

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes, Meeting of December 12, 1980

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State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

MINUTES, MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 1980

Pursuant to the call of the Chairperson, the Wildlife Conservation Board met in Room 6028 of the State Capitol, Sacramento, California, on December 12, 1980. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Chairperson Elizabeth Venrick.

1. Roll Call

PRESENT: Elizabeth Venrick
E. C. Fullerton

Chairperson
Member

ABSENT: Susanne Morgan
Senator Barry Keene

Member
Joint Legis. Interim Committee

STAFF PRESENT:

Chester M. Hart
Alvin G. Rutsch
John Wentzel
John Schmidt
Jim Sarro
Marylyn Gzyms
Alma Koyasako
Diane Wing

Executive Officer
Assistant Executive Officer
Field Agent
Senior Land Agent
Land Agent
Accountant
Secretary
Stenographer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dan Chapin
Jerlyn Costanzo
Terry Butler
Rose Takata
George Nokes
Jim Messersmith
Wayne Long
Jeff Shellito
Joe Sheehan

California Waterfowl Association
San Jose Flipper Dippers
Santa Cruz Co. Watershed Office
Dept. of Fish and Game
" " "
" " "
Multiple Use Managers, Inc.,
West Point
Office of Legislative Analyst
Dept. of Fish and Game

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Chester M. Hart, Executive Officer, reported that the minutes of the September 18, 1980, meeting have been published and circulated and that he knew of no need for correction or addition to those minutes. He recommended that the minutes of the public meeting, as well as the executive session immediately following the public meeting, be approved.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 1980, MEETINGS OF THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD BE APPROVED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Wildlife Restoration Fund Status

Mr. Hart reported the fund status at the beginning of the meeting as follows:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Unallocated balance at end of 9/18/80 meeting | \$3,586,447.64 |
| Plus transfer of federal monies from various funds | +515,587.36 |
| Unallocated balance at beginning of 12/12/80 meeting. . | \$4,102,035.00 |

4. Coastal Wetlands Acquisition Project

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| <u>Lakes Earl/Talawa, Phase 2, Del Norte County</u> | <u>\$40,000.00</u> |
|---|--------------------|

Mr. Hart advised that this item is public meeting confirmation of emergency action taken recently by the Board.

On September 18, 1980, the Wildlife Conservation Board approved the acquisition of six parcels of privately owned land along the east bank of Lake Earl, Del Norte County. At that meeting the Board allocated \$596,395.00 (\$576,395.00 for the land; \$20,000.00 for costs) for the acquisition of the 305+ acres contained in the six parcels. However, final survey of these parcels revealed an actual acreage of 322.66+ acres. Based on this revised acreage an additional \$40,000 was required to complete the acquisitions.

Because of the need to make immediate, firm offers to the property owners, Board members were polled by telephone as an emergency matter and the additional allocation of \$40,000 was approved.

The Executive Officer recommended confirmation at this time of the Board's previous emergency action to increase the Lakes Earl/Talawa, Phase 2, project by an additional \$40,000 from the 1976 Bond Act as approved for coastal acquisitions.

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IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD CONFIRM ITS TELEPHONIC APPROVAL OF EMERGENCY ACTION TO INCREASE THE ALLOCATION FOR LAKES EARL/TALAWA, PHASE 2, DEL NORTE COUNTY, BY AN ADDITIONAL \$40,000 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT BUDGETED FOR COASTAL WETLANDS ACQUISITION PROJECTS.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Vallejo Fishing Pier Rehabilitation, Solano County \$26,000.00

Mr. Hart reported that this item is a similar public confirmation of the Board's approval, by telephonic poll, of a supplemental allocation for the Vallejo Pier restoration previously approved by the WCB at its meeting of January 10, 1980.

The Greater Vallejo Recreation District on November 12, received a low bid of \$74,800 for this work, for which the Board had allocated \$60,000, based on the estimates provided by the District's engineers. A total of five bids were received.

Because of the very poor condition of the pier, it was deemed essential that the additional funds be approved as quickly as possible so that the contract for the work could be awarded. The executive officer therefore completed a poll of the Board on November 24 in which approval of an additional \$26,000 for the Vallejo Pier renovation was approved. The funding includes 10% for the District's engineering costs and 5% for contingencies. Staff will request an amendment to the Land and Water agreement so as to qualify these additional funds for the 50% federal reimbursement in accordance with normal practice.

The District was subsequently notified to proceed with the work and award of the District's construction contract is expected to be made in early December.

It was staff's recommendation that the Board confirm the telephonic vote authorizing an additional allocation of \$26,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund for the Vallejo Fishing Pier, Solano County, in order to accept the low bid for the pier renovation project.

Mr. Fullerton asked if this would finish the renovation of the fishing pier, and Mr. Hart responded that this should complete the project, although he pointed out that this is an old highway bridge converted to fishing pier use and there may be need to do additional work 10 - 15 years hence.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD CONFIRM ITS TELEPHONIC APPROVAL OF AN ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION OF \$26,000 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR THE VALLEJO FISHING PIER REHABILITATION, SOLANO COUNTY, IN ORDER TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID FOR THE PIER REHABILITATION PROJECT.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Bend Bridge Public Access Improvements, Tehama County \$18,000.00

The Bend Bridge Public Access in upper Tehama County is one of the first of the boat ramps on the Sacramento River that was developed by the Board to improve angler access. In 1957 the Board acquired 4.4 acres of land here with 580 feet of frontage along the left bank of the river. Public use of this rural access, while not large, has been consistent, with 4,000 visitor days counted last year.

The site is largely unchanged from its initial development, consisting essentially of a concrete ramp and a gravelled parking area. Chemical toilets have been located on the area for users' convenience.

The County has requested that funds be provided to upgrade the sanitary facilities by the construction of a permanent type restroom. This would help to reduce maintenance costs and provide a better standard of public convenience. A vault-type toilet is planned, since no water has been developed or is considered needed on this site.

The cost of a concrete block structure, based on the recent construction of a similar building at the Battle Creek Access in Shasta County is estimated by the Department of Fish and Game Engineering Section at \$18,000, including an allowance for contingencies and inflation.

The improvement of sanitary facilities at the Bend Bridge Public Access is Categorically Exempt from CEQA under Class 2 and Class 3(e) of the Resources Agency E.I.R. Guidelines, and a Notice of Exemption has been filed.

The County has indicated a willingness to renew their long-term operation and maintenance responsibilities for the project by agreement with the State upon the completion of the improvements.

Mr. Hart recommended the Board approve the Bend Bridge Public Access Improvements as proposed, allocate \$18,000 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE BEND BRIDGE PUBLIC ACCESS
IMPROVEMENTS, TEHAMA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$18,000
THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE
STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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7. Curry Mountains Public Access, Fresno County

\$76,600.00

Mr. Hart reported that this proposal is for the acquisition of approximately 97.43 acres of privately-owned land in the Curry Mountains area. Mr. John Schmidt, land agent, pointed out on a map displayed the area proposed for acquisition, which is located approximately 8 miles westerly of Coalinga, Fresno County, along State Highway 198. He reported that in addition to protecting wildlife habitat on the area, the acquisition would provide the opportunity for public access to approximately 1,700 acres of public land (Bureau of Land Management) which is presently inaccessible. At the present time, all of the public land on Curry Mountains is effectively blocked from public use by surrounding private-owned land. Mr. Hart elaborated that any future development for access would be planned by Region 4 of the Department of Fish and Game when management plans are developed for the area.

The Curry Mountains support a resident population of California mule deer as well as many other wildlife species, either on a year-round or migratory basis. Other species noted in the area include dove, valley quail, chukar, coyotes, bobcats, raptors, and a variety of songbirds.

The Department of Fish and Game has highly recommended this area for acquisition. The owners of this property have been the first willing sellers in this area and have agreed to sell to the State at the appraised value of \$72,816.00. An additional \$3,784.00 will be required for incidental costs including appraisal, Real Estate Services charges and title fees.

Management by the Department of Fish and Game is presently planned for this area, with some joint use or coordinated management with BLM a future possibility.

Any future development of the property would be undertaken as a separate project, with compliance with CEQA provisions as appropriate.

The proposed acquisition by the Wildlife Conservation Board falls within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements which includes acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve purchase of this parcel as proposed, allocate \$76,600 for the purchase and related costs from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE CURRY MOUNTAINS PUBLIC ACCESS PROJECT, FRESNO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$76,600 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Dos Palos Wildlife Area, Merced County

\$390,000.00

This proposal is to acquire a privately owned parcel containing approximately 358 acres. The subject property is located in the "Grasslands" area of Merced County, approximately three miles southwest of South Dos Palos. Acquisition has been recommended by the Department of Fish and Game, the Grasslands Water District, and the Grassland Resource Conservation District.

The property is primarily native marshland, and historically has been in a duck club - livestock grazing operation, as is typical for the Grasslands area.

Purchase of the property would provide a combination of benefits. It is planned that the area would be managed by the Department of Fish and Game as a satellite area under the Los Banos Wildlife Area. More intensive management by the Department would provide improved habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife and increased public hunting opportunity.

In addition, it is planned that a cooperative agreement would be entered into with the Grasslands Water District to enable the District to utilize approximately 80 acres of the property for a siltation pond system. Correction of an existing siltation problem is needed to improve the conveyance system that provides water to the Grassland marsh areas of Merced County including Los Banos Wildlife Area. The present conveyance system has been degraded over the years because of its inability to remove silt. As a result, the water supply and quality at Los Banos Wildlife Area and the privately owned marsh areas of the grasslands suffer. Purchase of this land would enable the Department to participate in improving the water supply and quality in the marsh and would be instrumental in maintaining the grasslands as a prime wintering area for waterfowl, one of the most important in California and the nation.

The siltation pond would provide a resting area for waterfowl. In addition, for its use of the property in this manner, the Grassland Water District has agreed to deliver to the Department without charge, a total of 1,000 acre feet of water annually for marsh and waterfowl management purposes.

Acquisition of this area falls within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements. This class consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes including preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, establishment of ecological reserves under Fish and Game Code 1580, and preservation of access to public lands and waters where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

The appraised fair market value of the property is \$384,850. In addition to the \$384,850 land costs, an estimated \$5,150 is required for appraisal, escrow, title insurance and other processing costs.

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Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve the purchase of this parcel as proposed, allocate \$390,000 for the purchase and related costs from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

There was discussion about the Grasslands Water District's responsibilities in relation to the siltation pond system, and it was brought out that the District probably would finance the system with some federal assistance.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE DOS PALOS WILDLIFE AREA, MERCED COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$390,000 FOR ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Los Banos Wildlife Area Water System Improvement, Merced County \$45,200.00

The Department has submitted a proposed project for certain modifications of the water system at the Los Banos Wildlife Area. These modifications are necessary to forestall possible legal action by the San Luis Canal Company which claims that the high water level maintained by the Department in the Boundary Drain is causing crop damage in adjacent fields.

The Department and the San Luis Canal Company have just concluded negotiations to resolve a long-standing disagreement over interpretation of a 1958 water agreement. The dispute centers on the Department's contention it has the right to back up water in the drain to its lift pumps.

To implement the negotiated settlement, an agreement has been drafted which provides for the canal company and the Department to jointly make the necessary improvements so the water levels in the drain can be lowered. The overall cost of this undertaking both on and off the wildlife area is estimated by the water company at \$210,000.

The portion of the work on the wildlife area itself is estimated at \$94,700 but under the negotiated settlement the canal company has agreed to pay for all except \$45,146 of these improvements. Specifically the Department's payment will go for the following work on the wildlife area:

1. Construct ditch - Boundary Drain to southeast corner of wildlife area.
2. Furnish and install 2 lift pump stations.
3. Remove existing water control structure at Beaver Pond.
4. Furnish and install new control structures.

The canal company will do all the engineering and construction involved in this project, including the installation of a completely new water recovery system with approximately 80 percent greater capacity than at present. In addition, the canal company would agree to deliver up to 1,000 acre feet of water purchased by the Department from the Grasslands

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Water District to the new lift pump in the Boundary Drain at no cost to the Department. All work proposed to be done on State property would be subject to the review and approval by the Department prior to construction.

The Department would, by terms of the settlement, pay the canal company \$45,146 on satisfactory completion of the work as described, and agree not to place any additional structures in the Boundary Drain that might impede the natural flow.

All necessary action for compliance with CEQA has been undertaken by the San Luis Canal Company.

Upon the Board's allocation of the necessary funds, the settlement agreement can be executed and the authorization given for the work to proceed. Since the appropriate time to do the work is in January, it was recommended by Mr. Hart the Board approve the modifications to the Los Banos Wildlife Area as proposed, allocate \$45,200 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Fullerton added that this is a problem that must be solved, and in order to correct the water problems for the Department of Fish and Game's neighbors, he fully concurred in the recommendation of staff.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE LOS BANOS WILDLIFE AREA WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT, MERCED COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$45,200 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Soquel Cove Artificial Reef, Santa Cruz County \$125,125.00

Construction of an artificial reef in the Soquel Cove area of Monterey Bay has been proposed by the County of Santa Cruz and favorably recommended by the Department of Fish and Game.

The planned site for the reef is in water 40 - 50 feet deep about 2 miles east of Soquel Point and approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles offshore.

This location is in close proximity to the Santa Cruz marina launching ramp, and to the boat hoist that will be on the Capitola Pier presently being renovated as a cooperative WCB-City of Capitola project.

Because of this location, the reef should provide unusual benefits to skiff and small boat fishermen, as well as to recreational divers.

In its evaluation, the Department of Fish and Game points out that where natural reefs occur in Monterey Bay they are very productive, but that

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much of the area has a bottom of sand or soft mudstone that erodes easily. It was felt that an artificial reef of hard rock or concrete would be as productive as a natural reef.

Estimated costs of the reef are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Quarry Rock, 4,000 T+ @ \$9.90 | \$39,600 |
| Barging and towing | 60,000 |
| Buoy and anchoring material | 500 |
| | <u>\$100,100</u> |
| Contingencies - 25% | 25,025 |
| TOTAL | <u>\$125,125</u> |

The cost quotes received, without contingencies, would make the reef cost \$25/Ton of rock in place, which is the same per unit cost as for the San Onofre reef recently constructed in Southern California waters. An important cost factor for the Monterey Bay area is that the closest tug and barge service is out of San Francisco Bay.

The the best of staff's knowledge, this would be the first offshore artificial reef constructed along the California coastline north of Ventura. As Such, it would be of considerable experimental value, and would provide opportunity for gaining new information on establishment of a rocky reef ecosystem.

For this reason, there has been support for the proposal from the academic community in the area, primarily from U.C. Santa Cruz. There also has been strong support from diving clubs in the general area, with members of the San Jose Flipper Dippers aiding in diving surveys for reef location and in other work necessary for the proposed project.

The Department of Fish and Game has secured, or is obtaining, necessary permits for the project, and also has processed a Categorical Exemption for compliance with CEQA.

Santa Cruz County will handle construction of the reef and by cooperative agreement will assume responsibility for maintaining a buoy marker at the site.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve the Soquel Cove Artificial Reef project as proposed, allocate \$125,125 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

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Mr. Fullerton was enthusiastic about this project, since it is the first time the Department has gone north into Monterey Bay for artificial reef construction.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE SOQUEL COVE ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$125,125 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Hart advised that there were representatives from Santa Cruz County and the San Jose Flipper Dippers. He noted that Jerlyn Costanza who was in attendance has personally done much of the work in developing this proposal and deserved recognition for this.

11. Meiss Lake Wildlife Area, Phase 1 - Siskiyou County \$2,080,000.00

This proposal is for the acquisition of a parcel of privately owned land in northern California's Butte Valley, Siskiyou County. The total ownership contains 13,200+ acres; however, this proposal is presently to acquire 7,920+ of this ownership.

Mr. Schmidt, with the use of maps, outlined for the Board members the location of Meiss Lake and Ranch which is located in northern Siskiyou County, approximately 14 miles from the California/Oregon border. The community of Macdoel is located about one mile to the east of the subject proposal.

Mr. Hart also provided a history of Meiss Ranch and the changes in the lake area, as well as the levee and drain system on the ranch.

The property contains extremely high waterfowl values due to its existing waterfowl habitat and to its location in the heart of the Pacific Flyway. Estimates during fall migration have shown 50,000 to 60,000 ducks and 20,000 - 30,000 geese using the lake and surrounding lowlands. An average of 260 pairs of ducks (nine different species) and 1,800 Canada geese nest on the property annually, producing their young in and around this lake. The lake area is known for its abundance of Canadian geese, the only goose which commonly nests in the State of California.

The waterfowl use given above is with the property being managed primarily for agricultural purposes. With development and more intensive management for wildlife purposes, use by waterfowl and other wildlife should increase several-fold.

Of the 7,920+ acres proposed for acquisition in this proposal, approximately 2,080 acres are included within the bed of the existing Meiss Lake. The total lake, as it is now contained by levees, includes approximately 2,200 acres. Much of the surrounding uplands, as contained in this proposal includes lands which are presently in grain crops, some of which could be

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retained as food sources and some of which could be restored to wetlands providing additional waterfowl habitat.

Water is available to this property from the numerous creeks, springs, and wells located on the property. This water, in addition to keeping lake levels up, provides water for the many upland game and non-game species, and their food sources, located on the property.

The property contains a deer population, as well as a population of antelope. It provides both winter and summer grazing for these species and serves as a prime kidding area for antelope. In addition, the area serves as a wintering area for the peregrine falcon and bald eagle, as well as other raptors. A small population of pheasants is also located on the property.

State ownership of this area would insure the preservation of this unique ecosystem which could be destroyed through extensive recreational development such as a large scale recreational subdivision. Even intensive agricultural development could lead to the eventual destruction of the high wildlife values of this property.

The acquisition of this property will not only protect this prime wildlife habitat but will also afford public recreational opportunities including hunting, hiking, nature observation, primitive camping, photography, as well as many educational opportunities. It will also add additional open space protection, as well as additional access to adjacent U.S. Forest Service lands.

The property has been recommended for acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game as well as by the U.S. Forest Service. Communications in support of this proposal have been received from the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association, the Siskiyou County Fish and Game Commission, and a Mr. Wayne Long who in past years has operated a hunting club on the area.

The proposed acquisition is within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements. Class 13 consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, including fish and wildlife habitat, establishing ecological reserves under Fish and Game Code Section 1580, and preserving access to public lands and waters where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

The owners have agreed to sell the land to the State at the appraised fair market value of \$2,056,860. An additional \$23,140 will be required for related acquisition costs such as appraisals, title insurance, surveys and related processing costs.

Acquisition of this area would secure an option on the remaining 5,280 acres in the ownership, which has a high potential for restoration as marshland. The appraised value is approximately \$1.9M, and the option would need to be exercised no later than July, 1981. Staff will plan to present this second phase of the acquisition for Board consideration at a future meeting if funding becomes available.

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Because of the high recreational values enjoyed by this property, it is felt that the acquisition should qualify for matching federal funds from the Land and Water Conservation fund. Application under this program has been submitted.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve purchase of this property as proposed, allocate \$2,080,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund as available for such purchases and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Hart reported that there was one telephone call received in the Department of Fish and Game's Wildlife Protection Branch office from a Mr. Kelly Cox who indicated he was opposed to this on the basis that lands would be taken off the tax roll. Mr. Hart explained that since this would be acquired for a wildlife area, the Department would be paying in-lieu taxes.

In response to Ms. Venrick's question about the levees, Mr. Fullerton stated that a management plan for the area has yet to be developed and, therefore, a determination has not been made as to whether or not the present levee system would be retained. Mr. Hart advised that there is an obligation for the ranch owner to maintain the existing levee, for it does provide flood control benefits other than for the ranch itself, which the Department would be incurring through the purchase. However, it would appear desirable to maintain the levee for use of the area and this would be determined when a management plan is developed.

Mr. Dan Chapin, representing the California Waterfowl Association, strongly concurred with WCB staff's recommendation to acquire this property. He stated they have recognized its potential for offsetting loss of wetlands in other areas of California, restoring what historically was wetlands in this area. He was impressed with the cost effectiveness of this proposal. He mentioned the possibility of an additional 2,000 or 3,000 acres immediately to the northeast being established as wetlands by the Forest Service. With respect to the balance of funding for this acquisition, he advised that they are looking into the possibility of supplemental appropriation in the next session of the legislature.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE PROPOSED PROJECT FOR MEISS LAKE WILDLIFE AREA, PHASE I, SISKIYOU COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$2,080,000 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED WITH THE PROJECT SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Coastal Wetlands Acquisition Project \$14,750.00
Batiquitos Lagoon, San Diego County

The following proposal is to acquire approximately six acres of property on the northerly side of Batiquitos Lagoon, San Diego County. The acquisition of properties in and around the lagoon have been highly recommended by the Department of Fish and Game, and 135 acres have been previously acquired through WCB action. The parcel in this proposal adjoins the area previously purchased.

Mr. Schmidt pointed out on a map the proposed acquisition at Batiquitos Lagoon which is located on the coastline about 28 miles north of San Diego, between the unincorporated community of Leucadia and the City of Carlsbad. The total lagoon area comprises about 340+ acres. However, only the western portion (which includes the area previously acquired) and the San Marcos Creek delta at the eastern end contain essentially permanent water filled channels and brackish marsh areas. Normally, a sand bar separates the lagoon from the ocean and prevents tidal flushing. This bar is occasionally opened by floods or by man, temporarily creating tidal action into the lagoon that reportedly was present in historical times. The easterly portion of the lagoon is flooded seasonally by storm runoff.

The diverse habitat formed at Batiquitos Lagoon supports many waterfowl, shorebirds, and upland birds, as well as many small mammals, reptiles, and aquatic organisms. As many as 75 species of water-associated birds have been recorded at the lagoon, including the rare and endangered California least tern.

The area proposed for acquisition is located on the north shore of the east basin of the lagoon, approximately 150 feet east of Interstate 5.

Access to this property is from I-5 via the Poinsetta Interchange to Lagoon Lane. The property is located at the southerly end of Lagoon Lane.

In addition to protecting a valuable wildlife habitat from further degradation, the acquisition of this parcel will provide public access to this area for a variety of recreational and educational uses, such as bird watching, nature study, and scientific study, in addition to shoreline hiking.

No development is proposed for this parcel. It would be managed in essentially the existing state by the Department of Fish and Game. The proposed acquisition falls within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements. Class 13 consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife habitat, establishing ecological reserves under Fish and Game Code Section 1580, and preserving access to public lands and waters where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

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Ownership of this parcel is quite fragmented. The main owners have agreed to sell their interests in this property which includes approximately 80% of the fee interests. Because of the high desirability of placing this parcel in public ownership it is recommended that acquisition proceed on this portion of the ownership followed by continued efforts to acquire the remaining fractional interests. This would preclude possible development and protect public access to this wildlife area. The property has been appraised for \$10,000. An offer on any fractional acquisition would be prorated according to the interest being acquired. An additional \$4,750 is required for related costs including appraisal, title costs, and processing costs.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve the purchase of this parcel or majority interests therein as proposed, allocate \$14,750 for the purchase and related costs from the 1976 Bond Act funds available for coastal acquisitions and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE BATIQUITOS LAGOON ACQUISITION PROJECT, SAN DIEGO COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$14,750 FOR ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR COASTAL WETLANDS ACQUISITION; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

13. Coastal Wetlands Acquisition Project
Lakes Earl/Talawa, Phase 2 Expansion, Del Norte County \$48,900.00

This proposal is to acquire one privately owned parcel containing 33.42+ acres on the easterly shore of Lake Earl, Del Norte County. At its June 22, 1979, meeting the Board approved WCB participation in a coordinated tri-Department effort to acquire 7,880+ acres, generally westerly of the subject property. This acquisition has been completed placing 4,144+ acres under DFG control (1,544 acres by purchase and 2,600 acres by permit from the State Lands Commission) and 3,736+ acres under Department of Parks and Recreation control.

At its September 18, 1980, meeting the Board approved the acquisition of six additional parcels containing 305+ acres along the easterly shore. Negotiations are progressing toward the purchase of these parcels.

The acquisition of this additional parcel has been highly recommended by the Department of Fish and Game. It is contiguous to previously approved acquisitions along Lake Earl and is the seventh parcel on the east shore being presented to the Board out of the twelve recommended by the Department. Efforts are continuing towards purchase of the remaining five ownerships.

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This area is on the Smith River plain, which extends southward from the mouth of the Smith River to Crescent City, the county seat of Del Norte County.

The acquisition of this parcel will provide additional protection to the riparian habitat as well as some small portions of actual lake area included within the parcel. As part of the acquisition process, any claims of the State Lands Commission to underlying lake bed areas will be recognized on the basis that such lands be leased by the Commission to DFG for a long-term period.

The Smith River plain is an integral part of the coastal arm of the Pacific Flyway. The waters of Lakes Earl and Talawa and the lands in this proposal include habitat that is critical to the existence of significant waterfowl populations, such as the Aleutian Canada goose. This species is presently listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as endangered. The waters of Lake Earl also support the highest wintering population of canvasback ducks north of San Francisco Bay. The overall floodplain, lakes and surrounding uplands support over 250 species of birds, most of them water-associated (almost three million bird days of use annually between 1970 and 1973), and 58 species of mammals.

In addition to protecting valuable and additional ecologically significant wildlife habitat, this acquisition will help ensure public access to the overall Lake Earl area for a wide variety of compatible recreational and educational uses such as fishing, bird watching, nature and scientific study, hiking, and horseback riding. The lakes harbor 15 species of fish, including salmon and trout, and as much as 3,000 user days have been expended on them during the waterfowl season. Because of these recreational uses of the area, it is felt that this acquisition should qualify for matching federal funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and application under this program is planned.

The proposed acquisition by WCB falls within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements which include acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. No development is planned for this area. Management by the Department of Fish and Game is planned with some joint use or coordinated management agreements with the Department of Parks and Recreation anticipated.

This parcel has been appraised for \$44,917 and the landowner has agreed to sell for this value. An additional amount of approximately \$4,000 is needed for appraisal, survey, title insurance and processing costs.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board approve purchase of this parcel as proposed, allocate \$48,900 for the purchase and related costs from the 1976 Bond Act funds available for coastal wetlands acquisition, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned, including authorization to proceed with obtaining the State Lands Commission lease for the lake areas.

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IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE PURCHASE OF THE PARCEL AS PROPOSED FOR THE LAKES EARL AND TALAWA, PHASE 2 EXPANSION, DEL NORTE COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$48,900 FOR ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR COASTAL WETLANDS ACQUISITION; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED, INCLUDING AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED WITH OBTAINING THE STATE LANDS COMMISSION LEASE FOR THE LAKE AREA.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. Other Business

Special Project - Account S-2500

\$25,000.00

Replenishment of funds in WCB account S-2500 is needed. This is in part a revolving fund established by the Board early in the WCB program to provide working funds for staff evaluation of proposed projects. It is used primarily for appraisals, but also for feasibility studies and preliminary engineering costs.

When projects are approved by the Board, any preliminary costs from S-2500 are reimbursed to the account. However, for projects that for some reason are determined to be infeasible, the account is not reimbursed from a project allocation, which slowly depletes the fund.

The account was last replenished in 1975, and the balance now is approximately \$2,500.

Mr. Hart recommended that the Board allocate \$25,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund to account S-2500.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD ALLOCATE \$25,000 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR REPLENISHMENT OF FUNDS IN ACCOUNT S-2500.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Communication - Sportsmen's Council of Central California

Mr. Hart provided a copy of a letter received this week from the Sportsmen's Council of Central California addressed to the Chairperson of the Wildlife Conservation Board. This was a totally unsolicited letter and was very complimentary of the WCB, its projects, and the program administration. Ms. Venrick requested staff to acknowledge and make appropriate response to this very nice letter.

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Chairperson Venrick advised that this would be her last meeting with the Wildlife Conservation Board and took this opportunity to thank the Board staff and fellow members.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chester M. Hart

Chester M. Hart
Executive Officer

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on December 12, 1980, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947, totaled \$47,790,254.38. This total includes \$6,448,313.02 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, and the Pittman-Robertson Program.

The statement includes projects completed under the 1964 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act. Projects funded under the 1970 Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Bond Fund, the Bagley Conservation Fund, and the 1974 and 1976 Bond Acts will be included in this statement after completion of these programs.

| | | |
|----|---|------------------------|
| a. | Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects | \$10,592,706.73 |
| b. | Fish Habitat Development | 4,899,031.95 |
| | 1. Reservoir Construction or Improvement | \$2,781,719.19 |
| | 2. Stream Clearance and Improvement | 337,992.19 |
| | 3. Stream Flow Maintenance Dams | 439,503.32 |
| | 4. Marine Habitat | 502,135.36 |
| | 5. Fish Screens, Ladders & Weir Projects | 837,681.89 |
| c. | Fishing Access Projects | 14,816,882.61 |
| | 1. Coastal and Bay Access | 1,529,680.04 |
| | 2. River and Aqueduct Access | 3,462,896.51 |
| | 3. Lake and Reservoir Access | 3,303,255.14 |
| | 4. Piers | 6,521,050.92 |
| d. | Game Farm Projects | 146,894.49 |
| e. | Wildlife Habitat Development and Improvement Projects | 16,070,979.88 |
| | 1. Wildlife Areas | 15,350,571.47 |
| | 2. Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Dev. | 720,408.41 |
| f. | Hunting Access | 549,036.81 |
| g. | Miscellaneous Projects | 631,221.91 |
| s. | Special Project Allocations | 83,500.00 |
| | Total Allocated to Projects | <u>\$47,790,254.38</u> |

STATUS OF FUNDS WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Unallocated balance at beginning of 12/12/80 meeting | \$4,102,035.00 |
| Less allocations. | -2,785,925.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| Unallocated balance at end of 12/12/80 meeting | \$1,316,110.00 |