

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

Minutes, Meeting of March 15, 1983

C O N T E N T S

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Roll Call	1
2. Funding Status	2
3. Capitola Fishing Wharf, Santa Cruz County	2 - 4
4. Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary, Monterey County Visitor and Service Facilities	5 - 7
5. Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary, Monterey County Marsh Restoration.	8 - 9
6. Conway Summit Wildlife Area, Mono County	9 - 10
7. Napa Marsh, Huichica Creek, Napa and Sonoma Counties	11 - 12
8. Bair Island, San Mateo County.	12 - 13
9. Petaluma Marsh Wildlife Area, Sonoma County	13
10. Petaluma Marsh Habitat Development, Marin County (Toy Parcel)	14 - 15
11. Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County	15 - 17
12. Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Del Norte County	17 - 19
Program Statement	30

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

Pursuant to the call of the Chairman, the Wildlife Conservation Board met in Room 127, State Capitol, Sacramento, California, on March 15, 1983. The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by Acting Chairman E. C. Fullerton.

1. Roll Call

PRESENT: E. C. Fullerton Acting Chairman
 Chon Gutierrez Member, vice, Michael Franchetti

 Assemblyman Norman S. Waters Joint Interim Committee
 Greg deGierre Vice, Senator Keene, Joint Interim
 Committee

ABSENT: Norman B. Livermore, Jr. Chairman
 Senator Robert Presley Joint Interim Committee
 Senator David Roberti " " "

STAFF PRESENT:

W. John Schmidt	Executive Officer
Alvin G. Rutsch	Assistant Executive Officer
John Wentzel	Field Agent
James V. Sarro	Land Agent
Howard Dick	Land Agent
Marylyn Gzyms	Accountant
Beth Manwaring	Stenographer
Alma Koyasako	Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Stephen R. Burrell	City Manager, City of Capitola
Ronald Graves	Mayor, City of Capitola
Craig French	Pub. Works Director, Capitola
Brian Hunter	Reg. 3, Dept. of Fish & Game
Watson Burkhead	Reg. 3, Dept. of Fish & Game
Dan Chapin	Calif. Waterfowl Association
John S. Warriner	Elkhorn Slough Advisory Comm.
Ken C. Moore	Dept. of Fish & Game
Jeff Shellito	Legislative Analyst
Marillin Hindus	Dept. of Finance
Joanne B. Lasnik	Economic Dev. Corp. of Monterey Co.
Sam Farr	Assemblyman, 28th District
Joe Sheehan	Dept. of Fish & Game

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

2. Funding Status

The following funding information was provided by the Executive Officer, Mr. John Schmidt.

a. Wildlife Restoration Fund

Unallocated balance at end of 2/15/83 meeting	\$3,774,558.65
Plus miscellaneous revenue	+ 535.11
Plus Federal LWCF reimbursement	+ 3,091.31
Plus 80/81 FY reimbursement for work at San Jacinto	+ 31,241.31
Less administrative charge on LWCF reimbursement.	- 5,517.10
Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting	\$3,803,909.28

b. Energy and Resources Fund

Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting -0-

c. 1976 State, Urban and Coastal Park Fund

1) Coastal Wetlands

Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting \$2,574,157.12

2) Interior Wetlands

Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting 50,369.40

3) Development

Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting 931,000.00

3. Capitola Fishing Wharf, Santa Cruz County

\$91,500.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Capitola Fishing Wharf was reconstructed in 1981 by the City of Capitola and the State as a matching Wildlife Conservation Board pier project. It sustained major damage during the severe storms which ravaged the coastal areas of the State last January. The City has proposed that the wharf be reconstructed to its recently restored condition on a matching fund basis.

The wharf, located in the Capitola Village area, is a historic fixture in this coastal community. It was built over 125 years ago as a ship loading facility but has now become a major regional recreation attraction, primarily for ocean fishing.

1982 was the first full year the wharf was open to the public after years of non-use. The City reported 250,000 visitor days of use for the year. The wharf has been partially open to the public since the January storm damage occurred, but the better fishing area is no longer accessible.

Staff has inspected the wharf and concurs in this assessment. The proposed work is considered to be beyond the maintenance responsibility assumed by the City in the City-State cooperative agreement for operation and maintenance.

The City has applied for federal disaster relief funds under the Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance program (FEMA). If the application is approved, the FEMA program would provide for 75% of the approved repair costs, with the City and WCB sharing the balance of the costs on a 50/50 basis, approximately \$22,875 for each agency.

If FEMA does not approve the City's application, it is proposed that the City and WCB share the entire repair costs, up to \$183,000, on a 50/50 basis in the usual manner. If the Board approves the project as proposed, a standard agreement between the City and the Department of Fish and Game will be drawn up to provide for reimbursement or recovery to the WCB of any portion of the Board's allocation which may not be needed because of the federal participation, or if costs are less than estimated.

A description of the damage has been provided by the City, as well as detailed estimate of the cost to restore the wharf. Approximately 50 feet of the outer end of the structure was destroyed or damaged, including restroom, lighting and beach access stairway. There was also damage to the private concession building landward of the 50' destroyed area. It will be the responsibility of the concessionaire to replace this facility.

The wharf had been reconstructed to current accepted standards for ocean piers, and it was expected to last for at least 25 years without needing significant structural replacements. It is speculated that the wharf sustained unusually severe damage because logging debris, washing to sea from the swollen nearby San Lorenzo Creek, occurred at the same time as the high tides and destructive waves. According to the City's evaluation, it was this combination of forces, in itself an extremely rare occurrence, that was to blame for the damage.

Mr. Al Rutsch, Assistant Executive Officer, explained the proposed plan for reconstruction of the pier indicating what the engineers have determined is necessary to increase the strength of the pier to withstand the forces of the wave and debris.

The City plans to contract out the work and has retained a consulting engineer to prepare plans for the work and a detailed cost estimate. The City indicates they will absorb the engineering inspection and contract administration costs. The repair estimate as submitted by the City is as follows:

Reconstruct 50' x 52' wharf	\$119,000
(Incl. piles, framing, deck, railing, lighting and hardware)	
Contractor's supervision, overhead & profit	40,000
Engineering, 10%	16,000
Contingencies, 5%	<u>8,000</u>
Total Estimated Cost	\$183,000

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

The City has determined that this work is exempt from CEQA under Class 2 (reconstruction of existing facilities), Section 15102 of the State Guidelines and has filed a Notice of Exemption in accordance with the requirements of the act.

Mr. Schmidt recommended the WCB approve the Capitola Fishing Wharf repair project as proposed, allocate \$91,500 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned. He also advised that letters of support have been received from Senator Mello and also from Assemblyman Farr who was present to speak on behalf of the project. He further pointed out that Mayor Ron Graves, City Manager Stephen Burrell, and Public Works Director Craig French from the City of Capitola were present to respond to any questions the Board might have.

Assemblyman Waters asked if participation by the WCB would affect the receipt of disaster relief funds, and Mr. Schmidt assured the Board that this has not been the case in other reconstruction work. In response to questions relative to timing, it was brought out that the disaster relief funds are fairly rapidly disbursed, once the application is approved by the Federal government. It was also clarified that the \$91,500 to be provided by the WCB would be on a reimbursement basis.

Assemblyman Sam Farr spoke in support of the project, explaining the cause of the damage, and the need for reconstruction of the pier which is so vital to the economy of this small coastal city.

Assemblyman Waters recommended approval of this proposed reconstruction.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE CAPITOLA FISHING WHARF REPAIR PROJECT, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$91,500 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary

Assemblyman Farr stated he also represents Monterey County and asked to be heard at this time relative to Elkhorn Slough. He understood that this hearing was set up as a follow-up to a previous meeting after allowing the Board an opportunity to review it further. He was pleased to see that the staff recommends funding of the visitor facilities and restoration of the estuarine sanctuary. He pointed out that this is the only estuarine sanctuary in California, and it has yet to provide access to the public because there has not been a commitment of funds for development of these visitor facilities. He strongly supported allocation of these monies, for it would reap benefits for California in the revenues derived by enhancing tourism and would permit the flow of grant monies to institutions surrounding the sanctuary to study impacts of the estuarine sanctuary, and hoped for favorable action on these proposals.

Since there was no objection, Acting Chairman Fullerton requested that the Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary proposals be heard at this time.

Mr. Schmidt advised that the following two items were heard by the Board at the February 15, 1983, meeting. However, after some discussion it was the Board's decision to defer them to a special meeting to be held in March. This move was made to allow the Department of Fish and Game staff the opportunity to re-evaluate the projects in light of future operation and maintenance problems and costs. The re-evaluation has now been completed and the projects are being resubmitted, as amended, for Board consideration at this time.

The Board's involvement in Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary began at its April 16, 1979, meeting when it authorized entering into the sanctuary project on the basis that matching funds would be obtained from the Federal Office of Coastal Zone Management. The project, as planned, called for the acquisition of approximately 1,510 acres along the easterly and southerly edges of Elkhorn Slough, and for appropriate development including marsh restoration, public access projects, education, interpretive, and administrative facilities.

To date approximately 1,227 acres have been acquired. Some minor development projects have also been completed. Project costs were estimated to amount to \$4,521,270. Approximately \$3,384,863 have been spent to date by the Board, 50% of which is to be reimbursed to the State by OCZM.

Recognizing the need to ensure that funding obligations are met for this project, the Board, at its August 5, 1982, meeting, set aside a \$1,000,000 reserve for continued acquisitions and development within the boundaries of this sanctuary.

Mr. Schmidt advised that there are two major sanctuary development proposals on this agenda. The reserved funds are from the 1976 Bond Act funds available for Coastal Wetland Acquisition and Development and must be encumbered by June 30, 1983. Therefore, it is imperative that projects in this category be acted upon at the earliest opportunity.

4. Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary, Monterey County
Visitor and Service Facilities \$655,650.00

The first Department proposal for Board consideration at this time is for the major construction project enumerated in the Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan as prepared by the Department of Fish and Game. As with earlier sanctuary proposals, 50% of the costs would qualify for reimbursement by the federal government's Office of Coastal Zone Management. One of the conditions of the sanctuary grant is OCZM approval of the management plan, and it is currently under their review.

Cost estimates for the proposed project are provided below. Because of the size of this project, final design, contract award and final construction supervision must be carried out by the Office of the State Architect. Department of Fish and Game personnel are presently putting this proposal in a form acceptable to OSA which will enable them to begin engineering

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

as soon as funds are allocated by the Board. Prior to authorizing final construction of the project, WCB staff and the Department of Fish and Game will have the opportunity to review and approve the final plans.

The major costs involved in this proposed development would be for public access and use facilities. However, items 4-6 below, would be needed as support facilities for the day-to-day operation of the sanctuary.

John Wentzel, Field Agent, provided the following information and cost estimates, using a conceptual plan displayed at the meeting.

1. Public Vehicular Access and Parking Areas \$135,650

The present entry road into the area from Elkhorn Road is felt to be unsafe for public use due to its location on a curve. A new road at another location is therefore proposed. This 3,000 foot paved road will provide access to an 11,000 square foot parking area (capable of accommodating 30 cars and buses) located within the public use area. It will also contain a paved overlook area to facilitate easy observation of this area by visitors, including handicapped visitors. This item also provides for proper drainage, culverts, access road, fencing, entry gate and signing.

2. Sanctuary Visitor Facility and Interpretive Building \$300,000

It is proposed that a general purpose building be constructed containing approximately 2,300 square feet that will accommodate up to 200 people. The building will have necessary storage area, employee and visitor rest-rooms, and built-in exhibit areas. As one purpose of the sanctuary program is to provide educational opportunities, a facility of this type is felt to be necessary to house visitors and provide the opportunity for an organized program. It is felt that any educational program carried out at the sanctuary will be largely handled by volunteers from local colleges, as well as private, natural resource conservation organizations. Exhibits will also be provided for self-interpretive purposes.

3. Outside Interpretive Area \$25,000

It is proposed that the existing pole barn overlooking the slough be upgraded with the addition of a rustic patio and built-in signs and displays. It will be the staging area for visitors and students touring the sanctuary. The trail systems to the slough/marsh area will start from this facility. Visitors, including handicapped, will have a panoramic view of the total Elkhorn Slough system. Upgrading of this existing structure will be considerably less expensive than new construction of a replacement facility.

4. Sanctuary Center Residence \$75,000

This residence is intended to house a new employee and would take the place of a residence originally considered for remodeling but was found to be beyond economical repair. Because of its lack of foundation, extreme dry rot and overall poor state of repair, DFG Engineering recommended that State money would be much better spent in constructing a 1400 square foot modular home with detached two-car garage of 600 square feet.

5. Remodeling of Existing Shop/Garage/Dairy Building \$100,000

It is proposed that the existing dairy building be remodeled into a shop/garage for the Sanctuary and have a facility for clean-up of personnel after coming out of the marsh. It would also provide an enclosed area, as working on equipment and material is necessary for the proper operation of this area. A Butler type building will also be considered during the design stage as an alternate for possible savings to the State.

6. Equipment/Corporation Yard \$20,000 ✓

This will be a fenced area to provide proper security from the public use facilities. It is proposed that it be graveled and oil sealed and contain a vehicle washing pad, necessary to keep vehicles clean to avoid rusting in this salty environment. It is intended that this area be used for storage of all Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary vehicles and materials.

The project is categorically exempt from CEQA under Classes 1, 2, and 7, consisting of repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing public structures or topographical features and replacement of existing structures.

It was Mr. Schmidt's recommendation that the Board approve the Elkhorn Slough facilities development, allocate \$655,650 from the 1976 Bond Act funds available for this purpose, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

He advised that letters of support have been received from the following: Assemblyman Farr, Senator Mello, Supervisor Mark Del Piero, the Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary Advisory Committee who has sent a representative Mr. John Warriner, Association of Former Coastal Commissioners, and the California Native Plant Society.

Mr. Fullerton reviewed for Mr. Gutierrez that the Board had approved this item at the February meeting, but because there was concern expressed on the question of the overall marsh restoration and management, it was decided to hold it up along with the visitor facility proposal until such time as the marsh question was settled. He stated this has now been settled after review of the management plans.

Assemblyman Waters then recommended approval of this allocation, and Mr. Gutierrez expressed his approval when he learned that his predecessor's (Del Pierce) reaction to the overall management plan was favorable.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ELKHORN SLOUGH ESTUARINE SANCTUARY FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT, MONTEREY COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$655,650 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

5. Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary, Marsh Restoration \$281,000.00
Monterey County

The second major development project proposed by the Department of Fish and Game for the Elkhorn Slough Estuarine Sanctuary is for the restoration of saltwater marshes. Because of the concerns expressed at the previous meeting, the plans have been substantially altered to the point where it nearly eliminates future management costs, which was the major concern. Much of the area proposed for restoration has been diked in past years to create pasture land, but due to lack of maintenance on the dikes, some saltwater has intruded into the reclaimed pasture. It is felt that with proper water circulation, optimum wetland values could be realized on the potential restorable lands. In addition, circulation would eliminate critical mosquito problems in the area.

The proposed improved restoration will convert approximately 498 acres of dikes and abandoned pasture into two marsh areas, a 123 acre marsh on the north and a 375 acre marsh on the south. Natural high land forms a buffer between the two areas. Since no levees are needed for this restoration project, future management costs will be minimal.

Tidal flows will be improved by deepening the channels under the two railroad trestles which cross each marsh. Rock lining each of the two channels may be necessary to promote more efficient water flows. It may also be necessary to strengthen or modify the trestle bents to maintain trestle stability, and an amount has been included in the cost estimate for this purpose.

Mr. Wentzel explained that at the north marsh, 5500 lineal feet of new channel, 20 feet wide, will be excavated to -3 feet in depth to provide for proper exchange of water flows. Spoil from this excavation will be made into islands on either side of the channels. These will be vegetated with plants other than the surrounding pickleweed and should host various bird species when completed. At high tide, the marsh will extend to near the 10-foot contour.

At the south marsh a new 4300 foot long channel will be excavated to -5 feet in depth. This added depth is necessary to obtain proper drainage from a low lying area, thereby further decreasing local mosquito problems. An existing slough, 3300 feet long channel will be enlarged to the 20 foot width, and a new 2000 foot long channel will be excavated near its southerly end. The latter two will be excavated to the -3 foot depth. An existing levee will be cut to form loafing and nesting bars (islands) for bird life.

The project will be designed and carried out to comply with the permit requirements of the Coastal Commission and other agencies with regulatory authority. This project is categorically exempt from CEQA under Class 4(d), minor alterations in land which result in improvement of wildlife habitat, and the necessary exemption has been filed with the Secretary for Resources.

This proposed restoration work will provide valuable marsh habitat within the sanctuary complex, requiring very little future maintenance. Wildlife benefits gained by this project are many in that additional area is being opened to normal tidal influence thereby creating nesting and feeding areas for

many species of water-associated birds. In addition, the channels will add important nursery and feeding area for sport, as well as commercial fishes.

The preliminary plans and cost estimate have been prepared by the Department and reviewed by staff. The cost estimate is as follows:

Earthwork (excavate channels, construct islands, veg. planting)	\$199,500
Trestle modifications	57,500
Contingencies	24,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$281,000

It is anticipated that this project will be supervised by Department personnel with most of the work being done by outside contract. California Conservation Corps personnel will also be able to assist in this restoration project. The project also qualifies for 50% reimbursement of all costs from the Office of Coastal Zone Management.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the Elkhorn Slough Marsh Restoration, allocate \$281,000 from the 1976 Bond Act funds budgeted for this restoration project, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned. He advised that letters of support for this project were received from the same sources as were received for the visitor facilities development.

Assemblyman Waters recommended approval of this proposal.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ELKHORN SLOUGH ESTUARINE SANCTUARY, MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT, MONTEREY COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$281,000 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED FOR THIS RESTORATION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Conway Summit Wildlife Area, Mono County \$30,000.00

This proposal is to consider the acquisition of four parcels of Caltrans surplus land totalling 421.28+ acres. The parcels are separated from each other by Highway 395 as it winds down the south side of Conway Summit, approximately ten miles north of Lee Vining in Mono County. A good view of Mono Lake is obtained from each of these four irregular shaped parcels which vary in elevation from 7,100+ feet to 8,200+ feet. The subject area was pointed out on a map displayed at the meeting by Mr. Howard Dick, Land Agent.

The properties also vary in types of terrain from flatlands to steep sided canyon slopes. Sagebrush and bitterbrush habitat is broken by occasional riparian habitat found in several ravines and along a creek and spring located within the parcels. The most southerly parcel contains 2.37+ acres, while the other three vary from 88.77+ acres to 232.11+ acres to 98.23+ acres as you travel in a northerly direction.

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

The Department of Fish and Game has recommended this acquisition as extremely important toward the preservation of prime deer summer range as well as a major deer migration corridor for the Mono Lake deer herd. It also provides habitat for populations of chukar, grouse and raptors. The acquisition of this area will also insure its protection as open space for compatible public use purposes.

The fair market value of the land was appraised by Caltrans in June of 1980 to be \$208,300. However, AB 2535 approved September 26, 1982, authorized DOT to convey the property to the DFG or WCB for the acquisition costs, plus interest, which has been computed to total \$28,756.18. Processing costs are estimated to be \$1,240.00 which would bring the total allocation necessary to process the transaction to \$29,996.18, rounded to \$30,000.

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 conservation purposes including preservation of 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.

It was recommended by Mr. Schmidt that the Board authorize the purchase of this property as proposed, allocate \$30,000 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund for payment of the purchase price and related processing costs, and authorize the staff and Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Assemblyman Waters commented that he had witnessed the incredible number of deer congregating at this locality, and asked what the Department proposed to do with the property after acquisition. Mr. Fullerton responded that it will remain in its present state as it is a deer summer range and a migration corridor; no maintenance costs will be involved.

Mr. Gutierrez stated he had no problem with the proposal, but asked what was the purpose for which it was originally acquired and why is it now necessary to transfer ownership. He was advised that the parcel was originally purchased for highway purposes, and it was necessary for Caltrans to acquire the entire parcel at that time. They are now putting up for public sale the surplus, and there are some areas where cabin sites could be located.

Assemblyman Waters recommended approval of the acquisition.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR CONWAY SUMMIT WILDLIFE AREA, MONO COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$30,000 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND FOR PAYMENT OF THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED PROCESSING COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. 1976 Bond - Coastal Wetlands
Napa Marsh, Huichica Creek, Napa and Sonoma Counties \$556,500.00

This proposal is for the purchase of approximately 339 acres of land in the Napa River marsh complex. The property is located primarily in Napa County with about 14 acres on the west side lying in Sonoma County. The parcel is along Duhig Road, approximately five miles southwest of the City of Napa and five miles southeast of the City of Sonoma. On a map displayed at the meeting, Jim Sarro, Land Agent, pointed out the subject property.

The property proposed for acquisition by the Board is part of an overall holding which has in recent years been utilized as a dairy. This particular 339-acre tract, however, has been devoted to grazing and hay production and is separated from the northerly dairy by a Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Huichica Creek runs generally south through the property, and drains into Hudeman Slough on the parcel's south boundary.

Historically, prior to reclamation of this property for agricultural purposes, the lower 300+ acres of the land was subject to tidal influences. However, diking has prevented the land from retaining its marshland characteristics.

Studies by the Department of Fish and Game indicate that economic pressures and urbanization have brought on reclamation and conversion of much of the San Pablo Bay area marshes to residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses. This has resulted in the destruction of key habitat and various rare and endangered species, such as the California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse, as well as the loss of other important natural values of the area. In fact, a study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1980 indicated that total wetland losses due to various forms of development had reached 80% of the historic marshes. Generally, marshes and estuarine areas are considered the most important and productive habitat overall for fish and wildlife.

The Department has highly recommended the purchase of the subject property for a number of reasons. Most importantly, State acquisition will allow for a reversion of this tract to its natural, tidal marsh condition, thereby actually increasing the availability of habitat for dependent species. Also, with its close proximity to populated areas, this would afford an excellent opportunity for public uses, such as nature study, birdwatching, and wildlife photography and hunting.

The 339-acre parcel has a fair market value of \$757,300. However, the landowner has offered the State a donation of approximately 27%, reducing the State's price to \$550,000. Appraisals and closing costs are expected to be about \$6,500.

Because of the recreational values afforded by this property, it is felt that the acquisition would qualify for matching federal funds recently made available to the Board from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Application under this program has been submitted. If this application is approved, one-half of the total value of the property would be reimbursed to the Board by the federal government. The total reimbursement, including costs, would be approximately \$396,000. These reimbursed funds would, by law, be deposited

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

to the Wildlife Restoration Fund. If the State's application for matching federal funds is approved, the net cost to the Board, after reimbursement, would be \$171,350, plus costs not covered by the federal program.

Funds are available for this purchase from the 1976 Bond Act for coastal wetlands acquisitions. The acquisition falls within Class 13 of categorical exemptions from CEQA. Management of the property would be by the Department.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve this project as outlined above, allocate \$556,500 therefor from the 1976 Bond funds budgeted for this purpose for the purchase price and acquisition costs, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

In response to Mr. Gutierrez's question about future maintenance with regard to the dikes and whether or not this proposal has gone through legislative deliberation, he was advised that there would be no future maintenance costs to the Department, other than breaching of the dike for restoration of the area to its natural marshland condition. Also, this marsh is included in the 1976 Bond Act proposal approved by the Legislature and passed by the electorate for coastal wetlands acquisition. Mr. deGierre pointed out that this area overlaps into Senator Keene's district and is considered an important wildlife area which the Senator has supported.

Assemblyman Waters recommended approval of this acquisition proposal.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF NAPA MARSH, HUICHICA CREEK, NAPA AND SONOMA COUNTIES; ALLOCATE \$556,500 THEREFOR FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED FOR THIS PURPOSE FOR THE PURCHASE PRICE AND ACQUISITION COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Bair Island, San Mateo County \$100,000.00

This item is a proposal by the Department of Fish and Game for preservation and protection of a nesting area for the endangered California least tern. The area proposed for development is situated on State tidelands at the south end of San Francisco Bay in San Mateo County.

The least tern habitat is currently threatened by tidal flooding since abandoned salt pond dikes, which have protected the nesting area, are rapidly deteriorating. To prevent these losses it is necessary to construct and repair dikes around the nesting sites and install water control structures for proper drainage of the area.

The least tern has historically nested mainly on salt and mud flats in coastal wetlands and on coastal beaches from Monterey County south into Baja California. However, as much of this habitat has been lost to development, the bay area nesting habitats have become more important than ever and should be intensively managed to sustain the remaining pairs of birds, as well as increase their productivity.

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

Mr. Rutsch explained that a 2,000 foot long inner levee would be constructed to preserve the least tern colony in its present location while allowing for the restoration of tidal influence to about 70 acres of wetlands. Because the inner levee would be protected by salt marshes, sand bars and outer dike sections, future maintenance costs of this improvement should be minimal.

The dike repair consists of building up about 200 lineal feet of low levee and closing a 75 foot gap at one point. The water controls to be installed would consist of a corrugated 24 inch diameter pipe through the levee with gates, risers and connectors.

The department engineers have prepared preliminary plans and have estimated project cost as follows:

Water control (24" pipe, gates and connectors)	\$13,000
Earthwork, 16,200 cy (including equipment mobilization and demobilization)	<u>87,000</u>
Total estimated cost .	\$100,000

The work is exempt under Class 4(d), Section 15104 of the CEQA Guidelines, and a Notice of Exemption has been filed pursuant to the Act. It is expected that the work will be contracted out with the department engineers inspecting the work and administering the contracts.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the proposed Bair Island project for the California least tern habitat development, allocate \$100,000 therefor from the 1976 Bond funds budgeted for development at Bair Island, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned. He advised that this project has already been reviewed by the Legislature and included in the 1982/83 budget in this amount.

Assemblyman Waters voiced approval of this proposal.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE HABITAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ON BAIR ISLAND; ALLOCATE \$100,000 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED FOR THIS PURPOSE; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Petaluma Marsh Wildlife Area, Sonoma County

Mr. Schmidt advised that subsequent to the preparation of the line item agenda announcing this meeting, it was determined that this item should be withdrawn pending further study. Mr. Fullerton interjected that it was at his request this item was withdrawn. He believed the project as designed signified high maintenance costs and would not accomplish long-range restoration of the Petaluma Marsh. It was therefore his recommendation that the staff go back and provide a long-range plan therefor so that we would know

where we are going in the future, and to bring it back at the next meeting so the Board can consider it.

10. Petaluma Marsh Habitat Development, Marin County \$14,000.00
(Toy Parcel)

This proposal by the Department of Fish and Game is to open up 54 acres of the 1,897 acre Petaluma Marsh complex to tidal action. The purpose of this is to provide increased diversity for wildlife and vegetation.

The Board acquired the Petaluma Marsh in two acquisitions authorized in 1979 and 1980. It is the second largest block of contiguous marsh in the San Francisco Bay area and supports a large number of resident and migratory wildlife species. The marsh has four miles of frontage along the Petaluma River and three miles of frontage on San Antonio Creek.

The Toy parcel is at the southernmost end of the marsh complex. It lies just north of the State Highway 37 bridge where the WCB developed a boat launching ramp facility in 1960.

At the time this acquisition was being considered for approval, the Department noted that the parcel was an example of excellent marsh habitat, but could support an even greater abundance and variety of wildlife with the application of intensive marsh management practices. The Department at that time recommended this be done at a future date. This proposal is to follow up on that recommendation.

Mr. Rutsch explained that the Department's plans are to modify the area before breaching the exterior levees and removing an existing water control structure to permit a combination of open water ponds, slough channels, marsh, and transition and upland habitat to develop.

The work required will be to create a network of 4,300 lineal feet of 20 foot wide 2-3 foot deep channels with a dragline. The excavated material, approximately 7,400 cubic yards, will be placed alongside the channels to create islands and berms of various sizes and elevations. This will provide the diversity necessary for optimum wildlife and vegetal productivity.

The Department engineers estimate all of the work can be completed by equipment rental with an operator in not more than 230 hours. At a rental rate of \$60 per hour, this amounts to \$13,800, rounded to \$14,000 to allow for possible minor contingencies.

This activity is exempt from CEQA under Class 4(d) Section 15104 of the State Guidelines (minor alteration to land on a state wildlife area which improves wildlife habitat), and a Notice of Exemption has been filed in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Petaluma Marsh (Toy parcel) habitat development project as proposed, allocate \$14,000 therefor from the 1976 Bond Act funds budgeted for habitat

development on this property, and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned. This project also was included in the 1982/83 budget approved by the Legislature.

With the favorable recommendation by Assemblyman Waters, the following motion was made.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE PETALUMA MARSH (TOY PARCEL) HABITAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, MARIN COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$14,000 THEREFOR FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED FOR HABITAT DEVELOPMENT ON THIS PROPERTY; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County

\$396,000.00

This proposal by the Department of Fish and Game is to reconstruct exterior and interior levees, replace water control structures, and improve ditches on Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and on Joice Island Wildlife Area in the Suisun Marsh.

The 1,887 acre Joice Island Wildlife Area was originally purchased by the DFG as a State game refuge in 1931. In 1951, the Board acquired and subsequently developed the 8,600 acre Grizzly Island Wildlife Area. Since that time the Joice Island Wildlife Area has been managed by the Department as a sub-unit of the Grizzly Island complex. In 1982 the Board in separate actions, acquired an additional 250 acres contiguous to the easterly end of Joice Island and 236 acres on the northwest corner of Grizzly Island. This 10,973+ acre complex provides very important wintering habitat for large numbers of Pacific Flyway waterfowl, as well as habitat for many other migratory and resident wildlife species.

Both areas provide wildlife associated recreation such as fishing, waterfowl and pheasant hunting, photography, and nature observation. The reintroduction of tule elk to Grizzly Island in recent years has provided a bonus to the visitor fortunate enough to observe or photograph these animals in this part of their historic range.

The Department's proposal is for the reconstruction of portions of the levee system. Over the years, wind, boat wakes and burrowing animals, combined with peat soil composition prevalent in this area, have all contributed to exterior levee deterioration. During wet years such as the 1981/82 winter, as well as the current winter, the combination of high tides and heavy runoff have caused levee over-topping on both islands. This has, in turn, resulted in damage to the interior levees, particularly on the larger Grizzly Island Wildlife Area.

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

Maintenance of water control structures and/or their replacement is also of primary concern. Their deterioration occurs very rapidly in the saline soils which dominate the area. Reconstruction of silted-in and vegetation-choked bleeder ditches is also necessary to maintain proper water flows in the area for optimum marsh management.

The proposed development is categorically exempt from CEQA requirements under Class 4(d), minor alteration to land on a State wildlife area which improve wildlife habitat. It is proposed that all work will be accomplished by outside contract to be administered and supervised by Department of Fish and Game personnel. A cost estimate has been prepared by the DFG engineering section and reviewed by staff.

The following cost estimate and an explanation by unit was provided by Mr. Wentzel.

Joice Island Unit

A contract floating dredge will be used to replace five deteriorated water controls used for controlling water flows within the wildlife area and reconstruct 13,300 feet of exterior levees where recent high tides have demonstrated that they are too low. Approximately 50,000 cubic yards of material will be dredged from Montezuma and Suisun Sloughs for the currently proposed projects and stockpiled for future levee repairs.

Estimated Cost Breakdown (Joice Island Unit):

1. Water Control Structures:

a. 10 ea. - 48" slide flap gates w/10' galv. steel frames	\$66,100
b. 340' - 48" CMP (asbestos bonded-asphalt coated)	37,100
c. 40 ea. - 48" CMP coupler	<u>10,800</u>

Total water control structures . . . \$114,000

2. Floating dredge contract 86,000

TOTAL COST . . . \$200,000

Grizzly Island Unit

A contract dragline will be used to replace three deteriorated water controls used for controlling water flows within the wildlife area and reconstruct 134,800 lineal feet of subsided and eroded interior levees. A contract ditcher will be used to reconstruct and clean 62,500 lineal feet of silted-in and vegetation-choked bleeder ditches.

Estimated Cost Breakdown (Grizzly Island Unit):

1. Water Control Structures:

a. 6 ea. - 36" slide flap gates w/10' galv. steel frames	\$19,500
b. 60' - 36" CMP (asbestos bonded-asphalt coated)	4,680
c. 10 ea. - 36" CMP couplers	<u>1,820</u>

Total water control structures \$26,000

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

	Total water control structures . . .	\$ 37,000
2.	Dragline contract	\$145,000
3.	Ditcher contract	<u>25,000</u>
	TOTAL COST . . .	\$196,000

It was the recommendation of staff that the Board approve the proposed Grizzly Island Wildlife Area project, allocate \$396,000 from the 1976 Bond funds as budgeted in the 1982/83 budget for development at this area, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

The use of asbestos bonded-asphalt coated pipes was questioned by Mr. deGierre who was reassured by staff that there would be no hazard to people by our using this pipe, a standard use in this type of construction.

Assemblyman Waters recommended approval of this development project.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE GRIZZLY ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA DEVELOPMENT, SOLANO COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$396,000 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED FOR THIS PURPOSE; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Del Norte County \$40,000.00

The Lake Earl/Talawa Wildlife Area was acquired by the Board through several actions in the period 1979 through 1982. During this time 2,218 acres have been acquired in fee, and 2,600 acres have been leased from the State Lands Commission, making a total of 4,818 acres under DFG management. An additional 3,736 acres is under control of the Department of Parks and Recreation. The total acreage controlled by the two agencies in the area is 8,554 acres.

This general 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 Smith River plain is an integral part of the coastal arm of the Pacific Flyway. The waters of Lake 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.

This property was acquired to preserve wetland habitat in and around Lake Earl and Lake Talawa to protect cultural resources and to provide compatible

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

recreational opportunities. These include fishing, bird watching, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding. The lakes harbor 15 species of fish, including trout and salmon, and during the waterfowl season, up to 3,000 hunters have been reported as using the area.

Mr. Wentzel explained the work proposed which will provide public access to the area and improve existing wildlife habitat. The work will include grading and graveling of about 1 3/4 miles of main headquarters access road; developing parking areas, dikes and water control structures; selective thinning of overgrown vegetation; and fencing, including eight gates. The road and parking area construction and part of the water control system will be performed by outside contract under DFG administration. All other work will be accomplished by CCC with DFG personnel providing assistance and supervision. A small area will also be graveled at the headquarters area for parking. In addition, a 20-car parking area will be developed on the north-westerly side of Lake Earl in an area presently used by motorists, but where additional vehicular control is needed. To assist in this purpose, a wood post and rail barrier will be erected around the developed parking area.

Small dikes and water control structures will also be developed to restore previously drained wetlands. It is anticipated that several hundred acres can be restored by this method. Overgrown vegetation will be thinned to create openings in the wetlands to improve waterfowl habitat for nesting as well as feeding.

Both new and replacement fencing will be erected along the exterior boundary and at interior pastures to control livestock use. Gates will also be installed to provide for vehicle or livestock movement. Some cattle grazing of this area is now permitted under lease as a means of controlling vegetative growth, a practice which both reduces fire hazards, as well as enhance wildlife habitat.

This project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA under Class 1, maintenance of existing facilities, Class 3, new construction of small facilities, and Class 4(d), minor alterations of land on a wildlife area to improve wildlife habitat. The categorical exemption has been filed with the Secretary for Resources.

A cost estimate has been provided by the Department and reviewed by staff. The estimated cost is as follows:

Grade and gravel access road and parking areas . . .	\$17,000
Vehicle barrier material	2,500
Dikes and water control structures	6,000
Vegetation thinning	1,500
Fencing - approximately 4 miles	<u>13,000</u>
TOTAL	\$40,000

Minutes of Meeting, Wildlife Conservation Board
March 15, 1983

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the Lake Earl Wildlife Area development, allocate \$40,000 from the 1976 Bond Act funds budgeted for this purpose, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

He pointed out that this item was also included in the 1982/83 budget approved by the Legislature, and that in this year's budget, the legislative analyst has pointed out the lack of access in this wildlife area and has encouraged our proceeding with this.

As a point of information, Mr. deGierre advised that 90% of Del Norte County is owned by the Federal or State government and that there is high unemployment, and there is eagerness on the part of the residents to develop Lake Earl/Talawa for public access. Assemblyman Waters was in favor of this development project.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE LAKE EARL WILDLIFE AREA DEVELOPMENT, DEL NORTE COUNTY; ALLOCATE \$40,000 FROM THE 1976 BOND ACT FUNDS BUDGETED THEREFOR; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Fullerton at 12:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

W. John Schmidt

W. John Schmidt
Executive Officer

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on March 15, 1983, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947, totaled \$53,005,692.31. 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, 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	\$10,793,030.47
b.	Fish Habitat Development	4,996,337.42
	1. Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$2,817,112.39
	2. Stream Clearance and Improvement	404,082.62
	3. Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	439,503.32
	4. Marine Habitat	497,957.20
	5. Fish Screens, Ladders & Weir Projects	837,681.89
c.	Fishing Access Projects	16,691,628.06
	1. Coastal and Bay Access	1,654,578.74
	2. River and Aqueduct Access	4,176,374.26
	3. Lake and Reservoir Access	3,844,666.50
	4. Piers	7,016,008.56
d.	Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
e.	Wildlife Habitat Development and Improvement Projects	19,112,764.30
	1. Wildlife Areas	18,322,470.00
	2. Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Dev.	790,294.30
f.	Hunting Access	546,069.66
g.	Miscellaneous Projects	635,467.91
s.	Special Project Allocations	83,500.00
	Total Allocated to Projects	\$53,005,692.31

STATUS OF FUNDS WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Unallocated balance at beginning of 3/15/83 meeting	\$3,803,909.28
Less allocations	<u>- 121,500.00</u>
Unallocated balance at end of 3/15/83 meeting	\$3,682,409.28