

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

Minutes, Meeting of June 11, 1985

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State of California
The Resources Agency
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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Minutes, Meeting of June 11, 1985

Pursuant to the call of the Chairman, the Wildlife Conservation Board met in Room 2040 of the State Capitol, Sacramento, California on June 11, 1985. The meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Chairman William Burke.

1. Roll Call

<u>PRESENT:</u>	William A. Burke, Ed. D.	Chairman
	Jack C. Parnell	Member
	Nancy Ordway	Member
	Kip Wiley, vice Senator Keene	Joint Interim Committee

<u>ABSENT:</u>	Senator Robert Presley	Joint Interim Committee
	Senator David Roberti	" " "
	Assemblyman Phillip Isenberg	" " "
	Assemblyman Jim Costa	" " "
	Assemblyman Norman S. Waters	" " "

STAFF PRESENT:

W. John Schmidt	Executive Officer
Alvin G. Rutsch	Assist. Exec. Officer
James V. Sarro	Senior Land Agent
Howard Dick	Land Agent
Frank Kotey	Land Agent
Nancy Pinaglia	Stenographer
Alma Koyasako	Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Paul Romero	County of Riverside
Paul Jensen	Dept. of Fish and Game
Preston Johns	Dept. of Fish and Game
Eric Gerstung	Dept. of Fish and Game
Glenn Olson	Natl. Audubon Society
Harry Nelson	Assemblyman Costa's Office

2. Approval of Minutes.

Mr. W. John Schmidt, Executive Officer, advised that minutes of the April 10, 1985, meeting have been published and knew of no corrections to be made and therefore recommended approval.

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IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 10, 1985, MEETING OF THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD BE APPROVED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Funding Status as of June 11, 1985

Mr. Schmidt provided the following information relative to the funding status, advising that no action was necessary or required.

a. 1984/85 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$3,129,000.00
Less previous Board allocations	1,482,132.51
Unallocated balance	<u>\$1,646,867.49</u>

b. 1983/84 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$4,038,000.00
Less previous Board allocations	<u>\$3,383,336.70</u>
Unallocated balance	<u>\$654,663.30</u>

c. 1976 State, Urban and Coastal Park Fund

1. Coastal Wetlands

Unallocated balance	\$296.79
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2. <u>Interior Wetlands</u>	-0-
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3. Development

Unallocated balance	\$32,000.00
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d. 1984/84 Environmental License Plate Fund

Governor's Budget	\$3,000,000.00
Less previous Board allocations	<u>-2,479,100.00</u>
Unallocated balance	<u>\$520,900.00</u>

e. 1984/85 Fish & Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund

Governor's Budget	\$12,100,000.00
Less previous Board allocations	<u>-2,866,650.00</u>
Unallocated balance	<u>\$ 9,233,350.00</u>

4. Recovery of Funds.

Mr. Schmidt reported that the following projects previously authorized by the Board have balances of funds that can be recovered and returned to the various funds. It was recommended that the total amount of \$93,250.53 be recovered to the Wildlife Restoration Fund, \$25,019.40 to the 1976 State, Urban and Coastal Park Fund, and \$41.80 to the General Fund, and the project accounts be closed.

(The amount shown in the agenda for General Fund recovery was \$134.20 which was the balance remaining at the time the agenda was prepared for the Lake Country Estates acquisition project. Subsequent billings to this account left a balance of \$41.80.)

Lower Sherman Island

Allocation	\$37,350.00
Expenditure	-35,964.03
Balance for Recovery	\$1,385.97

Nimbus Shoals Public Access

Allocation	\$35,000.00
Expenditure	-26,589.69
Balance for Recovery	\$8,410.31

Truckee River Public Access

Allocation	\$11,000.00
Expenditure	-8,925.15
Balance for Recovery	\$2,074.85

Dos Reis Public Access

Allocation	\$54,000.00
Expenditure	-50,528.54
Balance for Recovery	\$3,471.46

Pinto Lake Public Access

Allocation	\$196,000.00
Expenditure	-195,214.02
Balance for Recovery	\$785.98

Oyster Point Fishing Pier

Allocation	\$222,000.00
Expenditure	-168,580.43
Balance for Recovery	\$53,419.57

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Bolsa Chica Marsh Re-establishment

Allocation	\$388,150.36
Expenditure	<u>-384,841.61</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,308.75

Miscellaneous S-2500

Allocation	\$25,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-24,470.15</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$529.85

Blue Ridge Wildlife Area

Allocation	\$344,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-341,318.29</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,681.71

Little Panoche Reservoir Wildlife Area

Allocation	\$6,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-3,509.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,491.00

Mouth of Mill Creek Fishing Access

Allocation	\$46,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-31,308.92</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$14,691.08

Total WRF Recoveries \$93,250.53

1976 State and Coastal Park Fund

San Pablo Wildlife Area Expansion

Allocation	\$171,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-161,581.27</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,418.73

Petaluma Marsh, Rush Creek

Allocation	\$117,520.00
Expenditure	<u>-116,399.10</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$1,120.90

San Pablo Bay Wildlife Area Expansion, Phase 1

Allocation	\$1,000.00
Expenditure	<u>-996.73</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3.27

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Elkhorn Slough Wildlife Area

Allocation	\$758,000.00
Expenditure	-744,750.60
Balance for Recovery	<u>\$13,249.40</u>

Crescent City Marsh Expansion

Allocation	\$52,720.00
Expenditure	-51,492.90
Balance for Recovery	<u>\$1,227.10</u>

Total 1976 Bond Fund Recoveries - \$25,019.40

General Fund

Lake Country Estates

Allocation	\$5,010,000.00
Expenditure	-5,009,958.20
Balance for Recovery	<u>\$41.80</u>

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD RECOVER FUNDS FROM THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS AND CLOSE THE PROJECT ACCOUNTS AS FOLLOWS:

Lower Sherman Island, Sacramento County	\$1,385.97
Nimbus Shoals Public Access, Sac'to Co.	8,410.31
Truckee River Public Access, Placer Co.	2,074.85
Dos Reis Public Access, San Joaquin Co.	3,471.46
Pinto Lake Public Access, S.Cruz Co.	785.98
Oyster Point Fishing Pier, S. Mateo Co.	53,419.57
Bolsa Chica Marsh Re-establishment,	
Orange County	3,308.75
Miscellaneous S-2500	529.85
Blue Ridge Wildlife Area, Tulare Co.	2,681.71
Little Panoche Reserv. WLA, Fresno Co.	2,491.00
Mouth of Mill Creek Fishing Access,	
Tehama County	<u>14,691.08</u>

TOTAL WRF RECOVERIES\$93,250.53

San Pablo WLA Expansion, Marin Co.	\$9,418.73
Petaluma Marsh, Rush Creek, Marin Co.	1,120.90
San Pablo Bay WLA Exp., Ph. 1, Marin Co.	3.27
Elkhorn Slough WLA, Monterey Co.	13,249.40
Crescent City Marsh Exp., Del Norte Co.	<u>1,227.10</u>

TOTAL 1976 BOND FUND RECOVERIES.....\$25,019.40

Lake Country Estates	\$41.80
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TOTAL GENERAL FUND RECOVERY..... \$ 41.80

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THE SUM OF \$93,250.53 IS TO BE RETURNED TO THE UNALLOCATED BALANCE OF THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; \$25,019.40 IS TO BE RETURNED TO THE UNALLOCATED BALANCE OF THE 1976 BOND FUND; AND \$41.80 IS TO BE RETURNED TO THE GENERAL FUND.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Camp Cady Wildlife Area Addition, San Bernardino Co. \$47,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal is to acquire two parcels totaling 44.16+ acres of riparian habitat along the Mojave River, San Bernardino County. The subject properties are adjacent to the DFG's Camp Cady Wildlife Area in the Mojave River channel. The Department of Fish and Game has recommended purchasing these parcels as they will, in addition to protecting this prime desert riparian habitat, also serve to round out the State's property lines in this area, thereby providing a more manageable unit.

Howard Dick, Land Agent, indicated on a map displayed at the meeting that the Camp Cady Wildlife Area is located approximately 25 miles easterly of the City of Barstow, and is readily accessible from Harvard Road. This road, which is served by two interstate freeways (I-40 is 7 miles to the south and I-15 is 3 miles to the north) provides convenient public access to this area.

The wildlife area includes approximately three miles of river frontage and is composed of areas within the river bottom, floodplain, and some adjacent uplands. The area provides a desert oasis setting which is unique to this vicinity. This occurs as a result of the surfacing of the Mojave River at this location, where geological substrata formations carry subsurface waters from nearby mountains. This combination of "spring" water and river water has created prime riparian habitat found nowhere else in this vicinity of the Mojave Desert.

The overall habitat supports a variety of both game and nongame species. Resident and migratory waterfowl, as well as other water associated species occur in the ponded area located within the wildlife area. Numerous quail, doves, and other species of birds are present in the upland and wooded areas. Various hawks, owls, and other raptors use the tall trees as roosting and nesting areas while a variety of reptiles are found in the drier sandy wash areas. Bighorn sheep have been observed obtaining water from the easterly end of the wildlife area.

In addition to protecting this unique habitat from degradation by almost certain development, the acquisition of these areas would provide the public with additional area for many compatible recreational opportunities, such as nature observation, hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, picnicking, and primitive camping.

The proposed acquisitions fall 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 is anticipated that these parcels will be managed by the Department of Fish and Game in its present condition as part of the overall wildlife area.

The owners of the properties have agreed to sell for their approved appraised fair market value totaling \$41,300 (rounded). An estimated \$5,700 will be required to cover processing costs including appraisal cost, title and escrow charges and General Services review costs.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the acquisition of this 44.16+ acre addition to the Camp Cady Wildlife Area as proposed, allocate \$47,000 to cover the estimated acquisition and related costs from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PARNELL, SECONDED BY MS. ORDWAY, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR THE CAMP CADY WILDLIFE AREA ADDITION, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$47,000 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND TO COVER THE ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Kinsman Flat Wildlife Area Expansion, Madera County \$256,000.00

This proposal, Mr. Schmidt reported, is for the acquisition of 200+ acres of critical deer winter range at Kinsman Flat in eastern Madera County for expansion of the State's holdings in the area.

Kinsman Flat is an historic deer winter range located approximately 40 miles northeast of the City of Fresno. It is the primary wintering area for an estimated 4,000-5,000 deer of the San Joaquin deer herd. Some of the Department's earliest experimental work to improve deer range was carried out here in recognition of the area's importance as wildlife habitat.

The location of the proposed acquisition and its relationship to present holdings in the area were indicated on a map by Jim Sarro, Senior Land Agent.

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In 1975 the Wildlife Conservation Board authorized the acquisition of two parcels totaling 170 acres for protection of the Kinsman Flat deer winter range. These parcels were subsequently acquired and negotiations have continued in an attempt to protect additional key deer winter range habitat in this area. In 1982, the Board further authorized the purchase of a protective conservation easement over an additional 80 acres, and this easement is also under DFG's jurisdiction.

The subject property was in the first priority group in the Department's Kinsman Flat acquisition proposal more than 10 years ago, and it remains a top priority today. It is made even more important by its location, being bounded by BLM lands on the north and east and by DFG lands on the south. Its acquisition would greatly simplify the management of the range, which is currently undertaken on a cooperative basis by DFG and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

A prior appraisal (1980) of the property at \$250,000 has been approved by the Department of General Services as being the appropriate current fair market valuation today as well, and the owners have indicated they would now consider a sale at this price if the Board approves this proposal. The estimated closing expenses, appraisal review charges and General Services review costs are estimated to be \$6,000. Funding for this acquisition is available from the Wildlife Restoration Fund.

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.

It was Mr. Schmidt's recommendation the Board approve this proposal, allocate \$256,000 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund to cover the purchase price and costs and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY AS PROPOSED FOR THE KINSMAN FLAT WILDLIFE AREA EXPANSION, MADERA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$256,000 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND TO COVER ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

(Mr. Kip Wiley from Senator Keene's office, who had just come in to the meeting, was recognized and introduced at this time.)

7. Tehama Wildlife Area-Plum Creek Addition, Tehama Co. \$92,130.00

This is a proposal to acquire a 476.38+ acre parcel adjacent to the Tehama Wildlife Area. The Tehama Wildlife Area is located in eastern Tehama County south of the community of Paynes Creek, northeast of Red Bluff (via Highway 36). The property has nearly 3/4 mile of stream frontage on Plum Creek, a permanent stream. Riparian vegetation associated with segments of Plum Creek is moderate to dense.

The present wildlife area boundary as it exists and the proposed addition were pointed out on a map displayed at the meeting by Howard Dick, Land Agent.

Wildlife uses of the property include the eastern Tehama deer herd's use of the north rim of Antelope Creek as a major holding area during movements to and from their winter range. The overall range supported 328 deer-days use per acre as noted in samples taken in past years, while permanent plots in the vicinity of the proposed acquisition indicated winter deer use in excess of 17 deer days per acre. Upland game species include valley quail and tree squirrels, and the area also has potential for Rio Grande turkeys. Mourning dove nesting occurs here and Lewis' woodpeckers are seasonal visitors. A small population of rainbow trout occurs in Plum Creek. In addition to increased fishing and hunting opportunities, this area will also provide opportunities for hiking, photography, and general wildlife observation.

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 water where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

The Department of Fish and Game has recommended the acquisition of this parcel as a means of insuring protection of this area. Management responsibilities would be assumed by the Department as an addition to Tehama Wildlife Area.

The property's appraised market value for this parcel is \$88,130 (or \$185/ac.). An additional \$4,000 will be required for related acquisition costs, including appraisals, title insurance and processing costs.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the purchase of this property as proposed, allocate \$92,130 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Schmidt called the Board's attention to the letter from the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association which supports this proposal as well as others on the agenda and then goes on to compliment the work of the Board during the past 30 years.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PARNELL, SECONDED BY MS. ORDWEAY, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR THE TEHAMA WILDLIFE AREA - PLUM CREEK ADDITION, TEHAMA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$92,130 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND TO COVER THE ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Juanita Lake, Siskiyou County \$61,000.00

Mr. Schmidt advised that this is a proposal for the Board to allocate funds for improvements at Juanita Lake, an existing WCB project, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. The work is essentially to riprap the face of the main dam and small saddle dam and to reconstruct a timber foot bridge over the spillway for improved fishing access to the west shore of the lake.

The location of the dam and the work contemplated here were discussed by Al Rutsch, Assistant Executive Officer.

The dams, originally constructed with WCB funds in 1963, are located on a tributary to Musgrave Creek in northern Siskiyou County. The lake is eight miles west of Macdoel near the State's Butte Valley Wildlife Area.

A diversion from Musgrave Creek was also constructed to maintain a constant level in this high elevation lake. The Forest Service has developed a campground adjacent to the lake and has improved the access roads into the area.

The 55 acre lake has been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Fish Game by a Special Use Permit from the Forest Service. The original term of the Use Permit has expired, but is to be renewed to assure the continued public use of this important facility. A condition of the renewal is that the Board and the Department make improvements to the dams so as to bring the project up to State safety standards.

The County of Siskiyou was responsible for project maintenance during the first 20-year period under a cooperative agreement with the Department, but does not wish to continue that responsibility. The Department and Forest Service therefore propose that each agency assume part of the project maintenance, Forest Service doing the annual minor upkeep and the Department the major repairs.

The Forest Service's responsibilities for annual and minor maintenance of the Juanita Lake Dam is set forth in the Special Use Permit as follows:

- Brushing vegetation
- Annual operation and maintenance of outlet works
- Ongoing rodent control
- Painting and redecking of spillway bridge
- Cleaning debris from spillway and diversion bridge
- Any other work that can be done by hand or in less than two days by a small rubber-tired backhoe.

The Special Use Permit also stipulates that the Wildlife Conservation Board is to provide for "major maintenance and repair" of the Juanita Lake Dams, which is defined as any work not included in the "annual and minor" list above. Such work would be contingent on specific future allocations of funds by the Board. The replacement of the corrugated steel outlet pipe in the main dam at some time in the future when it eventually rusts out is an example of such work. The present proposal for rock facing is a one-time improvement which should not need to be repeated for many years, if ever.

The following cost estimate for bringing the dam up to current safety standards was prepared by the Forest Service and has been reviewed by both staff and the Department. It is considered to be adequate to complete the work this summer as proposed. The Forest Service will bid out and administer the construction contract:

Mobilization	\$5,300
Excavation	3,400
Treated timber bridge	5,000
Concrete	400
Riprap	41,000
Rock and earth barrier	400
Construction Cost	<u>\$55,500</u>
Engineering and design, 5%	2,800
Contingency, 5%	<u>2,700</u>
Total Project Cost	\$61,000

The project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, Class 1, (maintenance or minor alteration of existing structure) and a Notice of Exemption has been filed in accordance with the Act.

It was Mr. Schmidt's recommendation that the Board approve the Juanita Lake Dam improvements as proposed, as well as the renewal of the Special Use Permit with the conditions as described, allocate \$61,000 therefor from the Wildlife Restoration Fund, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE IMPROVEMENTS TO JUANITA LAKE DAM, SISKIYOU COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT AS DESCRIBED; ALLOCATE \$61,000 THEREFOR FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Thornton Wildlife Area, San Joaquin County \$389,000.00

Mr. Schmidt advised that this proposal has the support of numerous groups and legislators as indicated by the presence of Glenn Olson from the Audubon Society. He requested Frank Kotey, Land Agent, to show on the map the location and salient features of the proposed wildlife area.

This proposal is to acquire 145.27+ acres of land in the north-west corner of San Joaquin County, on the eastern edge of the San Joaquin Delta. The property abuts the south side of Woodbridge Road about two miles west of Interstate 5 and six miles west of Lodi. Since 1929, until most recently, the property has been used primarily as a duck club by various members. In the off-season the land is used for cattle grazing.

Shallow open ponds for loafing and roosting cranes cover about 80% of this area. The remainder is grasslands, dikes, islands, and levees that cranes and other wildlife use for their various activities. Studies by the Department of Fish and Game indicate the parcel is a key roosting area for an average of from several hundred to approximately 2,000 greater and lesser sandhill cranes. A maximum roost count of some 5,000 cranes has been made at this site, of which 1,050 were greater sandhill cranes. Several species of waterfowl also use the area, including whistling swans. Water associated birds, including shorebirds of several species, herons and egrets, rail, certain gulls, and kingfishers are also found there. Burrowing owls, red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, black-shouldered kites, northern harriers and other raptors have also been sighted on or near the parcel. Loss of this area to an incompatible land use would be detrimental to sandhill cranes and other species of wildlife.

Adjacent lands have been converted to vineyards, a crop type that, unlike corn or pasture, cannot be used by cranes or most other kinds of wildlife that presently find habitat on these premises. If the area were unavailable for these species, there would be a loss of animal diversity in the local area. The Pacific Flyway population of cranes could be affected as well as the State's segment of that population.

Greater sandhill cranes have been State-listed as Rare due to their low population size (3,400 in Pacific Flyway) and threats to breeding and wintering habitats. Preserving a key winter habitat such as this roost is compatible with management objectives to restore the population to a less critical state.

Improvements on the property consist of an older 516+ square foot caretaker dwelling, a "duck cleaning" building, duck blinds and miscellaneous out buildings. The surface of the property is unlevel and the slope is approximately one inch to 100 feet. Sycamore Slough is the source of irrigation and pond water.

Management of the property will be by the Department of Fish and Game. Opportunities exist for habitat manipulation to further enhance the area to benefit cranes and other wildlife species. Some work to make the area more productive during spring and summer months may be desirable so long as the primary goal of preserving an area suitable as a crane roost during winter months is not abandoned. Presently only flooding and minor maintenance is required to maintain the current level of use by cranes and other wildlife species.

This acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of categorical exemptions.

The property has a fair market value of \$382,500 as approved by the Department of General Services. Owners are agreeable only to a full conveyance of their rights in return for the above-mentioned fair market value.

It was staff's recommendation the Board approve this acquisition, allocate \$389,000 from the Environmental License Plate Fund for the purchase price, appraisal fees, escrow and title insurance fees, reclamation district assessments, and related costs, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR THE THORNTON WILDLIFE AREA, SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$389,000 FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSE PLATE FUND TO COVER THE ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Delta Island, West Portion of Rhode Island, \$23,500.00
Contra Costa County

This proposal is to acquire the west portion of Rhode Island which is located in the San Joaquin Delta along Old River, south of Quimby Island. It is estimated that this area contains 12+ acres.

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The location of Rhode Island and other well-known islands in the Delta region were pointed out on a map by Howard Dick. He also indicated to the Board the previously acquired portion and the proposed acquisition.

In September of 1981 the east 55 acres of this island was acquired for \$90,200 using 1979/80 Environmental Licence Plate Funds. The west portion of this island was not acquired since the owners were unwilling to sell at that time. They have now offered to sell this area to the State which will give DFG full control of this delta island. At one time this island had been used for farming, but some years ago the levee broke flooding large portions of it. Since it was never reclaimed, a portion of the interior of Rhode Island is under water at all times, being at or near sea level, with water varying from two to several feet deep. The margins of the open water area to the inside of the perimeter levee are vegetated with tules and cattails. According to DFG the interior of the island appears to be in a process of accretion, and it is estimated marsh vegetation will increase in the future. The perimeter levee is heavily vegetated with a mixture of alder, willow, blackberry and tules. Due to this diverse habitat on the island, the island supports a variety of wildlife including such mammals as river otter, beaver, and muskrat, and birds such as wintering waterfowl, nesting wood duck cinnamon teal, mallards, great blue heron, common and snowy egret and a host of riparian-associated passerine species. It also contains habitat commonly used by the yellow-billed cuckoo, black rail, and San Joaquin garter snake.

The DFG plans to manage the island by keeping it in an "as is" condition. Having control of the entire island will greatly assist in attaining this objective and will eliminate boundary disputes.

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 water where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

The owners have agreed to sell this parcel for its approved fair market value of \$20,000. An additional \$3,500 will be required for related acquisition costs, including appraisals, title insurance and processing costs.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the purchase of this property as proposed, allocate \$23,500 therefor from the Environmental License Plate Fund, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Ordway inquired about the status of the levees on the island and the maintenance responsibilities thereof, and Mr. Schmidt advised that the levees are gone and therefore it has become a

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better marsh environment. He assured the Board that there would be no levee maintenance nor operation and maintenance costs involved in State acquisition of this island.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR DELTA ISLANDS, WEST PORTION OF RHODE ISLAND, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$23,500 FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSE PLATE FUND TO COVER ACQUISITION AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Desert Tortoise Natural Area, Kern County \$600.00

This proposal is for the acceptance of an offered donation of 640+ acres of land located at the base of the Rand Mountains near the federal BLM's Desert Tortoise Natural Area.

The location of this proposed natural area was pointed out to the Board members by Mr. Sarro.

The property lies about 25 miles due south of Ridgecrest and about 80 miles east of Bakersfield. Department personnel have inspected this area and determined that it is a natural habitat area which would be appropriate for State ownership. Besides the presence of the state-listed "rare" Mojave ground squirrel and "protected" desert tortoise, the area also supports excellent populations of chukar, dove and Gambel's quail. The Department has undertaken guzzler developments in this area to improve conditions for these latter species. All of these important resources would definitely benefit through the preservation of this habitat in its natural condition. Acceptance of this inholding, which is totally surrounded by BLM, would complete public ownership of the area and insure that future development does not reduce wildlife uses.

The estimated value of this property, based on an appraisal, which was made in 1981 and reviewed by staff this April, is \$160,000 (\$250/acre). The only costs which would be incurred in the transaction would be closing expenses and General Services Department review costs, an estimated total of \$600. Funding is available from the 1984/85 Environmental License Plate Fund and the project is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of categorical exemptions as an acquisition of land for preservation of wildlife habitat. The Department contemplates a cooperative management agreement with the Federal Government at minimal expense to either party.

It was Mr. Schmidt's recommendation that the Board approve this acquisition, allocate \$600 from the Environmental License Plate Fund to cover the processing costs, and authorize staff to proceed as outlined.

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IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PARNELL, SECONDED BY MS. ORDWAY, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATED PROPERTY FOR THE DESERT TORTOISE NATURAL AREA, KERN COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$600 FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSE PLATE FUND TO COVER PROCESSING COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Honey Lake Wildlife Area-Dakin Unit Expansion, \$237,000.00
Lassen County

This proposal, Mr. Schmidt reported, is to acquire a 320+ acre parcel, located adjacent to the Dakin Unit of the Honey Lake Wildlife Area in Lassen County. The property is located about 17 miles southeast of Susanville via Highway 395, Mapes Road and Dakin Road. The north shore of Honey Lake is approximately one mile south of the subject property. The Dakin Unit of the Honey Lake Wildlife Area bounds the proposed acquisition on the south and west sides.

Mr. Dick used a map to indicate the location of the proposed acquisition and its relation to the existing wildlife area and the surrounding towns.

The DFG has highly recommended acquisition of this property since it is capable of being incorporated into the existing wildlife area and being managed with existing manpower and equipment. The primary objective would be to provide nesting habitat for upland nesting species of ducks and pheasants. Rotational cereal grain farming and the maintenance of permanent cover with wheatgrass and seed alfalfa would provide food and nesting habitat. Secondary objectives would include providing food for migrating waterfowl with seasonally-flooded ponds. Another prime benefit to this proposal is the expanded waterfowl hunting opportunities it will provide.

Hartson Slough bisects the property but its riparian qualities are in poor condition due to overgrazing by cattle. This riparian area would be enhanced with various tree and shrub plantings. The Dakin Unit closed zone would be expanded by approximately 20 acres to protect existing buildings, public access roads, and provide a refuge for upland game.

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.

The property has an approved market value of \$232,000 which includes a land value of \$208,000 and improvement value of \$23,625. Improvements consist of a manufactured (mobile) home, various outbuildings, and a domestic water system. There are also two agricultural wells located on the property.

It is estimated that in addition to the property's appraised value, an estimated \$5,000 will be required for related acquisition costs, including appraisals, title insurance and processing costs.

It was staff recommendation that the Board approve the purchase of this property as proposed, allocate \$237,000 therefor from the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund, as designated for interior wetlands, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned. He advised that this proposal has been supported by the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR THE HONEY LAKE WILDLIFE AREA - DAKIN UNIT EXPANSION, LASSEN COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$237,000 FROM THE 1984 FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND AS DESIGNATED FOR INTERIOR WETLANDS PROJECTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

13. Suisun Marsh Complex - Engineering Survey, Solano Co. \$50,000.00
(Grizzly Island, Joice Island, Hill Slough)

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Department of Fish and Game is requesting funds to conduct an engineering level survey of its land in the Suisun Marsh complex, and requested Mr. Rutsch to give a run-down of the Department ownership in the area.

The Department currently owns approximately 13,000 acres in the marsh. Of this, the existing and potential managed wetlands are as follows:

Grizzly Island:	9,100 acres
Joice Island:	1,900 acres
Hill Slough:	<u>1,000 acres</u>

TOTAL: 12,000 acres

The proposed work would encompass these 12,000 acres of managed wetlands. The remaining 1,000 acres consists of high ground and tidal lands outside of the perimeter levees, including land on Peytonia Slough.

The proposed project includes an engineering survey and flood and drain evaluation of all managed wetlands owned by the Department in the Suisun Marsh. The project would provide the following needed information:

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1. Bottom elevations of all existing ponds.
2. Elevations of high ground within existing pond areas.
3. Surveys of all areas not in ponds.
4. Evaluation of existing flood and drain facilities and their capabilities.

The information obtained from this project will allow the Department to make better decisions as to locations of future development projects on its lands located in the Suisun Marsh. A tremendous potential exists for improving wetlands habitat on these lands, and it is essential to make the best possible use of the limited funding available for wetlands development.

It is planned to have the Suisun Resource Conservation District perform the work by agreement with the DFG. SRCD has completed similar type projects for over 125 private landowners on an estimated 30-35,000 acres in the Suisun Marsh over the past several years, so it is well-qualified by experience to do this project. The District has estimated the survey would take six months to complete and is estimated to cost \$50,000.

For comparative purposes, another State agency was contacted about performing this survey. Not only could it not complete the work in the desired time, but the estimated cost was considerably more than as quoted by the District.

This proposal is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15306, Class 6, collection of data for resource evaluation.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the project as proposed, allocate \$50,000 from the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund (as designated for interior wetland projects), and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ENGINEERING LEVEL SURVEY OF LANDS IN THE SUISUN MARSH COMPLEX (GRIZZLY ISLAND JOICE ISLAND, HILL SLOUGH), SOLANO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$50,000 FROM THE 1984 FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND AS DESIGNATED FOR INTERIOR WETLANDS PROJECTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. Hidden Valley Wildlife Area, Riverside County \$30,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that the County of Riverside, which operates and manages the State-owned Hidden Valley Wildlife Area, has proposed a method for securing a firm water supply to enhance the

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area's waterfowl values. The Hidden Valley Wildlife Area, acquired in part with WCB funding, is located along the Santa Ana River, near the City of Riverside. The area has experienced a water supply problem since acquisition. To solve this problem, the County in their preliminary investigations indicated that delivery of treated effluent to this area from the nearby Riverside Treatment Plant is feasible, but some engineering is needed to prepare a design and final cost estimate.

This proposal is being submitted for WCB approval of the concept and an allocation for the engineering work. A very preliminary estimate of the project cost is \$300,000, using a figure of \$100 per foot for the approximately 3,000 foot pipeline required.

The Department of Fish and Game supports the project, noting that the year-round supply of tertiary treated effluent will not only benefit waterfowl, but fisheries and the numerous species of wildlife that reside in the area as well. It is expected that public use of the area for fishing, wildlife observation, hiking, bird watching or picnicking will also benefit from this improvement.

A minimum of 8.0 million gallons a day is available for diversion to the wildlife area. The pipeline and an existing ditch will carry it to a series of seasonally dry ponds on the area. It is necessary, however, to first perform percolation tests and determine percolation rates at these ponds prior to design and choice of pipe size. When the project is completed as planned, the ponds will have a permanent water surface area of about 47 acres. A field survey is also needed to select the proper alignment of the pipe to carry this water to the area.

It was recommended by staff recommends that the Board approve the Hidden Valley Wildlife Area water supply diversion as proposed, allocate \$30,000 from the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund, as designated for interior wetland, for an engineering study, project design and preparation of final cost estimate, and authorize staff and the DFG to proceed substantially as planned. Staff will bring the proposal back for an allocation for construction after the design and final cost estimate have been completed.

Mr. Schmidt reported that Senator Presley has supported this project and that Paul Romero from Riverside County was present today to voice his support of the proposal.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE HIDDEN VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA WATER SUPPLY DIVERSION, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$30,000 FROM THE 1984 FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND AS DESIGNATED FOR INTERIOR WETLANDS PROJECTS FOR AN ENGINEERING STUDY, PROJECT DESIGN, AND PREPARATION OF FINAL COST ESTIMATES; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. By-Day Creek, Mono County

\$20,000.00

The Department of Fish and Game has proposed that the Board allocate funds to rehabilitate degraded stream habitat on By-Day Creek, a tributary to the East Walker River in Mono County. The project site is located four miles northwest of Bridgeport, west of Highway 395. The project area was shown on a map by Mr. Rutsch.

Mr. Schmidt continued that By-Day Creek contains the only known endemic population of genetically pure Walker River strain Lahontan cutthroat trout. The Lahontan cutthroat trout is a federally-listed threatened species.

During 1983, the Board expended \$128,000 to acquire a key 160-acre parcel along By-Day Creek to forestall potentially incompatible subdivision development. In recent years, a severe stream channel erosion problem has developed on By-Day Creek involving the downcutting of the streambed and consequent sloughing in of adjacent stream banks. This process, which probably started slowly in concert with a century of moderate to heavy livestock grazing, was greatly accelerated by the breaching of a large beaver dam in 1978 followed by heavy run-off during 1982 and 1983. Within a 4-year period the streambed dropped as much as 6 feet. Unless the process is reversed soon, much of By-Day Creek will be of little value to Lahontan cutthroat trout.

The Forest Service is currently working on a streambed stabilization project on national forest land on the headwaters of By-Day Creek and expects to complete the project by the end of June 1985. They are prepared to continue working downstream on the State's one-half mile of stream by agreement with the Department if funds are provided as proposed herein. The Forest Service has reviewed the project proposal and cost estimate and believe they can complete the project as proposed.

The Department's draft Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Management Plan recognizes By-Day Creek as a refuge for Walker River strain cutthroat trout which can provide broodstock for restoring the strain to other Walker River tributaries. The plan recommends that degraded trout habitat in By-Day Creek be rehabilitated.

Forest Service work on State-owned land is to be covered by a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of California. Since the Toiyabe National Forest has an experienced three-man seasonal work crew available for the project by virtue of their initial work on the headwaters of By-Day Creek, the Department recommends that the Forest Service be contracted to carry out the work.

The project will focus on channel stabilization measures with some additional work designed to enhance fish cover. These measures will include stabilization of headcuts, cribbaging, rock armoring, revegetation, and deflector construction to divert

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water flow off unstable banks. Fish cover will be enhanced by establishing willows along the bank and constructing log structures in the stream. The work will be done at the most badly eroded sites scattered along both banks of the stream through the entire State parcel.

The cost estimate for this project based on a 60-day completion schedule is as follows:

Labor - Three technicians @ \$55/day	\$15,900
One wildlife biologist @ \$100/day	
Materials - Rebar, hogwire, plastic visqueen, grass seed, straw mulch, etc.	3,000
Equipment - Backhoe rental, 12 hrs. @ \$50/hr.	600
Transportation - Vehicles, \$11 per day	<u>500</u>
Estimated Project Cost	\$20,000

This activity is exempt from CEQA under Class 4, Section 15304 of the State Guidelines and a Notice of Exemption has been filed by the Department in accordance with the Act.

Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Board approve the By-Day Creek stream restoration project as proposed, allocate \$20,000 therefor from the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund as designated for restoration of waterways, and authorize staff and the Department to proceed substantially as planned.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. ORDWAY, SECONDED BY MR. PARNELL, THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE BY-DAY CREEK STREAM RESTORATION PROJECT, MONO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$20,000 THEREFOR FROM THE 1984 FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND AS DESIGNATED FOR RESTORATION OF WATERWAYS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. Funding Status at end of meeting

Mr. Schmidt provided the following information relative to WCB funds after Board approval of the agenda items.

1. 1984/85 Wildlife Restoration Fund

Unallocated balance at beginning of meeting	\$1,646,867.49
Less allocations at 6/11/85 meeting	<u>- 456,130.00</u>
Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	\$1,190,737.49

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2. 1983/84 Wildlife Restoration Fund

Unallocated balance at beginning of meeting	\$654,663.30
Plus recoveries at 6/11/85 meeting	+ 20,393.64
Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	<u>\$675,056.94</u>

3. 1976 State Urban and Coastal Park Fund

Coastal Wetlands

Unallocated balance at beginning of meeting	\$296.79
Plus recoveries at 6/11/85 meeting	+ 25,019.40
Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	<u>\$25,316.19</u>

Development

Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	\$32,000.00
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4. 1984/85 Environmental License Plate Fund

Unallocated balance at beginning of meeting	\$520,900.00
Less allocation at 6/11/85 meeting	-413,100.00
Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	<u>\$107,800.00</u>

5. 1984/85 Fish & Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund

Unallocated balance at beginning of meeting	\$9,233,350.00
Less allocation at 6/11/85 meeting	-337,000.00
Unallocated balance at end of 6/11/85 meeting	<u>\$8,896,350.00</u>

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by
Chairman Burke at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

W. John Schmidt

W. John Schmidt
Executive Officer

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on June 11, 1985, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$84,157,153.70. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

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

a. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects	\$15,819,485.80
b. Fish Habitat Development	5,519,620.27
1. Reservoir Construction or Improvement .	\$2,978,821.39
2. Stream Clearance and Improvement	476,115.44
3. Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	500,503.32
4. Marine Habitat	620,198.23
5. Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	943,981.89
c. Fishing Access Projects	21,760,634.49
1. Coastal and Bay	\$1,848,665.61
2. River and Aqueduct Access	5,921,851.83
3. Lake and Reservoir Access	4,413,314.95
4. Piers	9,576,802.10
d. Game Farm Projects	146,894.49
e. Wildlife Habitat Acq., Development & Improvement Projects	34,443,094.36
1. Wildlife Areas (General)	31,391,866.26
2. Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Dev. ...	1,205,528.10
3. Wildlife Areas/EcoReserves, (Rare & Endangered)	1,845,700.00
f. Hunting Access	546,069.66
g. Miscellaneous Projects	5,757,050.77
h. Special Project Allocations	164,303.86
Total Allocated to Projects	\$84,157,153.70