.00
Expended	<u>-266,299.48</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$118,876.52

Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund \$301,666.71

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

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, Napa Plant Site Restoration, Ponds 9, 10, and Wash Ponds Construction, Napa County

Allocated	\$6,942,850.00
Expended	<u>-4,767,389.62</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,175,460.38

San Luis Rey Watershed Arundo Eradication and Riparian Habitat Restoration, San Diego County

Allocated	\$1,700,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,699,999.30</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.70

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 \$2,175,461.08

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

Arcata Community Forest Expansion (Schmidbauer), Humboldt County

Allocated	\$650,000.00
Expended	<u>-640,067.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,932.50

Chalk Mountain Conservation Easement, Phase II, Humboldt County

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

Charles Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement, Phase II, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$1,200,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,200,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Miller Forest, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$1,228,750.00
Expended	<u>-1,219,875.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,875.00

San Diego County MSCP/HCPLA 2009 (El Cajon), San Diego County

Allocated	\$5,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,250.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,750.00

San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Expansion 4, San Diego County

Allocated	\$2,280,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,259,940.50</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$20,059.50

San Joaquin Multi-Species Conservation Plan (2007) - Barron, Contra Costa County

Allocated	\$978,930.00
Expended	<u>-973,930.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,000.00

San Joaquin Multi-Species Conservation Plan (2008) - Thomas, Contra Costa County

Allocated	\$1,847,966.00
Expended	<u>-1,844,466.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,500.00

Wildlake Ranch Conservation Easement, Napa County

Allocated	\$6,020,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,020,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

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Windsor Oaks Habitat Restoration, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$640,000.00
Expended	<u>-0.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$640,000.00

Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 **\$691,117.00**

- *6. Lake Earl Wildlife Area Trail Improvements \$147,500.00
Del Norte County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Smith River Alliance for a cooperative project with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and Tolowa Dunes Stewards to make trail improvements on the DFG's Lake Earl Wildlife Area in Del Norte County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Lake Earl Wildlife Area is tucked away in the far northwest corner of California located approximately 5 miles north of Crescent City in Del Norte County (County). The 6,134± acre wildlife area borders the Pacific Ocean. Sand dunes extending inland are covered with scattered beach grasses and other vegetation. The area encompasses Lake Earl and Tolowa, two lagoons connected by a deep channel known as the Narrows, and bordered by salt and fresh water marshes. Further inland the area ends in upland fields and forest. Some of the diverse wildlife species that can be found in this area include canvasback, western grebe, coastal black-tailed deer, and beaver.

A road and trail system accesses most of the wildlife area. The area is popular with hikers, bicyclists, birdwatchers, fishermen, and waterfowl hunters. Sailing, canoeing, and kayaking are also popular. The wildlife area is a valuable habitat protection and recreation asset for the County and State.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has a long history of funding acquisition and improvement projects at the wildlife area, with over twenty projects funded there since the late 1970s.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing informational facilities (signs and kiosks) in the wildlife area are dilapidated and falling apart, nonexistent in some areas, and in need of updating in other areas. This project will replace interpretive, directional and regulatory signs as needed. In addition, many of the picnic tables, found in various locations in the wildlife area are in need of replacement.

The Smith River Alliance and the Tolowa Dune Stewards have worked closely with local Native American tribe members, DFG, and the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop new interpretive signs for the wildlife area to improve the interpretive messaging for the wildlife area.

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 project will be located on Lake Earl Wildlife Area, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of the wildlife area by the DFG as part of the regular management and maintenance of the Lake Earl Wildlife Area. Replacing dilapidated signs and picnic facilities will reduce maintenance costs to the DFG. The new low-maintenance signs and picnic furniture will benefit public access for years to come, increasing interpretive opportunities and educating the public regarding natural and cultural resources at the wildlife area.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$147,500.00
Department of Parks and Recreation	\$320.00
Department of Fish and Game	<u>\$6,960.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$154,780.00

Project costs will be project administration, coordination with DFG, Department of Parks and Recreation, Tolowa Dunes Stewards and Smith River Alliance; purchase of sign materials, construction of signs, interpretive panel design and construction; purchase of picnic furniture and installation of all signs and tables.

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.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 1 of the Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15301 as it is the repair of public structures and facilities and also under Class 2 as a replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities. 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 \$147,500.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund (Local Assistance); 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.

- *7. Shanghai Bend River Access \$10,000.00
Sutter County

This proposal is to consider acceptance of 13± acre accretion parcel bordering the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Feather River Wildlife Area, Shanghai Bend Unit from Sutter County. Acceptance of this accreted parcel along the lower Feather River would expand and protect a large representative block of mature riparian habitat for wildlife and offer the potential for future expansion of public use opportunities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located along the west bank of the Feather River, within the current river levee in southeast Sutter County near Yuba City. The Property is located directly north of DFG's Feather River Wildlife Area, Shanghai Bend Unit, commonly referred to as the Shanghai Bend Recreational Facility (SBRF). The SBRF is a riparian wooded area providing fishing and public river access. Yuba City is located just north and west of the Property separated by the river levee. The levee system itself is owned by Sutter County. To the south and west outside the levee the land uses are predominately agricultural. Within the levee running south along both sides of the river is a riparian corridor that in places is heavily treed and densely vegetated.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Specifically, this proposal is to consider the acceptance of a quitclaim deed from Sutter County of accreted land adjacent to Sutter County's levee property (Levee) and the SBRF. Currently the Property is not separated from the SBRF by any improvements or barriers. As a result, members of the public quite often access the Property through the SBRF. DFG, in cooperation with the County, believes that the logical ownership of the Property should reside with DFG as an expansion to the SBRF. The acceptance of the quitclaim deed will create a legal parcel and establish DFG as the property owner.

In 1972 DFG obtained the initial 108± acres of the SBRF along the Feather River through a donation. One of the main features of the site is a small waterfall in the Feather River that concentrates salmon and shad as they move upriver, providing good fishing opportunities. Soon after the original acquisition, in 1973, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funded a public access project which included access roads, public parking, a water supply system and public restrooms at the SBRF. In 1975, the WCB acquired another 2± acre to provide permanent roadway access to the facility.

The levee at Shanghai Bend has a long history of poor performance during significant flood events, most notably the catastrophic levee failure that occurred near the site in 1955 that resulted in 38 fatalities. Continued poor performance of

the levee, including heavy seepage at every flood event, finally came to a head during the 1997 floods when a levee failure seemed imminent. As a result, the Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) entered into a Project Cooperation Agreement with the State Reclamation Board in 1998 to construct a 1,250-foot setback levee. The setback levee was completed in 1999. As a result of the realignment, the new levee eliminated access to DFG's public fishing area and existing improvements were either damaged or destroyed. Negotiations between the WCB, DFG, the local reclamation district, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the ACOE, Sutter County and Yuba City resulted in an agreement for the re-establishment of access to the SBRF site. Since then, and partly due to the new levee realignment, approximately 13 acres of land has accreted north and next to the SBRF. By all appearances this accreted area, the Property proposed for acceptance, appears to be part of the SBRF.

WCB PROGRAM

The acceptance of the Property is being proposed 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.*) and the WCB is authorized to transact real property or rights in real property on behalf of the DFG. 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 DFG.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed by DFG as part of the SBRF, which currently covers an area approximately 110± acres in size. The Property represents a nominal addition to the SBRF and, according to DFG, can be readily absorbed into existing DFG operations. DFG believes it will be able to manage and monitor the Property within its existing budget.

TERMS

Sutter County has agreed to quitclaim the Property to DFG. The terms and conditions of the proposed transaction provide that staff of the WCB conduct a Phase I environmental site assessment, and must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to acceptance of the quitclaim deed for the acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

TOTAL Purchase Price	N/A
Other Project Related Costs	<u>\$ 10,000.00</u>
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 10,000.00

It is estimated that \$10,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related expenses, and environmental review.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), which allows for the acquisition of land for hunting, fishing and other wildlife compatible recreational activities.

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, 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; and allocate \$10,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), to cover the internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

- *8. Conaway Ranch Conservation Easement \$10, 000.00
 (Change of Scope)
 Yolo County

This proposal is to consider a change of scope for a project previously approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) at its August 30, 2012 meeting allocating funding and authorizing the acquisition of four wildlife-friendly agricultural conservation easements (three outside and one within the Yolo Bypass) by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), located east of the cities of Davis and Woodland. This change of scope proposes to redirect a portion of the approved funding and authorize a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to acquire the easement within the Yolo Bypass in-lieu of the DFG.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION AUGUST 30, 2012

On August 30, 2012 the Board approved a motion to acquire four conservation easements totaling 6,224± acres by the DFG for the protection of threatened and endangered species and wetland and riparian habitat areas. Three of the easements were designated toward protection and recovery of specific species. The three easements included a 1,000± acres Swainson’s hawk (SH) conservation easement, a 1,000± acres giant garter snake (GGS) conservation easement and a 224± acres tri-colored black bird (TCB) conservation easement. The fourth conservation easement would encumber 4,000± acres of the Conaway Ranch and protect existing resource values by restricting land uses to current wildlife friendly agricultural practices (AG). All the easements allowed for continuation of agricultural uses so long as these uses retain the resource values as described under the easements.

The conservation easements were appraised as having a combined fair market value of \$11,800,000.00. The values were based on a before and after valuations of each property as encumbered by the conservation easements. The appraisal was reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The specific fair market value for each easement is shown below.

SH Easement 1,000± acres valued at	\$3,000,000.00
GGS Easement 1,000± acres valued at	3,000,000.00
TCB Easement 224± acres valued at	800,000.00
AG Easement 4,000± acres valued at	<u>5,000,000.00</u>
Total Fair Market Value	\$11,800,000.00

The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the approved appraised fair market value \$11,800,000.00. In order to fund the entire acquisition, the DFG agreed to contribute \$4,000,000.00 of Proposition 84 funding, which is available

for ecosystem restoration and protection projects in the Delta. The funding breakdown was as follows:

	DFG	WCB	Total
SH Easement 1,000 acres	\$0.00	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
GGG Easement 1,000 acres	\$0.00	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
TCB Easement 224 acres	\$0.00	\$800,000	\$ 800,000
AG Easement 4,000 acres	\$4,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total	\$4,000,000	\$7,800,000	\$11,800,000
Other Project-Related WCB Costs		\$35,000	
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION		\$7,835,000	

Subsequent to the Board action, it was determined the DFG funds were only available for grants to eligible recipients and could not be used to fund capital projects, including acquiring conservation easements for DFG. As a result, a non-profit organization, CWA, which is eligible to accept grants to acquire and hold conservation easements, and is acceptable to the landowner, will acquire the AG Easement from the landowner using grant funds from WCB and DFG. Under the requested change of scope, the funding allocated by the Board to acquire the AG Easement for DFG will now be allocated toward a grant to CWA for the same purpose. To complete the transaction, DFG will also grant its \$4,000,000.00 to CWA to acquire the AG easement.

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

MONITORING, REPORTING and MANAGEMENT PLANS

CWA will hold title to the 4,000-acre conservation easement and will cooperate with DFG on all future monitoring and reporting on the easement area. For the remaining three easements, DFG will continue to have the primary role in monitoring and reporting.

As a requirement of all the easements, the property owner will develop baseline conditions report that will be reviewed and approved by DFG and will be the basis for future monitoring to determine if habitat values are being maintained. In addition, management plans will also be developed between the property owner and DFG to further guide property uses and ensure habitat values are conserved and maintained.

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 1E), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species within a flood corridor or bypass, and recovery of threatened and endangered species.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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.

All other terms of the proposed project will remain the same as approved by the Board on August 31, 2012.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the change of scope as proposed, reallocate \$1,000,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b)(Proposition 1E) for a grant to CWA and allocating \$10,000.00 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.

- *9. Hudeman Slough Fishing Access CEQA \$50,000.00
Sonoma County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Sonoma County Regional Parks to complete preliminary design and analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reconstruction of the Hudeman Slough Boat Launch Facility (BLF), located in Sonoma County on property owned by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

LOCATION

The Hudeman Slough BLF is located on Hudeman Slough in Sonoma County, and is roughly framed by four highways – 29, 12, 37 and 121. The slough connects with Sonoma Creek and the Napa River, which both drain into the San Pablo Bay at the north end of the San Francisco Bay. Immediately adjacent to the BLF is a model airplane flying facility. The primary land uses beyond these recreational improvements are DFG lands to the south and privately owned lands with agricultural fields made up mostly of vineyards to the north.

Hudeman Slough, in addition to offering boating recreation for fisherman, is part of the Bay Area Water Trail – a primary recreation facility for kayakers and canoe enthusiasts in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In 1962, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) purchased the property and constructed the BLF. Sonoma County Regional Parks made improvements to the facility in 1987 and again in 2002 with assistance from the WCB. Prior investments will be incorporated into a new design plan. The facility currently receives about 10,000 visits per year from the public, primarily from fishermen launching their boats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

All of the facilities (ramp, dock, and gangway) are showing their age as a result of vandalism, tidal forces, and general use. There is also a fundamental problem with silt deposition at the site rendering the boat ramp difficult to use due to mud accumulation. In addition, the facility is no longer compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) due to the theft of critical ADA structural components.

This project will involve the completion of final design and CEQA documentation for a project to replace the existing boat launch ramp, piles, gangway and boarding float, and dredge the existing launch area. The project will consider a realignment of the boat ramp to resolve the issue of sediment accumulation. In addition, the project will consider adding visitor serving amenities, including a restroom and picnic area. This grant would fund only planning and preliminary design, CEQA analysis, initial regulatory agency consultations, and permit applications.

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 Hudeman Slough BLF is a primary boat launching facility in Sonoma County, serving about 10,000 visitors annually. Sonoma County currently manages and maintains the facility pursuant to an agreement entered into between the WCB and the County, as a result of the earlier construction projects at the site. Upon completion of the construction of this next phase, the County will enter into a new twenty-five year operation and maintenance agreement.

PROJECT FUNDING

The project will be funded by the WCB and Sonoma County. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$50,000.00
Sonoma County	<u>\$45,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$95,000.00

Project costs will be for preliminary designs, agency consultation for permits, and for the CEQA analysis.

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.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND-STATE RECOMMENDATION

This project involves the preparation and completion of preliminary planning and design documents, and environmental review, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the project is to plan and determine the level of environmental review needed for possible reconstruction of the boat launch facility and to prepare the appropriate environmental documents. There is no possibility that this project, which involves feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded, may have a significant effect on the environment. It is therefore exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(1) and (3) and 15262. 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 \$50,000.00 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.

- *10. Napa Sonoma Marsh, Napa River Unit (Giovannoni) \$35,000.00
Napa County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of 12± acres of land for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) as an expansion to DFG's Napa Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area (NSMWA) for the protection of wetlands and associated wildlife species, as well as the grant of an access easement over an existing road within the NSMWA.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located approximately 4 miles west of the City of American Canyon, 10 miles south of the City of Napa, south of Highway 12 off Buchli Station Road in Napa County. The Property is part of an inholding situated in the northern areas and ponds of the DFG's NSMWA. The NSMWA consists of 13,000± acres of managed saltwater ponds, tidal marshes and fresh water wetlands within a large system of levees, roads and sloughs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of three areas totaling 12± acres within a larger 97± acre inholding property surrounded by the DFG-owned NSMWA. This area was once tidal marsh that was diked for agricultural uses in the late 1800's and early 1900's. In the early 1950's, Leslie Salt started purchasing land in the area and developing it for salt production. In the 1970's, the DFG started purchasing the first land parcels that would later become the NSMWA. Recently a survey of the Property revealed that 12± acres of levees managed as part of the MSMWA encroach on the 97± acre inholding. The Property owners have agreed to sell DFG the 12± acres to facilitate levee maintenance and management. The Property owners also wish to purchase a non-exclusive access easement over an existing road within the NSMWA from DFG. Previously a license agreement provided the Property owners a right of access over the existing road. The license agreement has since expired.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed conservation easement 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.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The DFG will manage the Property in conjunction with the existing NSMWA. Public access will be available consistent with the existing access practices at the NSMWA.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$26,000.00. The access easement has a value of \$1,000.00. 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 fair market value of \$26,000.00, less the value of the easement, for a total price of \$25,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed 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.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board

Purchase Price	\$26,000.00
Less Road Easement Value	<u>1,000.00</u>
Net Purchase Price	\$25,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$35,000.00

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

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the proposed funding source, the Water Security, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Public Resources Section 79572 (c), that allows for the protection of wetland habitat within San Francisco Bay Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

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. The grant of easement involves no change to existing physical conditions and negligible or no change in existing use. There is therefore no possibility that the easement may have a significant effect on the environment and it is exempt from CEQA pursuant to

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b). 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 \$36,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Public Resources Code Section 79572(c) 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.

- *11. Quail Ridge UC Davis Natural Reserve System \$70,000.00
Napa County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Regents of the University of California to acquire 10± acres for expansion of the UC Davis Natural Reserve System (Reserve) used for research and training to improve the management and preservation of natural resources, including high-quality native grassland, oak, and chaparral habitats.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Reserve is one of 35 natural reserves administered by the University of California Natural Reserve System (UCNRS) and is located approximately 14 miles west of the City of Winters. Specifically, it lies on an isolated peninsula located on the southern end of Lake Berryessa Reservoir (Reservoir). The Reservoir was formed by construction of the Monitcello dam and the flooding of the Berryessa Valley in 1958. Due to the Reserve's location, it retains many elements of the native flora of this region that occurred prior to the flooding of the valley. The Reserve is also home to a wide variety of wildlife that includes more than 18 mammals, 130 birds, 20 reptiles and amphibians, and over 500 species of moths and butterflies.

Established in 1991 with 600 acres of land, the Reserve has expanded to approximately 2,000 acres since then. In August 2010, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved a grant to UCNRS to acquire 120± acres of land as one of the expansions to the Reserve. Today, the Reserve is comprised of a variety of different conservation lands that are owned by different non-profits and governmental entities. These lands are managed cooperatively through the Reserve. Some of the parties whose lands are managed as part of the Reserve are the US Bureau of Reclamation, US Bureau of Land Management, Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the Quail Ridge Wilderness Conservancy Land Trust. Located within the Reserve boundaries is DFG's 458± acre Quail Ridge Ecological Reserve. The Reserve also lies within the boundaries of the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area and provides part of a wildlife corridor along the southern edge of the Reservoir linking up with the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property (Property) is essentially an inholding within the Reserve, with legal access available through a driveway that winds south through the Reserve connecting to State Route 128 that wraps around the south part of the Reservoir. The Property is a wooded hill parcel with terrain composed of steeply to gently sloping tree covered hillside with a gently sloped area that contains a small stock pond. One of the drainages on the Property, including the pond, constitutes an important wildlife corridor within the Reserve which has been

documented using motion triggered cameras. The pond itself has robust populations of Pacific tree frog, California newts, and blue pirate and giant darner dragonflies. The Property is located within a highly shaded watershed area within the Reserve that contains an above normal level of moisture, hosting a high density of the valley oak, wild grape, redbud, and lace lichen populations of the peninsula. The Property is accessible to the public during natural history tours several times a year, but its primary use is for qualified research and educational purposes. The added property will be invaluable to the graduate and undergraduate University of California students researching the native and non-native flora and wildlife on the Reserve.

WCB PROGRAM

Under Proposition 84, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the UCNRS for land acquisitions, 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 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 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. This project has gone through the UCNRS Ad Hoc review process and is being implemented under the authority of WCB's Land Acquisition Program.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Reserve is currently managed by the Reserve staff through cooperative management plans developed by the various ownership groups within the Reserve, including the Quail Ridge Wilderness Conservancy Land Trust, DFG, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The Property will be integrated into the Reserve and managed as an expansion to the current Reserve system.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$65,000.00. 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 \$65,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to The Regents of the University of California 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 encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

As part of the project, the Reserve is providing a match of \$65,000.00 through a combination of a 36± acre property donation and related appraisal costs paid for by the UCNRS. The match property is also located within the Reserve, and, as a condition of the project grant, will have recorded on its title a notice of unrecorded grant agreement, requiring the property be held in perpetuity consistent with the purposes and terms of the grant.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$65,000.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$65,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 70,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related costs including DGS appraisal reviews.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, 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), which allows the acquisition of lands to support the UC Natural Reserve System.

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 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 \$70,000.00 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) for the grant and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

- *12. Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, \$350,000.00
Crescent Unit Water Conveyance
Solano 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) and three private landowners to enhance and restore 500± acres of wetland habitat on the DFG's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and adjacent private wetlands, located approximately 9 miles south of the City of Suisun in Solano County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The project is located on DFG's Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Crescent Unit, and three adjacent properties approximately seven miles south of the City of Suisun. The properties are situated within the 84,000 acre Suisun Marsh. The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has a long history in the Suisun Marsh, dating back to 1949 with the acquisition of 8,600 acres to protect feeding and resting habitat for waterfowl, and to provide public hunting opportunities. Since then, projects have included the construction of fishing access sites and further protection and restoration of wetland habitat. The Suisun Marsh is a natural wetland complex made up of tidal sloughs, bays, managed wetlands and uplands, which lie just west of the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. It is the largest contiguous brackish marsh in the United States and represents about 12% of all the remaining natural wetlands in California.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Crescent Unit lies on one of the highest elevation areas of Grizzly Island. Due to the elevation of the property, and the current water delivery infrastructure adjacent to the unit, the only source of water is Grizzly Bay which flows through the King Cut Distribution System. Grizzly Bay is a shallow brackish bay where salinities and turbidity are, more often than not, significantly higher than in sloughs and other bays of the Suisun Marsh. In addition to relatively high salinities of the source water, the current ditch system that delivers water to the Crescent Unit is used by several surrounding private landowners, which tends to cause regular water-use conflict. Some of the landowners use the ditch system for water delivery and some for water drainage or both. Besides water level conflicts, regular ditch maintenance and repair requires the entire system to be drained periodically. The net result of the situation is that DFG does not always have access to water, and when it does, that water is often of poor quality. This results in an inability to manage the habitats effectively on the Crescent Unit.

The project will improve water quality to 500± acres of managed wetland habitat. The project will include the installation, replacement and retrofit of water control structures on and adjacent to the Crescent Unit and Grizzly Ranch to allow low-

salinity, fresher water to be conveyed from Tree Slough through Grizzly Ranch to the Crescent Unit and beyond to other adjacent landowners. The freshwater to be supplied to these areas will help promote high quality habitat for a variety of avian and wetland dependent species.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400, *et seq.*) 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

Habitat management of the DFG owned lands involved in this project are covered under the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area Management Plan, and this project will make the habitat management of the area more efficient and easier to control. The three private properties involved in this project (Grizzly Ranch, Bent Barrel, and Wild Turkey) fall within the Primary Management Area of the Suisun Marsh, and as such, are subject to an individual ownership management plan that has been prescribed by DFG and agreed to by the Bay Conservation Development Commission. The water control structures and any other capital improvements completed on the privately owned properties as part of this project will be maintained in the intended functional order for twenty five years and at the sole cost of the landowner. If at any time during the twenty five year life of the project the grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements on the private property, the Grant Agreement requires the CWA 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$350,000.00
Landowners	20,000.00
TOTAL	\$370,000.00

Project costs will be for earthwork, water distribution infrastructure, weed control, and project management and administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Section 2786(d), (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400). This

funding allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands within a floodplain or flood corridor in the Central Valley, and is consistent with the objective 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 \$350,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Section 2786(d), (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400); 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.

- *13. East Contra Costa NCCP/HCP (Alaimo) \$0.00
Contra Costa County

This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

- *14. Lake Temescal Fishing Access Improvements \$250,000.00
Alameda County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to replace two fishing piers, improve bank erosion control, and improve access pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at Lake Temescal Regional Recreation Area in Oakland, Alameda County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

Lake Temescal is located within Lake Temescal Regional Park in the City of Oakland in Alameda County. In 1936, Lake Temescal opened to the public as one of the first three parks established by the East Bay Regional Park District. Largely in an urban setting, approximately 500,000 people live within a five mile radius of the lake. Lake Temescal is a popular fishing, swimming, and wildlife viewing park serving around 180,000 visitors a year. Fish routinely caught at the park include: rainbow trout, largemouth bass, red ear sunfish, bluegill, and catfish. A trail circumnavigates the lake and is popular to walkers and joggers. Picnic areas can be found at both ends of the lake. There is a historic bathhouse in the park, used today for weddings, parties, and corporate events.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The EBRPD will replace two fishing piers, improve erosion protection at a third pier location, and make ADA improvements at Lake Temescal Regional Recreation Area. Two of the existing fishing piers at Temescal are very old and dilapidated. Erosion is undermining the landing of another fishing pier. Finally, the restrooms, parking stalls and picnic area for the ADA fishing pier do not meet current ADA standards. Two of the existing docks, the ADA Dock and the North Dock near the dam, are old wooden docks that are cracked, bent and deteriorated. These two structures will be replaced with aluminum docks. Aluminum is lightweight and strong and, more importantly, does not rot or rust and will remain strong for many years to come. In addition, the existing shoreline protection around a third dock, the West Dock, is deteriorated and eroding. The damage around the dock landing is not severe, but the trail access to the dock is narrow and improvement of the erosion protection will preserve the landing and prevent additional sediment from entering the lake.

Although Lake Temescal has an ADA accessible fishing pier, the parking, restrooms and picnic facilities adjacent to the pier do not meet current standards. The grades, striping, signage and ramps of the parking area for the fishing pier will be improved to meet current standards. The existing men's and women's restroom will be improved by widening the entrances, modifying stalls and replacing fixtures. Finally, a picnic area adjacent to the ADA fishing pier will be renovated to provide ADA accessible tables, BBQ facilities and a drinking water fountain.

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

EBRPD will provide the long-term management of the project. The District has maintained and operated Lake Temescal Regional Park since 1938. The park currently has a staff of 7.5 full-time equivalents, which includes a park supervisor, 5.75 rangers/gardeners and 1.5 gate attendants. All of their time is allocated to the operations and maintenance of the park and this project area. EBRPD's police and fire departments patrol and respond to emergencies in the park. EBRPD manages approximately 6 other fishing piers on the San Francisco Bay, including the Ferry Point Pier, Eckley Pier, Antioch Pier and Big Break Pier, many of which were funded in part by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB).

All EBRPD parks and outdoor facilities are open from 5:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. These are the proposed hours of operation for the Temescal project improvements. The project will be maintained by the rangers at the park. The rangers will provide daily operation and cleanup of the facility and address all graffiti and maintenance issues. The sanitary service of the vault toilet and any repainting or pavement repairs are handled by EBRPD.

The project improvements are expected to last at least 25-years. The EBRPD is responsible for the long term management of the facility per the grant agreement between the WCB and the EBRPD. If at any time during the life of the project EBRPD does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the grant agreement requires the EBRPD 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$250,000.00
EBRPD	<u>\$110,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$360,000.00

Project costs will be for engineering, permits, project management and project construction, which consists of the replacement of two piers; the renovation of the public restroom, parking lot and picnic area; the installation of a drinking fountain and erosion repairs at a third pier.

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 the LWCF reimbursement is approved, the WCB will be reimbursed 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 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. 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 \$250,000.00 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.

- *15. San Joaquin River Parkway, \$0.00
Riverbottom Park and Schneider Property Habitat Restoration
Madera and Fresno Counties

This proposal was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

- *16. San Antonio Valley Ecological Reserve Expansion 1 \$868,000.00
Santa Clara County

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of 339± acres of land as an expansion to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) San Antonio Valley Ecological Reserve (SAVER) for the protection of sensitive plant and animal species and valuable habitat linkages to adjacent public lands. The expansion will also help enlarge and protect an existing wildlife corridor for migrating tule elk as described within the DFG's Mt. Hamilton Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in an isolated, rural, hilly area of eastern Santa Clara County near the western border of Stanislaus County, approximately 20 miles east of the City of San Jose, 25 miles south of the City of Livermore, and 20 miles west of the City of Patterson. The Property is accessible primarily from either Patterson from the east or Livermore from the north via San Antonio South Valley Road. The Property and surrounding lands are zoned as "Agricultural Ranch Land" and are primarily rural and low density rural residential. The main agricultural use is livestock operations, with some limited hunting opportunities provided by private landowners.

San Antonio Valley runs north to south and is located within the Mt. Hamilton Range. The Mt. Hamilton Range extends from the Alameda County located to the north to the San Benito County line in the south. To the east is the Diablo Range. These two ranges run parallel and merge near the San Benito County line. The interior areas of the Mt. Hamilton Range are mostly open space, separated into large ranches. On the western side of the Mt. Hamilton Range, encroachment from the San Jose Area and the State Route 101 corridor is occurring in terms of large residential estate developments extending into the mountain range. Similar encroachment is occurring farther north from the Livermore area, and some encroachment is coming from the Patterson/San Joaquin Valley areas, but most of this is being contained on the valley floor.

Just south and adjacent to the Property is the original 2,900-acre SAVER, acquired by DFG and approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 2005. Just south of the SAVER is the 90,000-acre Henry Coe State Park, and just south of Henry Coe Park is DFG's 4,100-acre Canada de Los Osos property, funded by the WCB in 2001. Further east of these properties are additional public lands located around San Luis Reservoir, including DFG's 6,000-acre Cottonwood Wildlife Area. In total within the area of the Mt. Hamilton CAPP, there are approximately 130,000 acres of conserved or protected lands, including properties belonging to DFG, California State Parks, Santa Clara County Parks, San Francisco Water District, Santa Clara County Open Space District,

University of California, and the City of San Jose. Combined, these protected lands help conserve important deer, elk, and large mammal corridors extending north to south within the mountain ranges and east to west between the San Joaquin Valley and the coastal range.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The irregularly shaped Property is vacant and unimproved in an area characterized by rolling foothills and grassy meadows dotted with oak trees, manzanita and chaparral, and includes a large stock pond that provides habitat for waterfowl and aquatic species. The acquisition of the Property is considered a priority acquisition by DFG as an expansion to the existing SAVER, to protect habitat for native species and maintain habitat corridors and linkages. In the absence of protective efforts, significant detrimental changes to the ecosystems of the region will threaten the area's sensitive species from direct loss of habitat and fragmentation.

The Property supports the Alameda whipsnake, a state and federally threatened species; several species of concern (American Badger, tri-colored blackbirds, northern harriers); and other state fully protected wildlife species such as the white tailed kite, American peregrine falcons, golden eagle, and the ring-tailed cat. Furthermore, a large herd of tule elk utilizes the Property as part of its migration trail, and the Property also provides habitat for other resident deer.

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 Code 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 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 /Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/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

DFG will protect and maintain the Property in its wilderness state and contemplates no significant improvements to the Property. As an addition to the

DFG's SAVER, all maintenance and operational costs will be absorbed in the current fiscal budget. Various public recreational activities already occur within the SAVER such as wildflower walks, bird-watching tours, special hunts, and possible apprentice fishing activities may be expanded to the Property once DFG takes over ownership and can develop specific management plans, which may also include livestock grazing as a range management tool.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$848,225.00. 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 \$848,225.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed 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 DGS.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$848,225.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$848,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 19,775.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$868,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$19,775.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including environmental assessment, DGS appraisal, property assessments and transaction review, survey, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a). 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 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.

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 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 \$868,000.00 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 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.

- *17. Santa Cruz Sandhills, Zayante (Zolezzi) \$87,921.00
Santa Cruz County

This proposal is to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to LTSCC for a cooperative project with the Resources Legacy Fund to acquire a conservation easement over 25± acres of land for the protection of habitat essential to the long term recovery of several state and federally endangered species.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located within the Zayante area in the City of Ben Lomond, approximately 12 miles northwest of the City of Santa Cruz in Santa Cruz County. The Property contains unique Sandhills habitat and is adjacent to other large home sites that feature intact Sandhills habitat. The Sandhills are unique communities found only on outcrops of sandy soils derived from marine deposits in Santa Cruz County. They support diverse assemblages of endemic plants and insects, including four endemic species that are federally listed as endangered. The South Ridge Conservation area, Ben Lomond Sandhills Preserve, and the Morgan Preserve are all located less than a mile away from the Property. An 18-acre Sandhills preserve owned by Grantee is contiguous with the Property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregularly shaped and is improved with a 4,852 sq. ft. upscale home with a curving driveway in front, a large rear patio, and landscaping behind the house. The house is served by a domestic well with a water tank, natural gas, electric, and a septic system. The remainder of the Property is vacant and contains approximately 20 acres (out of the total 25± acres) of Sandhills habitat. An area of approximately 6 acres of rare sand parkland habitat is found in the mid portion of the parcel behind the house. Parkland areas are characterized as areas of towering ponderosa pines with a dense and diverse understory of native wildflowers. The Property terrain climbs the side of a broad ridge that divides the Zayante and San Lorenzo Valley watersheds. The house is at the lower end of the site. The mid and upper portions of the parcel are wooded and unimproved.

The Property was identified in the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Conceptual Area Protection Plan for the Santa Cruz Sandhills. The proposed project will permanently protect and improve the management of rare Sandhills habitat essential to the long-term recovery of the Mount Hermon June beetle, Zayante band-winged grasshopper, Ben Lomond wallflower, and Ben Lomond spineflower, all of which are federally endangered species. The endangered species are threatened by habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation.

Assembling a network of interconnected, protected habitat blocks will promote long-term persistence of the endangered species and unique communities within the approximately 4,000 acres of remaining Sandhills habitat. Ongoing development in the region threatens to eliminate important habitat and irrevocably sever connectivity. Protection of the Property will increase the size and connectivity of existing protected habitat, thus facilitating dispersal, gene flow, and natural disturbance processes that maintain viable populations.

The Sandhills habitat within the Property is largely intact. The Property has only experienced limited residential development and has not been impacted by other land uses such as agriculture and mining that historically have caused the greatest degradation and loss of habitat for the Sandhills endangered species.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant and subgrant for this project are 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.*) 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 assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been targeted for acquisition and approved by DFG under its Conceptual Area Protection Plan for the Santa Cruz Sandhills, 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

The LTSCC will manage the Property in conjunction with other properties it owns in the surrounding area. The conservation easement and the WCB grant agreement require a baseline report be completed to outline the specific conservation values of the Property. The baseline report will provide an accurate representation of the Property at the time of acquisition and is intended to serve as an objective, though nonexclusive, information baseline for monitoring compliance with the terms of the conservation easement and grant agreements.

The conservation easement, WCB grant agreement, and subgrant agreement require annual monitoring by the LTSCC. Staff from WCB, DFG, and USFWS will have access to the Property once every three years to assess compliance with the terms, covenants and conditions of the conservation easement, grant agreement, and subgrant agreement.

TERMS

The conservation easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$250,000.00. 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 conservation easement for the fair market value of \$250,000.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the WCB grant agreement and funds from the LTSCC. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant and USFWS subgrant to the LTSCC provide that staff of 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 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$77,921.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	97,403.00
<u>Land Trust of Santa Cruz County</u>	<u>74,676.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$250,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$87,921.00

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, Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code section 5096.350(a)(5), which provides matching funds for the acquisition and protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened, endangered, or fully protected species.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (ECQA) 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 DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$87,921.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Code section 5096.350(a)(5) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$97,403.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

18. Crescent City Harbor \$527,000.00
Restroom and Fish Cleaning Station
Del Norte County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Crescent City Harbor District for a project to construct a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible restroom and enclosed fish cleaning station at the Crescent City Harbor in Crescent City, Del Norte County, as a component of a larger reconstructed promenade.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The proposed restroom and enclosed fish cleaning station is to be located on the north side of the Inner Boat Basin within the Crescent City Harbor on property owned by the Crescent City Harbor District (CCHD). The harbor serves both commercial fishing vessels and privately owned 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

On March 11, 2011, a tsunami struck the Crescent City Harbor area following a 9.0 earthquake in Japan. The tsunami caused major damage to the harbor, inner boat basin, and surrounding facilities. As a result of the damage, the boat basin ceased to function as a place to moor vessels. Dredging and temporary repairs have allowed the harbor to function on an interim basis. Plans for the total reconstruction of the harbor facilities have been prepared, approved, and permitted. The proposed improvements, including the restroom and fish cleaning station, will allow the public to more fully enjoy the harbor and will serve the commercial fishing industry as well. The harbor is one of the main centers of tourism in Del Norte County and is very important to the economic vitality of the area.

The proposed restroom and fish cleaning station will be an integral component to the overall re-establishment of the Inner Boat Basin at the Crescent City Harbor as a recreational and a commercial fishing marina, and as a popular visitor use area. The restroom will accommodate multiple user groups of the harbor by providing essential services to recreational boaters using the harbor and transient boaters sailing the coast. The proposed enclosed fish cleaning station will eliminate significant conflict between fishermen and brown pelicans, which arose around the old exposed fish cleaning stations when fish were being cleaned. Liquid fish waste will be disposed of through the sewer collection system and solids recycled for fish fertilizer and/or crab bait. The fish cleaning station will be an important step in improving the environment of the marina.

Construction plans have been prepared, funded partially from a previous grant from the State Coastal Conservancy. The building will be an attractive structure with an “ocean theme” that will be readily visible to the users of the boat basin. ADA compliant walkways and parking spaces will be constructed around the structure.

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, and other wildlife-oriented recreation statewide.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Crescent City Harbor Commission (CCHC) owns the site of the proposed restroom and fish cleaning station building. The CCHC will be responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the facility. The facilities are to be open year round from dawn to dusk each day. The Grant Agreement requires that CCHC, as the grantee, maintain the improvements for twenty-five years. If at any time during the life of the project the grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires CCHC 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 larger promenade harbor project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$527,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	2,350,000.00
CCHD	<u>1,565,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$4,442,000.00

The funding provided by the WCB will cover all construction project costs for the restroom and fish cleaning station including site work, substructure, building shell, interior fixtures, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, building permits, sewer/water connection and construction engineering services.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for this project is the Wildlife Restoration Fund (Local Assistance). 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The Crescent City Harbor District, 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 this project as proposed; allocate \$527,000.00 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.

19. Yolo County HCP/NCCP Development \$600,000.00
Yolo County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to Yolo Natural Heritage Program Joint Powers Authority to complete a first draft of a Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) covering the entire County of Yolo.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The HCP/NCCP will cover all of Yolo County, an area totaling approximately 654,000 acres.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The HCP/NCCP program was developed by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to provide a unified effort by the DFG, FWS, and numerous private and public partners to take a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An HCP/NCCP identifies and provides for regional or area-wide protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The primary objective of the HCP/NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem level while accommodating compatible land use. The program seeks to focus on the long-term stability of wildlife and plant communities while also including key interests in the process.

Yolo County and its four cities (Woodland, Davis, West Sacramento and Winters) embraced this concept in 2002 and formed a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to implement a regional HCP/NCCP. An intensive public and stakeholder outreach program was undertaken to provide input into, and critical oversight of the development of the plan. With grants from partner agencies at the State and federal level, the JPA staff and various consultants have prepared a countywide land use and habitat data base, conducted habitat impact analysis for various species for specified covered activities, prepared substantial portions of an administrative plan, and completed the regulatory framework for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR).

The plan includes six categories of community types (broad habitat classifications), 28 habitat associations, and 104 floristic-based vegetation types. The plan is designed to provide the basis for regulatory coverage for 37 species over a 50-year period. Activities that are included in the plan include expected urban development, infrastructure projects, agricultural activities, and certain conservation-related actions. Impacts from covered activities are preliminarily estimated to total approximately 20,000 acres.

What sets this plan apart from others is that it is not driven by developer interests or significant amounts of planned urban development, but rather by a desire to protect, preserve, and integrate the agricultural landscape with habitat protection and regional conservation strategies.

The plan is estimated to be 50 percent complete and the EIS/EIR is estimated to be 20 percent complete. While it is universally recognized that development of the plan is important and desirable for the enhancement of the County's unique and extensive biodiversity, efforts to complete the plan have been challenged along the way by a variety of issues including:

- Agreement over which species are to be covered, given the multitude of species that inhabit Yolo County.
- Determination of covered activities over a 50-year permit horizon when local planning efforts typically focus on a 20 or 30 year planning horizon.
- Overlap between the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) and other regional planning efforts.
- Integration of species conservation with the County's significant and historic efforts to protect, preserve, and promote agricultural practices.

This project will allow for the continuation of the work done to date and will result in the completion of GIS mapping for the plan, completion of the habitat impact analysis, and completion of a draft of the plan, including all chapters, figures, and appendices.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Upon adoption of the HCP/NCCP and issuance of the regulatory permits, the program will transition to implementation, moving to land protection and habitat restoration pursuant to the adopted plan. The JPA or a successor agency will undertake the subsequent duties of long-term management, implementation, monitoring, and compliance over the 50-year term of the program. It is anticipated that funding for implementation will come from project fees and implementation grants.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project, as proposed, is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$600,000.00
DFG's Ecosystem Restoration Program	272,000.00
FWS Section 6 grant	<u>88,500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$960,500.00

Project costs will be for completing all GIS mapping layers, an administrative draft of a Yolo County HCP/NCCP, circulation of that draft to DFG and FWS, and incorporating comments into a second draft ready for broader circulation to all interested parties.

The final plan is expected to be completed by mid-2015. It will consist of a final HCP/NCCP, a final EIS/EIR, pursuant to the federal National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and final approvals by DFG and FWS. Funding for this future effort, estimated to be approximately \$1,200,000, is not yet secured. The JPA will pursue additional funding from DFG through the Ecosystem Restoration Program and from FWS through additional Section 6 grants, and possibly from a future proposal to WCB.

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(c)(SB8), which allows grants that implement or assist in the establishment of natural community conservation plans for areas in and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

DFG has reviewed this project and recommends it for funding by the WCB. The purpose of this project is to fund development of an initial draft HCP/NCCP. There is no possibility that development of a draft HCP/NCCP may have a significant effect on the environment. Moreover, there is no possibility that this project which involves feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded, may have a significant effect on the environment. It is therefore exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(1) and(3) and 15262.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$600,000.00 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)(SB8); 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. East Sacramento County Blue Oaks Legacy Area, \$2,713,514.00
Expansion 2
Sacramento County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Mother Lode Land Trust (MLLT) for a cooperative project with the Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC), United States Army Corp of Engineers, and the County of Sacramento to acquire 375± acres of land for the protection of grassland, vernal pool, oak woodland, and riparian habitat areas which will provide habitat linkages and corridors between existing protected lands.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located near the unincorporated community of Sloughhouse in Sacramento County, on the east side of Scott Road, approximately six miles south of the City of Folsom and three miles north of the community of Rancho Murieta. The property is adjacent to the SVC managed 4,000± acre Deer Creek Preserve (Preserve) established in 2002 and 2003 with grant funds provided by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). The Preserve is also referred to as the East Sacramento County Blue Oak Legacy Area project. Most of the areas to the immediate north and east of the property include oak woodland hilly areas comprised of large agricultural rural properties used mostly for livestock grazing. Further north, residential and commercial land use conversion is taking place, encroaching south from the City of Folsom toward the Preserve. To the west, the terrain levels out more into grassland areas leading into the Sacramento metropolitan area with smaller ranchette type developments encroaching from the west.

This Property is located within a foothill oak woodland habitat corridor in eastern Sacramento County that runs north to south between the American River Parkway corridor and open space lands near Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake, south past the Property to the Cosumnes River corridor, and then further south to the Mokolumne River. The section of the corridor between the City of Folsom and the Cosumnes River that contains the Property, is identified within the DFG's Land's Committee approved Sacramento County Blue Oak Woodland Legacy Area Plan as a critical habitat corridor in need of protection from encroaching development, providing benefits for migrating deer herds and other foothill species that utilize these foothill oak woodland areas. The corridor is also described within the SVC's 21st Century Land Use Vision Plan developed through a collaborative local conservation planning effort; and is also being considered for preservation within the sphere of the proposed South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of two irregularly shaped parcels totaling 375± acres with level to steep sloping terrain. The improvements on the Property include a perimeter fence and small cattle shed. The acquisition of this Property connects the Preserve to over a linear mile of Deer Creek and expands the protection of multiple habitat types including oak woodlands, savannah, grasslands, vernal pool wetlands, and riparian habitat. These various habitat areas benefit up to 170 bird species, 100 mammal species, and 58 species of amphibians and reptiles. The addition of this Property expands the Preserve's transitional habitat for many of these species between the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills, providing the ability for these species to move between these habitats to nest, rest, and forage and potentially adapt to any climate change impacts.

Protection of this Property in perpetuity will help maintain this habitat connectivity and further inhibit habitat fragmentation over time. The Property will also enhance and expand existing Preserve recreational opportunities which include docent-led and self-guided hiking tours, equestrian and mountain bike outings, and overnight backpacking and day trips with the Youth, Education, and Stewardship (YES) program sponsored by SVC.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project 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 Department of Fish and Game (DFG), evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to DFG's Regional Operations Committee for review and approval and later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The SVC, through a lease from MLLT, will manage the site consistent with the adjacent Deer Creek Hills Preserve management plan. An endowment provided by SVC will cover the management and the MLLT ownership cost. SVC, with the support of over twenty existing institutional partners, will work to raise funds as lessee to manage the site for both habitat and public recreation. SVC plans to provide recreational access via open hiking days, docent-led hiking, equestrian and mountain bike outings, and their YES program will provide overnight and day trips for youth groups and schools.

TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$3,000,000.00. 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 \$3,000,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to MLLT 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 encumber the property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,698,514.00
US Army Corps of Engineers	101,790.00
County of Sacramento	199,696.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$3,000,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 15,000.00
TOTA WCB ALLOCATION	\$2,713,514.00

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related cost including DGS appraisal review.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with 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.

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 fish and 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 \$2,713,514.00 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 project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

21. Clos du Bois Vineyard Habitat Restoration \$500,000.00
Sonoma County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship (the Center) for a cooperative project with Clos du Bois Vineyard to restore and enhance wildlife and pollinator habitat and provide landowner workshops on sustainable and wildlife-friendly farming practices on 556± acres of privately owned land, along the Russian River, approximately 22 miles north of the City of Santa Rosa.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The 556± acre project site is a privately-owned vineyard in eastern Sonoma County, along the Russian River, six miles north of the City of Healdsburg and 22 miles north of the City of Santa Rosa. The property includes approximately 2.6 miles of native riparian habitat along the Russian River, approximately 1000 feet wide.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will restore and enhance canopy cover for wildlife migratory corridors and increase plant species diversity to support beneficial insect and pollinator populations on the Clos du Bois property. The enhanced ecological landscape will directly support local wildlife, including the declining western bluebird, and populations of European honeybees, native California bees, and other beneficial insects. The project includes hedgerow installation, native plant installation, consultation on beneficial management practices, farmer educational workshops/seminars, and community volunteer days of celebration. The overall project can be broken down into to the following three components.

The first component will install five insectary hedgerows. The proposed hedgerows increase the habitat for beneficial insects, native California bees, European honey bees, and wildlife. Hedgerows can improve value to cropland by aiding in weed suppression, increasing wildlife and beneficial insect populations, reducing soil erosion, and increasing water infiltration and sediment trapping. Hedgerows and riparian corridors provide foraging habitat for terrestrial insect populations which are a significant food source for salmonids, especially during summer months when other aquatic macro-invertebrate availability is low. Hedgerows support beneficial insect populations known to prey on pest species including leafhoppers, thrips, and mites. Research has shown that these beneficial insect populations will travel from a hedgerow up to 350 feet into an adjacent crop to prey on pest species. One hedgerow extends through the center of the vineyard, and the remaining four expand the riparian habitat along the Russian River. The hedgerow locations were chosen to address site-specific requirements, and sun and drought tolerant plant species were chosen that will

increase canopy cover for migratory wildlife and foraging habitat for honeybees and other pollinator species.

The second component consists of services provided by the Center to install 46 cavity-nesting bird boxes and 10 native California bee nesting boxes. Throughout California, the loss of suitable nesting habitat typically found in old-growth oak woodland (including decomposing trees, caves and crevices) has caused a decline in the populations of cavity-nesting birds and native bees. When properly constructed, dispersed and managed, nesting boxes for birds and native bees provide a viable resource to support wild populations, while encouraging sustainable farming practices.

The Center will coordinate with Sonoma County Beekeeper's Association and Clos du Bois to place European honey bee colonies adjacent to hedgerows and cover crops that provide a diversity of plant species for foraging. The Center will build and install native California bee nesting boxes placed within and adjacent to the installed hedgerows. In the hedgerow designs, the Center will also clearly mark open areas placed with logs and other decomposing wood, designated specifically as burrowing habitat for native bees to build their underground nests. Clos du Bois Vineyard staff will be instructed on the proper care and maintenance of bee nest boxes and burrowing habitat.

The third component of the project is community education and outreach. The Center will host three landowner education workshops and eight community volunteer days to provide community members and farmers with opportunities to witness and learn about the diverse components of the Clos du Bois Project. Workshops will include guest speaker presentations and guided tours of all project components, including color maps and educational hand-outs to increase awareness of ecological restoration on agriculture land. The work to be performed in the Clos du Bois Project will serve as a "forever living-laboratory" for regional farmers and landowners and community members to gain knowledge and reference for the purpose of incorporating sustainable agriculture practices in support of the ecological landscape.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Ecosystem Restoration on Agricultural Lands Program and meets the program's goal of assisting landowners in developing sustainable wildlife friendly practices on their properties that co-exist with their agricultural operations.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the improvements for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant. If at any time during the life of the project the grantee is unable to manage and maintain the project

improvements, the grantee will 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$500,000.00
The Center	33,930.00
Clos du Bois Vineyards	\$102,325.00
TOTAL	\$636,255.00

Project costs will be for planting and irrigation, nursery plants, materials, vegetation maintenance, consulting, and project signs; and project design, construction supervision, and administration.

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(d)(4), which assists farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

This restoration project is exempt under Section 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines as a minor alteration to land, because the project will consist of a minimal amount of earthmoving and there will be no negative impacts to the physical environment that would reduce its ability to produce native or agricultural plants. 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 \$500,000.00 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(d)(4); 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. Campstool Ranch \$2,761,055.00
Calaveras County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) for a cooperative project with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to acquire a conservation easement on 2,175± acres of mixed conifer working forest lands, including diverse oaks and oak woodland habitat that will enhance the protection and conservation of the natural resources, preserve wildlife area linkages, provide habitat to numerous wildlife species, reduce soil erosion, and sustain water quality.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in the upper foothill region of Calaveras County, approximately 5 miles east of the town of Mokelumne Hill. Specifically, the Property is located between Prussian Hill Road and Ridge Road, in the small rural community of Rail Road Flat. Elevations in the area of the Property range from 1,400 feet to over 3,000 feet, with the land becoming heavily timbered above 2,500 feet. Standard ranching operations and seasonal cattle grazing occur on lands below 2,500 feet in the area. The Property is within the upper watershed of the Calaveras River, which runs in a northeasterly to southwesterly direction. Low density development has occurred in some small enclaves mainly to the north and west of the Property.

The Property is adjacent to public lands owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) located northwest of the Property. Two miles further north is a string of additional BLM held land that runs along the south fork of the Mokelumne River. Three miles due east are approximately 6,000 acres of Department of Fish and Game (DFG) managed conservation easements, comprised of the Eagle Ranch conservation easement donated to the DFG through Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Program and the Swiss Ranch property, encumbered by WCB-funded conservation easements. Just south of these DFG easements is the 3,000± acre Sheep Ranch, which is also managed by DFG through a combination of fee and conservation easement held properties. Running north to south and paralleling these DFG-managed properties to the east is a large amount of federally managed lands within the Stanislaus National Forest.

Together, these areas help preserve a north-south habitat corridor through the upper foothill areas, as well as an east to west corridor and habitat linkage from the foothill region to higher elevations of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. These corridors are not only important to migrating deer herd and other large mammals, but the elevation linkages are also important in providing protection against potential climate change impacts.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is irregularly shaped and consists of nine assessor parcels totaling 2,175± acres. The Property and streams are threatened by degradation through intensive logging, or possible conversion to other non-forest or habitat supporting uses. The proposed acquisition of this site will address these threats by protecting this site through permanent easement and stewardship by the PFT. The project will also help protect significant water resources and water quality of a number of streams and watersheds fed by the property including the Jesus Maria Creek, Esperanza Creek, and the North Fork of the Calaveras River, which flows down into the main stem of the Calaveras River and into the San Joaquin River and Delta System.

The Property provides habitat to over 300 wildlife species, and includes a relatively natural Sierran mixed-conifer forest ecosystem, including a diversity of age classes and forest structures. There is a wide variety of plant and animal species, including some rare and special status species that will benefit from this project, such as Railroad Flat deer herd, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, Sierra Nevada red fox, western pond turtle, Red Hills soaproot, three-bracted onion, Tuolumne button-celery, silver-haired bat, foothill yellow-legged frog, and Leech's skyline diving beetle. The Property's significance also includes historic values, including well-documented architectural remains and structures from the 19th-century gold-mining period; in particular, an extensive stone flume system.

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, and utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry expertise, including the 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.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The PFT 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 three (3) existing single family residences within specified

residential zones, up to four (4) temporary and/or mobile structures for camping on the Property so long as such structures are not occupied for more than one hundred twenty (120) days in a year; use of a portable sawmill for timber harvested on the Property; grazing of livestock in accordance with a Rangeland Management Plan prepared for the Grantor by a Certified Rangeland Manager and approved by Grantee; harvesting or removal of conifers and hardwoods, and other forest management activities in accordance with the Timber Management Plan developed for the Property. The sustained timber harvesting will provide revenues to the landowner that can help assist in the management of the Property. Prior to disbursement of funds, a baseline report of the Property's resource values will have been completed by the Grantee and approved by the WCB. The baseline report will be the basis from which PFT will conduct future monitoring for compliance with the terms of the conservation easement. The conservation easement does not convey a general right of access to the public but allows access to both PFT and WCB for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The property owners have agreed to sell the conservation easement to the PFT for \$3,101,055.00, significantly less than its appraised fair market value of \$3,568,440.00, which has been approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). Under terms of the grant, WCB staff is responsible for review of all acquisition-related documents prior to disbursement of grant funds. 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,751,055.00
<u>Sierra Nevada Conservancy</u>	<u>\$ 350,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$3,101,055.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10, 000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$2,761,055.00

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

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the proposed funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a), which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order 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 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 lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in lands 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 a total of \$2,761,055.00 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 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.

23. Los Banos Wildlife Area, \$859,000.00
Island Wetland Enhancement
Merced County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to enhance 335± acres of wetlands and associated uplands by recontouring the habitat areas, removing debris, and improving water deliver infrastructure on the DFG's Los Banos Wildlife Area.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Los Banos Wildlife Area (LBWA) is located a few miles north of the town of Los Banos in Merced County and consists of a mixture of habitats including wetlands, riparian habitat, and wildlife friendly grazing and agricultural practices. The property is bordered by Highway 165 to the west, Highway 152 to the south, Highway 99 to the east and Highway 140 to the north. Surrounding lands are a mixture of private agricultural lands and federal and State lands managed to maintain wetland and wildlife habitats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 335-acre project area is located near the northern boundary of the LBWA. The wetlands and riparian habitat on the project site is difficult to flood and drain, and the uplands cannot be properly irrigated. Two lift pumps that supply water to the site are beginning to fail. The property is littered with concrete and other debris left over from the previous owner's agricultural operations.

To rectify these issues, the two pumps will be rehabilitated and a solar array constructed to generate enough electricity to cover 99% of the power needs. In addition, the project will improve wildlife habitat by removing unnecessary debris and concrete from the area, dismantling concrete lined ditches, grading two upland managed fields, performing minor levy maintenance, constructing PVC pipelines for extending water delivery, installing Fresno valves and livestock fencing, and planting trees and understory plants to improve riparian habitat. Public access and education will be improved by resurfacing roads and trails in the area and installing interpretive panels.

The project will contribute directly to the Central Valley Joint Habitat Venture's goal of enhancing seasonal wetlands, riparian habitat and associated uplands. The site is located less than a mile from the new visitor center at the Fish and Wildlife Service's San Luis National Wildlife Refuge and is immediately adjacent to a new hunter check station, which was completed with assistance from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) just this past summer. The improved public access and education at this site will benefit the many public visitors who are now drawn to this area.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400, *et seq.*) and meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project will be located on the LBWA, and management of this project will be incorporated into the existing management of the LBWA. The annual power bill for the two pumps is approximately \$20,000.00, which will be reduced to nearly nothing with the addition of the solar panels. The improved water management capabilities associated with this wetland enhancement will allow the DFG managers to provide improved wetland and upland habitats through more efficient water delivery, irrigation and drainage, with less staff time.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$859,000.00
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Project costs will be for surveys, earthmoving, planting, installation of water delivery infrastructure, installation of a solar array, public access improvements, signage, and project management and administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding sources for this project are the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund and the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, which allow for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands and associated upland habitat to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass in the Central Valley, and are consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

This 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 structures; Section 15303, Class 3, new construction of small structures; and Section 15304, Class 4, minor alterations 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 \$350,000.00 from the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund and \$509,000.00 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.

24. Star Creek Ranch \$2,510,000.00
Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (Land Trust) for a cooperative project with the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and other private donors to acquire 1,210± acres of land for the protection of a mixed conifer forest property. The project represents a key acquisition in providing a protected habitat linkage between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Gabilan Mountain Range.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located approximately five miles east of the City of Watsonville and on the border between Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties, straddling a prominent ridge located in the Pajaro Hills. The Pajaro Hills are comprised mostly of grasslands and steep drainages that support large strands of redwoods. To the west are lowlands leading out to the coast developed extensively with various agricultural crops, and surrounding the City of Watsonville. The Pajaro River runs along the southern portion of the hills and is the major watershed feature in the region, separating the Pajaro Hills to the north from the Gabilan Mountain Range to the south. Pescadero Creek, a steelhead stream, is a major tributary to the Pajaro River and drains from the Pajaro Hills through the Property into the Pajaro River.

The Pajaro Hills and Star Creek Ranch play an important role in maintaining regional landscape connectivity. The Property falls within DFG's Santa Cruz Mountain Linkages Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). Linkage information outlined in the CAPP reveals that the best path to connect the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Gabilan Range is through the southeastern portion of Santa Cruz County, through the Pajaro Hills. This linkage emanates from the Pajaro Hills and goes south through Star Creek Ranch via Pescadero Creek to the Pajaro River and State Route 129. The linkage then follows the river and connects to the northern foothills of the Gabilan Range just east of the town of Aromas in San Benito County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is a privately owned ranch that has been historically managed as a working timber forest and livestock ranch with some private camping. Currently, the ranch is zoned as a Timber Production Zone (TPZ) and is managed for timber production with limited livestock grazing. The forested areas have been logged commercially since the 1890's. This project would allow the Land Trust to practice sustainable "restoration forestry" to improve the commercial viability and ecological function of the forest as well as help sustain local timber-related businesses and services.

The Property contains a variety of habitats with 936 acres of forestland, including stands of coastal redwoods, as well as riparian corridors, oak woodlands, grassland and aquatic areas. The terrain of the Property is primarily hilly to steep. Several creeks run through the property, including 2.5 miles of Pescadero Creek, which provides breeding and rearing habitat for the federally threatened and endangered steelhead trout. Pescadero Creek is also likely an important movement corridor for the California red-legged frog and the southwestern pond turtle. Star Creek Ranch also provides important habitat for wide-ranging species such as mountain lion, American badger, grey fox, bobcat, olive-sided flycatchers, golden eagles, northern harriers, white-tailed kites, and horned larks.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Forest Conservation Program (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 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.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed and owned by Land Trust. According to the terms of the proposed grant, the Land Trust is to develop a non-industrial timber management plan shortly after its acquisition of the Property. The timber harvest revenue will offset the cost of the Land Trust's overall management of the Property. The Land Trust's future management will include harvesting the Property in a way that will result in a more natural forest stand structure, increase total timber volume, and improve the functioning of the forest's natural processes. The forest management practices will also help sustain and support the local timber economy. The Land Trust is considered a local leader in sustainably managing forests. Since 1984, the Land Trust has owned and managed the 500 acre Byrne-Milliron forest as a working forest. Revenue from timber harvesting has funded an onsite care taker and the creation of an extensive trail system that is open to the public. The Land Trust intends to develop plans to allow future public recreational uses, including hiking on many of the roads and trails that exist on the Property, as well as to work with DFG to develop potential future hunting opportunities.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$4,800,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for \$4,200,000.00. The terms and conditions of the grant between WCB and the Land Trust 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,500,000.00
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	1,420,000.00
Private donations	<u>280,000.00</u>
Total	\$4,200,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$2,510,000.00

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, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a), which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order 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 project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an

ownership interest in land to preserve open space 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 \$2,510,000.00 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 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.

25. Joshua Tree North Linkage - Section 33 \$695,000.00
San Bernardino County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT) to acquire 624± acres of land for the protection of desert habitat corridors leading south to the Joshua Tree National Park.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located within the Morongo Basin between the towns of Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree, fronting on and south of State Route 62. Commercial development is common near the Property along State Route 62 with a number of rural residential subdivisions radiating out from the communities of Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree. These developed areas give way to large open desert habitat parcels heading south and north of the Highway and the two communities.

The Morongo Basin is a high desert region within the southeast portion of the Mojave Desert, with relatively flat to rolling hill terrain. This desert region is known mainly for the Yucca tree that dominates most of the open space, desert habitat areas. The State and federally threatened desert tortoise can also be found in this area, and is the focal point of many of the desert conservation efforts that take place in the region. To the south is the Joshua Tree National Park and to the north is the Marine Corps Air Combat Center at Twenty Nine Palms, both of which are large landscape-level open space/ecosystems. Acquisition of the Property will help preserve the Joshua Tree North Linkage that is a linkage to the larger portion of the Joshua Tree-Twenty Nine Palms habitat linkage connection. The linkage occurs within an ecological transition zone between the Mojave and Sonoran (Colorado) desert eco-regions and connects the Joshua Tree National Park and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is vacant and contains a gently sloping bajada (i.e., alluvial plain formed at the base of a mountain by the coalescing of several alluvial fans) throughout and is zoned for commercial and residential uses. Acquisition of this Property will add one mile (extending north/south) to the preservation of the Joshua Tree North Linkage and the view-sheds to Joshua Tree National Park, which is the primary economic driver of the Morongo Basin's communities. It will also provide future potential public access and educational opportunities through outreach to the Morongo Basin's 68,000 residents and to the Morongo Basin Unified School District's 9,500 students. A public elementary school is located directly across the street on the western boundary of the Property, making it a prime location for conservation outreach.

The Property will preserve habitat and potential habitat for listed and special status species including the State and federally listed desert tortoise; fully protected golden eagle; species of special concern such as American badger, northern harrier hawk, loggerhead shrike, and Le Conte's thrasher, as well as DFG watch listed prairie falcon. The Property also contains rare and protected native plant species that include approximately 10,000 Joshua Trees, Mojave Yucca, and a Creosote ring.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant for this project is being proposed under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The 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 the 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 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 owned by MDLT in accordance with the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices, and in accordance with grant agreements with the Resources Legacy Fund, DFG, and the Department of the Navy's conservation easement requirements. In addition, MDLT intends to develop an educational program with the Morongo Unified School District for students, for MDLT's 1,300 members and the local communities to utilize the land for learning about desert ecosystems, wildlife, watersheds and species.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$1,405,000.00. 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 \$1,405,000.00. The terms and conditions of the proposed grant between the WCB and the MDLT 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$685,000.00
Department of Defense	702,500.00
Mojave Desert Land Trust	<u>17,500.00</u>
Total	\$1,405,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$695,000.00

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, Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Section 5096.350(a) (3), which allows for the acquisition of habitat for threatened and endangered species or for the purpose of promoting recovery of those species.

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 \$695,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Proposition 12), Public Resources Section 5096.350(a)(3) 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.

26. Upper Mission Creek / Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, Expansion 6 (Palmwood) Riverside County \$2,012,000.00

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 Friends of the Desert Mountains (Friends), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the Friends to acquire 883± acres of land for the protection of critical habitat, benefiting covered species addressed in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan located near Desert Hot Springs in Riverside County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) lies within the unincorporated area of Riverside County northwest of the City of Desert Hot Springs, located on both sides of Indian Avenue and Highway 62. Current general plan land use designations include Open Space Rural, Commercial Retail, Open Space Water, and Rural Desert. The Property was previously part of the proposed Palmwood residential development that was approved by the county for development. However, due to local opposition to development, the developer was never successful in initiating development and lenders have subsequently foreclosed on the Property and divided it into three portions. The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) acquired the 640 acre portion of the Palmwood property east of the Property in 2010, and the Friends acquired the 261 acres of the Palmwood property west of the Property in 2011. CVCC has also acquired just under 400 acres adjacent to the Property.

The Property is identified for its important resource values within Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, a sub-plan area under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP/NCCP). A portion of the Property is also located within the Bureau of Land Management's Big Morongo Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), located along the lower slopes of the Little San Bernardino Mountains.

The Property is located in the habitat corridor and linkage between the Little San Bernardino Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountain Range, which is designated as an important wildlife habitat corridor in need of protection, both within DFG's 2010 California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project and in the South Coast Wildlands Project (a southern California conservation collaborative effort that identified the fifteen most crucial landscape linkages in southern California). This linkage, in conjunction with the varied terrain and elevation gradients of the Project and existing conserved lands to the west (San Geronio Wilderness), north (Big Morongo Canyon ACEC), northeast (Joshua Tree

National Park), and south (Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon and Willow Hole Conservation Areas), also benefits species by providing them with the ability to move between significant ecosystems and elevations in order to adapt to climate change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is vacant, undeveloped open desert land, except for several dirt roads that cross the Property. The terrain is rolling hills, with several washes that traverse the Property providing habitat for a number of rare and important native plant species including the Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus, the Mojave mixed woody scrub, Sonoran mixed woody, triple-ribbed milkvetch, succulent scrub, and desert dry wash woodland. The northern higher elevation portions of the Property have a sand source that washes across the Property, providing for fluvial sand transport of sediments downstream via Mission Creek and Morongo Wash, which help to sustain the blowsand habitat in the original Willow Hole Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard Preserve located to the south. The Property also provides valuable habitat for the federally and state listed as threatened desert tortoise, the federally listed endangered Palm Springs pocket mouse, and the Le Conte's thrasher and burrowing owl which are both designated as California bird species of special concern.

WCB PROGRAM

The proposed grant 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.*) 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 assist with acquisitions 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 and accepted 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

DFG issued the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) permit for the CVMSHCP on September 9, 2008. USFWS issued the final permit for the CVMSHCP on October 1, 2008. The plan lays out management and monitoring targets, as well as a funding mechanism based on development fees throughout the Coachella Valley. The Property will be managed initially by the Friends, a Coachella Valley based non-profit corporation which currently owns more than 15,000 acres in the Coachella Valley and has previously owned considerably more acreage which over the years has been conveyed to BLM, USFS, and CVCC for long-term management. The Friends intend to convey the Property to

CVCC in the future for permanent conservation and management as part of the CVMSHCP/NCCP Reserve System. The CVCC has also developed a more specific Reserve Management Unit Plan (RMUP) that addresses this general area, including the Property, under the CVMSHCP/NCCP and regularly convenes coordination meetings among the various land managers to discuss implementation of that plan.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of \$6,180,000.00. 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 the approved appraised fair market value of \$6,180,000.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy and a WCB grant to Friends. The terms and conditions of the proposed WCB grant to the Friends and the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the Friends 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,000,000.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	2,150,000.00
Coachella Valley Mountain Conservancy	<u>2,030,000.00</u>
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$6,180,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	\$ 12,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	\$ 2,012,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$12,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

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(c), which allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural

Community Conservation Plans and is consistent with the purposes of the 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 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 \$2,012,000.00 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), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; approve acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$2,150,000.00 and approve a subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

27. Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center Renovation \$2,833,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to The Regents of the University of California to construct additional enclosed building space, a small storage building, patio, and an outdoor staging and parking area at the Steele Burnand Anza Borrego Desert Research Center (DRC), located in Borrego Springs in San Diego County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The DRC sits on 4± acres of desert land that is surrounded by four parcels of land (totaling 74± acres) donated to University of California, Irvine by the local Anza Borrego Foundation (ABF). These parcels are adjacent to the Anza Borrego Desert State Park (ABDSP) and private land. The DRC's prime location adjacent to the ABDSP makes it ideal for supporting a range of research and educational activities pertaining to natural science, social science, humanities and resource management. At 600,000 acres, the ABDSP is the largest state park in California, and the second largest state park in the continental United States. ABDSP accounts for about 43% of all of California state park lands and is located primarily in eastern San Diego County with some portions extending into Riverside and Imperial counties.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will consist of constructing student quarters, researcher lodging, laboratories, storage space, outdoor staging areas, and sheltered parking. The improvements will provide a field station facility that will bring university investigators and students to ABDSP for research and education by providing laboratory, dormitory, and classroom space. These facilities will be used not only by the university community, but also by ABDSP and Anza Borrego Foundation staff. The main hall at the DRC will be used for public events, outreach, and training. The ABF also conducts K-12 outreach and will utilize the dormitory and meeting space for these activities.

WCB PROGRAM

Under Proposition 84, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for land acquisitions, 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 University of California, Natural Reserve System (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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,833,000.00
University of California, Irvine	2,833,000.00
TOTAL	\$5,666,000.00

Project costs will be for new facility construction, site preparations, utilities, project reporting, design, engineering and 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 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 and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

A Negative Declaration was completed by the project applicant for the current project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Negative Declaration and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The project was vetted through the University of California Natural Reserve System'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 \$2,833,000.00 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 to proceed substantially as planned.

28. Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit and San Luis Rey Watershed \$952,000.00
Exotic Invasives Removal, Phase II
San Diego County

This proposal is to consider the allocation for a grant to the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to restore 180± acres of habitat in the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit (CHU) and the San Luis Rey Watershed in San Diego County by removing invasive plant species and replanting and restoring native plant communities.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The CHU is composed of seven coastal watersheds in northern San Diego County. More than 200 miles of major and minor creeks run through the CHU. All of the seven watersheds of the CHU drain to the Pacific Ocean; four of these watersheds include critical southern coastal salt marsh estuaries. Historically, the predominant land use in the CHU was agriculture with enclaves of concentrated residential and commercially developed areas. Urban and suburban development has increased dramatically since the 1970s. Today, a significant portion of the undeveloped and agricultural land area has been or is slated to be developed for residential or commercial uses. By the year 2020, it is projected that the amount of undeveloped lands will decrease from approximately 35% to 10%. This anticipated reduction makes the restoration and protection of native habitats imperative.

The CHU covers a total of 135,604 acres that include portions or the entirety of seven municipalities. Land ownership and management in the CHU is varied; properties range from small, private parcels in one municipality to large, open space parcels on unincorporated county lands managed for agriculture, recreation, or habitat value. Many areas have undergone several land use transitions in recent decades, increasing their susceptibility to invasive plant species. Several large and crucial transportation networks traverse the CHU. These transportation corridors increase habitat fragmentation on remaining stands of native vegetation. This human activity promotes dispersal and spreading of invasive species. All of these factors contribute to increased likelihood of invasion by non-native species. With such active and varied land uses, diligent monitoring and a consistent approach are necessary to control the spread of invasive species.

The adjacent San Luis Rey Watershed is more rural and agricultural in character. This 359,000 acre watershed originates in the Palomar Mountains and reaches the Pacific Ocean at the City of Oceanside. The river is designated as critical habitat by the Fish and Wildlife Service for three endangered species: least Bell's vireo, the southwestern willow flycatcher, and the arroyo southwestern toad. The San Luis Rey River supports the largest population of southwestern willow flycatchers in the State and the second largest population of least Bell's vireos in

San Diego County. *Arundo* and other invasive non-native plant infestations have significantly lowered habitat and water quality along many stretches of the river. If these sources of habitat fragmentation are removed, the river contains significant riparian habitat acreage with the potential to support more wildlife. For example, steelhead salmon were observed on the river in April 2007 for the first time in recent history.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is a second phase of two projects previously funded by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in 2006. The first phase of the CHU project restored 450 acres and the first phase of the San Luis Rey project restored 120 acres. This project will both add to these restored acreages and ensure the continued success of the initial projects.

The project will perform habitat restoration in the form of invasive vegetation control and revegetation at strategic sites to protect existing and increase native habitat area and quality in the CHU and San Luis Rey watersheds. The system of invasive vegetation control has been developed over the past several years to include plant occurrence documentation, prioritization based on threat to existing and potential habitat, efficient coordination of habitat management crews, and selectivity for manual versus chemical control techniques. Plants of highest priority for treatment include pampas grass, *Arundo donax*, eucalyptus, Brazilian pepper, Chinese elm, and German ivy. Treatment activities are prioritized based on the threat of plant infestations to nearby high quality habitat or on-site potential for improved habitat quality. Treatments are made according to the watershed-based invasive plant management plans that are continually refined by the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy under an adaptive management strategy.

Control of invasive plants uses methods developed over the past several years and refined for efficiency and effectiveness. Certain sites are revegetated with regional and site-appropriate native plants. Over the past eight years, program staff has developed several native plant palettes, designed for each habitat type that have been shown to mature to high-quality native habitats with minimal maintenance needs. Implementation will occur on both public and private properties, thus requiring coordination with landowners on all aspects. The quality of landowner coordination directly affects the outcome of implementation efforts. The Program has a strong and successful history of working with private landowners to treat invasives and demonstrate sustainable land management techniques. The Program has currently more than 600 signed Right-of-Entry forms permitting access to 22,261 acres on 3,046 public and private properties. Further outreach to property owners of targeted parcels will attempt to gain permission to enter in order to restore habitat, as well as educate landowners about the project, invasive plant issues, and invasive plant control methods.

The detection and documentation of invasive plants is accomplished via remote detection using aerial imagery, focused on-site observation of plant occurrences, and communication via a network of program partners and cooperators. Weed occurrences are recorded in the program GIS, and those data are shared with project partners, county and State agencies, and regional organizations. Although mapping has been accomplished previously at numerous sites, the program is designed to maintain annual and, at times, seasonal accuracy in order to adjust for rapid changes in riparian vegetation components and coverages. Mapping data are retained in the program GIS, analyzed, and used to communicate treatment need to landowners and treatment directions to contractors. Mapping efforts inform intervention strategies by delineating infestation boundaries and density categories. These efforts also assist program staff to monitor treatment and restoration effectiveness. Up-to-date aerial images are acquired as often as possible from partner organizations, agencies, and municipalities, to reduce the cost of acquiring new imagery.

For most established invasive plants, one to three retreatments are necessary in order to fully rid an area of the targeted infestation. Exceptions are arundo and pepperweed, which take up to ten years to achieve 100% control. Once initial treatments of new infestations are made, project staff and partners monitor the effectiveness and target any regrowth for retreatments accordingly.

While these efforts are crucial toward reversing the trends of infestation and habitat degradation, continual monitoring, retreatment, and expanded revegetation are necessary to achieve the long-term goals of the program. Current and future work strives to identify and control newly emerging infestations; monitor and retreat previously treated areas; and revegetate and protect areas with high potential for increasing habitat quality and integrity.

In addition to the restoration of 180± acres of habitat, this project will protect the previously restored 450 acres of native habitat in the CHU. As the invasive plant management plans for each watershed dictate, treatments will be made in nine different habitat types, with the primary objective to restore and protect the highly vulnerable wetland habitats. Including the previously restored 450 acres, the program goals include eventual successful treatment and restoration of 758± acres of native habitat in the CHU. Project activities will occur on at least 37± acres of lands owned and/or managed by California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) including the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, Batiquitos Lagoon ER, Agua Hedionda Lagoon ER, Buena Vista Lagoon ER, Buena Vista Creek ER, and Carlsbad Highlands ER.

In the San Luis Rey Watershed, the Mission Resource Conservation District (Mission RCD), in conjunction with the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, is undertaking a program to remove 612± acres of arundo along the San Luis Rey

River and its tributaries, working from the top of the watershed to the bottom. The program has controlled over 500 acres of arundo to date (83% of the total acreage in the watershed). The majority of the remaining acreage funded for control and full eradication is expected in the watershed within ten years.

Rare species to benefit from this watershed based project include western snowy plover, California least tern, light-footed clapper rail, Belding's savannah sparrow, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and California gnatcatcher.

This project is consistent with the approved Carlsbad Watershed Management Plan and is listed as the highest priority for cross-watershed boundary projects. It supports the goals of the North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) (in development), the municipalities' Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), and the Carlsbad Sub-Area Plan. The program supports and is aligned with the Encinitas, Escondido, and Oceanside sub-area plans, which are in the final stages of development. This project is also supported by three Local Coastal Plans (Encinitas, Carlsbad, and Oceanside) and is consistent with the Coastal Act.

The project has all of the approvals from the resource agencies. Permit compliance activities include monitoring and recording pertinent project actions by Project Biologists, annual activity reporting to DFG and USFWS, as well as communication and coordination responsibilities that come with holding resource agency permits.

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

Long-term funding for operation and maintenance is primarily born by the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) administered by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). The San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy will rely on EMP funds for invasive plant retreatments and treatments of other newly emerging nonnatives threatening the restoration. Additional maintenance efforts will include landowners who are educated about invasive plants and habitat management throughout the course of the project, and municipalities, which are developing habitat management programs aligned with NCCP subarea plans. It should be noted that maintenance costs at the end of the project will be considerably lower than current costs because of the expected effectiveness of weed control and outreach efforts undertaken by this program. All work will

either be on public land or on private land with 10-year Right-of-Entry form signed by the landowner in place.

If at any time during the life of the project the grantee does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy 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:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$952,000.00
Natural Resource Conservation Service	\$112,200.00
Department of Water Resources	\$612,777.00
San Diego Association of Governments	\$413,455.00
San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy	<u>\$166,400.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$2,256,832.00

Project costs will be for permit compliance; project management; mapping and GIS management; landowner permission; monitoring; invasives control and restoration; travel and mileage; equipment and supplies; and native plants and seeding.

FUNDING SOURCE

The proposed funding source for the project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50 SoCal), which allows for the 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 AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the WCB. All permits for this project have been obtained. The County of San Diego and the Mission RCD, as lead agencies, prepared Mitigated Negative Declarations for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declarations 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 \$952,000.00 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.

29. 2013 Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting Schedule Informational

The Board will consider and possibly adopt its 2013 meeting schedule.

February 28, 2013
May 30, 2013
August 22, 2013
November 21, 2013

30. Strategic Planning

Informational

Staff will provide an update, answer questions and receive direction regarding our Strategic Plan efforts. Based upon discussion and approval from the Board during its August 2012 meeting, staff has initiated an Invitation for Bid process for completion of the Plan. Six companies have been invited to submit bids. A contract package will be assembled for the selected contractor and work is anticipated to begin in early January.