

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

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Rec'd MEMO
MAY 30 1995

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

Minutes, May 4, 1995

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

MINUTES, MEETING OF MAY 4, 1995

Pursuant to the call of the Chairperson Frank Boren, the Wildlife Conservation Board met in Room 317 of the State Capitol, Sacramento, California on May 4, 1995. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Introductions were made at this time and it was noted that Senator Jack O'Connell had recently been appointed to the Board as a Legislative Advisory Committee Member.

1. Roll Call**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS**

Frank Boren, Chairperson
President, Fish and Game Commission
Theresa Parker, Chief Deputy Director,
Vice, Russell Gould, Member
Director, Department of Finance
Boyd Gibbons, Member
Director, Department of Fish and Game

JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ross Sargent,
Vice, Senator Pat Johnston
Gavin Payne,
Vice, Senator Jack O'Connell
Krist Lane,
Vice, Senator Mike Thompson
Mary Morgan,
Vice, Assemblyman Dan Hauser
Rick Battson,
Vice, Assemblyman Phillip Isenberg

Absent: Senator Daniel Boatwright (Alternate)
Senator Tom Hayden (Alternate)

Minutes of Meeting, May 4, 1995
Wildlife Conservation Board

Staff Present: W. John Schmidt, Executive Director
Clyde Edon, Assistant Executive Dir/Administration-Development
Marilyn Cundiff-Gee, Wetlands Program Manager
Bob Schulenburg, Field Agent
Scott Clemons, Riparian Program Manager
Jim Sarro, Chief Land Agent/Assistant Executive Director
Howard Dick, Senior Land Agent
Frank Giordano, Senior Land Agent
Georgia Lipphardt, Senior Land Agent
Debbie Townsend, Associate Land Agent
Sylvia Gude, Staff Services Analyst
Jan Beeding, Office Technician
Sandy Daniel, Executive Secretary

Others Present: Stephen McCabe, California Native Plant Society
Mike Martin, County of Solano
John Anderson, Department of Fish and Game, Long Beach
Merrilee Fellows, The Nature Conservancy
Ken Clouse, Citizen
Steve Randall, Truckee Donner Recreation & Park District
Scott Ferguson, The Nature Conservancy
Greg Shannon, Sedona Pacific
Roy A. Jones, Montezuma Harbor
Steve Nicola, Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento
Roxanne Bittman, Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento
Birgitta Corsello, Solano County Dept. of General Services
James M. Jackson, Bank of America
Kent Smith, McCollum Associates
Mike McCollum, McCollum Associates
Neal Nelson, Citizen
Lin McNamara, California Conservation Corps
Joe Caves, County of Santa Cruz
Jonathan Wittwer, Consultant for County of Santa Cruz
Mike McCoy, UC Davis
Michael A. Bias, Ducks Unlimited
Corey Brown, Trust for Public Land
Dr. J. Rod McGinnis, Sacramento Safari Club
Dennis W. Chiniaeff, Kemper Real Estate Management Company
Edna Maita, Assemblymember Cortese

* **CONSENT CALENDAR (Items #2-15)**

Mr. Schmidt reported that the consent calendar consisted of Item Nos. 2-15 and that it was recommended that proposal "B" (San Joaquin Wetland Farms, Stanislaus County) of Item 12 (San Joaquin Valley Wetland Restoration Projects) be removed from consideration and that the funding be reduced from \$64,000 to \$47,000. With that change, staff recommended approval of the Consent Calendar as proposed in the individual agenda explanations including funding as noted therein. Hearing no requests for removal of any items, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS NOS. 2-15 AS PROPOSED IN THE INDIVIDUAL AGENDA EXPLANATIONS, INCLUDING FUNDING AS NOTED THEREIN AND ALSO INCLUDING THE MODIFICATION TO ITEM 12, DELETING PORTION "B".

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Schmidt introduced Mr. Krist Lane, representing Senator Thompson, who joined the meeting at this time.

* 2. Approval of Minutes (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Approval of minutes of the February 16, 1995, meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board was recommended.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 1995, MEETING OF THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD BE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes of Meeting, May 4, 1995
 Wildlife Conservation Board

* 3. Funding Status as of May 4, 1995 (CONSENT CALENDAR) (Informational Only)

(a) 1994-95 Wildlife Restoration Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget - Land Acquisitions	\$ 750,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>- 31,802.70</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$ 718,197.30
Governor's Budget - Minor Projects	\$749,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>-405,500.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$ 343,500.00

(b) 1993-94 Environmental License Plate Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Added to Governor's Budget by Ch. 1241	\$ 572,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>- 86,783.00</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$ 485,217.00

(c) 1992-93 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Reappropriation of 1989/90 - Stream Projects	\$2,044,100.49
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,740,545.76</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$ 303,554.73

(d) 1992-93 Wildlife and Natural Areas Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$2,000,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>-1,817,641.19</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$ 182,358.81

(e) 1988-89 California Wildlife, Coastal & Park Land Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Direct appropriation to the Wildlife Conservation Board	\$81,300,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	-63,375,188.47
Less State Administrative Costs	- 1,219,500.00
Less Reverted Funds	-11,528,799.69
Plus Reappropriated Funds	<u>11,528,799.69</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$16,705,311.53

(f) 1994-95 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$8,703,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	<u>-4,599,827.18</u>
Unallocated Balance	\$4,103,172.82

(g) 1993-94 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$9,844,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	-2,289,689.73
Unallocated Balance	\$7,554,310.27

(h) 1992-93 Habitat Conservation Fund Capital Outlay Budget

Governor's Budget	\$ 9,194,000.00
Less Previous Board Allocations	-6,757,181.51
Unallocated Balance	\$ 2,436,818.49

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

<u>Wildlife Restoration Fund</u>	\$ 1,061,697.30
<u>1984 Fish & Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund</u>	\$ 303,554.73
<u>Ca. Wildlife, Coastal & Park Land Conservation Fund of 1988</u>	\$16,705,311.53
<u>Wildlife & Natural Areas Conservation Fund</u>	\$ 182,358.81
<u>Ca. Environmental License Plate Fund</u>	\$ 485,217.00
<u>Habitat Conservation Fund</u>	\$14,094,301.58

* 4. Recovery of Funds (CONSENT CALENDAR)

The following 19 projects previously authorized by the Board have balances of funds that can be recovered and returned to their respective funds. It was recommended that the following totals be recovered and that the projects be closed.

\$991.87 to the **Wildlife Restoration Fund**,
\$40,575.83 to the **Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund**,
\$25,087.18 to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**, and
\$19,796.37 to the **Wildlife & Natural Areas Conservation Fund**.

WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND

Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion #4, Humboldt County

Allocation	\$37,400.00
Expended	<u>-37,400.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$-0-

South Bonnyview Fishing Access (Sacramento River), Shasta County

Allocation	\$288,100.00
Expended	<u>-288,095.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5.00

Vallejo Fishing Pier (CEOA Permits), Solano County

Allocation	\$30,000.00
Expended	<u>-29,013.13</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$986.87

Total Wildlife Restoration Fund Recoveries \$991.87

FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND

Big KimsheW Creek Habitat Enhancement, Butte County

Allocation	\$46,400.00
Expended	<u>-33,544.68</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$12,855.32

Gamecock Creek Barrier Removal, Santa Cruz County

Allocation	\$21,500.00
Expended	<u>-21,500.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$-0-

Lake Earl Wildlife Area, Expansion #17, Del Norte County

Allocation	\$715,000.00
Expended	<u>-711,635.82</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,364.18

Little North Valley Creek Habitat Enhancement, Butte County

Allocation	\$31,400.00
Expended	<u>-21,667.60</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$9,732.40

Shasta River Habitat Enhancement, Siskiyou County

Allocation	\$18,100.00
Expended	<u>-4,097.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$14,003.00

Willits Creek Habitat Enhancement, Mendocino County

Allocation	\$134,930.00
Expended	<u>-134,309.07</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$620.93

Total Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Fund Recoveries \$40,575.83

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion #4, Humboldt County

Allocation	\$6,000.00
Expended	<u>-3,446.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$2,554.00

Green Creek Wildlife Area, Expansion #1, Mono County

Allocation	\$80,855.65
Expended	<u>-77,261.65</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,594.00

Honcut Creek Wildlife Area, Butte County

Allocation	\$239,380.00
Expended	<u>-225,508.70</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$13,871.30

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Mud Slough Wetlands Restoration, Merced County

Allocation	\$30,000.00
Expended	<u>-29,904.36</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$95.64

Santa Rosa Mountains Wildlife Area, Potrero Canyon,
Expansion #1, Riverside County

Allocation	\$163,250.00
Expended	<u>-158,277.76</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$4,972.24

South Fork Winchuck River Habitat Enhancement, Del Norte County

Allocation	\$33,750.00
Expended	<u>-33,750.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$-0-

Total Habitat Conservation Fund Recoveries \$25,087.18

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AREAS CONSERVATION FUND

Allensworth Ecological Reserve, Expansion #6, Tulare County

Allocation	\$422,000.00
Expended	<u>-418,148.48</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$3,851.52

North Table Mountain Wildlife Area, Butte County

Allocation	\$1,059,000.00
Expended	<u>-1,058,814.15</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$185.85

Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve, Expansion #1,
Riverside County

Allocation	\$320,000.00
Expended	<u>-314,310.00</u>
Balance for Recovery	\$5,690.00

South Fork Kern River Ecological Reserve, Canebrake Creek,
Kern County

Allocation	\$2,186,000.00
Expended	-2,175,931.00
Balance for Recovery	\$10,069.00

Total Wildlife and Natural Areas Conservation

Fund Recoveries \$19,796.37

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD RECOVER FUNDS FOR THE 19 PROJECTS LISTED AND CLOSE THE PROJECT ACCOUNTS. RECOVERY TOTALS INCLUDE \$991.87 TO THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND, \$40,575.83 TO THE FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND, \$25,087.18 TO THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND, AND \$19, 796.37 TO THE WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AREAS CONSERVATION FUND.

MOTION CARRIED.

* 5. Special Project Planning Account (CONSENT CALENDAR) (Informational Only)

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

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

The Board, at the May 6, 1986, meeting, authorized the Executive Director to use up to one (1) percent of a budgeted appropriation to set up and maintain an appropriate planning account with the provision it would be reported to the Board as an information item at the next meeting. Accordingly, the planning account has been set up as follows:

Habitat Conservation Fund \$5,250.00

* 6. Salmon, Steelhead & Resident Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects \$326,508.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

It was proposed that the Board allocate funds for the enhancement and rehabilitation of salmon, steelhead and resident fish spawning and rearing habitat on ten (10) waterways in California.

The anadromous fishery resource in California has suffered a severe decline over the past thirty years. For example, records indicate that the chinook salmon population in the Klamath River Basin has declined from a historic level of 500,000 to 180,000 by 1963, 115,000 by 1978, 55,000 by 1984 to 33,000 by 1991. One of the major causes for this decline is degradation of natural habitat due to stream and watershed disturbances from logging, road construction, mining and other activities associated with modern development. There has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of artificially produced fish returning to the Klamath system since 1985. Returns of naturally produced salmon are still very low, however, due to the recent drought and widespread loss of habitat.

In addition, the 1964 flood, which produced record high flows in many waterways in northern California, caused serious damage or completely destroyed miles of productive salmon and steelhead habitat. In addition to thousands of cubic yards of debris and sediment being deposited in the lower gradient sections of the streams, miles of flood riffles were also created by the high flood waters.

Flood riffles are broad, shallow stream sections commonly referred to as "bowling alleys" which are composed primarily of 6 to 8 inch cobbles or boulders. These areas lack pools and provide little if any spawning or rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead. Some streams have usable spawning and rearing habitat that is blocked by a rock or log barrier. Modification of these barriers can open miles of good habitat that currently can not be reached by anadromous fish. Flood waters also caused the loss of bank stability and associated streamside shade canopy which is needed to maintain cooler summer water temperatures required for survival of juvenile salmon and trout. Since anadromous fish spend the juvenile portion of their life cycle in their natal stream, the need for adequate rearing habitat is a significant factor relative to the overall status of a population.

Habitat enhancement and restoration is also needed on many interior streams that support populations of resident fish species. Over the years grazing and timber harvest practices, coupled with damage from high storm flows, has caused serious impacts to many of California's smaller interior streams resulting in an overall degrading of habitat.

Many of the problems associated with the larger coastal streams are also common to the smaller interior waterways. Long stretches of some interior streams also lack the proper pool-riffle ratio and require log-rock weir structures and boulder clusters to re-create the proper habitat diversity. Unstable streambanks are common and create conditions that reduce stream habitat values.

Streambanks lacking cover generate increased sedimentation which smothers spawning gravel and fill pools needed for rearing habitat. The lack of streambank riparian growth also results in higher water temperatures, less hiding cover and a reduced food source. Some segments of streams that are heavily fished lack adequate hiding and holding cover which reduces angler success and lessens the fishing experience. Stream habitat modifications are also necessary to protect, enhance and restore populations of threatened or endangered species of fish.

The following stream restoration projects have been recommended by the Department of Fish and Game. They are exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, Class 1 (i), maintaining fish habitat and stream flows to protect fish. A Notice of Exemption or other appropriate environmental documentation has been filed for each project. The projects listed in this item are intended to correct or enhance situations identified above. The Department of Fish and Game will, in all cases, either administer projects themselves, or monitor the work of public agencies or nonprofit organizations.

Site specific information for each of the ten (10) proposed habitat enhancement projects is briefly provided below:

A. Bear Creek Habitat Enhancement, Humboldt County \$21,000.00

The Department of Fish and Game was proposing to construct seven stream enhancement structures on Bear Creek, a tributary to the Eel River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout and salmon fishery. All work will be done on Pacific Lumber Company land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring log structures in the stream to provide woody cover and generate flows which will create scour pools. Similar structures will be installed to direct the water away from areas where the bank is failing in order to reduce downstream sedimentation. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing conditions for juvenile steelhead. This project will be administered by the California Conservation Corps from the Fortuna Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

B. Booths Run Habitat Enhancement, Humboldt County \$51,600.00

The Department of Fish and Game was proposing to construct 25 stream enhancement structures on Booths Run, a tributary to the Van Duzen River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout fishery. All work will be done on Pacific Lumber Company land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring log structures in the stream to provide woody cover and generate flows which will create scour pools. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing conditions for juvenile steelhead. This project will be administered by the California Conservation Corps from the Fortuna Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

C. Johnson Creek Habitat Enhancement, Mendocino County \$22,200.00

The Department of Fish and Game was proposing to construct 18 stream enhancement structures on Johnson Creek, a tributary to Big River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout and coho salmon fishery. All work will be done on Louisiana-Pacific Corporation land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring log structures in the stream to provide woody cover and generate flows which will create scour pools. Similar structures will be installed to direct the water away from areas where the bank is failing in order to reduce downstream sedimentation. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing conditions for juvenile salmonids. This project will be administered by the California Conservation Corps from the Fortuna Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

D. North Fork Elk River Habitat Enhancement, Humboldt County \$46,000.00

This Department of Fish and Game proposed project consists of constructing 22 stream enhancement structures on North Fork Elk River, a tributary to the Elk River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout and salmon fishery. All work will be done on Pacific Lumber Company land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring logs and root wads in the stream to provide woody cover and allow the flow of water to scour pools. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing and overwinter refuge habitat conditions for juvenile salmonids. The project will be completed by the California Conservation Corps crews from the Fortuna Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

E. North Fork Redwood Creek Habitat Enhancement,
Mendocino County \$39,000.00

This was a proposed cooperative project between the Department of Fish and Game and the Center for Education and Manpower Resources, Inc., a private nonprofit organization, for the enhancement of coho salmon and steelhead trout. The North Fork Redwood Creek, which is a tributary to Ten Mile River, has had a past history of good salmon and steelhead production. However, a newly formed log barrier is preventing fish from reaching spawning habitat in the upper reaches and smaller tributaries. In addition to removing the barrier, selected logs in or adjacent to the stream will be anchored to prevent movement and the formation of future barriers. These structures will also provide pool habitat and cover for downstream migrants. Approximately three additional miles of upstream habitat will be made available for spawning when this project is completed. This project will be administered by the Center for Education and Manpower Resources, Inc., under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

F. Scott River Riparian Fencing and Planting #2, Siskiyou County \$8,500.00

This was a proposed cooperative project between the Department of Fish and Game and the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District, a private, nonprofit organization, to fence approximately 1,200 feet of riparian habitat and to plant approximately 1,000 riparian cuttings along Scott River, a tributary to the Klamath River. Two species of salmon (coho and chinook) and steelhead trout inhabit this river; with recent data indicating that a high density of fish are returning to the stream to spawn, but spawning results are still low. Part of the problem is felt to be the lack of streamside habitat due to livestock grazing along the stream. The construction of the fence will exclude cattle from the stream and reduce the sediments entering the river as a result of bank failures and erosion, which is now covering spawning habitat. The planting of riparian vegetation will accelerate the vegetative growth and provide shade and eventually woody debris along the river, an essential habitat component for successful salmonid rearing. This project will be administered by the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

G. South West Tributary East Branch Mill Creek, Del Norte County \$32,300.00

This Department of Fish and Game proposed project consists of constructing 15 stream enhancement structures on the South West Tributary East Branch Mill Creek, a tributary to the Smith River, for the enhancement of the steelhead and cutthroat trout and coho salmon fishery. All work will be done on Rellim Redwood Company land and will consist of developing habitat by placing large logs and root wads in the stream to provide woody cover and allow the flow of water to scour pools. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing and overwinter refuge habitat conditions for juvenile salmonids. The project will be completed by the California Conservation Corps crews from the Del Norte Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

H. Tarup Creek Habitat Enhancement, Del Norte County \$28,700.00

This Department of Fish and Game proposed project consists of constructing 14 stream enhancement structures on Tarup Creek, a tributary to the Klamath River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout and salmon fishery. All work will be done on Simpson Timber Company land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring logs and root wads in the stream to provide woody cover and allow the flow of water to scour pools. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing and overwinter refuge habitat conditions for juvenile salmonids. The project will be completed by the California Conservation Corps crews from the Del Norte Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

I. Terwer Creek Habitat Enhancement, Del Norte County \$29,500.00

This Department of Fish and Game proposed project consists of constructing 15 stream enhancement structures on Terwer Creek, a tributary to the Klamath River, for the enhancement of the steelhead trout and salmon fishery. All work will be done on Simpson Timber Company land and will consist of developing habitat by anchoring logs and root wads in the stream to provide woody cover and allow the flow of water to scour pools. The developed pools and woody cover will provide better summer rearing and overwinter refuge habitat conditions for juvenile salmonids. The project will be completed by the California Conservation Corps crews from the Del Norte Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

J. Tuolumne River Bank Stabilization, Stanislaus County \$47,300.00

This Department of Fish and Game proposed project with the California Conservation Corps will benefit the fall run chinook salmon in the Tuolumne River. This project site is located approximately four miles east of Waterford, in Stanislaus County. The Tuolumne River is a major tributary to the San Joaquin River and supports an active spawning population of fall run salmon. Previous rehabilitation projects have provided spawning riffles; however, natural topography, combined with agricultural usage on the steep hillsides has caused hillside erosion resulting in siltation of the spawning riffles. This project will decrease hillside erosion and river siltation by constructing siltation basins and holding ponds to reduce the amount of sedimentation entering the river. Gullies will be plugged and planted with riparian vegetation to stabilize the bank and reduce erosion. The project will be completed by the California Conservation Corps from the Delta Center, under direction of the Department of Fish and Game.

Administrative contract costs to process the contracts for the listed projects is estimated at \$408.00.

Staff recommended that the Board approve these ten (10) salmon, steelhead and resident fish projects as one item as proposed; allocate \$326,508.00 from the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Fund (P-19), which includes \$408.00 to cover the Department of General Services contract review costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

A letter of support was received from the Mountain Lion Foundation.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE TEN SALMON, STEELHEAD AND RESIDENT FISH PROJECTS AS ONE ITEM, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$326,508.00 FROM THE 1984 FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND (P-19), WHICH INCLUDES \$408.00 TO COVER THE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES CONTRACT REVIEW COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- * 7. Coon Hollow Wildlife Area Restoration, Butte County \$7,700.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

This proposal was to consider funding a cooperative riparian habitat restoration project between the Department of Fish and Game, the Wildlife Conservation Board and The University Foundation, representing California State University, Chico. This proposed project will protect and enhance wet meadow and riparian habitat within the Snag Lake Unit of the Coon Hollow Wildlife Area, in northern Butte County. The project will be administered through an interagency agreement with the University Foundation and will utilize students from the University's School of Agriculture and other disciplines to restore habitat and to manage wildlands for various resource objectives.

The Coon Hollow Wildlife Area consists of three management units including 729 acres of conifer forest and meadow/riparian habitats at the 6,000 foot elevation, approximately five miles east of Butte Meadows. The areas surrounding the wildlife area are grazed by cattle under an open range system which has resulted in the loss of significant riparian habitat along Humbug Creek (willow, aspen and cottonwood) in the Snag Lake Unit. In addition, the meadow and riparian habitat areas within the Snag Lake Unit are being invaded by lodgepole pine, resulting in a gradual loss of its historic wildlife habitat values. This project would enhance the riparian and meadow habitats through the installation of 1.5± miles of perimeter fence, by thinning and removing selected lodgepole pine trees, and by building brush piles for small birds and mammals. The Department of Fish and Game has observed excellent recovery of the willow stands along portions of the streams in the area where cattle have been removed.

The proposed project conforms to, and is consistent with the Coon Hollow Wildlife Area Management Plan that was produced by the Department of Fish and Game in 1990. That plan calls for the priority management of State and/or Federally listed rare, threatened or endangered species. Protection and enhancement of willow habitat should aid in the

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recolonization of willow flycatcher (State endangered) at the Snag Lake Unit as the species is already known to breed at the Coon Hollow Unit. The enhancement of aspen and cottonwood should be beneficial to California spotted owl populations. Sierra red fox (State threatened) is believed to occur in the area and would benefit from the exclusion of livestock from meadow habitat and the building of brush piles.

If approved, it is anticipated that this project will be completed by the end of 1996. The Butte County Fish and Game Commission has provided \$1,000 toward the purchase of fencing materials for the project. As noted earlier, the project will be administered by the University Foundation, under the direction of staff and the Department of Fish and Game.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this riparian restoration project as proposed; allocate \$7,700.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 (ELPF), as made available to the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

A letter of support was received from the Mountain Lion Foundation.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE COON HOLLOW WILDLIFE AREA RESTORATION PROJECT, BUTTE COUNTY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION (REPRESENTING CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHICO), AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$7,700.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 (ELPF), AS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE CALIFORNIA RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- * 8. Butte Creek House Ecological Reserve Restoration, Butte County \$4,200.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

This proposal was to consider funding a cooperative restoration project between the Department of Fish and Game, the Wildlife Conservation Board and The University Foundation, representing California State University, Chico. This proposed project will protect and enhance riparian habitat within the Butte Creek House Ecological Reserve in northern Butte County. The project will be administered through an interagency agreement with the University Foundation utilizing students from the University's School of Agriculture and other disciplines to restore habitat and to manage wildlands for various resource objectives.

The Butte Creek House Ecological Reserve was acquired in 1987 to protect the meadow and fishery resources associated with the headwaters of Butte Creek. This property is located approximately three miles southeast of Jonesville, at an elevation of approximately 5,800 feet. The reserve is near the Snag Lake Unit of the Coon Hollow Wildlife Area, and provides extremely important habitat for a variety of wildlife species.

Previous restoration projects have restricted cattle grazing by fencing around the meadow along Butte Creek, and the construction of 13 log check dams in the lower sections of the creek in order to retain spring runoff, thereby hastening meadow recovery, as well as providing fish and wildlife habitat. The Department of Fish and Game reports that these initial efforts have been extremely successful.

This proposed project would further enhance the wildlife habitat conditions by the addition of six small check dams in the upper portion of Butte Creek House Meadow and by planting willow thickets throughout the meadow area to fill in voids between existing woody vegetation.

Protection and enhancement of willow habitat should aid in the recolonization of the willow flycatcher (State endangered) at the Butte Creek House Ecological Reserve, as the species is already known to breed at the nearby Coon Hollow Unit of the Coon Hollow Wildlife Area. If approved, it is anticipated that this project will be completed by the end of 1996. Project administration will be handled by the University Foundation, under the direction of staff and the Department of Fish and Game.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this riparian restoration project as proposed; allocate \$4,200.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 (ELPF), as made available to the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

A letter of support was received from the Mountain Lion Foundation.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE BUTTE CREEK HOUSE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE RESTORATION PROJECT, BUTTE COUNTY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION (REPRESENTING CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHICO), AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$4,200.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 (ELPF), AS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE CALIFORNIA RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- * 9. Riparian Habitat Inventory and Assessment Project - Phase 2 \$150,000.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

This proposal was to consider funding the second phase of the statewide riparian habitat inventory and assessment, an important element of the Resources Agency's California Rivers Assessment (CARA). The first phase of this project is now being completed by the University of California at Davis (UC Davis) under an Interagency Agreement with the Board. It was proposed that a new agreement be executed with UC Davis to accomplish the second phase which will add to the information collected in the first phase, and will expand the area to be assessed from the thirteen river basins now being completed to forty basins.

This overall project is assessing the current amount and status of the state's remaining riparian resources through a comprehensive, cooperative effort to gather and analyze riparian-related data into a centralized location, provide a standardized evaluation system with the ability to overlay resource information, and to provide information about the significance of riparian resources on a statewide basis. Four basic tasks to the inventory and assessment process as identified by staff are:

- 1) The identification of existing data on riparian habitat;
- 2) The development of a riparian habitat classification which cross-indexes the multiple classification systems employed by various organizations having data to be incorporated into the inventory;
- 3) The development of a database which will "interface" with other organizations' databases. This database is being designed in a manner as to be expandable to

include other resource information categories as envisioned by the interagency CARA Coordinating Committee (see membership below);

- 4) The organization and input of existing riparian habitat information into the newly created comprehensive statewide database.

A two-pronged effort was implemented during the first phase of this project. A Professional Judgement Assessment questionnaire (PJA) was distributed to over 1,000 resource professionals seeking their opinions about riparian habitat trends on 157 rivers. At the same time, river-specific data and other resource information was collected from various agencies and organizations in thirteen demonstration river basins (the Aggregated Information Model [AIM]).

A partial statewide inventory and assessment has now been developed, using information collected for portions of 132 of the rivers targeted in the PJA, from several statewide river-related databases maintained by participating agencies, and from the thirteen demonstration river basins. The project has also developed an efficient riparian vegetation survey method employing aerial photographs of several of the rivers in the demonstration basins.

Staff coordinated the preparation of an interim CARA progress report, in cooperation with UC Davis and the interagency CARA Coordinating Committee, which is co-chaired by WCB staff and the National Park Service, and includes representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Fish and Game, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and The Nature Conservancy. This report includes the results of the first phase of the riparian habitat inventory and assessment. A final report for that phase will be completed during July, 1995.

The CARA Coordinating Committee has determined that additional work is needed to complete the riparian inventory and assessment. UC Davis estimates that it will require approximately three more years, and approximately one million dollars in additional funding to complete the statewide rivers assessment for riparian and aquatic habitats. During the next year, Phase 2 of the riparian inventory and assessment will expand the riparian database by adding data from up to twenty-seven additional river basins (also known as hydrologic units), based upon the returns from the Professional Judgement Assessment indicating the highest value riparian habitat areas in need of conservation assessment. In addition, Phase 2 also will expand the riparian corridor aerial vegetation inventory to include up to 60 new rivers.

UC Davis will continue to coordinate with the other participating agencies, including the CARA Coordinating Committee. They have also provided your staff with a proposed budget for this work which has been reviewed and approved by staff. The estimated completion date for this phase is June, 1996.

UC Davis is also contributing \$149,000 of in-kind services, including \$13,000 in

computer services and hardware support from the UC Davis Center for Ecological Health Research, \$71,000 in data and support from the California Watershed Inventory Project, and \$10,000 in staff time from the National Science Foundation's Long Term Ecological Research Project.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the funding for the Riparian Habitat Inventory and Assessment Project - Phase 2 as proposed; allocate \$150,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Letters of support were received from the Mountain Lion Foundation and the National Park Service.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE RIPARIAN HABITAT INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT PROJECT - PHASE 2 AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$150,000.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

*10. Fall River Fishing Access, Shasta County (CONSENT CALENDAR) \$9,000.00

This was a proposal to extend the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) present lease of the Fall River Fishing Access site for one additional year. On November 21, 1989, the Board approved funding (\$33,000) for the purpose of leasing and developing a one acre site located on the Fall River for the purpose of a public fishing access. The term of the original lease was for a five-year period with the State having the option to renew at the end of that period. Since the lease has been in effect, the site, which is located approximately one mile east of the town of Glenburn, has been developed and used by the public.

DFG has been interested in acquiring public fishing access to Fall River for many years. Since this river was first declared navigable, there has been concern that the general public does not have reasonable access to the upper reaches of the river, which flows almost entirely within private lands, in effect denying the public access to one of the best trout fishing rivers in the state.

It is felt that limited public access to the upper Fall River has actually affected fishing patterns. Past creel census data has shown that most anglers who have their own access put in and take out at the same location and fish sections of the river adjacent to their

launch locations. However, all other anglers must put in where they can which, with the limited access available, results in unneeded traffic that detracts from the fishing experience and, for gasoline powered boats, contributes to bank erosion.

This leased access has helped alleviate some of these problems by making it possible to provide a much needed public access to upper reaches of the river. The site is improved with a gravel parking area (which can accommodate 15± vehicles), vehicle barriers, fencing and gate, a small dock and a portable toilet.

The owner has agreed to extend the lease for an additional year at the appraised value. The approved value of a one-year lease, to be paid at the start of the lease, is \$8,000. An additional \$1,000 is estimated to be necessary for costs to cover the appraisal and administrative charges bringing the total to \$9,000.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the lease extension, as proposed; allocate \$9,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ONE YEAR LEASE EXTENSION FOR THE FALL RIVER FISHING ACCESS SITE, SHASTA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$9,000.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *11. American River Fishing Access, Upper Sunrise, Sacramento County \$13,000.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

This was a proposed cooperative project with the Sacramento County Parks Department to complete upgrading of two fishing access sites on Department of Fish and Game owned land located along the south bank of the American River, downstream from the Nimbus Hatchery. Sacramento County also owns lands adjacent to the State property, which are part of the American River Parkway, providing public access to the river for fishing and other recreational activities.

The access project includes two parking lots, which are located on a portion of the 68 acres of land acquired pursuant to Board action in 1966. Since that time the property has been maintained and patrolled under a cooperative agreement by the County. These lots now require upgrading if public use is to continue. This will include base rock to fill

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low areas, application of oil penetrating emulsion to control dust and posts and fencing to control vehicle access.

The County has agreed to renew the operation and maintenance agreement for an additional 20 years, agreeing to continue maintaining and patrolling the sites. If approved, the County will administer a private contract for completion of the proposed improvement project. Cost estimates have been reviewed by Board staff as follows:

Add base rock to fill holes (300 CY)	\$ 4,500.00
Application of dust control emulsion	2,000.00
Post and fencing (400 LF)	4,800.00
Mobilization	500.00
Contingency	<u>1,200.00</u>
Estimated Total	\$13,000.00

The project is exempt under CEQA under Section 15301 (c), minor repairs to existing public facilities and a categorical exemption has been filed as required by CEQA. The Department of Fish and Game supports the upgrade of the public parking lots.

Staff recommended that the Board approve funding for the upgrade of the two parking lots as proposed; allocate \$13,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE FUNDING FOR THE UPGRADE OF TWO PARKING LOTS AT THE AMERICAN RIVER FISHING ACCESS, UPPER SUNRISE, SACRAMENTO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$13,000.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *12. San Joaquin Valley Wetland Restoration Projects,
Merced/Stanislaus Counties (CONSENT CALENDAR) \$64,000.00

As one of the consent items considered at the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Schmidt reported that Item B - San Joaquin Wetland Farms, Stanislaus County, was withdrawn from the agenda, and that the total amount requested was reduced to \$47,000.00.

It was proposed that the Board allocate funds and award a grant to Ducks Unlimited for the restoration and enhancement of approximately 285± acres of wetland habitat on two separate properties located in the San Joaquin Valley. This proposal was a cooperative proposal to be funded in part by three public agencies and the individual property owners.

The San Joaquin Valley is comprised of two large drainage basins and is approximately 85 miles long and 40 miles wide, covering 3,400 square miles. Historically, the San Joaquin Basin's major wetland areas were found east and west of the San Joaquin River, near Los Banos and Merced. There are approximately 25,167 acres of publicly owned and managed natural wetland habitat areas and approximately 100,000 acres of privately owned and managed areas that support seasonal and permanent wetlands and associated upland habitat. This area is critical for migratory waterfowl and other wetland dependent species such as, numerous shorebirds, American egrets, great blue herons and various raptors.

Consistent with the goals and objectives of the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, the two proposed projects will all contribute toward the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Objective of enhancing wetlands on 291,000 acres of privately owned wetlands. They are designed to enhance and maintain quality migratory waterfowl habitat, provide nesting cover for waterfowl and create additional seasonal wetlands by improving the water supply and delivery systems.

In addition, two of the projects will also contribute toward another Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Objective designed to enhance waterfowl habitat on 443,000 acres of agricultural ground.

Specifically, two of these proposals, the Bardin Ranch project and the Greenhouse Ranch project, are designed to incorporate the use of cattle grazing as a tool to manage the wetland habitat. By rotating the cattle from the native uplands in the early Spring, the upland grasses are allowed to reach suitable height to provide good spring nesting habitat for waterfowl and other upland nesting birds. Further, cattle will be used to control the unwanted and excessive cattail and tule growth which chokes out shallow wetland ponds, thus decreasing their habitat values. Controlled cattle grazing will also provide critical habitat for migrating geese, as geese prefer short, cropped grasses. Thus, goose habitat can be enhanced through rotational cattle grazing practices.

To assure the projects are managed to achieve the desired quality of wetland habitat, management plans have been developed for each of the two projects, specifying how the wetlands are to be managed. For the two projects involving the use of cattle grazing, a grazing schedule is included in the management plan. In addition, site visits will be performed twice a year to assure the use of cattle grazing are indeed benefiting the wetland habitat.

Site specific information for the three proposed projects is summarized below:

A. Greenhouse Ranch Wetland Restoration, Merced County \$57,500.00

This project was designed to restore approximately 160 acres of wetlands and provide approximately 4.5 miles of interior fencing to control cattle grazing and facilitate a rotational grazing program. The wetland restoration effort will also involve the extension of a water distribution system. Specific cost estimates and proposed work to be accomplished follows:

Fencing, materials and labor	\$38,250.00
Materials and installation of water control structures	13,500.00
Overflow channel and distribution channel (earth work)	<u>5,750.00</u>
Total Cost:	\$57,500.00

B. San Joaquin Wetland Farms, Stanislaus County \$33,355.00

THIS ITEM WAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA.

This project was designed to restore approximately 40 acres of seasonal wetlands and develop a water conveyance system capable of providing winter water for an additional 206 acres of wetlands. Specific cost estimates and work proposed to be accomplished follows:

16" Crisafulli pump and motor	\$13,000.00
Five water control structures & associated fittings	10,259.00
Internal levee and ditches to transport water	<u>10,096.00</u>
Total Cost:	\$33,355.00

C. Bardin Ranch Wetland Restoration, Merced County \$23,000.00

The project was designed to restore approximately 125 acres of seasonal wetlands and develop a water conveyance and distribution system. Specific cost estimates and work proposed to be accomplished follows:

Materials for water control structures	\$19,000.00
Drainage swales, water distribution system construction	<u>4,000.00</u>
Total Cost:	\$23,000.00

Recognizing the importance of the two projects, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Agricultural Soil Conservation Service (ASCS) have agreed to contribute toward the overall cost associated with implementing these projects. The following summary provides a breakdown of each partners cost share contribution:

<u>Cost-Share Partners</u>	<u>Partner Contributions</u>	<u>Revised Partner Contributions</u>
Wildlife Conservation Board	\$64,000.00	\$47,000
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	16,497.00	16,497
Soil Conservation Service	3,500.00	3,500
Landowners ^{1/}	<u>30,858.00</u>	<u>30,858</u>
Total Project:	\$114,855.00	\$97,855

1/ Should any of the construction items exceed the estimated cost, the landowners have agreed to pay for any cost overruns.

The capital improvements associated with each project, i.e., the water control structures and fencing materials are estimated to last about 10 years. As such, the landowners have agreed to manage and maintain the project according to the provisions contained in the management plan for 10 years. If for some unknown reason the landowner is not able to manage and maintain the wetlands according to the provisions of the agreement, the landowners have all agreed to reimburse the State for the portion of the amortized costs for the remaining project period.

Consistent with the provisions of CEQA, the projects are exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, Class 1 (i), maintaining fish and wildlife habitat to protect wildlife habitat. A Notice of Exemption or other appropriate environmental documentation has been filed for each project. The two projects are intended to correct or enhance situations identified above. The Department of Fish and Game will monitor the work of the private landowners, public agencies and the nonprofit organization.

These joint venture projects involving the private sector, a nonprofit organization, federal

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and state entities reflects a true partnership and cost-effective opportunity for the conservation of critical wetland habitat. Furthermore, this project is consistent with and supports Governor's Wilson's Comprehensive Wetland Policy that emphasizes (1) wetland conservation efforts through landowner incentives, (2) preservation of productive agricultural lands and (3) the development of private and public partnerships.

Staff recommended that the Board approve these two (Items A & C) wetland restoration projects as one item, as proposed; allocate \$47,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (P-117) as designated for use by the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; and authorize the staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Letters of support were received from the California Waterfowl Association, Mountain Lion Foundation and Ducks Unlimited.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE AND AWARD A GRANT FOR THE TWO (ITEMS A AND C) WETLAND RESTORATION PROJECTS AS ONE ITEM, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$47,000.00 FOR THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD'S SHARE FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (P-117) AS DESIGNATED FOR USE BY THE INLAND WETLANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *13. Laguna de Santa Rosa Wildlife Area, Expansions #6 and #7,
Sonoma County (CONSENT CALENDAR) \$88,000.00

This proposal was to consider two separate acquisitions totalling 82.4± acres of vacant land located in and adjacent to the Laguna de Santa Rosa floodplain. Both acquisitions are located in the City of Sebastopol, in the County of Sonoma.

The Wildlife Conservation Board staff, using Department of Fish and Game funds, initiated acquisition in this area in 1980 with the purchase of the 75± acre Laguna Ecological Reserve to protect seasonal vernal pools, valley oaks and endangered species. Beginning in 1989, and to date, the Board has authorized the acquisition of a total of 624± acres within the Laguna at varied locations. The Conceptual Area Acquisition Plan (CAP) prepared by the Department of Fish and Game for the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wildlife Area proposes to connect these parcels.

Both of the proposed acquisitions are considered "first priority parcels" within the CAP, as properties that contain the highest wildlife species or habitat values (existing or restorable). These parcels contain the core wetland habitats of the Laguna de Santa Rosa; seasonal upland floodway and the bottom wetlands of the Laguna channel. Both acquisitions are valuable as inholdings to existing State ownerships.

Acquisition of the subject properties will primarily benefit wetland associated species, resident as well as migratory. The wetland habitats of the Laguna ecosystem contain or support the greatest number of rare, endangered and unusual species found in any one Sonoma County area including, but not limited to, the yellow-billed cuckoo, peregrine falcon, southern bald eagle, freshwater shrimp and tiger salamander. State-listed rare, threatened or endangered plant species found in the Laguna area include white sedge, Burke's goldfields, Sebastopol meadowfoam and many-flowered navarretia. The Laguna de Santa Rosa is a wetland of major significance and is of interest to federal, state and local agencies.

The habitats of the Laguna have been severely impacted by historic and ongoing livestock grazing, agriculture, irrigation (groundwater and wastewater), development, channelization and fragmentation. Present zoning does not allow for the planned management of the vital wetland habitats which is being lost to increased human uses. Acquisition of the subject properties will allow for enhancement of natural values and long-term survival for all wetland species within the Laguna.

The rich riparian and marsh habitats, with high species diversity and scenic quality, also makes the area of high value for bird watching, nature study, hiking and equestrian trails. An access plan is proposed for the larger management area which will include access routes which do not impact existing homes, and recreational uses which are compatible under a management plan designed to protect its wildlife values.

Consistent with long-range planning purposes, staff of the Board has been conducting

negotiations to pursue acquisition of "first priority parcels" containing sensitive wetland habitat components and are presenting the following two proposals for Board consideration.

A. Expansion #6 \$10,000.00

This was a proposal to acquire approximately 76.4 acres of land located to the north of Cooper Road and to the east of Gravenstein Highway (Highway 116); to the east of the City of Sebastopol. Direct access is provided by a 20-foot dirt road extending from Cooper Road northward to the subject.

The property consists of a rectangularly shaped, generally level, site located entirely within the 100-year floodplain and bordered by the Laguna de Santa Rosa along the easterly property line. With the exception of perimeter fencing, the property is unimproved.

The owners have agreed to sell their property, together with the access, to the State at the total approved appraised fair market value of \$343,845.00. An additional \$6,155 is estimated to be required to cover the costs of appraisal, title insurance, escrow and Department of General Services review charges, for a total of \$350,000.00.

WCB staff has filed an application to the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) and has been approved for a \$340,000 grant for the acquisition of resource lands identified in the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wildlife Area CAP. The purpose of the program is to provide funds to local, state, federal and nonprofit organizations for acquisitions and associated costs of resource lands to mitigate the impacts of modifications to an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. A portion of these funds were proposed to be used for Expansion #4 (November 10, 1994, meeting). However, since reimbursement was not possible at that time, the entire \$340,000 will be applied to this purchase. After application of the EEMP funds, which will be placed directly into escrow, the net cost to the Board for these acquisitions will be \$10,000.

B. Expansion #7 \$78,000.00

This was a proposal to acquire approximately 6 acres of land located on the northerly line of Occidental Road, to the east of Gravenstein Highway (Highway 116); to the north of Sebastopol and west of Santa Rosa. Direct access is provided by a 15-foot access easement which extends from Occidental Road north and then west to the subject property. The access easement, established across the Grantor's remaining lands, will be limited to use for administrative purposes. The area proposed for acquisition is fairly level low lands, with some rather steep areas. With the exception of perimeter fencing, the area is entirely unimproved.

The owners have agreed to sell approximately 6 acres of their property, the exact acreage to be determined upon completion of a survey, at its approved appraised fair market value of \$11,000 per acre. An additional \$12,000 is estimated to be necessary to cover the costs of the appraisal, survey, title insurance, escrow and Department of General Services review charges, bringing the total allocation necessary to \$78,000.00.

The Department of Fish and Game recommends acquisition of the subject properties as a part of this major wildlife area. Potential claims to the properties by way of the State Lands Commission have been considered to have no impact on the Department's acquisitions. The acquisitions are exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition of land for wildlife habitat conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition of these properties as proposed; allocate a total of \$88,000.00 from the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Fund of 1988/P-70 [Section 5907(c)(10)]; authorize the receipt and use of the Environmental Enhancement Program funds as proposed; and further authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Letters of support were received from the California Waterfowl Association and the Mountain Lion Foundation.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE LAGUNA DE SANTA ROSA WILDLIFE AREA, EXPANSIONS #6 AND #7, SONOMA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE A TOTAL OF \$88,000.00 FROM THE CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE, COASTAL AND PARK LAND CONSERVATION FUND OF 1988/P-70 [SECTION 5907 (c)(10)]; AUTHORIZE THE RECEIPT AND USE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS AS PROPOSED; AND FURTHER AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *14. Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve, Expansion #2,
Riverside County (CONSENT CALENDAR) \$132,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of 20.4± acres adjacent to the Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve for the preservation of south coastal riparian habitat and its associated, widely varied, species of wildlife. The existing Ecological Reserve is located on both the north and south sides of the river and this proposal adds to the north side holdings of the State. More specifically, the subject property is located on the south side of Camino Estribo, less than one mile from I-15, in the rapidly growing Temecula area.

The Santa Margarita River corridor extends approximately 27.2 miles from southwestern Riverside County, near the town of Temecula, through Camp Pendleton in northern San Diego County where it empties into the Pacific Ocean. The corridor is roughly 1/3 of a mile wide and encompasses approximately 6,000 acres.

The Santa Margarita River corridor is unique as it is one of the last remaining coastal streams in relatively pristine condition in southern California. Although there are two small dams close to the headwaters, most of the river is unregulated. The majority of the river corridor is in various public ownerships including the USMC Camp Pendleton, Fallbrook Utility District, San Diego State University and the Bureau of Land Management. The latter two ownerships are managed by San Diego State University as part of its Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve. Less than five percent of the river corridor is in private ownership and is recommended for acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game. The subject property is the third highest priority identified in the Department's Conceptual Area Acquisition Plan (CAP) prepared for this area. Priorities one and two were acquired by the Board in 1994.

The area within the CAP traverses the coastal mountains through a fairly remote region, characterized by coastal sage scrub and chaparral on the slopes and riparian vegetation in the canyon bottom. Due to its remoteness, and because the river is one of the few nearly free-flowing rivers in southern California, it supports some of the least disturbed and largest stands of riparian habitat left in the southern part of the State.

The river corridor, encompassing both riparian and coastal sage scrub communities, provides habitat for a diverse ensemble of wildlife species, including two reptilian species of special concern, the San Diego horned lizard and the orange-throated whiptail. The California gnatcatcher, an avian species of special concern, is also present in addition to numerous other bird species. The total bird density and diversity on the Santa Margarita River is considered to be among the highest in southern California. Of additional significance is that the area serves as a vital wildlife corridor for mountain lion and deer.

The Santa Margarita River provides critical habitat for several rare, endangered and sensitive species. Among these are the Stephens' kangaroo rat (State-threatened/Federal-endangered), the Belding's savannah sparrow (State-endangered), and the bank swallow (State-threatened). The river also supports approximately ¼ of the remaining breeding population of Least Bell's vireo, a Federal and State listed endangered species. Endangered plant species include thread-leaved brodiaea, coastal dunes milkvetch, California orcutt grass, Parish's meadowfoam and Nevin's mahonia. The river bottom supports extremely dense and undisturbed stands of southern willow scrub and areas of coastal brackish marsh, both rare communities.

The river corridor is critical to mountain lion migration as it links areas in the southern Santa Ana Mountains (Cleveland National Forest, Camp Pendleton, Santa Rosa Plateau) with areas further southeast (Agua Tibia Wilderness of the Cleveland National Forest). The river also leads to the only passable undercrossing of Interstate 15, a formidable barrier to wildlife movements in the area.

The Santa Margarita River is best suited for passive recreational uses, such as hiking, bird watching and photography, due to the presence of several sensitive and protected species. The area is also ideal for scientific research, as it is located within easy driving time of ten major colleges and universities. San Diego State University currently owns and manages over 2,500 acres in the upper Santa Margarita River and has indicated willingness to assume responsibility for management of the State's holdings in the corridor under a cooperative agreement with the Department of Fish and Game. Costs to the Department would, therefore, be minimal. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has assumed a leading role in the project evaluation and planning, and in the coordination of the various public agencies connected with the river corridor. TNC has negotiated options to acquire a number of the privately held ownerships within the CAP, and has exercised its option and is now the owner of the subject property. They propose to sell it to the State for inclusion in the publicly owned and managed holdings. The approved appraised fair market value of the subject property is \$128,000.00 and TNC proposes to convey the property to the State for that sum. In addition to the purchase price, it is estimated that an allocation of \$4,000 would be required to cover the costs of escrow, General Services review and related acquisition expenses.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; allocate \$132,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 (Environmental License Plate Fund), to cover the purchase price and related costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

A letter of support was received from the Mountain Lion Foundation.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE SANTA MARGARITA RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE, EXPANSION #2, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$132,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117(ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSE PLATE FUND), TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

- *15. Mud Slough Wildlife Area, Expansion #1, Merced County \$661,000.00
(CONSENT CALENDAR)

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of two parcels of land totalling 258± acres as an expansion of the State's existing Mud Slough WLA. The acquisition will allow for the restoration, development and preservation of historic wetlands. The properties lie approximately three miles east of the City of Los Banos, on the north side of Hwy. 152. Delta Road, a county road, connects with Hwy. 152 and serves as legal access to both properties. The subject parcels are located within the Grassland Resource Conservation District in the corridor between the north and south grassland areas. This corridor is a mile-wide strip that was converted to leveled agricultural fields between 1967 and 1980. Previously, it had consisted of a mixture of uplands, seasonal wetlands and slough channels. The Board approved the original purchase of the Mud Slough Wildlife Area, which consisted of 395± acres, at its November 1994, meeting.

Current use of the subject properties is irrigated agriculture and grazing. Both properties contain some marsh, and a scattering of valley sink scrub uplands located along Mud Slough. Crops grown on the property typically include hay, cotton and melons. There are no substantial improvements on either parcel except for their water delivery systems.

It is the Department's plan to restore the property to its previous wetland condition. Ducks Unlimited (DU) has agreed to conduct, contract and pay for this restoration through its VALLEY CARE PROGRAM in 1996, assuming adequate funding is available. Restoration money for VALLEY CARE will be provided by matching public and private funds to fulfill a challenge grant request from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. They are currently preparing to restore the first purchase made at Mud Slough with this year's VALLEY CARE funds.

It is anticipated that development will include open water slough channels, valley freshwater marsh, areas for great valley willow scrub, valley sink scrub habitat and other areas for wildlife food crops. Restoration, for this phase, which could begin in the summer of 1996, will be done according to plans approved by the Department of Fish and Game. No reintroduction of listed or other species is planned at this time.

The subject properties are potentially threatened with conversion to urban residential development. In 1990, a draft EIR was completed for the property for annexation to the City of Los Banos. A slow local economy and a lawsuit over the adequacy of the draft EIR put the project on hold. Recently there has been renewed development pressure and there is potential that this project will again be brought forward. If the property is not protected, this important area could be lost to development.

Upon completion of the restoration, it may be appropriate to offer the property for sale, with the developed habitat and wildlife values protected via a conservation easement. Should the Department decide not to sell the property, its management will be under the Department's current Los Banos Wildlife Area.

The particular properties under consideration are generally described as:

Parcel 1 - 153± acres fronting on State Highway 152. This parcel is irregular in shape and has as its main water source a large well located on the property. It also contains a portion of Mud Slough which forms a portion of its northeast boundary. It is separated from Parcel 2 and the original Mud Slough acquisition by an intervening ownership. The approved appraised value and purchase price for this parcel is \$367,200.00.

Parcel 2 - 105± acres located adjacent to and contiguous to a northeast portion of the original Mud Slough purchase. The subject parcel receives water from three sources; Mud Slough, San Pedro Canal (San Luis Canal Co.) and Cox Ditch (also in Luis Canal Co.). As in Parcel 1, Mud Slough forms a portion of the northeast boundary of the subject. The approved appraised value and purchase price for this parcel is \$283,500.00.

The owners have agreed to sell at the approved appraised fair market values, totalling \$650,700. It is estimated that an additional \$10,300 will be needed for acquisition costs which include escrow, title insurance, and Department of General Services review costs. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Section 15313 as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acquisition of these properties, as proposed; allocate a total of \$661,000.00; \$587,172.82 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 (PRA) and \$73,827.18 from the Inland Wetlands Conservation Fund, to cover the purchase price and related costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Letters of support were received from the Mountain Lion Foundation, California Waterfowl Association, Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, Grassland Water District and 54 letters to the Governor.

AS ONE OF THE CONSENT ITEMS HEARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF TWO PARCELS OF LAND AT THE MUD SLOUGH WILDLIFE AREA, EXPANSION #1, MERCED COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE A TOTAL OF \$661,000.00; \$587,172.82 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 (PRA) AND \$73,827.18 FROM THE INLAND WETLANDS CONSERVATION FUND, TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

16. Carlsbad Highlands Conservation Bank (Bank of America),
San Diego County \$1,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this was a proposal to accept 180± acres, in three phases, consistent with the Implementation Agreement for the Carlsbad Highlands Conservation Bank between the Bank of America, the State, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the potential subsequent transfer of the property to the USFWS or an acceptable nonprofit entity. The irregularly-shaped subject property is located in the hilly area east of the City of Carlsbad and adjacent to the Oceanside city line in western San Diego County. Mr. Jim Sarro described the location of the project and explained the background of a conservation bank.

In the way of background, Bank of America, owner of the property, approached the appropriate resource agencies to offer the subject property, which supports habitat which is considered suitable for a variety of endangered, threatened and sensitive species, as a mitigation banking project. An agreement was then entered into to establish a mitigation bank, in concert with the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program, and in anticipation of the construction and development activity in San Diego which will necessitate mitigation needs.

The subject property provides extremely important coastal sage scrub habitat and is acknowledged as being in the heart of a critical conservation corridor under the State's NCCP program. In addition to the California gnatcatcher, which has been observed on site, three other species of birds considered as sensitive by various authorities were also observed on site, including the sharp-shinned hawk, black-shouldered kite and turkey

vulture. A sighting of the golden eagle has also been reported.

The agreement would enable the Bank of America to establish, in three phases, a mitigation bank in order to provide for long-term conservation. Upon inclusion of a phased segment in the Conservation Bank, Bank of America would be entitled to receive conservation credits for that amount of property, which it may sell on the open market. The proposed Phase 1 (60± acres) is now encumbered with a Conservation Easement in favor of the State. Upon the sale of all credits in the Phase 1 site, it would be deeded to the State in fee. Phase 2 (60± acres) would then be encumbered with a Conservation Easement. Upon the sale of all of the credits in Phase 2, it would likewise be granted to the State in fee. The Phase 3 (60± acres) transfer would be repeated in the same sequence as Phases 1 & 2. The three phased segments, consisting of a total of 180 acres, would then be either retained by the State or, at the option of the Department of Fish and Game, be transferred to the USFWS or to an acceptable nonprofit organization for management, together with accompanying endowment accounts set up for the management of each phased segment. If a transfer is made to a non-State agency or acceptable nonprofit organization, the State would first reserve a Conservation Easement.

The Implementation Agreement provides that the bank pay for all transfer costs, escrow and recording charges for each phase. In addition, the bank has agreed to reimburse the State for all processing costs, including the review charges by the Department of General Services. An amount of \$1,000 is being requested to cover administrative costs which may arise prior to reimbursements being received. These actions are exempt from CEQA under Classes 13 and 25 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition and transfer of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Mr. Schmidt reported that Mr. Jim Jackson, from Bank of America, was present should there be any questions. Mr. Schmidt noted that this particular transfer also came with an endowment for future maintenance of the project.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the acceptance of the subject property, in three phases as provided for in the Implementation Agreement for the Carlsbad Highlands Conservation Bank, and the subsequent transfer of the property to a public agency or acceptable nonprofit organization, reserving a Conservation Easement to the State; allocate \$1,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 [Section 2720 (a)] for administrative costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

A letter of support was received from the Mountain Lion Foundation.

Mr. Boren stated that data should be kept as a case study to determine the successfullness of this project. Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE ACCEPTANCE OF THE CARLSBAD HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION BANK (BANK OF AMERICA) PROPERTY, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, IN THREE PHASES AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT FOR THE CARLSBAD HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION BANK, AND THE SUBSEQUENT TRANSFER OF THE PROPERTY TO A PUBLIC AGENCY OR ACCEPTABLE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, RESERVING A CONSERVATION EASEMENT TO THE STATE; ALLOCATE \$1,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 [SECTION 2720 (a)] FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Schmidt introduced and welcomed Mr. Gavin Payne, representing Senator Jack O'Connell, who joined the meeting at this time.

17. Belden's Landing Fishing Access (Phase I), Solano County \$250,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this was a proposal to fund the first phase of a fishing access project on Department of Fish and Game owned property located at the junction of the Grizzly Island Road and Montezuma Slough in the Suisun Marsh. Mr. Clyde Edon explained the proposed project. The project area is located approximately five miles south of Suisun City and can be reached by traveling south on Grizzly Island Road from Highway 12. The nearest boat ramp to this location is in Suisun City. However, it requires travel over many miles of winding sloughs to reach this new location by boat.

The 10 acre subject project site was approved for purchase for fishing access purposes by the Board in November of 1986. Approximately one-half of the property will be used for fishing and boating access facilities while the remainder will be retained in, or enhanced, as wetland habitat.

Since this project is completely new, with no existing facilities on site, the total effort will be phased to correspond to anticipated funding availability. Therefore, this is proposed as a three phased cooperative effort between the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), Solano County and the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW). Solano County has passed a resolution in support of the project and will provide operation and maintenance at no cost to the State for 25 years and will administer over the construction contracts.

The DBW will provide all design and engineering services including construction supervision and, providing funding is available, will assist WCB with funding of the last phase of the planned work in 1996/97. DBW will also assist the County with preparation of technical specifications and construction plans to be included in the County's standard bidding documents.

The site is a very popular location for fishermen and will provide a much needed boating access site in the Suisun Marsh. Fishermen in these waters report catches of catfish, striped bass, sturgeon and an occasional salmon or steelhead.

The total project development for both boating and fishing access facilities is estimated to cost approximately \$900,000 including costs for mitigation. However, the total estimate is likely to be reduced by a very generous offer of volunteer labor from the Telephone Pioneers of America. The Telephone Pioneers have offered to provide all the labor necessary to construct the walkways and fishing piers at no cost. All of the project facilities will be designed to be barrier free and will satisfy American Disabilities Act requirements.

It is proposed that the final project will include a boat ramp with slope protection, parking lot, restroom facilities, water and septic system, fishing piers, walkways, boat boarding float, landscaping, fencing and signs.

Cost estimates for Phase I, which will include construction of the boat ramp and some parking, have been reviewed and approved by staff as follows:

Project layout, earthwork grading	\$ 42,000
Ramp cut (below water work)	8,000
Rock slope protection	18,000
Concrete boat launching ramp	90,000
Boat boarding float	37,000
Partial paving of parking lot	30,000
Permit application and fees, consultant cost	<u>25,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$250,000</u>

The above cost estimates provide Solano County with the ability to use up to 10 percent of Phase I funds for consultant costs to prepare and submit the project for all approvals and permits required prior to preparation of the bid package. Completion of paving and other planned project features will be included in Phases II and III. This project qualifies under the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Act (SFRA) program and is therefore eligible for a 75 percent reimbursement of project costs. Staff will apply for approval under this program and reimbursements received will be shared with DBW. The net cost to the State of this phase, after reimbursement, will be approximately \$62,500.

The Department of Fish and Game will provide project mitigation recommendations and are currently preparing a biological opinion for the site. The County has completed a

Negative Declaration as required by CEQA and will review the need for and obtain all additional approvals and permits required for the project.

Mr. Schmidt noted that Ms. Birgitta Corsello and Mr. Mike Martin, both from Solano County, were present should there be any questions. A letter of support was received from Assemblyman Tom Hannigan.

Staff recommended that the Board approve Phase I of this project as proposed; allocate \$250,000.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE PHASE I OF THE BELDEN'S LANDING FISHING ACCESS PROJECT, SOLANO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$250,000.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

18. Donner Lake Fishing Access, Nevada County \$80,500.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this was a proposed cooperative project with the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District to provide a much needed barrier-free fishing dock on Donner Lake. Mr. Schmidt added as a point of information that there are no handicapped access fishing piers on Lake Tahoe or Donner Lake, so this would be the first in this area. Mr. Edon described the project. The site is located midway on the north shore of Donner Lake adjacent to Donner Pass Road, at Shoreline Park. An abandoned portion of old highway 40 is located on the site and will provide parking for about eight cars and an access point for the project.

This proposal consists of the development of a parking lot, pathway and floating dock with gangway that will serve all fishermen including those that are physically disabled. There are currently no fishing piers or docks on the north shore of Lake Tahoe or in the Truckee area that provide public fishing access for physically disabled persons.

The Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District Board of Directors has passed a resolution in favor of this project and will provide the State with a 25 year free lease to the property and will also provide the operation and management of the project area during this time period. They have also agreed to fund a portion of this project as well

as administer the construction project, which will be accomplished through a combination of competitive bidding and force account work. The project will provide good fishing opportunity and is being supported by the Department of Fish and Game.

Cost estimates for this proposal have been reviewed and approved by staff as follows:

A.C. Concrete paving, sidewalk, handrails	\$ 27,692
Street work, parking	21,050
Grading	5,010
Drainage, sand & oil trap, drain pipe	10,563
Floating pier and gangway	33,357
Signs	1,200
Engineering, permits	4,812
Contingency	<u>6,872</u>

TOTAL PROJECT ESTIMATE: \$110,556

WCB Total: \$ 80,500

District Contribution: \$ 30,056

The District has prepared and completed a Negative Declaration for this project and has filed a Notice of Determination as required by CEQA.

Mr. Schmidt noted that Mr. Steve Randall, General Manager of Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District, was present should there be any questions.

Staff recommended that the Board approve funding for this fishing access project as proposed; allocate \$80,500.00 from the Wildlife Restoration Fund; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE DONNER LAKE FISHING ACCESS PROJECT, NEVADA COUNTY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE TRUCKEE DONNER RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$80,500.00 FROM THE WILDLIFE RESTORATION FUND; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

19. Loch Lomond Vernal Pool Ecological Reserve,
Expansion #1, Lake County \$175,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this was a proposal to acquire $3.7 \pm$ acres of vacant land to protect the existing $8.2 \pm$ acres of vernal pool habitat at the Loch Lomond Ecological Reserve. Approval has been granted for the construction of a mini-storage facility on the subject property and the owners plan to proceed with construction if the property is not acquired.

Mr. Howard Dick explained the proposed project. The subject parcel and the existing ecological reserve are located on the west side of Highway 175 at its junction with Loch Lomond Road, in the community of Loch Lomond. This community is located in the mountainous area about 18 miles south of Clear Lake. Loch Lomond has a resort type atmosphere, although the vicinity is in transition toward year-round residents due to the steady influx of retirees from the San Francisco Bay area.

The Loch Lomond vernal pool provides the only known occurrence in the world of the Federally listed endangered Constance's coyote thistle. The best known population of the endangered many-flowered navarretia is also found at this Loch Lomond site and is known to exist in only three other locations. A population of few-flowered navarretia, also located on the property, is one of only five known populations. According to the Department of Fish and Game, watershed protection is critical to maintaining the natural resource values of the vernal pools and the subject parcel is biologically the most closely related parcel, and most crucial to the protection of the Loch Lomond vernal pool. The two parcels are hydrologically connected and share wetland habitat along their common border. Surface water and shallow groundwater of the "expansion" parcel are part of the same water body that forms the Loch Lomond vernal pool. There is no practical way to prevent compounds entering the surface and shallow groundwater of the subject parcel from ultimately reaching the vernal pool, since drainage in this area flows from the subject parcel toward the vernal pool. The Department strongly recommends this acquisition as the only feasible way to preserve the subject property and to secure the integrity of the habitat within the existing ecological reserve.

The proposed acquisition is within Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions from CEQA requirements. Class 13 consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, including fish and wildlife habitat, establishing ecological reserves under Fish and Game Code Section 1580, and preserving access to public lands and waters where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition. The Department of Fish and Game will manage the area in conjunction with the existing ecological reserve so management costs are not expected to exceed those currently in existence.

The owners have agreed to sell the $3.7 \pm$ acre site to the State at the approved appraised fair market value of \$170,000. An additional \$4,000 is estimated to be needed for related acquisition and processing costs. Also, the Department of Fish and Game has

requested that the Board allocate an additional \$1,000 for habitat enhancement by removing exotic plants from the subject property. Therefore, the total allocation necessary to complete this proposal will be \$175,000.

Letters of support were received from the Mountain Lion Foundation and the Loch Lomond Property Owners Association.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition project as proposed; allocate \$175,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 [Section 2720 (a)]; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE LOCH LOMOND VERNAL POOL ECOLOGICAL RESERVE, EXPANSION #1, LAKE COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$175,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 [SECTION 2720 (a)]; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

20. Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve, Expansion #2,
Riverside County (Formerly known as Santa Rosa Springs) \$2,110,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to add 435.3± acres to the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve in Riverside County. Mr. Dick explained the project. This is a cooperative project which started in 1984 with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) acquiring 3,100± acres of the Plateau. In 1991, Riverside County, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and Wildlife Conservation Board acquired an additional 3,825± acres of land, then called the Santa Rosa Springs Ecological Reserve, which brought the reserve to its current size of 6,925± acres. The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) currently holds 1,936± acres; 668± acres of which were acquired by the Board in 1991 and 1,268± acres of which were acquired pursuant to Fish and Game Commission authorization in 1993. This proposed acquisition will round out the boundary of the ecological reserve to the existing county road and eliminate a major intrusion of private property into the reserve thus eliminating future development which could adversely impact the reserve.

The Santa Rosa Plateau, lies at the southern end of the Santa Ana Mountains, in southwest Riverside County, approximately 85 miles southeast of Los Angeles and about

50 miles north of San Diego. The reserve and the subject property can be accessed from Interstate 15 at Clinton Keith off ramp by going west to the ecological reserve. Clinton Keith Road becomes Tenaja Road, on which the subject fronts.

The Santa Rosa Plateau is a fault block which rises to 2,200 feet in elevation over 1,100 feet above Murrieta Valley to the east. The southern edge of the plateau consists of a rim of four flat-topped mesas. These are erosional remnants of a once extensive basalt flow which occurred approximately 5.5 million years ago.

The Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve includes four of California's most threatened habitat types, encompassing excellent examples of upland native bunchgrass, Engelmann oak woodland, southern sycamore alder riparian woodland and southern coast live oak riparian forest. The site also supports fine examples of the more common Venturan sage scrub, northern mixed chaparral and chamise chaparral plant communities.

In addition, the property contains some of the largest contiguous areas of upland native bunchgrass that remain in southern California. The prairie is dominated by such native perennials as purple needlegrass, slender needlegrass and malpais bluegrass. Ecologists generally agree that this is the finest preserved bunchgrass prairie left in California. The Engelmann oak woodland community type is found on the Santa Rosa Plateau property in both the open or savannah phase and the riparian phase. Engelmann oak, the dominant species, was once widespread in southern California but is now reduced to a few significant sites ranging from the Santa Ana Mountains to San Diego.

The southern riparian forest found on the subject property is ecologically unique because of the presence of Engelmann oak. Both the riparian forest and the sycamore/alder riparian woodland shelter unique "tenajas", permanent rock pools in the otherwise ephemeral streambeds. These tenajas support a diverse array of reptiles and amphibians. Coastal sage scrub and chaparral areas on the site provide habitat for numerous birds such as California thrasher, common bushtit, California quail and rufous-sided towhee.

In addition to the threatened habitat types described above, at least three rare plants are found on the subject property. These plants include the peninsular manzanita, thread-leaved brodiaea, and the San Miguel savory. Also, either special amphibian, reptile and/or mammal species are found here including the southwestern pond turtle, San Diego horned lizard, coastal rosy boa, Hammond's two-striped garter snake, mountain lion, and the American badger. Birds of special concern include the Cooper's hawk, golden eagle, black-shouldered kite, burrowing owl and yellow warbler.

The Santa Rosa Plateau is listed in the 1988 Annual Report of Significant Natural Areas of California prepared by the Land and Natural Areas Program as an "ensemble" site (three or more highly ranked elements). It has been described as containing "the greatest concentration of different endangered ecosystems in California".

The subject property is currently used for cattle grazing but will no doubt eventually be

developed if not acquired. While development has slowed in the last few years, in the last two decades the general area has undergone tremendous development. The current slowdown has resulted in a reduced value of the subject property. In addition, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been able to negotiate a bargain sale to offer the State even a lower price. The approved appraised market value of the subject property is \$2,830,000. TNC has negotiated an option at a reduced value allowing for a transfer to the State for \$2,100,000. The donation of \$730,000 balance is partially attributable to the landowner's voluntary price reduction (\$200,000) and partially attributable to a contribution of funds toward the purchase by TNC (\$530,000). In addition to the purchase price of \$2,100,000, it is estimated that an allocation of \$10,000 will be necessary to cover costs of the acquisition including escrow, title policy and the Department of General Services charges. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions and the appropriate Notice of Exemption has been filed.

It is anticipated that the area, if acquired, will be managed in accordance with the Land Use & Management Master Plan for the Santa Rosa Plateau which has been adopted by the Department of Fish and Game, the County of Riverside, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy.

Mr. Schmidt reported that Mr. Scott Ferguson, representing The Nature Conservancy, and Mr. John Anderson, representing the Department of Fish and Game's Long Beach Office, were present should there be any questions. For the record, letters of support were received from Mr. Denis Bertone-Councilman for City of San Dimas, Endangered Habitats League, Preserve Our Plateau, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency, San Diego Audubon Society, Mayor Jeffrey Stone-City of Temecula, Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District, Mountain Lion Foundation, Riverside County Supervisor Kay Cenicerros, Riverside County Supervisor Bob Buster and 75 letters from private citizens. One letter of opposition was received from Roxanne Schleuniger, D.D.S. concerning the lack of an equestrian trail developed on this particular project. A telephone call was received from Mr. Greg Donahue, member of the American Turkey Foundation, who was opposed to the no hunting provision on the property.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this acquisition as proposed; allocate \$2,110,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (P-117) [Section 2720 (a)], to cover the purchase price and related costs; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Dennis Chiniaeff, representing Kemper Real Estate Management Company which owns 1,200 acres across the street from the subject property, stated he was very much in support of the proposed acquisition.

Dr. J. Rod McGinnis, representing the Sacramento Safari Club, inquired why there was no hunting allowed on the property. Mr. John Anderson, from the Department of Fish

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and Game's Long Beach Office, responded that due to the nature of this acquisition when first put together by all the partners, one of the stipulations of the management agreement was that hunting not be allowed on this ecological reserve. There is an advisory group that manages this area and a number of different partners (funding partners) for the overall reserve. Almost all of the partners that participated in the acquisition are on the joint management team. No hunting is allowed on any portion of the reserve.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE SANTA ROSA PLATEAU ECOLOGICAL RESERVE, EXPANSION #2, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$2,110,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (P-117) [SECTION 2720 (a)], TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

21. Quail Hollow Ecological Reserve, Santa Cruz County \$750,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was for a grant of funds to the County of Santa Cruz to assist in the purchase and protection of extremely rare habitat, located in the Santa Cruz Mountains near the community of Felton, about 10 miles north of the City of Santa Cruz. Mr. Jim Sarro described the area and the project.

In 1986, the Board allocated \$200,000 toward the purchase of the Quail Hollow Ranch, which lies just to the north of the subject property. The Ranch is now operated by the County, in part as a park and in part as a preserve for the rare plant communities that exist in small pockets (a total of about 2.5 acres) at scattered locations around the perimeter of the Ranch. The basis of the Board's involvement was the protection of the habitat, known as sand parkland habitat and is considered by many botanists to be "the rarest plant community in California". It is estimated that there are less than 50 acres of this sand parkland habitat in the world.

At the time of the Board's 1986 action, it was well-known that the best and most viable example of sand parkland habitat was the "South Ridge", a part of an active quarry site. However, until now, the South Ridge has not been available for public acquisition.

Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) botanists have outlined the rarity and biological importance of sand parkland and its related habitat in numerous recent reports. The following is from a DFG report discussing this rare habitat and the South Ridge site:

The South Ridge contains approximately 12 acres of sand parkland, a very rare plant community dominated by widely scattered ponderosa pines, known only from five localized occurrences on Zayante sands in Santa Cruz County. This plant community probably extended over less than 200 acres historically, and that area has been considerably reduced in this century by sand mining and suburban development in the area. The South Ridge represents one of the best remaining examples of this rare plant community, which today is restricted to less than 50 acres, primarily as isolated remnants adjacent to sand quarries. Northern maritime chaparral, another rare community restricted to the Zayante sands, is also found on the South Ridge.

In addition to the significance of the sand parkland and northern maritime chaparral as rare plant communities, there are 90 plant taxa that are considered sand specialty plants of the Zayante sands; 78 of these species are found on the South Ridge. The sand specialty plants include seven rare and endangered plants, four additional plant taxa endemic to the Zayante sands, and at least 21 disjunct (geographically isolated) plant taxa, including seven taxa that are isolated inland populations of coastal species. Two species found on the South Ridge

have been listed under the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts: Ben Lomond wallflower, State and Federal endangered and Ben Lomond spineflower, Federal endangered. The South Ridge supports the largest and best population of the Ben Lomond wallflower.

In addition, seventeen locally rare species of animals (including five endemic insect taxa and one endemic mammal) are found in Santa Cruz County only in plant communities associated with Zayante sands. Thirteen have been identified from the South Ridge.

Should this site not be purchased, it will be mined, and this last and best example of the very rare sand parkland will be lost forever. Reestablishment of this plant community has never been demonstrated, and many believe it impossible, due to the intimate relationship between the existing geology (particularly the indurated sand dollar beds) and the establishment and maintenance of the community.

In a recent letter in support of public acquisition of South Ridge, the FWS indicated the following:

Sand parkland habitat, such as that found on the South Ridge of Quail Hollow Quarry, is of significant conservation concern. It supports an astounding diversity of plant and animal species, including several federally endangered, proposed, and candidate species. While sand parkland has probably always been limited, human activities such as urban development and sand mining have significantly reduced the amount of existing sand parkland habitat by over 60 percent. An estimated 500 acres of sand parkland habitat existed historically; recent delineations estimate high quality sand parkland habitat, such as that found on the South Ridge parcel, to be limited to only 25 acres. Consequently, preservation of remaining sand parkland habitat is crucial to the survival and recovery of the sensitive species, as well as to the maintenance of the ecosystem on which they depend.

As noted above, South Ridge is part of an active quarry at Quail Hollow. In recent years, it has been the subject of litigation between the County of Santa Cruz and the landowner over the right of the owner to mine the property. After rather intense negotiations, the parties have reached a compromise which provides for public acquisition of South Ridge and enables the landowner to mine the less critical, previously disturbed portions of the remainder of the quarry site. This would allow certainty to the landowner of future mining of this economically valuable resource while allowing certainty to the public of protecting the biologically priceless resource.

Under the agreement, the County would have until July 1, 1998, to raise \$3.2 million, the fair market value of the 34.8 acre South Ridge, and to deposit the funds in escrow.

Efforts are underway locally to secure the necessary funds, and the proponents of the purchase are optimistic about the likelihood for success. The County of Santa Cruz has committed significant funds to the purchase, as have the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the (local) South Ridge Watershed Association. In addition, Mel and Bill Lane, whose family once lived on what is now Quail Hollow County Park, recently made substantial contributions to the acquisition. Grants are pending from public agencies, as well as from private nonprofits and individuals.

When completed, the acquisition will do more than protect the critical 34.8 acre block of South Ridge habitat. The settlement agreement also provides that if the South Ridge is acquired, conservation easements would be placed on remnant pieces of sand parkland on the north and west ridges of the quarry, effectively providing permanent protection to 80 percent of all known remaining sand parkland habitat. Once acquired, the South Ridge would be maintained, primarily for scientific and educational purposes, by the County of Santa Cruz.

Staff recommended that the Board approve a grant of \$750,000.00 to the County of Santa Cruz for purposes of contributing toward the acquisition of the South Ridge property. The grant would be made pursuant to conditions and terms as necessary to assure the purposes of the acquisition are carried out, with appropriate restrictive covenants placed on the title to the property.

Funding is available for this grant in the Habitat Conservation Fund, the source being Proposition 70 of 1988 funds provided to preserve "highly rare examples of the state's natural diversity".

Staff recommended that the Board approve this proposed grant as proposed; allocate \$750,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 [Section 2720 (a)] to carry out the grant as outlined; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Schmidt noted that support letters had been received from Senator Mello, Sierra Club-Santa Cruz Group, California Native Plant Society, Santa Cruz County, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Olympia Mutual Water Company, San Lorenzo Valley Water District, Dr. Peter Raven-Director of the Missouri Botanical Gardens, Granite Rock Company, South Ridge Watershed Association and the Mountain Lion Foundation. Mr. Schmidt also noted that Mr. Jonathan Wittwer, Chief County Counsel of Santa Cruz County, was present.

Mr. Stephen McCabe, representing the California Native Plant Society, expressed support and commented that a long series of negotiations took place to achieve this proposal and that the project was highly supported by the local community, as well as the mining company and conservation groups.

Mr. Joe Caves, representing the County of Santa Cruz, mentioned this was a chance to

acquire the last of the sand parkland habitat in the world and it was one of, if not, the rarest plant community in California. He added that this was a remarkable deal and an example of bringing together all the various parties. Mr. Caves thanked the Board staff, as well as the Department of Fish and Game's staff, for the remarkable effort to help put together this financing package.

Mr. Jonathan Wittwer added his thanks to the staff. Mr. Gibbons noted that he highly supported this project.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE GRANT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF THE QUAIL HOLLOW ECOLOGICAL RESERVE, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$750,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 [SECTION 2720 (a)] TO CARRY OUT THE GRANT AS OUTLINED; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

22. Sequan Peak Ecological Reserve, San Diego County \$1,520,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of 593± acres of southern mixed chaparral vegetation located approximately two miles northeast of the community of Jamul in southwestern San Diego County. Ms. Lipphardt explained the project's location. The unimproved property is situated between Sloan Canyon Road on the north and Lawson Valley Road to the south, roughly halfway between Interstate Highway 8 and State Route 94. Lawson Valley Road provides access to the property from the south. The subject is near the extreme western edge of the Cleveland National Forest, approximately three miles east of the Department of Fish & Game's McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve, acquired by the Board in 1989 and adjacent to the Department's Sweetwater River Ecological Reserve, acquired by the Board in 1992. Additional access to the property could be provided through the Sweetwater River Ecological Reserve on the north.

The proposed acquisition area is included within a 1,555± acre section identified by the Department of Fish & Game as a Significant Natural Area (SNA). The Department nominated the area for acquisition in its Sequan Peak Conceptual Area Acquisition Plan. Sequan Peak is a 2,801 foot-tall conical-shaped mountain with an approximate six mile

radius. The proposed 593± acre acquisition area includes the most eastern half of the Sequan Peak lands, including the peak itself. The primary purpose of this acquisition would be habitat preservation for 42 species of rare, threatened, endangered or special concern status plants and animals. In particular, the Sequan Peak SNA contains the best example habitat for two plant species, the state-listed endangered Dehesa nolina and the state-listed rare Gander's butterweed. Additionally, the property is used as foraging territory by a number of raptors and birds of prey, including peregrine falcons, a state and federally-listed endangered species, Cooper's hawks, golden eagles, prairie falcons, turkey vultures and the common barn owl. The Sequan Peak lands are part of a large, important wildlife corridor linking McGinty Mountain to the west with the Cleveland National Forest to the east. Included in this corridor is the Sweetwater River Ecological Reserve which adjoins the subject. Protection of the corridor would allow continued use by a number of large and small mammals that inhabit the area, including mountain lions, mule deer, coyotes, bobcats, squirrels and rabbits. The property supports several species of rare lizards as well, including the orange-throated whiptail, western whiptail, and the San Diego horned lizard.

Lands on Sequan Peak were rated of "highest biological value" under the Habitat Evaluation Model developed for San Diego County's Multiple Species Conservation Plan. The subject acquisition would complement the Department's bioregional planning efforts and the County's open space preserve plans for Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub in southwestern San Diego County presently being developed under the Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act. The property would be managed in conjunction with the management of the Department's Sweetwater River Ecological Reserve. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of categorical exemptions as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

The landowner has agreed to sell the subject property for \$1,500,000, which represents a substantial donation. The property's appraised fair market value is \$1,927,250, or \$3,250 per acre for the 593± acre property. As part of the acquisition agreement and in recognition of the donation, it is proposed that the State take title to 623± acres of the landowner's property and quitclaim back a 30± acre portion to a separate individual designated by the landowner. This action will allow the landowner to transfer his properties to two separate parties in one transaction. Staff has consulted with the County of San Diego and the proposed acquisition and transfer is in compliance with their local rules and regulations as well as the Subdivision Map Act.

The Department of Fish & Game has applied for an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Grant from Caltrans and, if approved, could provide up to \$679,000 in funds to offset the proposed WCB allocation. If the grant is approved, the funds would be reimbursed to the Board for a net purchase price to WCB of \$821,000 for this property which is valued at \$1,927,250. It is estimated that the costs involved in this acquisition will be an additional \$20,000 for state administrative review, the appraisal fee, and escrow, title and closing costs.

Mr. Schmidt thanked the property owners, who were present, for the donation valued at \$427,250. Mr. Schmidt noted that letters of support had been received from the Endangered Habitats League, California Native Plant Society, San Diego Natural History Museum, Horned Lizard Conservation Society, San Diego County Supervisor Dianne Jacob, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Professor Richard Wright-San Diego State University, Mountain Lion Foundation, San Diego Audubon Society and 6 personal letters.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this transaction as proposed; allocate \$1,520,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 [Section 2720 (a)]; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Boren thanked the landowner's representative, Mr. Greg Shannon of Sedona Pacific Development Corporation, who was present, for their generous donation. Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE SEQUAN PEAK ECOLOGICAL RESERVE, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$1,520,000.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 [SECTION 2720 (a)], TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

23. San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, San Diego County \$1,512,000.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was to consider the acquisition of 566± acres and the acceptance of a transfer of 200± acres of land for protection of a deer migration corridor and for the enhancement and preservation of riparian habitat. Ms. Lipphardt described the proposed project. The property is located approximately 10 miles northeast of the community of Julian and north of the Cleveland National Forest in northeastern San Diego County. The Cleveland National Forest consists of three non-contiguous land areas. The southernmost section of the Forest has its western boundary near the Sequan Peak area, which is the subject of Agenda Item 22, some 30± air miles from the subject San Felipe Valley area. The property is near lands recently acquired by the County of San Diego and the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Acquisition of the subject would assure the long-term protection of wildlife movement corridors between the Cleveland Forest (USFS), the San Felipe Hills (BLM), the Anza Borrego Desert (State Parks) and the designated open space lands of the Volcan Mountain Wilderness Preserve and the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Park (County of San

Diego and the JPA).

The subject property is located within a privately owned 11,523± acre ranch known as Rutherford Volcan Mountain Ranch and contains mixed conifer forest, sub-alpine meadows and deep canyons at its higher elevations (5,350 feet) and the San Felipe Valley itself at its lower elevations (2,500 feet). San Felipe Creek flows on the eastern side of the mountain and just south of San Felipe Valley Road which bisects the eastern portion of the property providing access to the subject. The proposed 566± acre acquisition area includes portions of San Felipe Creek. Protection of these areas will afford an opportunity to enhance and preserve the creek area and will insure public access to the federal lands to the northeast. The property along the road provides ideal sites for rural home development due to the scenic nature of the area and its proximity to the historic community of Julian. Current zoning would allow minimum lot sizes of 4, 8 and 20 acres. Acquisition of this area will provide permanent protection against development which would have an adverse affect on the wildlife habitat values and the wildlife corridor.

The proposed acquisition area is part of the San Felipe Valley portion of the ranch which is an extremely important fawning and summer area for southern mule deer occupying the east-central desert of San Diego County. The deer use the valley's riparian and oak woodland habitats for fawning and to obtain water and quality forage during the dry summer months. San Felipe Valley also supports a relatively high density resident deer population throughout the year. Current use of the property is light recreation, including deer and upland game hunting. Hunting also occurs on adjacent public and private lands. A major goal of acquiring the property is to retain and enhance the area for wildlife habitat and to assure public access where it does not conflict with the maintenance of the habitat values.

Major wildlife species represented within the valley include deer, mountain lion, coyote, bobcat, gray fox, badger, wild turkey, golden eagle, California quail, mourning dove and several species of raptors. The area has critical habitat to support the endangered Least Bell's vireo, the threatened Southwestern Pond turtle and the endangered unarmored threespine stickleback. Both the Least Bell's vireo and the pond turtle have been observed within San Felipe Valley and the creek has been used as a refugia for the stickleback. In addition, the property was recently designated as a Significant Natural Area by the Department due to the presence of Riversidian Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub on site.

The entire Rutherford Volcan Mountain Ranch is currently under option to the Trust for Public Land, which has previously sold portions of the optioned area to the County of San Diego and the San Dieguito River Park JPA. To date, the County has purchased approximately 1,293 acres of the ranch and the JPA has purchased approximately 902 acres, all located west of the subject. These lands are designated open space lands and are managed as part of the County Park lands and the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park. The JPA is currently proposing to acquire an additional

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200± acre portion of the ranch, and has expressed its desire in a March 17, 1995, resolution, to transfer the 200± acres, once acquired, to the Department of Fish and Game for management in conjunction with the subject acquisition area. While these two areas are not contiguous, it is hoped that future acquisitions will join the properties and complete the wildlife corridor connection to public lands on the south. The Department has expressed a willingness to accept and manage the property and has agreed to develop a management plan in consultation with the JPA for the 200± acre area.

The option-holder has offered to sell the 566± acre area to the State for the approved appraised fair market value of \$1,500,000. In addition to the purchase price, it is estimated that an allocation of \$12,000 would be required to cover the costs of escrow, Department of General Services review and related acquisition expenses of this proposed acquisition and the proposed transfer from the JPA. The acquisitions are exempt from CEQA as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes.

Mr. Schmidt noted that letters of support were received from the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park, San Diego County Parks Department, San Diego Audubon Society, Back Country Land Trust of San Diego, Mountain Lion Foundation, San Dieguito River Valley Land Trust, California Native Plant Society, Planning and Conservation League, National Audubon Society, Volcan Mountain Preserve Foundation and Senator Lucy Killea.

Staff recommended the Board approve this acquisition and acceptance of the JPA lands as proposed; allocate a total of \$1,512,000.00, to cover the purchase price and related costs, \$457,111.13 from the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Fund/P-70 [Section 5907 (c)(3)], and \$1,054,888.87 from the Habitat Conservation Fund as made available from the following sources;

ELPF/P-99	-	\$52,888.87
P-70/P-99	-	\$375,855.65
P-70 [2720 (b)]	-	\$626,144.35

Staff further recommended that the Board authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF LANDS AND THE ACQUISITION OF THE SAN FELIPE VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE A TOTAL OF \$1,512,000.00, TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS, \$457,111.13 FROM THE CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE, COASTAL AND PARK LAND CONSERVATION FUND/P-70 [SECTION 5907 (c)(3)], AND \$1,054,888.87 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND AS MADE AVAILABLE FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

ELPF/P-99	-	\$52,888.87
P-70/P-99	-	\$375,855.65
P-70/ [2720 (b)]	-	\$626,144.35

STAFF FURTHER RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

24. Wetland Conservation Easement Program (Department of Fish and Game) - Rancho Rio Oso, Yuba County \$269,888.00

Mr. Schmidt reported this was a Department of Fish and Game proposal which was part of the Department's ongoing wetland conservation easement program. Mr. Frank Giordano explained the project.

In the fall of 1991, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) initiated a program of purchasing permanent conservation easements, which contain specific private management requirements on Central Valley wetlands. The program is intended to ensure the preservation and enhancement of existing and restored marshes critical to the welfare of waterfowl wintering in California with a long-term goal of placing at least 75,000 acres of wetland habitat under permanent easements.

Guided in part by the Implementation Plan formulated by the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, the Department selects parcels qualifying for this program from among a host of properties offered by their owners. The easement purchase price is derived from a formal appraisal, as approved by the Department of General Services. Due to the continuing operation and management requirements being placed on the owners, the easement values, depending on the agricultural potential of the property have ranged between 20 percent and 70 percent of fee value. Of course, the benefit to the State is the protection of wetland habitat in perpetuity with future operation and maintenance

costs being absorbed by the underlying fee owners.

The terms and conditions of the easement agreement permit full and exclusive use of the property by the landowner except those uses which would result in the loss of wetland habitat or the degradation of the property's waterfowl habitat values. In addition, the DFG, in cooperation with the landowner, has developed a marsh management plan for each property to be encumbered by the easement. The plan is intended to assure the development and maintenance of high quality waterfowl habitat throughout the property with each participant being responsible, at their cost, for the maintenance and water supply for their property. Although the program is aimed primarily at preserving natural marsh habitat, some portions of the property may be devoted to unharvested grain crops or "food plots". It should also be pointed out that the program is structured to allow for the acquisition of easements on those properties which are not currently wetlands, but where conversion to wetland habitat is in progress or imminent.

The term of the easement, which does not provide for public access, extends in perpetuity and the easement runs with the land regardless of changes in ownership. Should waterfowl hunting be prohibited by State or Federal mandate for a period of three consecutive years, the landowner may initiate a process which could result in the termination of the easement and reimbursement of the State's costs of purchasing the easement. Additionally, should the grantor desire to sell the encumbered property, the State has reserved the first right of refusal to buy at fair market value.

Under the provisions of this program, the DFG has identified a number of areas for acquisition consideration. WCB staff has been conducting the negotiations for this program and is presenting the following proposal for Board consideration.

A. Rancho Rio Oso, Yuba County \$269,888.00

Consistent with the above described program, this proposal was to acquire a conservation easement over 133± acres of land consisting of permanent and seasonal wetlands, together with related riparian habitat. The land is located in Yuba County, lying on the east side and adjacent to Bear River Bypass, approximately six miles south of Marysville. The property is presently used for farming and, during the waterfowl season, as a private duck club. The proposed marsh management plan will eliminate all commercial farming or other agricultural uses and provide that the majority of the property be maintained in permanent and seasonal wetlands.

The owner of the above property has agreed to sell at the Department of General Services' approved appraised fair market value of \$261,888. It is estimated that an additional \$8,000 will be needed for appraisal, survey, escrow and Department of General Services review costs. The acquisition is exempt from CEQA under Class 13 of Categorical Exemptions as an acquisition for wildlife conservation purposes.

It was noted that this easement program was started in 1991 and to date 2,000± acres have been encumbered and the easement does require active management by the owner.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this easement acquisition as proposed; allocate \$269,888.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117, as made available to the Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Schmidt stated that one of the advantages of this program are the small wetland areas scattered throughout the valley that are operated and maintained in wetland habitat at no continuing future costs to the State of California. He added that letters of support were received from the Mountain Lion Foundation and California Waterfowl Association.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. GIBBONS THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACQUISITION AT RANCHO RIO OSO, YUBA COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$269,888.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117, AS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE INLAND WETLANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM, TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE AND RELATED COSTS; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

25. Eel River Wildlife Area Restoration, Humboldt County \$93,650.00

Mr. Schmidt reported that this proposal was for a grant of funds to the Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) for the restoration and enhancement of riparian habitat on Cock Robin Island, a unit of the Eel River Wildlife Area in Humboldt County. Mr. Scott Clemons described the project and its location. Cock Robin Island is located in the Eel River Delta approximately 2.5 miles west of the town of Loleta. The majority of this 400+ acre island was privately managed for dairy farming and livestock grazing until 1994 when the Board approved the acquisition of two adjacent parcels totalling 274 acres for the purpose of protecting existing wildlife habitat and restoring riparian and wetland habitats.

Significant riparian habitat is found along the perimeter of the island, but previous land uses, including farming and livestock grazing, have led to the removal of most of the riparian vegetation on the interior of the island. Cock Robin Island accurately depicts the fish and wildlife habitat conditions that exist in much of the Eel River Delta. It is

the fish and wildlife habitat conditions that exist in much of the Eel River Delta. It is felt that this island, along with much of the Delta, supported large stands of typical coastal riparian forest prior to settlement. Where this riparian forest does exist, it normally includes willow, black cottonwood, alder, cascara, and sitka spruce. By acquiring a large portion of Cock Robin Island, the Board and the Department of Fish and Game have ensured protection of the 30 acres of existing riparian forest and have provided the opportunity to restore a significant area of the Eel River Delta to riparian forest and associated freshwater wetland habitat.

Existing wildlife habitat in the Eel River Delta supports at least 35 species of mammals, and over 250 species of birds. Thousands of ducks and many species of coastal and pelagic birds pass through the area annually. The average annual bird days used in the Delta exceeds 1,350,000. The Eel River and its associated channels provide habitat for 26 species of fish, including chinook and coho salmon, steelhead trout, and coastal cutthroat trout. This project has the potential to expand riparian forest habitat, which is one of the most important wildlife habitats in the north coast region of California.

Cock Robin Island will be included in the Eel River Wildlife Area management plan that is currently being written by the Department. The first phase of the Cock Robin Island Riparian Restoration project is categorically exempt from CEQA under Section 15304 (d).

The proposed project is the first phase of a long-term habitat restoration effort for Cock Robin Island. There are four components to this proposed project which are described as follows:

1. Riparian Planting in Area A - Approximately five acres along the northwest edge of the island will be revegetated with approximately 6,050 native riparian trees, including willow, black cottonwood, alder, cascara, and spruce. This planting will connect two isolated sections of existing riparian forest, creating a continuous 1/2 mile long strip of riparian vegetation. The estimated cost of this portion of the project will be \$20,500.00.
2. Riparian Planting in Area B - Approximately ten acres along the southwest edge of the island will be planted with approximately 12,100 trees using the same species mixture as Area A. The estimated cost for this portion of the project will be \$31,000.00.
3. Seasonal Wetland Design in Area C - There is an existing swale in the center of the island running in an east-west direction which drains into the Eel River at the western tip of the island through an outlet structure. If properly designed, this area will provide seasonal freshwater ponding to benefit riparian and wetland vegetation adjacent to the swale. RCAA staff will work with the Department, the Pacific Coast Joint Venture Committee, and other interested parties to design, survey, and layout a freshwater riparian and wetland enhancement project. The actual

is secured from other interested agencies or organizations. The estimated cost of this portion of the project will be \$5,650.00.

4. Riparian Planting in Area D - As the central part of Cock Robin Island was managed as pasture and grazing lands for many years, restoration of riparian forest to the upland portion of the island will require an initial planting stage to determine the most cost effective and environmentally sound revegetation techniques. RCAA staff, with the assistance of senior or graduate students from Humboldt State University, will plant 2,000 native trees and monitor their growth. A larger planting stage will then be implemented in a future phase of the project. The estimated cost of this portion of the project will be \$36,500.00.

It is planned that this phase of the proposed riparian restoration project on Cock Robin Island will be completed within two and one-half years following approval by the Board. The riparian planting of Area A and Area D will be designed and implemented within the first planting season. The planting of Area B will be completed within the second year of the project. The survey and design of the freshwater wetlands will also be completed during the second year of the project.

This project will be administered by RCAA, and will be monitored on a regular basis during the project period and over the long-term by the Department. The Department has agreed to provide fencing materials, and the California Conservation Corps has volunteered labor to install the fencing to exclude livestock from the project area. Additional donations of materials and services are expected from Humboldt State University, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, local timber companies and private businesses.

Mr. Schmidt noted that a letter of support had been received from the Mountain Lion Foundation. Mr. Schmidt reported that this was a good project because many times the Department of Fish and Game was criticized for buying a piece of property and then not doing anything with it for several years which was due largely to a lack of funds. This was an excellent opportunity to begin restoration after only approximately nine months after completion of the acquisition.

Staff recommended that the Board approve this project as proposed; allocate \$93,650.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund/P-117 (ELPF), as made available to the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Game to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Parker commended staff for moving so quickly in preparing the restoration proposal for the property.

Mr. Boren asked if there were any questions or concerns, and since there was no further discussion, the following action was taken.

IT WAS MOVED BY MS. PARKER THAT THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVE THE RESTORATION GRANT FOR THE EEL RIVER WILDLIFE AREA, HUMBOLDT COUNTY, AS PROPOSED; ALLOCATE \$93,650.00 FROM THE HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND/P-117 (ELPF), AS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE CALIFORNIA RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME TO PROCEED SUBSTANTIALLY AS PLANNED.

MOTION CARRIED.

OTHER BUSINESS

26. Discussion regarding potential Logo for the Wildlife Conservation Board

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Wildlife Conservation Board has now been involved in over 650 projects to date, and yet we're still a relatively unknown organization. He indicated that this discussion item is on the agenda to determine if the Board Members felt we needed to do more to "sell" our organization and if so, whether there were any suggestions. He further added that a logo would be one way to provide identity, visibility and recognition for its many accomplishments. It is felt that the Board must sell itself if continued support and funding is expected to continue this valuable and longstanding program.

Mr. Gibbons reported that he thought another logo would be too confusing to the public; but was all for promoting acquisitions by the Board.

Ms. Parker inquired if other Boards and Conservancies had logos. Mr. Schmidt reported that the Coastal Conservancy has an officially adopted logo. The Santa Monica Conservancy, San Joaquin River Conservancy, and the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy all use a logo, but not officially adopted by their Boards. The Tahoe Conservancy does not have a logo at the present time, but is in the process of developing one.

Ms. Morgan stated that the people involved with the Board know about the Board, but it was the people not involved with the Board who are not aware that the Board exists. She added that given the public's attitude toward bond measures in voting them down, that a good community outreach program was needed to give the Board some added visibility. Otherwise, it will be difficult to rally any future support and funding. She added that a logo, slogan or something was a good idea.

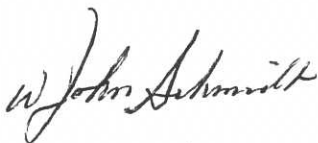
Minutes of Meeting, May 4, 1995
Wildlife Conservation Board

Mr. Boren indicated that he felt that the board has accomplished a lot of outstanding projects over the years, but felt that the critical issue now before us is to come up with a means of obtaining funds to continue into the future. He felt it might be a mistake to push for more recognition and then not have funds to do projects as people come to us.

The discussion ended and may be discussed at a future meeting.

There being no further business to consider, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. by Chairperson Boren.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. John Schmidt".

W. John Schmidt
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on May 4, 1995, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled \$356,840,410.41. 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 State Beach, Park, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974, the General Fund, the Energy Resources Fund, the Environmental License Plate Fund, the State, Urban and Coastal Park Bond Act of 1976, the 1984 Parklands Bond Act, the 1984 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Bond Act, the California Wildlife Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988, Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund of 1988, California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 and the Wildlife Restoration Fund.

A. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects		\$ 16,006,219.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement		21,276,202.94
1. Reservoir Construction or Improvement	\$ 3,063,613.05	
2. Stream Clearance and Improvement	15,175,001.70	
3. Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	467,219.86	
4. Marine Habitat	646,619.07	
5. Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	1,923,749.26	
C. Fishing Access Projects		36,312,385.63
1. Coastal and Bay	\$ 2,973,174.92	
2. River and Aqueduct Access	8,384,125.32	
3. Lake and Reservoir Access	6,693,138.45	
4. Piers	18,261,946.94	
D. Game Farm Projects		146,894.49
E. Wildlife Habitat Acq., Development & Improvement		272,300,088.80
1. Wildlife Areas (General)	\$165,646,380.64	
2. Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Dev.	4,587,265.96	
3. Wildlife Areas/EcoReserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	100,369,195.20	
4. Land Conservation Area	1,247.00	
5. Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	1,596,000.00	
6. Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	100,000.00	
F. Hunting Access Projects		484,898.57
G. Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)		8,782,014.87
H. Special Project Allocations		870,090.42
I. Miscellaneous Public Access Projects		659,115.63
J. Sales and/or exchanges		<u>2,500.00</u>
 Total Allocated to Projects		 \$356,840,410.41