

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95811
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State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Minutes
August 28, 2008

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes

August 28, 2008

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, August 28, 2008, in State Capitol, Room 112, in Sacramento, California. Mr. Richard Rogers, the President of Fish and Game Commission, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM, introduced Mr. Don Koch, Director of Fish and Game, Ms. Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance, Mr. John Donnelly, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board, and his Executive Assistant, Natalya Kulagina, and turned the meeting over to Mr. Donnelly.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Richard B. Rogers, Chairman
President, Fish and Game Commission
Michael C. Genest, Member
Director, Department of Finance
Donald Koch, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Senator Abel Maldonado (Brian Lanza attended)
Senator Darrell Steinberg (Marie Liu attended)
Senator Patricia Wiggins

Assembly Member Jared Huffman
Assembly Member Lois Wolk (Diane Colborn attended)
Assembly Member (Position Vacant)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

John P. Donnelly, Executive Director
Debra Townsend, Assistant Executive Director
Dave Means, Assistant Executive Director
Natalya Kulagina, Executive Assistant
Catherine Caldwell, Senior Land Agent
Roland Shield, Research Analyst II
Tony Chappelle, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Bonnie Turner, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Marilyn Cundiff, Public Land Management Specialist IV

Bill Gallup, Senior Land Agent
Carol Klein, Senior Land Agent
Ashley Laurance, Office Technician
Teri Muzik, Senior Land Agent
Peter Perrine, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Nancy Templeton, Chief Counsel
Chad Fien, Public Land Management Specialist III
Mary Westlake, Office Technician
Pat Dyas, Senior Land Agent

Others Present:

David Feliz, Department of Fish and Game
Jake Mossel, California Waterfowl Association
Ben Miles, Shasta Land Trust
JoAnn Baumgatner, Wild Farm Alliance
David Mayer, Department of Fish and Game
Carolyn Carey, Carey Ranch
Patty Forbes, Department of Fish and Game
Jeff Mathew, Wildlands, Inc.
Alan Ehr Gott, ARC
Lorraine Parsons, Point Reyes National Seashore
Tony Williams, Winzler and Kelly
Mark Stromberg, UC Berkley Hasting Reserve
Dave Eadle, Rutter Development
Renee Spentst, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Tracey Vriens, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Hoffnagle, Napa Land Trust
Carl Somers, TPC

Jonna Mazet, VCD – Wildlife Health
Scott Ferguson, The Conservation Fund
Jeff McCreary, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Marlyce Myers, The Nature Conservancy
Becky Miller, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Eric Seely, County of Lake
Sunel Thomas, The Nature Conservancy
Eric Larsen, Department of Fish and Game
Karen Y. Frankel, Trust for Public Land
Sally Bolger, Point Reyes National Seashore
Charlie Elbert, County of Santa Barbara
Gary Stacey, Department of Fish and Game
John Ranlett, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Laura Valoppi, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sandy Morey, Department of Fish and Game
Forest Halford, Wildlands, Inc.

2. Funding Status — Informational

(a) *2008-09 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

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

(b) 2006-07 General Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act.....	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(3,465,000.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$1,535,000.00

(c) *2008-09 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act.....	\$20,668,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(0.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$20,668,000.00

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

Budget Act.....	\$20,674,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(7,727,744.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$12,946,256.00

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

Budget Act.....	\$20,699,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(6,350,736.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$14,348,264.00

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

Budget Act.....	\$15,224,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(5,919,966.50)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$9,304,033.50

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

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects).....	\$14,562,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(14,417,375.33)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$144,624.67

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

Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)] ...	\$36,100,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(27,510,997.15)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$8,589,002.85

- (i) 2004-05 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund Capital Outlay Budget (2007-08 Reappropriation)
 - Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)..... \$11,000,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (331,026.00)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$10,668,974.00

- (j) 2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Capital Outlay Budget
 - Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650) \$273,000,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (167,056,938.94)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$105,943,061.06

- (k) 2004-05 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)
 - Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation) \$13,250,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (13,089,784.38)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$160,215.62

- (l) 2003-04 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget (Section 79568)
 - Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation) \$32,500,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (20,011,970.00)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$12,488,030.00

- (m) 2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 Capital Outlay Budget
 - Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572) including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005..... \$814,350,000.00
 - Less 2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565.... (21,000,000.00)
 - Less 2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565.... (21,000,000.00)
 - Less 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565..... (4,000,000.00)
 - Less 2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572..... (3,100,000.00)
 - Less 2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79672.... (17,688,000.00)
 - Less 2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 (5,150,000.00)
 - *Less 2008-09 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572 (1,000,000.00)
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (643,584,712.16)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$97,827,287.84

- (n) *2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget
 - Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects) \$10,000,000.00
 - Less Previous Board Allocations (0.00)
 - Unallocated Balance..... \$10,000,000.00

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

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

- (p) *2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055c).....	\$25,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(0.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$25,000,000.00

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

Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055c).....	\$25,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(2,529,700.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$22,470,300.00

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

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1))	\$14,293,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(1,183,492.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$13,109,508.00

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

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

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

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(3))	\$4,762,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(117,000.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$4,645,000.00

- (u) 2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 Capital Outlay Budget

Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	\$164,700,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(25,000.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$164,675,000.00
Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055b)	\$123,525,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(6,521,007.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$117,003,993.00

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

Budget Act (2006-07 Reappropriation)	\$5,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	(1,982,161.00)
Unallocated Balance.....	\$3,017,839.00

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	\$1,000,000.00
General Fund (b)	\$1,535,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund (c), (d) and (e)	\$47,962,746.00
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (f), (g) and (h).....	\$18,037,661.02
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (i), (j), (k), (l), (m) and (n)	\$116,632,035.06
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (o) and (p)	\$110,475,533.46
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t) and (u)	\$381,171,801.00
Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund (v).....	\$3,017,839.00

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

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

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

Note: * Funding outlined in items a, c, m, n, and p is contingent upon approval of the 2008-09 State budget.

Mr. Donnelly specified that there were five areas (subsections a, c, m, n, and p) that are the subject to the passage of the 2008/09 State budget.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions regarding this informational item. There were none.

3. Special Project Planning Account—Informational

The Board has historically used a special project account to provide working funds for staff evaluation (appraisals, engineering, preliminary title reports, etc.) of proposed projects. Upon Board approval of a project, all expenditures incurred and recorded in the Special Project Planning Account are transferred to the Board approved project account which reduces the Special Project Planning Account expenditures. This procedure, therefore, acts as a revolving account for the pre-project expenses.

Some appropriations now made to the Board do not include a specific budgeted planning line item appropriation necessary to begin a project without prior Board authorization. Pre-project costs are a necessary expenditure in most all capital outlay projects. The Special Project Planning Account is used for these costs.

The Board, at the May 6, 1986 meeting, authorized the Executive Director to use up to 1% of a budgeted appropriation to set up and maintain an appropriate planning account with the provision it would be reported to the Board as an informational item at the next meeting.

Accordingly, a planning account has been set up as follows:

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund	\$10,000.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$35,000.00
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$40,000.00
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund	\$20,000.00
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 84)	\$200,000.00

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any question about this informational item. There were none.

* 4. Proposed Consent Calendar (Items 5 – 19)

Mr. Donnelly explained that Federal Recovery Land Acquisition Grants are the money provided through Fish and Wildlife Service Section 6 Program to provide matching funds to help complete the projects. Mr. Donnelly also pointed out that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service placed a deadline on Wildlife Conservation Board as of September 30th, 2008, to spend as much funds as they can. Wildlife Conservation Board staff has been working very hard to complete the projects prior to this Board meeting. Mr. Donnelly thanked the WCB staff for completing the projects on time.

Mr. Donnelly also introduced and thanked the following staff from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Ms. Laura Valoppi, Division Chief of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program which administers Section 6 grants; Ms. Tracey Vriens and Ms. Becky Miller; and Mr. Bill Kindred of the Department of Fish and Game.

Mr. Rogers welcomed and introduced Ms. Diane Colborn of Assembly Member Lois Wolk Office.

Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support for item #8 of the Consent Calendar (Chickahominy Creek Habitat Restoration) were received from Assembly Member Lois

Wolk, 8th Assembly District; Ms. Helen M. Thompson, Chairwoman, Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan; Mr. Duane Chamberlain, Supervisor, Fifth District.

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support for item #9 of the Consent Calendar (Ebabias Creek Habitat Restoration) was received from Jared Huffman, Assembly Member, 6th Assembly District.

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support for item #15 of the Consent Calendar (El Sobrante, Expansions 1, 2, and 3) was received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League.

Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support for item #16 of the Consent Calendar (San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion 31) were received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League; Mr. George Hague, Conservation Chair of the Moreno Valley Group; Ms. Ann L. Turner-McKibben, President of the Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley. Per their requests, letters of support from Ms. Turner-McKibben and Mr. Hague were personally delivered to each Board Member during the meeting by Ms. Kulagina.

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support for item #18 of the Consent Calendar (Escondido Creek) was received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League.

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support for item #19 of the Consent Calendar (Fieldstone Habitat Conservation Plan, Expansion 1), was received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions on any item of the Consent Calendar. Ms. Karen Finn had a question on item #13 (Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, Expansions 13 and 17 Augmentation, Monterey County) of the Consent Calendar. Her question was about an increase in funding and the issue with the tenants on this property.

Mr. Donnelly gave a brief explanation of the funding breakdown and indicated the scope of the project had changed slightly from what the Board had originally approved.

Mr. Donnelly called Ms. Teri Muzik, Senior Land Agent of the Wildlife Conservation Board, who was the manager for this particular project to provide more insights on Ms. Finn's question. Ms. Muzik clarified that there were actually two tenants on the property, long-term month-to-month rental tenants and an agriculture lease by a bulb grower. The month-to-month tenants are being relocated but the agricultural lease is remaining in place.

Mr. Donald Koch moved that the Board approve Consent Calendar items 4 through 19 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations, including the funding therein.

Motion carried.

*5. Approval of Minutes—May 22, 2008 Meeting

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve the minutes of the May 22, 2008 meeting.

Motion carried.

* 6. Recovery of Funds

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

- \$30,911.76** to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
- \$478,325.75** to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
- \$0.00** to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**
- \$202,560.13** to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund**
- \$2,668,088.77** to the **Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002**
- \$7,128.00** 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

Habitat Restoration, Battle Creek Wildlife Area, Shasta County

Allocated	\$260,000.00
Expended	<u>-229,088.24</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$30,911.76

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund **\$30,911.76**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Ash Creek Wildlife Area, Wetland Enhancement, Phase II, Modoc County

Allocated	\$100,000.00
Expended	<u>-98,079.14</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,920.86

Big Hill Preserve and Expansion 1, Placer County

Allocated	\$1,005,000.00
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Expended	<u>-997,829.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,171.00

Burcham and Wheeler Flat Wildlife Area, Mono County

Allocated	\$1,965,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,956,263.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$8,737.00

Burton Ranch Wetland Restoration, Lassen County

Allocated	\$40,000.00
Expended	<u>-40,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Canebrake Ecological Reserve, Cap Canyon Unit, Expansion 2, Kern County

Allocated	\$100,000.00
Expended	<u>-92,648.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,352.00

Eel River Wildlife Area, Wetland Enhancement, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$335,000.00
Expended	<u>-255,932.93</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$79,067.07

Grizzly Island Wildlife Area Wetland Enhancement, Solano County

Allocated	\$305,000.00
Expended	<u>-260,622.70</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$44,377.30

Humboldt Bay Wildlife Area, Lower Janes Creek, Expansion 1, Humboldt County

Allocated	\$240,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,476.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$238,524.00

Ingomar Ranch Wetland Restoration, Merced County

Allocated	\$70,000.00
Expended	<u>-70,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Laguna de Santa Rosa Ludwigia Eradication Project, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$560,000.00
Expended	<u>-559,945.20</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$54.80

Marshall Canyon Conservation Corridor, Expansion 1, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$1,740,000.00
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Expended	<u>-1,736,353.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,647.00

Martis Valley, Nevada and Placer Counties

Allocated	\$3,594,000.00
Expended	<u>-3,583,748.85</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,251.15

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area, Tolay Creek Unit,
Expansion 5, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$3,020,000.00
Expended	<u>-3,003,222.32</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$16,777.68

Portuguese Ridge Conservation Area, Mariposa County

Allocated	\$210,000.00
Expended	<u>-200,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

Purisima Hills, Santa Barbara County

Allocated	\$339,725.00
Expended	<u>-329,725.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

Ramona Grasslands, Expansion 1, San Diego County

Allocated	\$2,020,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,004,674.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$15,326.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, American River Parkway, Phase II,
Sacramento County

Allocated	\$382,000.00
Expended	<u>-382,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Riparian Habitat Restoration, Lower Putah Creek, Yolo/Solano County

Allocated	\$1,207,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,206,994.90</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5.10

Rudd Ranch Wetland Restoration, Butte/Sutter County

Allocated	\$85,000.00
Expended	<u>-85,000.00</u>

Balance for Recovery \$0.00

Solstice Creek/Corral Canyon Steelhead Restoration, Los Angeles County

Allocated \$145,000.00
 Expended -145,000.00
 Balance for Recovery \$0.00

Tule Basin Farms Wetlands Restoration, Sutter County

Allocated \$124,000.00
 Expended -124,000.00
 Balance for Recovery \$0.00

Wetland Habitat Restoration, Honey Lake Wildlife Area, Phase II, Lassen County

Allocated \$165,000.00
 Expended -155,660.49
 Balance for Recovery \$9,339.51

Wetland Habitat Restoration, Willow Creek Wildlife Area, Phase II, Lassen County

Allocated \$135,000.00
 Expended -119,314.72
 Balance for Recovery \$15,685.28

Total Habitat Conservation Fund \$478,325.75

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Shaver Lake Boat Ramp, Fresno County

Allocated \$128,000.00
 Expended -128,000.00
 Balance for Recovery \$0.00

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund \$0.00

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

Big River/Salmon Creek Forestlands, Mendocino County

Allocated \$7,270,000.00
 Expended -7,253,936.00
 Balance for Recovery \$16,064.00

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion 34, Del Norte County

Allocated \$33,000.00
 Expended -32,433.50
 Balance for Recovery \$566.50

Lake Redding Fishing Access Improvements, Shasta County

Allocated	\$326,158.00
Expended	<u>-326,158.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Lower Pitkin Marsh, Sonoma County

Allocated	\$576,000.00
Expended	<u>-571,476.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,524.00

Martis Valley, Nevada and Placer Counties

Allocated	\$2,916,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,916,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$0.00

Pine Hill Ecological Reserve, Salmon Falls Unit, Expansion 5, El Dorado County

Allocated	\$110,000.00
Expended	<u>-107,654.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,346.00

Project Planning, San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects

Allocated	\$10,000.00
Expended	<u>-0.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara County

Allocated	\$4,730,000.00
Expended	<u>-4,726,388.68</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,611.32

San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch Site Enhancement, Fresno County

Allocated	\$66,000.00
Expended	<u>-38,900.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$27,100.00

Santa Ana - Palomar Mountain Linkage (Department of Defense - Margarita Peak), San Diego County

Allocated	\$1,580,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,572,952.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,048.00

Shaver Lake Boat Ramp Augmentation, Fresno County

Allocated	\$500,000.00
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Expended	<u>-479,721.69</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$20,278.31

Walker Basin, Kern County

Allocated	\$118,000.00
Expended	<u>-6,978.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$111,022.00

Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund **\$202,560.13**

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

Bluebird Preserve, Expansion 1, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$5,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-5,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

Famosa Slough Restoration, San Diego County

Allocated	\$186,000.00
Expended	<u>-166,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$20,000.00

Gordon Mull Preserve, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$2,356,000.00
Expended	<u>-0.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,356,000.00

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area Restoration, Ponds 1, 1A, 2, 3, 4, and 5, Solano/Napa County

Allocated	\$11,789,654.00
Expended	<u>-11,517,565.23</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$272,088.77

Santa Monica Bay, Rancho Corral Canyon, Los Angeles County

Allocated	\$2,010,000.00
Expended	<u>-2,000,000.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$10,000.00

Total Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 **\$2,668,088.77**

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

Montgomery Woods, Expansion 1, Mendocino County

Allocated	\$255,000.00
Expended	<u>-247,872.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$7,128.00

Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 **\$7,128.00**

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve the Recovery of Funds for the projects listed on pages 6 through 12 of the agenda and close the project accounts. Recovery totals include \$30,911.76 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund; \$478,325.75 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; \$0.00 to the Wildlife Restoration Fund; \$202,560.13 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund; \$2,668,088.77 to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002; and \$7,128.00 to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006.

Motion carried.

- *7. California Fisheries Restoration Projects – 2008 \$1,217,172.00
Mendocino, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for a cooperative project with the California Conservation Corps, Ventura Watershed Protection District, Santa Barbara County Water Agency, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, State Coastal Conservancy, Carpinteria Coalition Volunteers, Community Environmental Council, Mendocino County Department of Transportation and private landowners to improve fish passage and overall habitat quality for Chinook and coho salmon and steelhead trout in four coastal streams located in Mendocino, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

During the past three years the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) has provided matching grant funds to DFG to assist in the restoration and enhancement of riparian and fisheries habitat and fish passage on numerous coastal streams and interior portions of the Klamath River watershed. This proposal would be to provide a cost-share to help fully fund each project, as approved by DFG during its technical review of projects for the 2008 Fisheries Restoration Grant Program.

Three of the four project sites consist of stream crossings that are blocking fish passage during migration, and the fourth is a stream section that has been invaded by the nonnative plant, *arundo donax*. All four streams drain into the Pacific Ocean, and provide access to spawning habitat for salmon and/or steelhead.

WCB funding is proposed to be provided for the following projects:

1. Lion Creek Bridge Replacement Project, Ventura County
Subcontractor: Ventura County Resource Conservation District

The project is located on Lions Creek on the Dos Rios Ranch, approximately 850 feet upstream of the confluence with San Antonio Creek, a tributary to the lower Ventura River near the town of Oak View, in Ventura County. The objectives of this project are to improve fish passage for adult and juvenile steelhead, a significant problem within the entire watershed. The project includes the demolition of a low water crossing, which will be replaced with an 85 ft. long X 13.75 ft. wide Railsplan steel flatcar bridge and construction of a temporary access road across San Antonio Creek from Old Creek Road. The landowner is a contributing partner on this project. Once completed steelhead will be able to access more than nine miles of medium to high quality habitat in the upper reaches of Lion Creek, thereby facilitating migration for spawning adults and over-summering juveniles.

2. San Antonio Creek/Soule Park Arundo Removal Project, Ventura County,
Subcontractor: Ventura County Resource Conservation District

The project site (where the arundo will be removed) is in a section of San Antonio Creek, adjacent to the Soule County Park and Golf Course in the city of Ojai. The upstream project boundary is Highway 150. The downstream boundary coincides with the southern boundary of the golf course. The stream marks the park's northwest boundary. The project area is approximately two miles upstream of San Antonio Creek's confluence with Lion Creek, and six miles upstream of its confluence with the Ventura River.

Removal of the arundo by this project will improve the effectiveness of other habitat projects occurring downstream, including the Matilija Dam Giant Reed Removal Project, the Ventura River Watershed Assessment Project and restoration of the Ventura River lagoon. The cumulative effect of all the projects will be increased and improved steelhead habitat through the entire watershed.

3. Gobernador Creek/Widdoes Fish Passage Enhancement Project,
Santa Barbara County
Subcontractor: Community Environmental Council

The project site is located on Gobernador Creek approximately one-half miles upstream from the confluence of Carpinteria Creek. The goal is to expand and re-establish spawning and rearing habitat for adult and juvenile steelhead in Gobernador Creek. The project consists of removing the existing in-stream fair-weather crossing and replacing it with a clear span bridge. The landowner is a contributing partner on this project. The immediate benefit of this project will be to provide access to an additional 0.2 miles of habitat up to the next upstream barrier, a debris basin that is the final large fish passage barrier to upper reaches of the watershed. Plans are being developed with DFG to remove this final barrier. The debris basin removal project was previously funded under a prior Board grant as a DFG priority, and is moving through the permitting process.

4. #124 – HP Ancestor Creek Migration Barrier Removal Project, Mendocino County
Subcontractor: Mendocino County Department of Transportation

This project will involve work on Briceland Thorn Road, Ancestor Creek crossing, located approximately one mile east of the town of Four Corners. Ancestor Creek runs under the road through undersized culverts.

The project goal is to improve fish passage for Chinook and coho salmon and steelhead trout in Ancestor Creek, a tributary to the upper Mattole River in Mendocino County. This will be accomplished by removing the existing undersized culvert pipes, excavating the channel to its original dimensions, and replacing the culvert with a pipe arch structure that will carry traffic on top and allow successful fish passage in the stream channel under the road. The ultimate objective is to improve fish access to approximately 2 miles of spawning habitat for adult salmonids and rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids. In addition, the project will eliminate the potential for 375 cubic yards of sediment being delivered into the stream channel in the event of a culvert failure.

All of the above projects will all be managed by DFG, and should begin work within the next year and be completed within the next two years, weather permitting. If funding is approved, DFG will secure access and management agreements with the landowners, and will conduct periodic monitoring.

All projects are consistent with the objectives of the DFG's 1996 Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California and the 2004 Recovery Strategy for California coho salmon. The projects will also be implemented according to the guidelines provided in the DFG's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual.

Estimated Project Cost and Funding Distribution

Project No.	Project Name	Other Partner Share *	WCB Amount	Total Project Cost
1	#050-FP Lion Creek Bridge Replacement Project, Ventura County	\$379,654.00	\$64,886.00	\$444,540.00
2	#199-HR San Antonio Creek/Soule Park Arundo Removal Project, Ventura County	\$200,000.00	\$193,654.00	\$393,654.00
3	#169-HB Gobernador Creek/Widdoes Fish Passage Enhancement Project, Santa Barbara County	\$92,795.00	\$649,957.00	\$742,752.00
4.	#124-HP Ancestor Creek Migration Barrier Removal Project, Mendocino County	\$138,640.00	258,675.00	\$397,315.00
Subtotals		\$811,089.00	\$1,167,172.00	\$1,978,261.00
	DFG Cost Recovery – Department Overhead		\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
	TOTALS	\$811,089.00	\$1,217,172.00	\$2,028,261.00

Funding Breakdown:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,217,172.00
California Conservation Corps	7,634.00
Ventura County Watershed Protection District	200,000.00
Santa Barbara County Water Agency	65,855.00
Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project	1,500.00
State Coastal Conservancy	108,495.00
Carpinteria Coalition Volunteers	2,700.00
Mendocino County Department of Transportation	33,145.00
Community Environmental Council	9,740.00
Landowners	382,020.00
TOTAL:	\$2,028,061.00

Project costs will include design, permitting/right of way, operating expenses (labor, materials and supplies), project monitoring, project management, and administration.

The proposed funding sources for this project are the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650, and Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117) Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 50, Section 79572(a) SoCal). Both sources provide funding for the protection, restoration or enhancement of riparian and fisheries habitat and are consistent with the objectives of this project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board.

The DFG, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and has prepared proposed written findings documenting the Board's compliance with CEQA.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board adopt the written findings and approve the project as proposed; allocate \$269,756.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 and \$947,416.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786 (e/f) (Prop. 50, Section 79572(a) SoCal); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to complete the project; and authorize staff and the DFG to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *8. Chickahominy Creek Habitat Restoration, Yolo County \$404,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the California Waterfowl Association for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to restore 40± acres of riparian habitat, 4.5± miles of hedgerows, and 50± acres of native grass while improving water efficiency and providing vegetation for pollinators, on privately owned agricultural land. The project site is located four miles north and three miles east of the City of Winters.

Under Proposition 84 the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) received funding to work with farmers to enhance wildlife habitat on their working farms in a manner consistent with their ongoing agricultural practices. The intent of the funding is to assist these landowners in developing wildlife friendly practices that can be sustained and co-exist with their agricultural operations. Within California, large numbers of wildlife species rely on private agricultural properties for habitat. The Board sees this funding as a great opportunity not only to develop new and innovative approaches to integrate agricultural activities with ecosystem conservation, but equally important as a way to collaborate and develop new partnerships with the agricultural community.

The property is located in the lower Putah Creek watershed. Farming on the property consists mostly of a mixture of small grains and crops. Surrounding uses are mostly agricultural, including walnut orchards, almond orchards, rice, alfalfa, oats, and other hay crops, with some small natural habitat areas interspersed.

The project will provide protection and a significant expansion of a diversity of habitats that will benefit six high priority waterfowl species, seven priority waterfowl species, and 16 other species of waterfowl. The project will also benefit a variety of other wildlife, including 26 species of priority birds, 14 federal and state endangered or threatened species, 26 species of special concern and more than 225 species within California that are dependent on wetlands for breeding, wintering and migrating. Specifically, some of the wildlife species that will benefit include: bald eagle, Swainson's hawk, greater sandhill crane, western yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, bank swallow, California black rail, giant garter snake, California red-legged frog, and valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a habitat management plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowner is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$404,000.00
California Waterfowl Association	35,833.60
Natural Resources Conservation Service	126,252.00

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	25,000.00
California Department of Fish and Game	22,000.00
Landowner	39,501.00
TOTAL:	\$652,586.60

Project costs will be for construction/earthwork; water control structures; native grass seed, containerized plant stock, vegetation installation; maintenance and monitoring; and project design, construction supervision, and administration.

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), Section 75055(d)(4). This funding allows for assisting farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$404,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), 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.

Motion carried.

- *9. Ebabias Creek Habitat Restoration, \$288,000.00
Marin and Sonoma Counties

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District to restore riparian habitat on four farms and stabilize soils through native plantings to provide wildlife habitat and improve water quality on agricultural lands. Three of the project sites are adjacent to each other along Ebabias Creek located two miles northeast of Valley Ford, in Sonoma County; and the fourth project site is a half mile south of Valley Ford, in Marin County.

Under Proposition 84 the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) received funding to work with farmers to enhance wildlife habitat on their working farms in a manner consistent with their ongoing agricultural practices. The intent of the funding is to assist these landowners in developing wildlife friendly practices that can be sustained and co-exist with their agricultural operations. Within California, large numbers of wildlife species rely on private agricultural properties for habitat. The Board sees this funding as a great opportunity not only to develop new and innovative approaches to integrate agricultural activities with ecosystem conservation, but equally important as a way to collaborate and

develop new partnerships with the agricultural community.

The properties are all within the Estero Americano Watershed. The Estero Americano is a fjord-like estuary that extends from the Pacific Ocean, just south of Bodega Harbor four miles inland to the Town of Valley Ford. The two main tributaries are Americano Creek, that drains the upper third of the Estero Americano Watershed and Ebabias Creek, the only stream in the watershed with perennial flow and healthy populations of aquatic animals, including the California freshwater shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*). The subwatershed for Ebabias Creek is 4,193 acres in size, and possesses much of the remaining native vegetation in the larger Estero Americano Watershed. Unlike many coastal wetlands in California, the Estero Americano is relatively undisturbed. This is due, in large measure, to the unique continuity of land ownership and land use patterns in the watershed. All project sites are bordered with complementary land uses including small, multigenerational family run dairies and livestock ranches that are the mainstay of the local economy, and account for over 80 percent of land use in the watershed.

The project sites will provide habitat for several species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals; create or enhance wildlife corridors, and improve soil stabilization and water quality. Specifically, some of the wildlife species and habitats that will benefit include: rearing habitat for two federally listed endangered fish species, the tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*) and winter-run steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The mudflats, open water, and extensive marsh area of the estuary provide seasonally important foraging habitat for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, and resident long-legged wading birds. The birds are thought to be taking advantage of the tide lag between Bodega Harbor and the estuary that increases the amount of time during which they can feed at low tide. Most of the migratory waterbirds using the open water of the estuary are exclusively winter residents, arriving in late fall and staying through early spring.

All four properties are located within the vicinity of several listed species, including the California freshwater shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*), tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), San Bruno elfin butterfly (*Callophrys missii bayensis*), Myrtle's silverspot (*Speyeria zerene myrtleae*), and California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*). The Estero Americano and its tributary, Ebabias Creek, are also designated as Critical Habitat for "winter run" steelhead trout by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) (50 CFR 226). Therefore, water quality improvements on the properties will directly improve downstream habitat for endangered species both in the stream and the estuary.

The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the properties for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a habitat management plan, and has secured access to the property for the term of the project. If at any time during the life of the project, the grantee is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board

\$288,000.00

State Water Resources Control Board	250,700.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	85,700.00
TOTAL:	\$624,400.00

Project costs will be for construction/earthwork; rip rap; culvert; vegetation installation; mulch, seed, and erosion control; fencing; labor; maintenance and monitoring; and project design, construction supervision, and administration.

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), Section 75055(d)(4). This funding allows for assisting farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection and is consistent the objectives of this project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board.

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$288,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (Proposition 84) 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.

Motion carried.

- *10. Central Coast Corridor Restoration, \$184,600.00
Santa Cruz County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Wild Farm Alliance to restore wildlife habitat and corridors on two farms by planting hedgerows and native plants that also benefit farming operations, by attracting beneficial insects and pollinators, increasing soil moisture, and improving water quality on agricultural lands. The restoration will take place on two farms located approximately one mile from the community of Corralitos.

Under Proposition 84 the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) received funding to work with farmers to enhance wildlife habitat on their working farms in a manner consistent with their ongoing agricultural practices. The intent of the funding is to assist these landowners in developing wildlife friendly practices that can be sustained and co-exist with their agricultural operations. Within California large numbers of wildlife species rely on private agricultural properties for habitat. The Board sees this funding as a great opportunity not only to develop new and innovative approaches to integrate agricultural activities with ecosystem conservation, but equally important as a way to collaborate and

develop new partnerships with the agricultural community.

Both properties are within the Lower Corralitos Watershed, a coastal watershed with a wide range of historical and diverse habitats that includes riparian valleys, redwood and hardwood forests, coastal sage scrub, maritime chaparral, and grasslands. Both project sites are bordered with complementary land uses of rural homes, agricultural land, grazing land, and small farm operations.

The project sites will provide habitat for several species of birds, reptiles, and small mammals; provide habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators; create wildlife corridors, and improve soil stabilization. Specifically, some of the wildlife species that will benefit include: healthy populations of deer, coyotes, bobcats, skunks, frogs, snakes, bats, birds of prey, and songbirds. The project sites are located adjacent to or near the identified habitat of the Santa Cruz kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys venustus venustus*), habitat of several listed species, including the listed Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), and western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*).

To spread awareness of these farm projects, a demonstration field tour for area growers and technical conservation advisors will be scheduled. Reaching this wider audience is expected to generate interest in implementing similar projects. One property will specifically demonstrate the capacity for vineyards to be successful and also accommodate wildlife by fencing just the crop instead of the entire property and by providing for wildlife movement outside the fence. The second property, having orchards and vegetable crops, will show how it is possible to operate a viable, diverse farm while supporting wildlife habitat and protecting water quality. CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) members and local students visit this property on a regular basis. Because education is an ongoing component of the farming operations, the landowners have hired a staff person to focus on increasing educational use of the farm. Student audiences will be introduced to the restoration activities undertaken at the site.

The landowners at both sites have agreed to manage and maintain the properties for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a habitat management plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$184,600.00
Santa Cruz RCD	2,600.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	1,000.00
Packard Foundation	21,500.00
Landowner (In-kind)	42,700.00

Volunteers (In-kind)	4,000.00
TOTAL:	\$256,400.00

Project costs will be for nursery stock, upland, and riparian vegetation; site preparation and planting; drip irrigation installation; project signs; and project design, construction supervision, and administration.

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), Section 75055(d)(4). This funding source allows for assisting farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$184,600.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), 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.

Motion carried.

- *11. Big Water Wetland Enhancement, Merced County \$91,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) to enhance 316± acres of seasonal wetlands and 84± acres of semi-permanent wetlands on privately owned land protected with a permanent U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) wetland easement. The property is located approximately five miles east of the City of Los Banos, adjacent to Santa Fe Grade, two miles southeast of its intersection with Highway 152.

The Grasslands is one of the most important wetland areas in California, containing and representing nearly one third of all the managed wetlands in the State. It has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention, as a Wetland of International Importance, one of only 22 sites so recognized in the United States. Most of the 180,000 acres of wildlife habitat Grasslands are privately owned. The USFWS manages nearly 50,000 acres of wetlands and uplands as refuge land, and DFG manages nearly 19,000 acres of wildlife habitat on the Los Banos, North Grasslands and Volta Wildlife Areas. The Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) considers this area to be of critical importance for breeding and wintering waterfowl and other wetland dependent species. The CVJV implementation plan calls for the protection and enhancement of an additional 20,000± acres of restorable lands within the San Joaquin Basin, which includes the Grasslands, and the enhancement of more than 6,700 acres of existing wetland habitats each year.

The property lies immediately adjacent to, and upstream of the DFG's Los Banos Wildlife Area Gadwall Unit that was restored with assistance from the Board in 2001. The property is located in a narrow wetland corridor between the North Grasslands and the South Grasslands. The property has been managed for many decades as a duck hunting club and has many different habitat types, from uplands and native shrubs to seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands. Over the years, the water control structures have begun to fail, the wetlands have become choked with tules and cattails and the levees have eroded and are near failure. This erosion in habitat quality normally occurs in all managed wetlands, usually requiring the entire property be renovated every 15 to 25 years. No significant upgrades or repairs have occurred on the site for a number of decades and as a result the property is in need of immediate enhancement.

DU, DFG and USFWS biologists have designed a project that will replace all the water control structures that are close to failure, excavate swales through seasonal wetland units to facilitate drainage and supply, and strengthen existing levees to provide long-term management capabilities. In addition, smaller wetlands will be consolidated into larger units to make management easier and to provide the larger wetland blocks that are more attractive to many wetland species. Most of the property will be managed as seasonal wetlands with associated uplands, and will be flooded in the winter and irrigated in the summer. The large semi-permanent wetland in the center will be left as one large lake, and the water supply system will be upgraded.

The 80± acre semi-permanent wetland, the "Big Water" for which the property is named, provides deep-water habitat that is uncommon in the Grasslands and necessary for birds such as canvasbacks and grebes. The enhanced seasonal wetlands provide ideal habitat for a number of species such as mallards, northern pintails and green-winged teal. Shorebirds that will benefit from the wetlands include greater yellowlegs, black-necked stilts and long-billed curlews. A host of other species will also benefit, from swallows and garter snakes to river otters and beavers.

The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a habitat management plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$91,000.00
San Luis Canal Company	12,406.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	10,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	5,614.00
Landowner	<u>7,500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$126,520.00

Project costs include earthmoving; water control structures; and project design, construction supervision and administration.

The proposed funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 17), Section 2786 (d) IWCP, which provides funding for the protection, restoration or enhancement of wetland habitat in the Central Valley and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$91,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) (Inland Wetland Conservation Program); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *12. Los Banos Wildlife Area, Gadwall Unit, \$922,375.00
Merced County

This proposal was to consider the State's acquisition of 154± acres of privately-owned land located in Merced County. This proposal also requests authorization to apply funds from an estate disbursement directed to be used by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for the protection of waterfowl in Merced County toward the purchase price of the property. The Director of Finance has approved acceptance of the bequest. The purpose of this acquisition is to protect historic wetlands and improve distribution of waterfowl within the Grasslands Ecological Area by protecting additional wetland habitat within the area surrounding the Los Banos Wildlife Area.

The property is located on the southeast corner of Santa Fe Grade and Arroyo Canal, south of Highway 152 in an unincorporated area of Merced County, within the Los Banos city limits.

The property lies in western Merced County and is part of the Grasslands Ecological Area (GEA). The GEA consists of six state wildlife areas, a state park, a large national wildlife refuge complex and over 160 private duck clubs. It has been recognized as a Globally Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society and American Bird Conservancy, and as one of forty Internationally Significant Shorebird Habitats by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. The GEA typically winters about twenty percent of the waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway. Acquisition of this property will help further the completion of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture's goal to protect or restore some 200,000 acres of wetlands in the Central Valley. Waterfowl, shorebirds and other waterbirds will greatly benefit from the restoration of seasonal wetland habitat found on the subject property.

The property will be managed by the DFG and staff will gather appropriate survey data to evaluate possible future habitat restoration and public use facilities including the necessary water conveyances, roads, trail systems and other infrastructure. Appropriate public access will be considered once the management plan for the property is in place.

The DFG is the beneficiary under a trust from the estate of a donor who asked to remain anonymous. The trust directs the proceeds are to be used to acquire habitat for waterfowl in Merced County. Therefore, we are acknowledging the trust funds for this acquisition.

The property owner has agreed to sell the 154± acre property for \$884,000.00, the fair market value as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$884,000.00
TOTAL:	\$884,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$38,375.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including the appraisal, title and escrow fees and review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$922,375.00. The proposed funding sources allow for the protection of inland wetlands to benefit waterfowl, and are consistent with the purposes of this project.

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 under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$922,375.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(d) (Inland Wetland Conservation Program) for the acquisition and 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.

Motion carried.

- *13. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve Expansions 13 and 17 Augmentation, Monterey County \$1,288,000.00

This proposal was to consider an allocation for an increase in funding to address unanticipated planning costs and a shortfall in funding associated with a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant to facilitate the acquisition of two properties totaling 228± acres in Monterey County. The purpose of the acquisitions is to protect habitat for threatened and endangered species and a significant natural landscape and ecosystem in the Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve.

Expansion 13 was approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) on August 23, 2007, and Expansion 17 was approved by the Board on February 20, 2008. At the August 23, 2007 meeting, the Board accepted the LWCF grant and approved the use of those funds for the acquisition of Expansion 13. On February 20, 2008, the remainder of the grant was approved for purchase of Expansion 17. Although staff requested disbursement of the grant funds in April 2008, the funds were not released by DPR prior to expiration of the grant. To complete the proposed acquisitions in a timely manner, staff is requesting authority to use State funds to close the escrows on these projects. Staff has requested an extension of, and subject to approval of the extension, will be seeking reimbursement from the federal LWCP grant.

This proposal is also requesting funds to pay the cost of additional environmental testing performed on the Expansion 17 property, as well as fund a relocation study and related expenses for tenants currently living on that property. The acquisition of Expansion 17 would be contingent upon approval of its environmental condition by the Department of General Services. When this project was initially proposed to the Board, the tenants were going to remain as caretakers. Since that time, circumstances have changed and the tenants will be leaving. The relocation study will determine whether or not the tenants are entitled to relocation assistance benefits. This augmentation will fund the study and related expenses.

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

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

Elkhorn Slough is one of the few coastal estuaries in California and harbors a remarkable diversity of wildlife, including southern sea otters, harbor seals, over 340 species of birds, 100 species of fish and many unusual plants. These include, but are not limited to, Hooker's manzanita, Monterey ceanothus, Pajaro manzanita, Monterey spineflower, western snowy plover, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby and California tiger salamander. One of 27 National Estuarine Research Reserves established in the coastal zone of the United States, Elkhorn Slough has been designated a State Ecological Reserve by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and a Globally Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.

The subject parcels are very valuable as part of the overall Elkhorn Slough ecosystem. The properties contain coastal marsh and grassland habitat. In addition to the high wildlife values and the fish and wildlife values of the adjoining slough, the subject

properties may also provide recreational potential. Potential uses may include nature study, scientific research and bird watching. The DFG currently manages the reserve and will include these properties in the reserve for management purposes.

The requested augmentation is as follows:

LWCF grant	\$ 987,086.00
Planning costs	<u>\$ 300,914.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$1,288,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$914.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs by the Board, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$1,288,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of threatened and endangered species and significant natural areas statewide, and is consistent with the purposes of these two projects. Subject to approval of an extension of the federal grant, reimbursement of the State grant funds will be received by the Board and will go into the Wildlife Restoration Fund.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,288,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the funding augmentation; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish these projects; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *14. Shay Meadow Conservation Area, and Expansion 1, \$152,500.00
San Bernardino County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of two privately-owned parcels totaling 8± acres in western San Bernardino County, and the acceptance of a Recovery Land Acquisition grant from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to be applied toward the purchase of the properties. The purposes of the project are for the protection of wet meadow and seasonal pond habitat for the endangered and fully protected, unarmored threespine stickleback fish and other threatened, endangered and sensitive species that may occur on the parcels.

The subject parcels are located near the community of Big Bear City, east of the incorporated City of Big Bear Lake. The proposed Shay Meadow Conservation Area property contains 6± acres of vacant land and is located west of and adjacent to Hatchery Road (also known as Lakewood Drive), at the intersection of Cascade Street, a dirt road which bisects the property from east to west. The site includes elevated, gentle slopes and level, low-lying meadow to the south. The proposed Expansion 1 property includes 2± level, vacant acres immediately south of the above property, west of and adjacent to Hatchery Road. This property features low-lying and wet meadow, and a seasonal pond at the north end. Water flows intermittently across both properties toward

Shay Creek and Shay Pond. Both properties are adjacent to U.S. Forest Service land east of Hatchery Road.

The subject properties would protect endangered species habitat and create a corridor between the Shay Meadow Pond property to the west, owned by the Big Bear City Community Services District, and the 670,000+ acre San Bernardino National Forest immediately to the east and surrounding the communities around Big Bear Lake. An additional six parcels totaling 11± acres have been identified as candidates for possible future acquisition, to further protect and buffer the stickleback habitat.

The Shay Meadow area provides one of the two known habitats for this population of stickleback. The area is at risk of sedimentation, resulting in degraded water quality that could result in the extirpation of this population. Preservation of the properties would protect water quality and maintain natural meadow functions. The area also contains habitat for other state and federally-listed species such as the bird footed checkerbloom, slender petaled thelypodium, San Bernardino blue grass, California dandelion, Southern mountain buckwheat, Southern rubber boa and two-stripe garter snake. This acquisition would allow the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to monitor and manage the fish, plants and wildlife populations, which may provide opportunity for translocation of experimental populations for recovery purposes, contributing to the preservation of the biodiversity of the San Bernardino Mountains as a whole.

The DFG has recommended the purchase of the properties to protect important native habitat and linkage, and would monitor and manage them in conjunction with the existing nearby Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve. The DFG would join the Big Bear City Community Services District and the U. S. Forest Service in a cooperative agreement to manage the water resources across the collective properties for habitat benefits.

The property owners have agreed to sell the properties to the State for the \$450,000.00 total purchase price. The appraised values have been approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

	<u>Shay Meadow Conservation Area</u>	<u>Conservation Area Expansion 1</u>
Appraised Value	\$300,000.00	\$150,000.00
USFWS Grant	\$225,000.00	\$112,500.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	<u>\$ 75,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 37,500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$300,000.00	\$150,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$40,000.00 is needed for the appraisal, environmental review, review costs by the DGS, and other project-related costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$152,500.00. The proposed funding source

allows for the acquisition of habitats that are critical to the sustainability of threatened or endangered species, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$337,500.00; allocate \$152,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *15. El Sobrante, Expansions 1, 2, and 3, \$1,987,000.00
Riverside County

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority); the acceptance of a Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); and the authorization to enter into an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Authority to acquire three properties totaling 104± acres in the Cities of Wildomar and Murrieta. The purposes of this project are to protect threatened and endangered species and wildlife corridors, and to implement federal, state, and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in western Riverside County.

The subject properties, all in western Riverside County, are currently under private ownership. Two are located in the newly incorporated City of Wildomar and the third in the nearby City of Murrieta. The topography of all three is rolling to hilly. The vegetation consists of mixed grasslands and Riversidean sage scrub, with intermittent riparian corridors on the two Wildomar properties. The land is undeveloped, except for several dirt access roads. There are no improvements on the properties.

Western Riverside County is one of the most ecologically important areas in the United States and arguably contains the most listed species of any region in California. The area is currently occupied by many types of animals and plants from swallows to golden eagles, jackrabbits to bobcats and the federally-threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, federally-endangered Stephen's kangaroo rat, State and federally-endangered least Bell's vireo, State and federally-endangered Munz's onion and other sensitive species. All are habitat specialists, relying on grasslands, sage scrub and riparian plant communities, all of which are rapidly disappearing in Southern California. Acquisition of properties in Western Riverside County is important in a broader

ecological context, providing north-south corridors for wildlife, and contributing to the genetic viability of a number of native species.

Under the Authority's management, limited public access may be possible without disturbance of the habitat values. Western Riverside County has been experiencing unprecedented growth and rapid development. The amount of open space and natural lands is rapidly declining as these areas are converted to housing and commercial uses. These factors create an urgent need to conserve remaining available lands to support populations of native species and habitats and to ensure the recovery of listed species. Finding property owners willing to sell at fair market prices has been difficult. Failure to acquire such property when it is available will result in a lost opportunity that may not come again as open lands become scarcer and more expensive.

These properties will be owned and managed by the Authority (a joint powers authority made up of the County and 14 cities) as a part of its mission of creating a habitat reserve system of 153,000 acres (of which approximately 37,000 acres have been conserved to date) to protect the 146 species covered by the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Educational and low impact recreational activities are encouraged at appropriate locations so long as they do not interfere with the basic preservation goals. Under the Authority's management, limited public access to the properties may be possible without disturbance of the habitat values.

The fair market value of the three properties, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), is \$3,949,000.00. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

	<u>Expansion 1</u>	<u>Expansion 2</u>	<u>Expansion 3</u>
Appraised value:	\$1,540,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$2,109,000.00
USFWS grant:	\$ 770,000.00	\$152,500.00	\$1,054,500.00
Board allocation:	<u>\$ 770,000.00</u>	<u>\$147,500.00</u>	<u>\$1,054,500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$1,540,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$2,109,000.00

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,972,000.00
USFWS Grant	\$1,977,000.00
TOTAL:	\$3,949,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs, including appraisal review fees by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$1,987,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants that implement or assist in establishing a Natural Community Conservation Plan, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed Grant Agreement and Agreement to Subgrant provide that staff of the Board will review and approve all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and the instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into an escrow established for the acquisition of each property.

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$1,977,000.00 and approve an Agreement to Subgrant the federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; allocate \$1,987,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), Section 75055(c) for an acquisition grant and 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.

Motion carried.

- *16. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Expansion 31, \$660,000.00
Riverside County

Expansion 30 has been withdrawn from consideration at this time.

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of fee title interest in an 87 acre property, to protect seasonal wetlands and significant habitat for threatened and endangered species located southeast of Moreno Valley in Riverside County. The purposes of the project are for the protection of threatened and endangered species and the acquisition of land to further implement federal, state, and local Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in western Riverside County.

The San Jacinto Wildlife Area (wildlife area) is located in the San Jacinto Valley of southern California, approximately 18 miles southeast of the City of Riverside, and just north of the community of Lakeview. The City of Moreno Valley is located to the northwest of the wildlife area and its southern corporate limits reach the northern boundary of the wildlife area.

Initial land acquisitions for the wildlife area were completed during the period of 1981-1982 as part of a mitigation package developed to compensate for wildlife habitat losses resulting from the construction of the State Water Project. As opportunity and circumstance allowed, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) continued to acquire additional properties. Since 1995, the Board has acquired approximately 3,000 acres adjacent to or within Mystic Lake for the wildlife area. The western boundary of this 9,000-acre wildlife area is contiguous with the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, placing a total of approximately 16,200 acres under public ownership and protection.

The acquisition of this property is important to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area as it will place nearly all of the southwestern shoreline of Mystic Lake under protection through either conservation easement or fee ownership. The wildlife area is also part of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG)-approved Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) efforts in western Riverside County. The permanent protection of these properties will contribute to the NCCP plan and provide for the protection of habitat, open space and protection for the multiple species that are native to the area.

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

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

The DFG has recommended that the subject property would be significant addition to the wildlife area and has identified this site as a high priority for protection.

Expansion 31: The project involves the proposed acquisition of fee title to an 87± acre property, referred to as Expansion 31. Located near the southwest shoreline of Mystic Lake, this vacant farm land is nearly surrounded by the existing wildlife area. Management of this property will be assumed by wildlife area personnel with little or no increase in management costs. The proposed acquisition and direct management by DFG will ensure the continuation of activities that are compatible to those on the wildlife area including numerous available options ranging from farming to reversion to native vegetation.

The property owners of this 87± acre parcel have agreed to sell their property in fee to the State at a bargain price of \$650,000.00. The DGS' approved appraised value of the property is \$800,000.00. It is estimated that an additional \$10,000.00 will be needed for project-related costs, including appraisal, environmental assessment, title and escrow fees and review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$660,000.00.

The proposed funding source for Expansion 31 allows for the acquisition of lands to implement or establish a Natural Community Conservation Plan, and is consistent with

the purposes of this project.

The proposed acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as the acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as the transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. Based on the documents reviewed in connection with this project, no exceptions to CEQA exemptions apply in this case and there are no potential impacts from unusual circumstances.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$660,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), Section 75055(c) for the acquisition and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish the project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *17. Crestridge Preserve, South Crest, and Expansions 1 and 2, \$181,500.00
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider an allocation for a grant to the Endangered Habitats League, Inc. (EHL) to acquire three privately-owned properties totaling 188± acres in eastern San Diego County to protect coastal sage scrub and other native habitats in a key wildlife corridor for numerous species; and to consider acceptance and subgrant of a U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Land Acquisition grant to the EHL to be applied toward the acquisitions.

All three subject parcels are moderate- to steeply-sloping, privately-owned vacant land located near the community of Crest, immediately east of the City of El Cajon. Primary access to this portion of San Diego County is by way of Interstate 8, the principal east/west freeway traversing the County. The Crestridge Preserve, South Crest parcel includes 32± acres west of Alta Lane and south of La Cresta Road, which connects to Interstate 8. Residential development occurs on small lots in the immediate vicinity between the subject and La Cresta Road, and immediately west of the project within the boundary of the City of El Cajon. The parcel includes a moderately sloping site suitable for residential development, with panoramic views across El Cajon to a distant ocean horizon.

Both Expansions 1 and 2 have pending lot line adjustments to finalize the parcels at the contemplated size. Upon Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) approval of funding, the respective landowners are prepared to submit lot line adjustment applications for final approval. Board funding would be contingent upon formal County approval of the lot line adjustments with recorded legal access to each of the parcels.

In 1999, the Board funded the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) acquisition of the

nearly 2,400± acre Crestridge Ecological Reserve, currently operated by the EHL. The DFG is in the process of transferring the Ecological Reserve property to the EHL, and intends to retain a conservation easement. The Board has also granted funds to the EHL to acquire two nearby properties totaling over 300 acres.

Like the nearby Ecological Reserve, these proposed project properties contain a variety of landscapes and habitats, primarily including coastal sage scrub habitat for the California gnatcatcher, and habitat for over 50 other sensitive and protected species. Further, the acquisitions are located in a critical “biological core and linkage area” in the South County Subarea Plan of the County of San Diego’s Multiple Species Conservation Program established pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act. The acquisitions would increase the protected block of biologically diverse habitat, augmenting habitat corridors between lands south of Interstate 8 and those to the north, including the USFWS’s San Diego National Wildlife Refuge and the Cleveland National Forest.

The EHL will accept ownership and management of the proposed acquisitions. Ultimately, the EHL intends to transfer the properties, along with other holdings, to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC) for perpetual management. Such a transfer would be subject to Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) approval. The EHL (ultimately EHC) would manage the subject properties in conjunction with the existing Ecological Reserve and other nearby acquisitions. Compatible public uses include hiking, photography, bird watching, and the EHL’s unique on-site educational program which assists in development of standards-based multidisciplinary programs combining science, technology, art, history and language arts.

The property owners have agreed to sell the properties to the EHL at the combined appraised value of \$2,250,000.00. The appraised value of the all three properties has been approved by the State’s Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

	<u>Crestridge, South Crest</u>	<u>Expansion 1</u>	<u>Expansion 2</u>
Appraised value	\$500,000.00	\$1,250,000.00	\$500,000.00
USFWS Grant	\$449,500.00	\$1,199,500.00	\$449,500.00
Board	<u>\$ 50,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 50,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 50,500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$500,000.00	\$1,250,000.00	\$500,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$30,000.00 will be needed for the appraisal review costs by the DGS, bringing the total recommended allocation for this project to \$181,500.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of real property subject to a Natural Community Conservation Plan, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grants and subgrants require Board staff review and approve all proposed title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance

prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow accounts for the acquisitions.

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$2,098,500.00, and an Agreement to Subgrant the federal grant funds to the Endangered Habitats League; allocate \$181,500.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(6) for the grant and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

- *18. Escondido Creek, \$200,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of 24± acres of privately-owned land located in San Diego County. The purposes of this acquisition project are to protect critical habitat for the California gnatcatcher, southern maritime chaparral and southern willow scrub/brackish marsh habitats, to further implement the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Natural Community Conservation Planning efforts in San Diego County, and enhancement of a general wildlife corridor between larger habitat areas. This proposal also requests authorization to accept a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to apply the grant funds toward the purchase price of the property.

The property is within the western limits of the 1,740-acre Cielo Master Plan area, which is located along the north side of Del Dios Highway about four miles northeast of the Rancho Santa Fe area. The Cielo Master Plan calls for the development of 527 luxury residences and estate home sites averaging from one to three acres, a commercial village center, a fire station, recreation areas, formal gardens, open space and trails. Because of the steep topographic characteristics, the home sites have been oriented atop peaks and ridge lines to take advantage of unobstructed view potential westerly towards the Pacific Ocean. Over sixty percent of the gross area is preserved as open space.

The subject property falls within the County of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program which addresses multiple species habitat needs and the preservation of natural communities for an approximate 900 square mile area in southwestern San Diego

County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss and species endangerment, and the mitigation for the potential loss of covered species and their habitat due to the direct impacts of future development of private and public lands. The MSCP creates a process for the issuance of state and federal permits and other authorizations under the state and federal Endangered Species Acts and the state and federal approved Natural Community Conservation Plan to mitigate impacts to plants, wildlife and their habitats while allowing development to proceed.

The subject lands are located within the boundaries of the proposed North County MSCP Subarea Plan. Lands immediately to the east are part of the Lake Hodges Segment of the adopted South County MSCP Subarea Plan; in this context, the subject lies adjacent to biological core and linkage areas. The property contains coastal sage scrub that supports the federally-threatened California gnatcatcher and provides an important connection between designated and proposed core areas off-site; it is also recognized as having high conservation value.

The subject property is also identified as one of the last remaining connections in private ownership between preserved lands to the east in the Lake Hodges Segment of the South County MSCP, preserved lands to the north within Escondido Creek, and preserved lands to the west/northwest that were originally acquired to mitigate off-site for future habitat disturbance in the Rancho La Costa Master Plan of eastern Carlsbad. When implemented, the combination of the various MSCP subarea plans and other related subregional plans will create an interconnected habitat preserve system throughout the County of San Diego.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has recognized the importance of the subject as one of the last remaining properties providing a connection between two MSCP subarea plans, as well as the valuable biological resources occurring on the site, and has agreed to hold title to the property and be responsible for its management. DFG will assess the site for public uses compatible with the protection of the resources, including hiking, scientific research, bird watching, photography and trails.

The property owners have agreed to sell the property at the appraised, fair market value of \$849,000.00, as approved by the State's Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$179,667.00
USFWS Grant	\$669,333.00
TOTAL:	\$849,000.00

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the acceptance of the USFWS grant and approve the use of the funds to be applied toward the purchase of the property. Staff also recommends that the Board approve an allocation in the amount of \$179,667.00 to cover the balance of the purchase price. It is estimated that an additional \$20,333.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including the appraisal, environmental site assessment, title and escrow fees and review charges by the DGS, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$200,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered

species and that provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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 under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$669,333.00; allocate \$200,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and 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.

Motion carried.

- *19. Fieldstone Habitat Conservation Plan, Expansion 1, \$20,000.00
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grants and the authorization to enter into two Agreements to Subgrant the federal funds to The Conservation Fund to be applied toward the acquisition of 235± acres northeast of the City of Encinitas and south of the City of San Marcos in San Diego County. The purposes of this acquisition project are to protect critical habitat for the California gnatcatcher, southern maritime chaparral and southern willow scrub/brackish marsh habitats, to further implement the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) efforts, and enhance a general wildlife corridor between larger habitat areas.

The property is located along Elfin Forest Road between Fortuna del Norte and Aguilera Lane, in the Elfin Forest community of unincorporated San Diego County. Elfin Forest is an unincorporated rural residential neighborhood that is bordered to the north and northwest by the master-planned community of San Elijo Hills within the San Marcos city limits; to the west by upscale rural residential neighborhoods within the Encinitas city limits; to the south by The Bridges at Rancho Santa Fe and Cielo, two newer luxury rural residential developments proximate to the renowned unincorporated community of Rancho Santa Fe; and to the east by the rural residential communities of Harmony Grove, Del Dios and Mt. Israel.

This acquisition will help to enhance existing efforts to conserve coastal sage scrub, southern willow scrub/brackish marsh and southern maritime chaparral habitats that support Del Mar manzanita, Encinitas baccharis, Orcutt's spineflower and the coastal California gnatcatcher. Acquisition of the property will further assist the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) in its NCCP efforts in the area. The property is located within the

subregional plan for the northwestern portion of the County (Cities of Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach and Vista) approved by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Board of Directors on March 28, 2003. The subregional plan encompasses nearly 112,000 acres (29,962 acres of natural habitat) and provides conservation for 77 species in a 20,593-acre reserve.

The Conservation Fund will take title to the property and hopes eventually to transfer it to the County of San Diego for long term management. Such a transfer would be subject to Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) approval. The benefits of conserving the property are to increase the chances of stabilizing and recovering the species and their habitat, and to reduce the likelihood of land-use conflicts in the area.

The owner of the property has agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$11,000,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

USFWS Grants	
Subgrant by the Board	\$1,330,667.00
Subgrant by the Board	\$ 812,900.00
The Conservation Fund	\$ 8,027,433.00
County of San Diego	<u>\$ 829,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$11,000,000.00

The proposed subgrants to The Conservation Fund will provide a total of \$2,143,567.00 in federal grant funds toward the purchase price from the USFWS grants. The County of San Diego will provide \$829,000.00, as the non-federal match. It is estimated that an additional \$20,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Board, which includes the DGS' appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$20,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for grants to protect threatened and endangered species and to implement or assist in establishing a Natural Community Conservation Plan, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

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

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; authorize acceptance of the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service in the amounts of \$1,330,667.00 and \$812,900.00 and two Agreements to Subgrant the federal funds to The Conservation Fund; allocate \$20,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 84), Section 75055(c) for 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.

Motion carried.

20. Pit River Wetland Enhancement, Carey Ranch \$232,000.00
Modoc County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) to enhance 690± acres of floodplain wet meadows, 200± acres of irrigated hay pasture, and 1 acre of riparian habitat on privately-owned property located approximately ten miles southwest of the City of Alturas in the Pit River floodplain adjacent to County Road 54. Mr. Peter Perrine of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

Many wildlife species in California depend on private working landscapes for at least a portion of their life cycles. In 2007, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) received funding under Proposition 84 to work with farmers and ranchers to enhance wildlife habitat on these working lands. The goal of this program is to assist landowners in developing sustainable wildlife-friendly practices that can co-exist with, or even enhance, their agricultural operations. The Board sees this funding as a great opportunity to develop new and innovative approaches to integrate agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration, and equally important as a way to collaborate and develop new partnerships with the agricultural community.

This proposal was for an enhancement of wildlife habitat on a privately owned ranch on the Pit River that begins its journey in the mountains of eastern Modoc County, flows across the high Modoc Plateau and eventually empties into Shasta Reservoir. As this river moves out of the hills and across the Plateau, its floodplain widens to accommodate the annual spring floods. In the 1950's, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the river in an effort to reduce flood damage from these flood events. As a result the water elevation in the grazed meadows and farmland along the river was lowered. To restore the hydrology, a series of weirs were placed in the newly excavated channel, each with removable boards to allow for the passage of flood flows. These weirs are managed by individual landowners along the river, all of whom are required to remove the boards in October of each year. The landowner can then replace the boards in the spring to raise the water elevation and provide needed irrigation water in the summer.

The Carey Ranch is one of the cattle ranches located adjacent to the Pit River and represents one of the largest and most diverse property holdings along the fifty mile stretch of river between Alturas and Bieber. While many of the farms and ranches located in the floodplain have been leveled to improve agricultural production, most of the Carey Ranch still shows all the original topography of the floodplain, complete with swales, remnant channels and oxbows. This diverse topography, coupled with a ranch

management regime that calls for flooding the swales for the entire year, regular irrigations, and grazing and haying to maintain high-quality grasslands, supports a wide variety of wildlife species.

Unfortunately, the weir that provides the water that allows for this habitat diversity is in a state of complete disrepair. The proposal is to replace the failing weir and improve two small levees in the floodplain, allowing for better water management. In addition, willows will be planted along the river channel to further diversify the wildlife habitat on the ranch. With these improvements, the ranch will continue to provide habitat for thousands of migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, a herd of resident mule deer and many other species. The new riparian habitat will benefit such species as song sparrows and yellow warblers. The ranch also provides nesting habitat for greater sandhill cranes, a State of California listed threatened species.

The landowner has agreed to manage and maintain the property for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of a habitat management plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowners are unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$232,000.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	25,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	20,704.00
Landowner	<u>15,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$292,704.00

Project costs will be for replacement of the existing weir; earthmoving; water control structures; riparian planting; and project design, permitting, construction supervision and administration.

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), Section 75055(d)(4), which allows for assisting farmers and ranchers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection and is consistent with the objectives of this project. The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 2 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15302, as a replacement of an existing structure. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Mr. Perrine introduced Mr. John Ranlett of Ducks Unlimited, Inc., and Ms. Carolyn Carey, the landowner, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$232,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), 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.

Motion carried.

21. Cow Creek Conservation Area, Expansion 1 \$1,731,503.00
Shasta County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Shasta Land Trust (SLT) to assist in a cooperative project with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (RLFF) to acquire a conservation easement over 4,915± acres of privately-owned land located east of Redding, four miles east of the community of Millville in Shasta County, for the protection of native oak woodlands and riparian areas necessary to deer, mountain lions, and other sensitive wildlife and plants. Ms. Catherine Caldwell of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The subject property is accessed via Whitmore Road, approximately two miles north of Highway 44, and is currently used for livestock grazing. Approximately 600 acres of the ranch are level to moderately-sloping irrigated pasture lands along Old Cow Creek. Adjudicated rights to Old Cow Creek provide the water for the pasture irrigation; multiple springs and other streams provide additional water for livestock and wildlife. The balance of the ranch climbs to a sloping lava table which provides winter range dry pasture. Elevations range from approximately 1,100 to 1,800 feet. Improvements include two residences, a manager's residence, hunting cabin, typical corrals, barns, and other buildings necessary for ranch operation.

The property is within the Cow Creek watershed, the northernmost undammed tributary system of the Sacramento River, and therefore is particularly important for California's anadromous fish populations like fall-run Chinook salmon and federally threatened steelhead. The property is within the DFG's Cow Creek Conceptual Area Protection Plan area, which includes critical deer winter range and major migration corridors that support a variety of special status and sensitive species. The primary habitat types on the subject property include oak woodland with annual grasses and manzanita-dominated chaparral. These habitats provide forage for insects, birds, mammals and reptiles, as well as diverse nesting, roosting and shelter opportunities, including fawning habitat for deer. The irrigated pastures are frequented by similar species, along with migratory species such as waterfowl. The proposed conservation easement would protect these diverse habitats by keeping the property united in one large, intact ownership, and prohibiting intensification of agricultural activity.

In addition to SLT's proposed role as the easement holder and RLFF's grant toward the proposed transaction, TPL has conducted much of the preliminary project management, including executing the purchase agreement and contracting for the appraisal. The private landowner would retain all management and operation obligations. The SLT would be responsible for monitoring the easement, with the option to implement

restoration activities on the property. Under the grant agreement, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) would have the ability to accompany the SLT at least once every three years during monitoring site visits. The proposed easement would also grant the SLT the ability to lead up to eight public guided nature tours per year.

The market value of the proposed conservation easement is \$2,500,000.00, as determined by an appraisal and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Landowner donation of value	\$ 600,000.00
RLFF Preserving Wild California Grant	\$ 173,497.00
Board allocation	<u>\$1,726,503.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$2,500,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be required for administrative expenses, including the DGS' appraisal review costs, bringing the total allocation for this proposal to \$1,731,503.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of native oak woodlands necessary to protect deer and mountain lions, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that the Board staff review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance, prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow for the purchase of the easement.

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

Ms. Caldwell introduced Mr. Ben Miles of Shasta Land Trust and Ms. Karen Kovacs of DFG Northern Region, who were in audience and available to answer questions.

Mr. Donnelly also pointed out that Gary Stacey, Regional Manager of DFG Region 1, was in the audience.

Mr. Rogers asked if there were any questions about this project. There were none.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,731,503.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Prop. 117), Section 2786(a) for the grant amount and project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

22. Millville Plains Conservation Area, and Expansion 1, Shasta County \$348,000.00

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of two conservation easements over 284± acres of privately-owned land in Shasta County. The purpose of the easements is to protect rare vernal pool habitat found on the properties. The proposal also includes the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Land Acquisition grant and a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) grant and approval to apply the federal grant funds toward the purchase price of the conservation easements. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The subject properties are located near the community of Palo Cedro, between the communities of Millville and Anderson in Shasta County. The Millville Plains Conservation Area is located in central Shasta County ranging approximately three to four and one half miles east of the Redding Municipal Airport. It is bounded by Cow Creek on the west, Dersch Road on the south, and Millville Plains Road to the east. The northern and eastern boundaries are delineated by breaks in topography that define the watershed of the Millville Plains.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has identified the Millville Plains as the highest priority for vernal pool conservation within the greater Redding Area and approved a Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for the project. The primary goal of the CAPP is to protect special status plant and animal species primarily through acquisition of conservation easements to preserve and enhance functioning vernal pool/wetland habitats. The proposed conservation easement acquisitions are a unique opportunity to protect significant vernal pool resources in the Millville Plains. The DFG currently holds a conservation easement on 84 acres; an additional 40-acre parcel is managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Together with these parcels, the two new conservation easements proposed will create a contiguous block of over 420 acres of protected habitat within the core of the CAPP.

In 2004, the USFWS approved a grant in the amount of \$317,716.00 for the purpose of protecting the Millville Plains Conservation Area vernal pools. In 2005, the BOR approved a grant in the amount of \$295,000.00 for the purpose of protecting the Millville Plains Conservation Area vernal pools. These grants will be applied toward the acquisitions.

The owners have agreed to sell conservation easement interests in their properties for the appraised fair market values of \$794,400.00 for the Millville Plains Conservation Area acquisition and \$102,100.00 for Expansion 1, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board (Board)	\$283,784.00
BOR grant	\$295,000.00

USFWS grant	\$317,716.00
TOTAL:	\$896,500.00

It is estimated that an additional \$64,216.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including the DGS' appraisal and transaction review, escrow and title fees, bringing the total proposed allocation for the State's share to \$348,000.00. The proposed funding sources allow for the acquisition of land to recover and restore habitats that are critical to the sustainability of threatened or endangered species, and are consistent with the purposes of this project.

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 under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Mr. Rogers asked if there were any questions about this project. There were none.

Mr. Koch commented that this project has been long and complicated and required cooperative efforts from Wildlife Conservation Board and Department of Fish and Game regional staff. Mr. Koch thanked WCB and DFG regional staff for their hard work.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Recovery Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$317,716.00; accept the Bureau of Reclamation grant in the amount of \$295,000.00; allocate \$348,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and 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.

Motion carried.

23. California Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Project, \$400,000.00
Statewide

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California, on behalf of the University of California, Davis and SeaDoc Society for a cooperative project with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to restore seafloor habitat and reduce risk to coastal marine life by retrieving lost fishing gear. The majority of the work will occur within the central coast, Marine Protected Areas, located between Pigeon Point in San Mateo County to the north and Point Conception to the south.

Mr. Donnelly reported that several letters of support were received for this project from the following people: Assembly Member Lois Wolk, 8th District; Ms. Sandra Morey, Regional Manager, Region 2, Department of Fish and Game; Mr. Peter Douglas,

Executive Director, California Coastal Commission; Ms. Deborah Streeter, Chairperson, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council; Ms. Diane Black, Chair, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council; and Mr. Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer, State Coastal Conservancy, and Council Secretary to the Ocean Protection Council.

Mr. Dave Means of the Wildlife Conservation Board presented this project.

Over the last century California coastal areas have been fished intensively, both commercially and recreationally. As a result, large amounts of fishing debris and gear have accumulated on the sea floor, without any comprehensive plan to remove or mitigate. Although out of sight, gear such as lobster traps continue to trap lobsters, fishing nets continue to ensnare fish as well as large marine mammals and most of California's public access fishing piers are now surrounded by forests of monofilament that pose hazards to both humans and marine wildlife.

A recent study by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and NOAA in the Puget Sound area of Washington looked at the economic factors related to fishing gear debris removal. This study determined that just the commercial cost alone of marine life claimed by fishing debris exceeded the cost of the debris removal, providing economic justification for the investment in removal. Factoring in the wildlife benefits of the removal, the benefits of removal become even more substantial.

The California Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Program (CLFGRP) is a statewide strategy for the recovery of derelict fishing gear and the prevention of further gear losses. The CLFGRP began as a pilot program, the California Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Project, in July of 2005, with funding provided by the California Ocean Protection Council through the State Coastal Conservancy, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Marine Debris Program. Under the pilot program a number of objectives were established and met including the development of policies, procedures, and implementation protocols, identification of over 770 target sites for gear removal, removal of approximately 10 tons of derelict gear, a thorough documentation of the impacts of derelict gear on marine sea floor habitats and development of a public outreach program. The CLFGRP will continue to build on the successes and efforts of the pilot program and will expand into two new areas 1) deep water gear removal and 2) recreational gear removal, prevention and outreach.

The main project tasks of the proposed project are:

- 1) Retrieve lost gear from Central Coast Marine Protected Areas;
- 2) Promote voluntary recreational gear waste prevention;
- 3) Retrieve high priority lost gear (including continued efforts in the Channel Island National Marine Sanctuary); and
- 4) Public Awareness.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board

\$400,000.00

NOAA (awarded)	85,000.00
NOAA (submitted)	71,205.00
TOTAL:	\$556,205.00

The majority of the Board funding will go toward removal of lost gear in the Marine Protected Areas. Although the project proponent fully anticipates the second NOAA grant to be awarded (based on positive responses from NOAA to prior efforts) if this grant is unfunded activities related to item 3 above may be curtailed.

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), Section 75055(b)(1). This funding source allows for protection and restoration of significant ecosystems and implementation of the California Wildlife Strategy, particularly as it pertains to DFG's Marine Region. Both allowed uses are consistent with the objectives of the proposed project.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The University of California, Davis, Office of Resource Management and Planning, has 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 the Board's compliance with CEQA.

The project has the support of a number of federal, state and local organizations involved in the protection and conservation of the state's marine resources. In addition to the funders and sponsors noted above, there is support from the California Coastal Commission, the Channel Island and Monterey National Marine Sanctuaries and a number of local fishing groups.

Mr. Means introduced Dr. Jonna Mazet of UC Davis who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Mr. Rogers asked if there were any questions or comments about this project. Ms. Finn had a question about what kind of responsibility the pier owners have. Dr. Mazet answered that all these piers are public, and that the City and recreational districts provide all the volunteer labor to clean up the pier. According to Dr. Mazet, groups like Beach Walker and Coast Keepers provide help as well.

Mr. Means provided more insight to Ms. Finn's question saying that pier owners are responsible for the overall maintenance of the piers, but to the extent and duration of how often they need to remove lost fishing gear from the surrounding waters is currently being evaluated. Mr. Donnelly said that the result of this particular project would be to find some solution that will require not only cleaning the top of a pier but also around a pier and below the water line.

Mr. Rogers commented about his own personal experiences, diving off the Santa Barbara coast, and the amount of lobster traps and gear observed, as well as the

dangers posed by this gear to wildlife and humans, and could imagine that the fishing line and hooks around piers must be a significant problem as well.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$400,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b)(1); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

24. Lucerne Fishing Pier, \$470,721.00
Lake County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the County of Lake (County) for a cooperative project with State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation to construct a new public fishing pier on Clear Lake in the town of Lucerne. The project is located at the foot of Third Street just south of State Highway 20.

Mr. Donnelly said that this has been an ongoing project for several years and reported that the letters of support were received for this project from the following people: State Senator Wesley Chesbro, Second District; Assemblywoman Patty Berg, First District; Mr. Gary Lewis, District 3 Supervisor, County of Lake Board of Supervisors; Mr. F.G. Rick Archbold, Chairperson, Lake County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Hidden Valley Lake Association; Mr. Scott MacNeil, owner, Alpine Café, Lucerne, CA.

Mr. Anthony Chappelle of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

Clear Lake is one of the most popular fishing destinations in California. Fishing tournaments for black bass occur here nearly every weekend of the year and catfish and crappie are abundant for anglers as well. State Highway 20, which runs along the north shore and right by the proposed project site, is heavily traveled by both residents and visitors and makes the area easily accessible. Unfortunately, public access to Clear Lake is at a premium due to the large amount of private ownership along the shoreline. The Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) has funded two previous public access projects on Clear Lake: the Red Bud Park Pier and the Red Bud Park Boat Ramp. There is one other existing pier in the town of Lucerne at Alpine Park but it is an old wooden structure near the end of its useful life.

The proposed fishing pier is part of the Lucerne 3rd Avenue Plaza project to construct a public shoreline plaza and parking area between the pier and Highway 20. This larger project is part of the County's, Northshore Redevelopment Plan adopted in 2001 to achieve several goals, including improvement and expansion of public access to Clear Lake.

In general, the proposed pier will create additional public fishing access to Clear Lake. Specifically, the project will construct a 180 foot-long pier with a 40' by 60' fishing platform with shade structure at the waterside end. The pier will consist of a steel frame, steel pilings, concrete deck, and a stainless steel cable railing system. A project sign will be installed acknowledging Board's participation.

The County has agreed to manage and maintain the project improvements for 25 years, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement management plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the County is unable to manage and maintain the project improvements, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 470,721.00
County of Lake	\$ 366,791.00
State Parks	\$ 500,000.00
TOTAL:	\$1,337,512.00

Project costs will be for fishing pier pilings; pier steel frame fabrication and erection; pier concrete deck; pier stainless steel cable railing; pier shade structure; pier picnic tables and benches; and installation of a project sign. It is anticipated that the project will qualify for Federal participation under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Staff has filed the appropriate application with the National Park Service, which, if approved, will provide the Board with a 50 percent reimbursement of all qualifying project costs.

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40) that allows funding for grants pursuant to the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947, including public access improvements, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The County has prepared an Initial Study and 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 the Board's compliance with CEQA.

Mr. Chappelle introduced Mr. Eric Sealey, Deputy Redevelopment Director of the County of Lake, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if there was any private land involved in this project. Mr. Donnelly clarified the location of the future park and confirmed that all the land involved is a public land.

Mr. Rogers suggested that language be added to the grant to require retrieval of lost fishing gear if possible.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; accept reimbursement of up to \$235,361.00, from a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from the U.S National Park Service; allocate \$470,721.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly said that staff will amend the grant agreement to include Mr. Rogers' request and require recovery of lost fishing gear as part of the operation and maintenance of the facility.

Ms. Finn had a question about the source of the State Parks' funding available for this project. Mr. Chappelle explained that the funding was originated from a Roberti-Z'berg-Harris grant.

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

Motion carried.

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| 25. American River Preserve, North Fork Unit
El Dorado County | \$1,510,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly pointed out that the project was renamed from "South Fork American River Preserve".

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the American River Conservancy (Conservancy) for a cooperative project with the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (RLFF) to assist in the acquisition of a conservation easement over 558± acres of privately-owned vacant land, to protect threatened and endangered species and wildlife corridors including nearly two miles of river frontage along the North Fork American River near the City of Auburn, two miles west of the community of Pilot Hill in El Dorado County. Ms. Catherine Caldwell of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The property is located off of Rattlesnake Bar Road west of Highway 49, the primary access to this part of the county. The property varies from gentle to moderate slopes except those portions extending steeply into the American River Canyon. The property is used for livestock grazing. No improvements exist on the property other than fencing and similar structures necessary for livestock management. Several streams and licensed stock ponds provide water for livestock and wildlife.

Since 1989, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) has assisted in the acquisition of approximately 3,700 acres along the lower reach of the South Fork American River and approximately 1,900 acres in the Pine Hill Ecological Reserve in western El Dorado County. This is the first proposed acquisition under the recently expanded and renamed South Fork American River Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), which now incorporates the foothill reaches of both the North and South Forks of the American River. This CAPP includes habitat for a number of threatened and endangered species

such as Stebbin's morning-glory, Pine Hill ceanothus, El Dorado bedstraw, Layne's butterweed, Red Hills soap root, El Dorado mule ears, and Bisbee Peak rush rose. This acquisition would protect riparian and diverse upland habitats including montane hardwood-conifer, blue oak woodland, mixed chaparral and annual grassland along with the many diverse species of wildlife resident within and dependent upon this habitat.

The North Fork American River and its tributary streams support spawning gravels for many species of native fishes including native rainbow trout, Sacramento pikeminnow, riffle sculpin, California roach and Sacramento sucker. The project area includes habitat for many wildlife species including, but not limited to black-tailed deer, beaver, river otter, grey fox, coyote, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, Western pond turtle, Foothill yellow legged frog, bald eagle, osprey, Western toad, Pacific tree frog, song birds as well as numerous game birds such as dove, quail and wild turkey. The subject lands provide a critical wildlife connection between protected State lands within the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area to the west and the Auburn State Recreation Area to the east.

The private landowner will retain all management and operation obligations. The Conservancy will be responsible for monitoring the easement, which would emphasize maintenance and protection of existing populations of wildlife species, and provide limited public access. Under the grant agreement, the Board will have the ability to accompany the Conservancy at least once every three years during monitoring site visits.

The market value of the proposed 558± acre conservation easement is \$1,887,000.00, as determined by an appraisal and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Landowner donation of value	\$ 68,000.00
RLFF Preserving Wild California Grant	\$ 266,329.00
Conservancy contribution	\$ 50,458.00
Board allocation	<u>\$1,502,213.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$1,887,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$7,787.00 will be required for administrative expenses, including the DGS' appraisal review costs, bringing the total allocation for this proposal to \$1,510,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of threatened and endangered species habitat and wildlife corridors, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

The terms and conditions of the proposed grant provide that the Board staff review and approve all documents associated with the proposed purchase including title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, agreements for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance, prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow.

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

Ms. Caldwell introduced Mr. Alan Ehrgott, Executive Director of American River Conservancy, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn had a question about the other protected lands in the immediate area and whether they were fee title lands or protected through a conservation easement. Ms. Caldwell indicated that they were a combination of both.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve a grant to the American River Conservancy for this project as proposed; allocate \$1,510,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| 26. | Knoxville Wildlife Area, Expansion 2,
Napa County | \$3,370,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was for the acquisition of 738± acres of privately-owned land to protect oak woodlands and threatened and endangered species habitat, as an addition to the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Knoxville Wildlife Area, east of the City of Middletown, fifteen road miles from the community of Pope Valley in Napa County. Ms. Caldwell of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The subject property is located approximately three miles north of Lake Berryessa, abutting Berryessa-Knoxville Road for several miles. It varies from very gentle to steep slopes ranging in elevation from 600± to 1200± feet, and was used historically for livestock grazing. Vegetation includes open grass, scattered oaks to fairly dense oaks, brush (chamise) and gray pine. Improvements include a new 5,500 square foot, round log residence, a small, fully renovated second residence, and a metal shop building. Electricity is provided by a modern solar system with a diesel generator back-up system. Domestic water is piped in from springs, although a well could be brought into use with electrical service. In addition to Eticuera Creek, livestock and wildlife access several stock ponds and springs on the property.

The existing 16,000+ acre Knoxville Wildlife Area (WA) currently includes the Knoxville Ranch acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) in 2000, and the Expansion

1 property acquired in 2005. The adjacent 6,800± acre McLaughlin Reserve is managed as a University of California (U.C.) Natural Reserve by U.C. Davis. U.S. Bureau of Land Management land is adjacent to the east and west. This project area is included within the 500,000+ acre Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area (BRBNA), defined by a collaborative partnership of federal, state and local government agencies, local businesses, non-profit organizations and private landowners seeking conservation of the natural and working landscapes in the area. Additional BRBNA partners including California State Parks and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation have contributed to the preservation of more than 40,000 acres of contiguous protected land in the immediate area.

The Knoxville WA itself is remote and large enough to support tule elk, deer, bald and golden eagles, mountain lions and bears, as well as a variety of hawks, falcons, owls and other raptors. The proposed addition would protect grassland, oak woodland and riparian habitats of the Eticuera and Toll Canyon Creek watersheds, both tributaries to the Sacramento River. The subject property provides the enormous habitat benefits of nearly two miles on both sides of Eticuera Creek. A diversity of songbirds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish and invertebrates abound on the property. In addition, this project would bolster protection of surrounding Knoxville WA lands by removing the threat of impacts of potential development on the subject property.

The existing improvements would allow the DFG to establish an on-site presence in Knoxville WA by providing DFG staff housing and office space. The shop building would allow the DFG to store equipment necessary for maintenance of the entire Knoxville WA. The large log building would initially be used for DFG staff meetings. Ultimately, the DFG hopes to utilize the structure as a visitors' center with interpretive displays depicting resources in the Knoxville WA.

The proposed acquisition enjoys broad community support as an addition to the BRBNA. The Napa Land Trust has been instrumental in bringing this project forward, having negotiated and funded the purchase option agreement. The Nature Conservancy contracted for and funded the subject property appraisal. An existing partnership with the Wild Turkey Federation would support habitat management activities on the property. The Napa Resource Conservation District would assist in designing a grazing program to assist with habitat management.

The DFG would incorporate the subject property into the existing operation and management of the existing Knoxville WA. Start-up costs particular to this property would include livestock fencing for grazing management, and other minor modifications of the improvements as may be required for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance and general DFG operations. The DFG is pursuing U.S. Fish and Wildlife grant funding for Knoxville WA management, and may also seek Board funding for future habitat restoration activities that may be proposed on the WA. The DFG anticipates that additional future partnerships with the BRBNA members and the U.C. Reserve System would provide volunteer assistance and research support, as well as support for a possible future visitor center.

The fair market value of the 738± acre property is \$3,280,000.00 as determined by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The property owners

have agreed to sell the property at its approved, appraised value. Staff recommends that the Board approve an allocation of \$3,280,000.00 for the purchase price. It is estimated that the DFG will require \$75,000.00 in start-up funds for livestock fencing for grazing management and Americans with Disabilities Act modifications. Up to an additional \$15,000.00 will be needed for administrative expenses including title, escrow and DGS review costs, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$3,370,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of threatened and endangered species habitat, oak woodlands, riparian and wetland areas, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

Ms. Caldwell introduced Mr. John Haffnagle, Executive Director of Napa Land Trust; Mr. Dave Feliz, Mr. Brian Shelton, and Mr. Eric Larson of DFG; who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Mr. Feliz pointed out the operational benefits of acquiring the property as well as the improvements thereon which will provide the facilities and the opportunity to physically locate staff onsite.

Mr. Koch thanked Mr. Feliz for his comments.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,370,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 84), Section 75055(b) to be applied toward the purchase and associated project costs; authorize staff to enter into the appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| 27. | Giacomini Wetland and Riparian Restoration,
Marin County | \$420,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support were received for this project from the following people: Assembly Member Jared Huffman, 6th District; Mr. Fritz Reid, Chair, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture; and Mr. Donald Koch, Director, Department of Fish and Game.

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Point Reyes National Seashore Association (PRNSA) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy, the Kingfisher Foundation, the Department of Justice-Cape Mohican, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the State Water Resources Control Board to restore 556± acres of floodplain, tidal marsh and riparian habitat. The project site is located at the confluence of Lagunitas Creek and Tomales Bay on federal lands, 30 miles northwest of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. Ms. Bonnie Turner of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

This project will restore approximately 50% of Tomales Bay's estuarine wetlands. This wetland area has been designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention (an international treaty for protection of wetlands). At the same time the wetlands have been declared an impaired water body under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, prompting the need for and signifying the importance of this project.

Levees and tide-gates constructed in the 1940s as part of the Giacomini dairy development have disconnected and degraded much of the hydrologic and ecological function of more than 550 acres of wetland habitat at the head of Tomales Bay. The levees severely constrain a two mile reach of the estuarine zone to a very narrow, homogenous channel, and isolate the channel from its former tidal floodplain. The effects of these constraints are even more deleterious considering as more than two thirds of the freshwater inflow (Fisher et. al. 1996) to Tomales Bay passes through the project area. The majority of the project area is made up of severely degraded wetlands caused by a history of dairy cultivation and grazing, as well as isolation from natural tidal inundation and flooding regimes by the levees. Grading and ditching to maintain dairy pastures has limited development of riparian habitat, while bird nesting, forage and refugia opportunities have been limited by the monotypic, cultivated pasture.

Some of the most important species that will benefit from this project include the federal and state endangered California coastal coho salmon, the federally threatened central California coast steelhead, the federally endangered tidewater goby, the federally threatened California clapper rail, the state threatened California black rail, and other species of concern such as the saltmarsh common yellowthroat, the southwestern river otter, and numerous other birds, fish, and mammalian species. As an example, the Lagunitas/Olema Creek watershed supports 10-20% of the federal and state endangered coho salmon in the Central California Coast ESU (evolutionarily significant unit, assigned by the National Marine Fisheries Service). In 2004, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) completed the California Coho Recovery Plan which included both regional and local area recommendations.

The Giacomini project is the culmination of more than seven years of planning, compliance, and fundraising. In 2007, PRNSA completed Phase I of the restoration project, which included removal (and recycling) of dairy infrastructure (buildings, pipes, fences, etc.), minor levee removal activities, as well as construction of marsh and open water habitat areas, to support the federally threatened California red-legged frog.

Phase II, the project considered under this proposal, is scheduled for implementation between July and October 2008, and will complete the remaining restoration activities, including: removal of more than three (3) miles of levee impeding natural floodplain and tidal marsh process on the property; removal of dairy ranch infrastructure (e.g., roads, pipes, powerlines, rip rap) filling of existing drainage ditches; creation of a floodplain terrace or bench to increase floodplain connectivity further downstream; creation of a

tidal channel network; removal of invasive plants and planting of native vegetation along stream banks and other impacted areas; reconnection of unimpeded flow and fish access to Fish Hatchery Creek and Tomasini Creek; and contouring of microhabitats to benefit targeted special status species. In addition, the proposed marshplain enhancement actions will lower grades to support an additional 8 acres of vegetated intertidal and floodplain habitat.

The project area is in the natural zone of the Point Reyes National Seashore Management Area. The project area will be managed as a wetland and floodplain complex in compliance with National Park Service Policies, Point Reyes National Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report Seashore General Management Plan, and the Giacomini Wetland Restoration Project Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR). Actions in this area are also subject to compliance with Federal Executive Orders 11990: "Protection of Wetlands", and 11998: "Floodplain Management." Long-term site management will be provided by the Point Reyes National Seashore staff in perpetuity according to existing management policies for the area.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 420,000.00
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	2,500,000.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (NAWCA, NCWC)	1,686,594.00
State Coastal Conservancy	500,000.00
Kingfisher Foundation	10,000.00
Dept. of Justice-Cape Mohican	138,000.00
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	150,000.00
State Water Resources Control Board	<u>750,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$6,154,594.00

Project costs will include: marshplain enhancement and tide channel creation, south levee reduction to reduce flood elevations; enhancement of floodplain terrace; and rip-rap armor removal and bank restoration.

The proposed funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650, which allows for restoration of habitats that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species and is consistent with the purposes of the proposed project. The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board.

The National Park Service has completed all project permitting requirements including the California Coastal Commission – Consistency Determination for all proposed actions; National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion; US Fish and Wildlife

Service – revised Biological Opinion; DFG 1602 Permit/CESA Consistency Determination; State Historic Preservation Office – Section 106 consultation; US Army Corps of Engineers permit; San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board – 401 Certification; Bay Area Air Quality Management District – General Conformance with State Implementation Plan.

The California State Lands Commission (SLC) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement. SLC acting as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approved the project and filed a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the State Clearinghouse on July 9, 2007. Staff has considered the Final EIR/EIS, and has prepared written findings to document the Board's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Ms. Turner introduced Ms. Sally Bolger and Mr. Tony Williams of Point Reyes National Seashore Association who were in the audience and available to answer question.

Ms. Bolger pointed out the benefits and importance of this project.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed: allocate \$420,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Section 5096.650; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

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| 28. | Bair Island Ecological Reserve, Outer Bair Tidal Wetland Restoration, San Mateo County | \$563,000.00 |
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Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. for a cooperative project with the Lester Family Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the restoration of 468± acres of former salt production ponds on the outer portion of the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) Bair Island Ecological Reserve, known as Outer Bair Island, located one mile north of Redwood City. Ms. Bonnie Turner of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

This is the first phase of a larger restoration project aimed at restoring 1,400 acres of the entire 2,600-acre Bair Island complex, composed of Inner, Middle, and Outer Bair Islands. Historically, Bair Island was part of a large expanse of tidal wetlands associated with Belmont Slough extending along the southeastern edge of San Francisco Bay. In 1946, the area was converted to salt production, with associated levee and channel construction, and continuing until 1965. Post-production, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) each began to acquire parcels within the Bair Island Complex. The bulk of the wetlands remained in private ownership until the early 1990s when most of the remaining private holdings were purchased by the Peninsula Open Space Trust and

then later transferred to the two agencies. In 1997, DFG and the Refuge entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that provides for all such DFG lands to be managed by the Refuge in a signed Memorandum of Understanding. This project conforms to the goals of the 1999 San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project.

Restoration will occur in stages, beginning on Outer Bair Island. Timing for restoration of Middle and Inner Bair Island is dependent on completion of fill placement on Inner Bair Island. Beneficial re-use fill planning and implementation efforts are currently under way and are projected to be completed within approximately 4 years. Wildlife-oriented public access on Inner Bair Island and additional recreation opportunities in the complex are a separate component of the larger project for which the principals intend to seek and independent funding.

The Outer Bair Island project entails breaching the perimeter levee in two locations to restore tidal exchange between Steinberger Slough and remnant tidal sloughs within the island. At the eastern breach, a pilot channel will be excavated through the perimeter marsh. The internal borrow ditch created when the perimeter levee was constructed will be blocked with ditch blocks on each side in order to direct tidal flow into historic slough channels. The western breach is located in an area lacking perimeter marsh so no pilot channel is required and there is no ditch blocks associated with this breach. Two additional ditch blocks will be placed further south, adjacent to Corkscrew Slough to facilitate flow into the historic channels. Elevated salinities are expected to be found in the soils based on prior use as salt evaporator ponds. These salts will slowly leach from the soil upon tidal restoration with minimal effects on Bay water quality. This finding is based on previous studies and monitoring from other salt pond breaches that have occurred on the DFG's Eden Landing Baumberg Tract and Hayward Marsh.

This project will have multiple benefits for people and wildlife. Restoration of wetland system dynamics, in conjunction with an invasive species control and native vegetation planting effort led by Save the Bay, will increase the quality and quantity of habitat for listed species such as California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. Marsh areas with extensive channel systems will provide habitat for fish and other aquatic life. The project will also benefit resident and migratory waterfowl that have been found on the refuge including mallards, northern pintails, ruddy ducks, scoters, scaups, buffleheads, and northern shovelers. Other wetland associated species include Bewick's wren, red-winged blackbird, white-faced ibis, Brandt's cormorant, double crested cormorant, great blue heron, little blue heron, black-crowned night-heron, great egret, snowy egret, green heron, American bittern, long-billed curlew, western snowy plover, western sandpiper, greater yellow legs, willet, dunlin, and black-bellied plover, Pacific loon, brown pelican, pied-billed grebe, eared grebe. Raptors include golden eagle, bald eagle, northern harrier, and peregrine falcon. Pacific harbor seals currently use the site to haul out, rest, forage and birth. Tidal action and the improved tidal flushing regime should decrease the amount and duration of standing water and will assist with mosquito control, an important aspect given the potential for West Nile Virus vectors within close proximity to a large urban area.

Long-term management and maintenance on Outer Bair Island will be minimal since most of the area will be restored to tidal marsh. Potential long-term management needs include vegetation management along levees and control of invasive species. Some

mowing and periodic weed control may be required. The Refuge, which manages the property, will be responsible for performing or coordinating these efforts. Monitoring will be conducted by Refuge biologists in accordance with all regulatory permit conditions by Refuge biologists. The Refuge is in the process of developing an agreement with San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control to control *spartina* hybrids on and adjacent to the project site to minimize the cost of mosquito control.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 563,000.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (North American Waterfowl Conservation Grant)	206,910.00
Lester Family Foundation	<u>20,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 789,910.00

Project costs will include construction management, bid package preparation, bidding and contractor selection, surveys, staking, site preparation, as-built drawings and project reports, construction administration including mobilization and demobilization, levee breaches, pilot channel and ditch block construction, and associated activities.

The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Bond Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), which allows for the restoration of wetlands in the San Francisco Bay area and is consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. The DFG has reviewed this project and recommends it for funding by the Board.

Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and Army Corps of Engineers permits have been approved. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and DFG have completed a Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS). DFG acting as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approved the project on January 22, 2008, and filed a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the State Clearinghouse on January 24, 2008. Staff has considered the Final EIR/EIS, and has prepared proposed written findings to document the Board's compliance with CEQA as a responsible agency. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$563,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Turner introduced Mr. Jeff McCreary and Ms. Renee Spent of Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Ms. Spent made comments about the importance and benefits of this project.

Motion carried.

29. Willow Canyon, \$2,985,000.00
Santa Cruz County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) to consider the State's acquisition of 64± acres of privately-owned land located in Santa Cruz County. The purpose of this acquisition is to protect upland habitat to support a viable population of Santa Cruz long-toed salamander and the California red-legged frog. This proposal also requests authorization to accept a USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval to apply the federal grant funds toward the purchase price of the property. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The property is bordered on the north by Vista Del Mar Drive, on the west by Custa Drive, on the east by Zanzibar Drive, and on the south by the Seascape Uplands Preserve (managed through the Seascape Uplands HCP), in Santa Cruz County. On the northern coast of Monterey Bay, the Willow Canyon property includes the majority of the upper watershed of Bush Gulch; a small coastal watershed that occurs between the larger coastal watersheds of Valencia Creek and the Pajaro River. Bush Gulch, like many small coastal watersheds, provides habitat connectivity between the major watersheds of the coast. The subject property is currently comprised of intact coastal habitats that are in decline throughout the State, which include coastal scrub, coast live oak woodland, coastal terrace prairie and riparian woodland.

Acquisition of the Willow Canyon property has been identified as a high priority in the Draft Conceptual Area Preservation Plan for the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander, developed by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), with assistance from the Trust for Public Land (TPL). Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders inhabit freshwater wetlands for breeding and adjacent upland scrub and woodland areas during the non-breeding season. The subject property is significant as a recovery prospect in efforts to stabilize breeding populations of Santa Cruz long-toed salamander. It could contribute toward potential federal downlisting of the species by protecting a substantial portion of uplands utilized as sheltering habitat by Santa Cruz long-toed salamander at Seascape, providing a corridor for dispersal of this species between Valencia Lagoon and Seascape, and providing an opportunity for creation of a sizeable breeding pond with immediately associated sheltering habitat. Acquisition of the subject property, coupled with the existing Seascape Uplands Preserve, will increase the amount of protected upland habitat available to Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders by approximately fifty percent.

The California red-legged frog is listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act and is a California State species of special concern. The USFWS completed a recovery plan for the frog in 2002. The subject property falls entirely within Core Area 19 of the Central Coast Recovery Unit for the California red-legged frog. In addition to the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander and the California red-legged frog, the

subject property could also benefit the white-tailed kit, Cooper's hawk, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, pallid bat, small-footed myotis, yuba myotis and Gairdner's yampah.

The TPL has negotiated a bargain sale of the 64± acre property and currently holds an option agreement with the landowner for the purchase. TPL would either assign its purchase option to the State or facilitate a direct transaction between the landowner and the State. The property was appraised, and the appraisal approved by the Department of General Services (DGS), for \$7,700,000.00. The landowners have agreed to sell the property to the State for \$6,500,000.00. The proposed funding breakdown for this project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$2,954,878.00
USFWS Grant	\$1,695,122.00
EEMP Grant (through TPL)	\$ 350,000.00
California Coastal Conservancy	\$1,500,000.00
TOTAL:	\$6,500,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$30,122.00 will be needed to cover project costs, including the DGS' review costs, title insurance and escrow fees, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$2,985,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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 under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Ms. Muzik introduced Ms. Karen Frankel of Trust for Public Lands who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Frankel made comments about the importance and benefits of this project.

Mr. Koch had a question about the ultimate disposition of management on this property. Ms. Frankel answered the question to his satisfaction.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$1,695,122.00; allocate \$2,985,000.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(5) for the acquisition and 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.

Motion carried.

30. Hastings Natural History Reservation, Facilities Upgrade I, \$550,732.00
Monterey County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Regents of the University of California for a cooperative project with the National Science Foundation to upgrade and renovate facilities and telecommunications at the Hastings Natural History Reservation (Reserve), located in the Santa Lucia mountain range, north of East Carmel Valley road, approximately ten miles east of the Town of Carmel Valley. Mr. Chad Fien of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

Under Proposition 84, the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) received funding to provide matching grant dollars 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. The mission of the University of California, Natural Reserve System (NRS) 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.

The Reserve offers 2,700 acres of relatively pristine oak woodland, riparian, and chaparral habitats. In addition, the Reserve has formal and informal use agreements with neighboring landowners to provide access to an additional 14,000+ acres for research, including lands on the Santa Lucia Conservancy Preserve. The Reserve also has 25 buildings that it maintains; including seven for research and administration year-round; eight for long-term researchers, interns, and school class visits; two for resident staff; and the remainder for storage, workspaces, and housing for short-term researchers and visitors.

The project will renovate four of the facilities, replace one facility, and upgrade telecommunications to the Reserve. Renovations include replacing windows, replacing antiquated knob-and-tube electrical systems with National Electric Code approved wiring systems, replacing aged plumbing systems, installing insulation, and applying new paint to the exterior of the facilities. The project will also demolish exhibit structures and replace them with two manufactured residence buildings for research staff. Lastly, the telecommunications system will be upgraded to accommodate the needs of research staff.

The grantee has agreed to manage and maintain the facilities for 30 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, they will refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$ 550,732.00
National Science Foundation	173,100.00
Hastings Natural History Reservation	377,632.00
TOTAL:	\$1,101,464.00

Project costs will be for demolition, construction, earthwork, new electrical systems, plumbing, windows, insulation, paint, telecommunication system, project design, construction supervision, and administration.

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), 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. The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 1 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15302, replacement or reconstruction of existing public facilities involving negligible or no expansion of an existing use. Subject to approval by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Mr. Fien introduced Mr. Mark Stromberg of Hastings Natural History Reservation, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn asked if the actual section of Proposition 84 specifies for the construction and development of facilities, and Mr. Fien answered "Yes". Ms. Finn had another question about what campus the facility is associated with. Mr. Fien specified that the facility is associated with UC Berkeley.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$550,732.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Section 75055(b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

31. Irish Hills Conservation Area, Andre Ranch, San Luis Obispo County \$1,005,000.00

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support was received from Mr. James Patterson, Chair of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for a cooperative project with the Department of Parks and Recreation to acquire a conservation easement over 1,172± acres to protect rangeland, grazing land and grasslands located in the Irish Hills in San Luis Obispo County. The purposes of the project are to protect livestock grazing, together with wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits which emanate from livestock grazing. Ms. Carol Klein of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

Andre Ranch is a privately-owned property situated in the coastal mountain range known as the Irish Hills. The property, located approximately six miles east of the City of San Luis Obispo, is accessed from See Canyon Road. Topography ranges from gently rolling grasslands to steep slopes and canyons. The property consists of a mix of annual grassland, native perennial grassland, coastal scrub, riparian woodland, coastal live oak savanna and coastal live oak woodland. The land has been the home of the Andre family's cattle operation and ranching headquarters for over 100 years.

The property is bordered on the west by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. The BLM parcel connects the Andre Ranch to Montana de Oro State Park, an 8,000-acre park that includes the lower Coon Creek, Islay Creek and Hazard Canyon Watersheds. Immediately south of the conservation easement area is the 730-acre Andre Ranch property to be acquired in fee by the Department of Parks and Recreation as an addition to Montana de Oro State Park. This fee acquisition portion of the ranch is contiguous with the Hibberd Preserve, a 1,500-acre preserve owned by the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County.

The subject land joins these nearby protected lands in buffering sensitive area natural resources such as Coon Creek and several special status plants and wildlife. However, because of the proximity to the City of San Luis Obispo and Highway One, Irish Hills properties with public road access are increasingly exposed to residential development pressure. Lands to the east and north of the ranch have already been developed with 10 to 40 acre ranchettes. The subject property, consisting of 21 legal parcels, is vulnerable to development and related habitat fragmentation.

This conservation easement will prevent the conversion of the property's rangeland, grazing land and grasslands to nonagricultural uses and, thereby, sustain and protect associated plant and wildlife habitat, water quality, watershed and open space values. The proposed conservation easement will benefit numerous species such as steelhead trout, golden eagle, California red legged frog, coast range newt, southwestern pond turtle, California horned lizard, silvery legless lizard, two-striped garter snake, southern rubbery boa, prairie falcon, American peregrine falcon, white-tailed kite, northern harrier, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, desert woodrat and mountain lion. The property also supports habitat for numerous special status plant species and for rare plants such as San Luis Obispo morning glory and the Pecho manzanita.

The property owners have agreed to sell the conservation easement to TNC for the Department of General Services (DGS) approved appraised value of \$4,615,000.00. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$1,000,000.00
Department of Fish and Game Avila Spill Mitigation Funding	\$1,000,000.00
The Nature Conservancy	\$ 904,000.00
Packard Central Coast Opportunity Fund	\$1,261,000.00
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Avila Spill Mitigation Funding	\$ 250,000.00
County of San Luis Obispo Coast Resource Grant	\$ <u>200,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$4,615,000.00

It is estimated that an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related costs by the Board, including the DGS' appraisal review fees, bringing the total proposed allocation for this project to \$1,005,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the acquisition of conservation easements to protect livestock grazing, together with wildlife, water quality, watershed and open space benefits which emanate from livestock grazing, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

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

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

Ms. Klein introduced Ms. Marlyce Myers and Mr. Suneil Thomas of The Nature Conservancy, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,005,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), Section 75055(d)(1) for the grant and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

32. Sisquoc River Steelhead Barrier Removal, \$500,000.00
Santa Barbara County

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the County of Santa Barbara (County) to replace a low-water crossing with a new bridge over the Sisquoc River at Tepusquet Road. Tepusquet Road is a county public road and as such, the County owns the right-of-way for the project. The project is located approximately 10 miles southeast of the City of Santa Maria. Mr. Tony Chappelle of the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board) briefly described the project and its location.

While the Board has funded several steelhead barrier removal projects around the state, this is potentially the Board's first project of any type on the Sisquoc River in Santa Barbara County. The proposed project is important due to the presence of the endangered Southern California distinct population segment of steelhead (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*) in the Sisquoc River system which is designated critical habitat for this species. A 2003, steelhead migration barrier assessment of the Sisquoc River documented all the barriers to steelhead migration on the river and described the Tepusquet Road crossing as the only remaining significant barrier.

In general, the proposed project will enhance steelhead passage through the area by removing the existing culvert and road crossing that is impairing steelhead movement up the river. Under the current conditions, steelhead can get upstream of Tepusquet Road only when the crossing washes out during large storm events. These wash-outs are a double-edged sword in that they cause undue sedimentation impacts downstream and require the crossing be rebuilt with heavy equipment in the stream channel.

A new multi-span bridge will be constructed to replace the existing low-water crossing and allow steelhead improved access to upstream spawning habitat. The installation of a permanent structure will also eliminate the wash-outs and the resulting need for reconstruction of the crossing. The bridge will be 689 feet long with three spans and four concrete piles as foundation support in the river channel. It will accommodate two lanes of traffic and will elevate the road above the 100-year floodplain. The bridge will be located approximately 90 feet upstream of the existing crossing to allow for a safer road alignment to meet minimum design traffic speed requirements. The project will be designed and constructed to County, Caltrans, and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials standards and practices. A Geotechnical Report has been prepared and concludes that that the project is feasible with the use of concrete "cast in drilled hole" piles which are included in the project design.

In cooperation with staff from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the project site will be regularly monitored following project construction to ensure that steelhead passage is not constrained by sedimentation or debris collecting around the bridge footings. An annual monitoring report will be provided to Board staff for five years following project completion.

The County has agreed to manage and maintain the project for 25 years pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement Management Plan. If at any time during the life of the project, the County is unable to manage and maintain the project

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

The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$500,000.00
FHWA	\$8,197,123.00
County of Santa Barbara	\$1,135,443.00
TOTAL:	\$9,832,566.00

Project costs will be for construction of the bridge structure and installation of a project sign.

The DFG has reviewed this proposal and recommends it for funding by the Board. The County has prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting Board's compliance with CEQA as a responsible agency.

The proposed funding source for this project is the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a) that allows funding for the acquisition, protection, and restoration of coastal wetlands, upland areas adjacent to coastal wetlands and coastal watershed lands in southern California coastal counties, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

Mr. Chappelle introduced Mr. Charlie Elbert of County of Santa Barbara, who was in the audience and available to answer questions.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$500,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(a); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

33. Saddle Creek, \$11,660,000.00
Orange County

Mr. Donnelly reported that letters of support were received from the following people: Mr. Bill Campbell, Supervisor, Third District, Orange County Board of Supervisors; Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitat League; Ms. Lyndine McAfee, Executive Director, Nature Reserve of Orange County; Mr. Michael O'Connell, Executive Director, Irvine Ranch Conservancy; Mr. Scott Thomas, Conservation Director—Orange County, Sean and Sage Audubon Society.

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Conservation Fund (TCF) to acquire 306± acres in Orange County. The proposal also includes the acceptance of two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grants and the authorization to enter into two Agreements to Subgrant the federal funds to The Conservation Fund to be applied toward the acquisition. The purposes of this acquisition are to protect critical habitat for the California gnatcatcher, low elevation wildlife connections between the subregions of Orange County, reduce habitat fragmentation and further implement the Habitat Conservation Plans and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) covering the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described project and its location.

The property is located on the north side of Live Oak Canyon Road, east of Santiago Canyon Road, in the Trabuco Canyon area of the unincorporated area of Orange County. The subject property is within the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan Area (FTSP), which the County adopted in 1991. FTSP comprises 6,500± acres of undeveloped land that serves as a buffer between suburban development and the Cleveland National Forest. Land within the FTSP is known for its significant landform, biological and scenic resources, as well as for its recreational opportunities. Approximately 50-75% of the subject property is within the approved Central-Coastal Orange County NCCP.

Acquisition of this property would secure a large portion of a wildlife corridor associated with southern Orange County, Trabuco Canyon to Cleveland National Forest. Corridors have been designated in the FTSP to ensure linkages among the following large habitat areas: Cleveland National Forest, Arroyo Trabuco, O'Neill Regional Park, Whiting Ranch Wilderness Regional Park and Santiago Creek. Large mammals using habitat that occurs within these corridors include mule deer, mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, gray foxes, badgers, raccoons and skunks. Two designated wildlife corridors run through the subject property and the property is considered important as a low elevation habitat link for the region.

TCF will acquire and manage the property to protect the wildlife connectivity and a low elevation linkage for gnatcatchers from Southern Orange to the Cleveland National Forest, FTSP area and central Coastal NCCP planning area. The USFWS and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) (wildlife agencies) jointly control the "Southern Orange County Coastal California Gnatcatcher in Lieu Fee Account" that was created through the inception of the State coastal sage scrub NCCP and the corresponding Federal listing of the gnatcatcher as threatened. The fees are collected to mitigate the impacts to gnatcatchers within the Southern Orange planning area and are used to fund acquisition, management and restoration projects in Southern Orange County. From this account, the wildlife agencies will commit \$250,000.00 toward the management of the subject property. The funds will be available as soon as the property is purchased and may be used for any management work that may be necessary including fixing or erecting gates and fences, signage and non-native species removal.

The owners of the property have agreed to sell the property at the appraised value of \$17,770,000.00, as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	\$11,649,259.00
USFWS Grant (Board Subgrant)	\$ 3,120,741.00
USFWS Grant (Board Subgrant)	\$ 3,000,000.00
TOTAL:	\$17,770,000.00

The proposed subgrants will provide a total of \$6,120,741.00 in federal money toward the purchase price from the USFWS grants. It is estimated that an additional \$10,741.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Board, which includes the DGS' appraisal review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$11,660,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for projects that implement or assist in the establishing Natural Community Conservation Plans, and is consistent with the purposes of the project.

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

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

Ms. Muzik introduced Mr. Scott Ferguson of Conservation Fund and Mr. Dave Eadie of Rutter Development, who were in the audience and available to answer questions.

Ms. Finn had a couple of questions about grants and funds, and Ms. Muzik answered these questions to Ms. Finn's satisfaction.

Mr. Scott Ferguson expressed his appreciation for the grant and made comments about the importance and benefits of this project.

It was moved by Mr. Koch that the Board approve a grant to The Conservation Fund for this project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amounts of \$3,000,000.00 and \$3,120,741.00 and approve two Agreements to Subgrant the federal funds to The Conservation Fund; allocate \$8,288,119.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection fund of 2006 (Prop. 84), Section 75055(c), and \$3,371,881.00 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (Prop. 12), Section 5096.350(a)(6) for this project and 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.

Motion carried.

34. Trabuco Canyon, \$1,800,000.00
Orange County

Mr. Donnelly reported that a letter of support was received from Mr. Dan Silver, Executive Director of Endangered Habitat League.

Mr. Donnelly reported that this proposal was to consider the State's acquisition of fee title to 50± acres of privately-owned land located in Orange County. The purpose of this acquisition is to protect critical low elevation wildlife corridors, protect California gnatcatcher habitat, provide connectivity to other protected lands in the area, and prevent habitat fragmentation. Ms. Teri Muzik of the Wildlife Conservation Board briefly described the project and its location.

The subject property is located in rural Trabuco Canyon in southeastern Orange County within the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. It is approximately equidistant to the city boundaries of Lake Forest, Mission Viejo and Rancho Santa Margarita. The County's O'Neill Regional Park and Wilderness Area and the Cleveland National Forest are within one-half mile of the property. Access to the parcel is located along Live Oak Canyon Road, a county designated Scenic Highway.

The Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan (FTSP), adopted in 1991, comprises 6,500± acres of undeveloped land that serves as a buffer between suburban development and the Cleveland National Forest. The subject property is contained within the boundary of the FTSP. Land within the FTSP is known for its significant landform, biological and scenic resources, as well as for its recreational opportunities. The subject property is also within the planning area of the approved Southern Orange County Habitat Conservation Plan.

Acquisition of this property would secure a large portion of a wildlife corridor associated with southern Orange County, Trabuco Canyon to Cleveland National Forest. Corridors have been designated in the FTSP to ensure linkages among the following large habitat areas: Cleveland National Forest, Arroyo Trabuco, O'Neill Regional Park, Whiting Ranch Wilderness Regional Park and Santiago Creek. Large mammals using habitat that occurs within these corridors include mule deer, mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, gray foxes, badgers, raccoons and skunks. Two designated wildlife corridors run through the subject property and the property is considered important as a low elevation habitat link for the region.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will acquire and manage the property to protect the wildlife connectivity and a low elevation linkage for gnatcatchers from Southern Orange to the Cleveland National Forest, FTSP area and central Coastal NCCP planning area. The USFWS and the DFG (wildlife agencies) jointly control the "Southern Orange County Coastal California Gnatcatcher in Lieu Fee Account" that was created through the inception of the State coastal sage scrub NCCP and the corresponding Federal listing of the gnatcatcher as threatened. The fees are collected to mitigate the impacts to gnatcatchers within the Southern Orange planning area and used to fund acquisition, management and restoration projects in Southern Orange

County. From this account, the wildlife agencies will commit \$100,000.00 toward the management of the subject property. The funds will be available as soon as the property is purchased and may be used for any management work that may be necessary including fixing or erecting gates and fences, signage and non-native species removal.

The California Land Conservancy (CLC) has negotiated with the landowner to sell the property in three phases and currently holds an option agreement with the landowner for the phased purchase. The property is a total of 150± acres and each acquisition phase covers 50± acres. The negotiated purchase price for the entire property is \$5,300,000.00, with each phase being 50± acres for \$1,773,050.00. CLC would either assign its purchase option for the first phase to the State or facilitate a direct transaction between the landowner and the State for the phase one property.

The property was appraised and the appraisal was reviewed by the Department of General Services (DGS). DGS found the appraised value was not supported, and instead established and approved a reduced fair market value of at least \$5,300,000.00. This DGS-approved value is the same as the agreed upon purchase price. The DGS review found the negotiated value of each of the three phases to be acceptable as well. It is estimated that an additional \$26,950.00 will be needed for administrative expenses by the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board), which includes the DGS' review costs, escrow and title insurance fees bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to \$1,800,000.00. The proposed funding source allows for the protection of habitat that provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent habitat fragmentation, and is consistent with the purposes of the proposed project.

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 under Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space. Subject to approval by the Board, a Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Board approve the project as proposed; allocate \$1,800,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Prop. 40), Section 5096.650 for the acquisition and 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.

Motion carried.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on August 28, 2008, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$2,050,247,229.19. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

The statement includes projects completed under the 1964 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act, the 1970 Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Bond Fund, the Bagley Conservation Fund, the State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974, the General Fund, the Energy Resources Fund, the Environmental License Plate Fund, the State, Urban and Coastal Park Bond Act of 1976, the 1984 Parklands Fund, the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Bond Act, the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988, Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund of 1988, California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990, the Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Act of 1996, the Natural Resources Infrastructure Fund, the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund, Forest Resources Improvement Fund, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond, Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Protection Fund, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund, Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, and the Wildlife Restoration Fund. In addition to projects completed with the above funding sources, this statement includes tax credits awarded under the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000. The tax credits are not reflected in the total amount allocated to projects.

A.	Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$16,006,219.06
B.	Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement	41,914,416.41
	Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 5,605,699.00
	Stream Clearance and Improvement.....	30,495,078.19
	Stream Flow Maintenance Dams.....	542,719.86
	Marine Habitat	1,046,619.07
	Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	4,224,300.29
C.	Fishing Access Projects	52,581,091.95
	Coastal and Bay	\$ 4,612,013.11
	River and Aqueduct Access	16,862,441.93
	Lake and Reservoir Access	10,153,871.87
	Piers	20,952,765.04
D.	Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
E.	Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement	1,878,779,889.59
	Wildlife Areas (General)	\$393,377,906.99
	Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development.....	15,987,817.32
	Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	695,247,205.12
	Land Conservation Area	12,995,218.18

Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	23,340,620.64
Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	63,141,919.63
Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	704,580,305.61
F. Hunting Access Projects.....	484,898.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	19,812,831.12
H. Special Project Allocations	1,662,294.13
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects.....	38,325,550.80
State Owned.....	\$1,813,406.19
Grants.....	36,512,144.61
J. Sales and/or exchanges	533,143.07
K. Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded)(48,241,234.00)	
Statutory plans.....	(0.00)
Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and riparian habitat.....	(6,234,658.00)
Agricultural lands	(13,775,640.07)
Water and water rights	(0.00)
State and local parks, open space and archaeological resources.....	(28,230,935.93)
 Total Allocated to Projects	\$2,050,247,299.19