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STATE OF CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
1807 13TH STREET, SUITE 103
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95811
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EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor

BP 9/16/14

State of California
Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Minutes

May 22, 2014

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WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

May 22, 2014

The Wildlife Conservation Board met on Thursday, May 22, 2014, at the Resources Auditorium, in Sacramento, California. Mr. Kevin Hunting, Deputy Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. Mr. John Donnelly, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, performed the roll call.

1. Roll Call

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS

Kevin Hunting, Deputy Director
Vice, Charlton H. Bonham, Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager
Vice, Michael Cohen, Member
Director, Department of Finance

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Rachelle Caouette
Vice, Senator Jean Fuller

Senator Fran Pavley

Michael Erke
Vice, Senator Lois Wolk

Alia Schoen
Vice, Assembly Member Das Williams

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John P. Donnelly

Wildlife Conservation Board Staff Present:

Ashley Lackey, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Brian Cary, Public Land Management Specialist III
Brian Gibson, Senior Land Agent
Candice Marg, Senior Land Agent
Celestial Baumback, Staff Services Analyst
Dave Means, Assistant Executive Director
John P. Donnelly, Executive Director

John Walsh, Senior Land Agent
Mary Westlake, Staff Services Analyst
Peter Perrine, Assistant Executive Director

Teri Muzik, Senior Land Agent
Terry Roscoe, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Chad Fien, Public Land Management Specialist IV

Lloyd Warble, Staff Services Analyst

Melissa Ho, Budget and Fiscal Officer
Laura Featherstone, Executive Assistant
Kurt Weber, Senior Land Agent
Dawn Otis-Drowne, Grant Coordinator
Jasen Yee, Associate Land Agent
Elizabeth Hubert, Public Land Management Specialist IV
Liz Yokoyama, Senior Land Agent
Colin Mills, Staff Counsel
Cynthia Alameda Public Land Management Specialist IV
Nancy Templeton, Chief Counsel
Scott McFarlin, Public Land Management Specialist IV

Others Present:

Paul Edelman, MRCA
Steve Hackett, Agland Engineering
Terry Palmisano, CDFW
Brian Shelton, CDFW
Amy Chestnut, Sonoma Land Trust
Kelli Camara, RCD of Santa Cruz County
Donna Meyers, RCD of Santa Cruz County
John Bernstein, Trust for Public Land
Heather Pert, CDFW
Jeff Maloney, MRCA
Karin Winters, The Dangermond Group
Aaron Johnson, Eastern Sierra Land Trust
Rich Wright, California Waterfowl Association
Richard Gienger, Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc.
Marshall Cook, California Rangeland Trust
Virginia Getz, Ducks Unlimited

Brian Beck, Riverside County Authority
Karen Miner, CDFW
Kerry Wilcox, Audubon, California
Rondall Snodgrass, Land Conservation Consultant
Daniel Strait, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

William Bickell, WCMWC
Noah Levy, Sanctuary Forest
Suzanne Olyarnik, Bodega Marine Reserve
Matt Weegman, Ducks Unlimited
Keith Allen-Niesen, Manatt Phelps
Eric Haney, CDFW
Kevin Knowles, Conservation Land Group
Ryan Luster, The Nature Conservancy
Gail Sevrens, CDFW
Nickie McLaughlin, FPSM
Pete Dangermond, The Dangermond Group
Dan Gjerde, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
Linda Gorens-Levey, Stark Investments
Steve Mille, Mille Trust
Meredith Kuperferman, California Rangeland Trust
Misti Arias, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Spaces
Chris Larson, Lost Coast Forestland, LLC
Tasha McKee, Sanctuary Forest
Don Brubaker, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Michael Kisgen, U.C. Natural Reserve System

Mr. Donnelly pointed out that the funding status is being presented in a new format based on a discussion from the prior board meeting. It shows the appropriations the WCB receives; it shows the total unallocated balance of those appropriations; it shows projects that are currently being considered by the board, and it shows Total Project Development, which represents projects aligned with that particular funding. Finally, it shows the Projected Unallocated Balance. Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions. There were none.

2. Funding Status — Informational

The following funding status depicts Capital Outlay appropriations by year of appropriation and by fund source and fund number.

(a)	2013-14 Wildlife Restoration Fund, (0447)	
	Budget Act	$1,000,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-1,000,000.00
	Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**
	May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
	Total Project Development	0.00
	Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**
(b)	2013-14 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-6,182,200.00
	Unallocated Balance	**$14,480,800.00**
	May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-2,432,925.00
	Total Project Development	-7,108,580.00
	Projected Unallocated Balance	**$4,939,295.00**
(c)	2012-13 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-1,518,717.00
	Unallocated Balance	**$19,144,283.00**
	May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,065,000.00
	Total Project Development	-1,270,000.00
	Projected Unallocated Balance	**$16,809,283.00**
(d)	2011-12 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)	
	Budget Act	$20,663,000.00
	Previous Board Allocations	-10,795,242.00
	Unallocated Balance	**$9,867,758.00**

May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-657,000.00
Total Project Development	-6,142,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$3,068,758.00**

(e) 2010-11 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)

Budget Act	$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-15,129,355.00
Unallocated Balance	**$5,538,645.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-0.00
Total Project Development	-3,450,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$2,088,645.00**

(f) 2009-10 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,138,338.82
Unallocated Balance	**$1,529,661.18**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-630,000.00
Total Project Development	-620,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$279,661.18**

(g) 2008-09 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2012-13 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	$20,668,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-15,647,079.00
Unallocated Balance	**$5,020,921.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-700,000.00
Total Project Development	-660,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$3,660,921.00**

(h) 2007-08 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2011-12 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	$20,674,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,747,331.45
Unallocated Balance	**$926,668.55**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-108,325.00
Total Project Development	-652,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$166,343.55**

(i) 2006-07 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262) (2013-14 Reappropriation)

Budget Act	$20,699,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,797,399.32
Unallocated Balance	**$901,600.68**

May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-901,600.68
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**

(j) 2004-05 Habitat Conservation Fund, (0262)

Budget Act	$20,577,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-19,962,032.89
Unallocated Balance	**$614,967.11**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$614,967.11**

(k) 1999-00 Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund, (0005)

Continuously Appropriated [Sec. 5096.350 (a)(1), (2), (4) & (7)]	$36,100,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-31,224,215.01
Unallocated Balance	**$4,875,784.99**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-64,444.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$4,811,340.99**

(l) 2001-02 California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund, (6029)

Continuously Appropriated (Section 5096.650)	$273,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-239,273,256.94
Unallocated Balance	**$33,726,743.06**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,625,500.00
Total Project Development	-12,101,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$20,000,243.06**

(m) 2002-03 Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002, (6031)

Continuously Appropriated (Sections 79565 and 79572), including Chapter 81, Statutes of 2005	$814,350,000.00
2003-04 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
2004-05 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-21,000,000.00
2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79565	-4,000,000.00
2005-06 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-3,100,000.00
2006-07 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-17,688,000.00
2007-08 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-5,150,000.00
2008-09 Budget Act Transfer to HCF from Section 79572	-1,000,000.00

Previous Board Allocations	-675,043,697.23
Unallocated Balance	**$66,368,302.77**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-5,505,000.00
Total Project Development	-33,538,414.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$27,324,888.77**

(n) 2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Reappropriation)

Budget Act (San Joaquin River Conservancy Projects)	$4,800,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-25,000.00
Unallocated Balance	**$4,775,000.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-165,200.00
Total Project Development	-4,609,800.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**

(o) 2009-10 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)(2013-14 Reappropriation)

Chapter 2, Statutes of 2009 (SB 8)	$15,500,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-7,996,075.00
Unallocated Balance	**$7,503,925.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-7,190,070.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$313,855.00**

(p) 2008-09 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051),(2011-12 Reappropriation)

Budget Act (NCCP Section 75055(c))	$25,000,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-8,594,048.50
Unallocated Balance	**$16,405,951.50**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,098,750.00
Total Project Development	-8,522,885.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$6,784,316.50**

(q) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 , (6051) (2013-14 Appropriation)

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(1))	1,279,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-1,073,806.00
Unallocated Balance	**$205,194.00**

May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	-155,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$50,194.00**

(r) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)(2013-14 Appropriation)

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(2))	$1,500,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-909,398.48
Unallocated Balance	**$590,601.52**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-57,000.00
Total Project Development	-533,601.52
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**

(s) 2007-08 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051) (2013-14 Appropriation)

Budget Act (Section 75055(d)(4))	$2,368,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-497,236.00
Unallocated **Balance**	**$1,870,764.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-249,000.00
Total Project Development	-1,621,764.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**

(t) 2006-07 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006, (6051)

Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055a)	$164,700,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-86,356,697.96
Unallocated Balance	**$78,343,302.04**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-9,713,000.00
Total Project Development	-47,977,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$20,653,302.04**
Continuously Appropriated (Section 75055(b))	$123,525,000.00
Previous Board Allocations	-84,875,083.48
Unallocated Balance	**$38,649,916.52**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-60,000.00
Total Project Development	-7,820,500.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$30,769,416.52**

RECAP OF FUND BALANCES

Wildlife Restoration Fund (a)	**$0.00**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$0.00**
Habitat Conservation Fund (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i) and (j)	**$58,025,304.52**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-5,593,250.00
Total Project Development	-20,804,180.68
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$31,627,873.84**
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (k)	**$4,875,784.99**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	0.00
Total Project Development	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$4,875,784.99**
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Bond Fund (l)	**$33,726,743.06**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-1,625,500.00
Total Project Development	-12,101,000.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$20,000,243.06**
Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (m)	**$66,360,080.77**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-5,505,000.00
Total Project Development	-33,538,414.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$27,316,666.77**
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (n), (o), (p), (q), (r),(s) and (t)	**$148,344,654.58**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-11,342,950.00
Total Project Development	-78,517,701.00
Projected Unallocated Balance	**$58,484,003.58**
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	**$311,332,567.92**
May 2014 Board Meeting Allocation	-24,066,700.00
Total Project Development	-144,961,295.68
Projected Unallocated Balance	**142,304,572.24**

RECAP OF NATURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2000

Chapter 113, Statutes of 2000 and Chapter 715, Statutes of 2004Tax credits awarded through June 30, 2008 $48,598,734.00

Chapter 220, Statutes of 2009 (effective January 1, 2010) Tax credits awarded $0.00

SUMMARY OF BOND CASH

The following summary provides the status of the up-front general obligation bond sale proceeds that the Wildlife Conservation Board has received since the spring of 2009.

Bond Fund	Authorized GO Bond Proceeds	Expenditures through 04/30/14	Encumbrances through 04/30/14	Cash Balances Includes Encumbrances
Proposition 12	$12,621,973.31	$9,242,883.90	$497,884.00	$2,881,205.41
Proposition 40	$91,808,942.78	$71,765,077.26	$15,886,566.14	$4,157,299.38
Proposition 50	$164,644,999.96	$69,768,113.37	$34,079,364.20	$60,797,522.39
Proposition 84	$285,413,688.65	$211,903,899.48	$31,181,427.67	$42,328,361.50
Proposition 1E	$65,725,202.07	$47,001,254.73	$9,008,708.57	$9,715,238.77
Grand Totals	**$620,214,806.77**	**$409,681,228.74**	**$90,653,950.58**	**$119,879,627.45**

3. Special Project Planning Account — Informational

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

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

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

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

Habitat Conservation Fund.....$50,000.00

Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006.....$75,000.00

4. Consent Calendar (Items 5 – 16 and 18)

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Board approve Consent Calendar items 5 – 16 and 18 as proposed in the individual agenda explanations.

Motion Carried

*5. Approval of Minutes – February 22, 2014

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Board approve the Minutes of the February 20, 2014, Wildlife Conservation Board meeting.

Motion carried.

*Consent Calendar

*6. Recovery of Funds

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

$0.00	to the **Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund**
$34,507.12	to the **Habitat Conservation Fund**
$72,965.23	to the **California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund**
$5,047.00	to the **Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006**

SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND

San Joaquin River Parkway, River West-Madera Restoration Planning and Environmental Review, Madera County

Allocated	$144,624.00
Expended	-144,624.00
Balance for Recovery	$0.00

Total Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund **$0.00**

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND

Ash Creek Wildlife Area Habitat Restoration, Modoc County

Allocated	$1,154,000.00
Expended	-1,150,386.50
Balance for Recovery	$3,613.50

Goose Lake Legacy Project, Kern County

Allocated	$2,348,836.00
Expended	-2,338,836.00
Balance for Recovery	$10,000.00

Marysville Ranch Conservation Easement, Yuba County

Allocated	$265,000.00
Expended	-258,890.00
Balance for Recovery	$6,110.00

Mission Creek Fish Passage Project, Santa Barbara County

Allocated	$775,000.00
Expended	-772,745.00
Balance for Recovery	$2,255.00

Swiss Ranch, Expansion #3, Calaveras County

Allocated	$430,000.00
Expended	- 417,471.38
Balance for Recovery	$12,528.62

Total Habitat Conservation Fund **$34,507.12**

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

San Joaquin River Parkway, River West-Madera Restoration Planning and Environmental Review, Madera County

Allocated	$130,376.00
Expended	-57,410.77
Balance for Recovery	$72,965.23

San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island North Channel Crossing, Planning and Design, Madera County

Allocated	$100,000.00
Expended	-100,000.00
Balance for Recovery	$0.00

Total California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund **$72,965.23**

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

Bufford Ranch Conservation Easement, Kern County

Allocated	$570,000.00
Expended	-564,953.00
Balance for Recovery	$5,047.00

Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) (2012) - Nelson, Riverside County

Allocated	$88,000.00
Expended	-88,000.00
Balance for Recovery	$0.00

Total Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	**$5,047.00**

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the Recovery of Funds. Recovery totals include $0.00 to the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund; $34,507.12 to the Habitat Conservation Fund; $72,965.23 to the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund; and $5,047.00 to the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006.

Motion carried.

*7. East Mill Creek Riparian Enhancement, Humboldt County — $249,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Eel River Watershed Improvement Group (ERWIG), for a cooperative project with the landowner and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service to protect and enhance ±1.5 miles of riparian habitat on privately-owned property known as Valley View Ranch on the East Mill Creek, a tributary of the Mattole River, located one mile north of Petrolia in Humboldt County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Valley View Ranch lies in the Mattole River watershed, bordering the northeastern side of the mainstem Mattole River. The town of Petrolia, located south of the ranch, is situated near the confluence of the North Fork Mattole and Mattole Rivers. East Mill Creek is a perennial stream, and supports resident rainbow trout, a small population of coho salmon and a healthy population of red legged frogs.

The Valley View Ranch and surrounding properties historically were operated as sheep and cattle grazing ranches. The harvest of timber has long been a means for supplemental income from the ranching operation and, in some instances, the main income source for the landowner. Currently, almost 99% of the northern portion of the Mattole River watershed is still privately owned and the historical land uses have not changed significantly.

The ranch is encumbered by a perpetual Conservation Easement (CE), funded in part by the Wildlife Conservation Board in 2008. The CE, which is held by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, restricts development and controls timber harvest activities on the property. The land is currently managed for livestock grazing, sustainable timber production, and salmonid and upland wildlife habitat protection. Timber harvest is restricted to an average of 2.5% of forest inventory per year, which is 5% less than growth.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of a new fence planned to connect with existing and recently rehabilitated fencing on the Ranch. The new fence line will create a 73-acre Mill Creek Control pasture, which will protect the riparian zones from cattle during most of the year. A newly constructed water system will ensure distribution of livestock away from Mill Creek during the ± one-month grazing period when cattle will have access to the creek. This system will allow the large control pasture gates to be shut, eliminating all access to the creek for the majority of the year. Mill Creek has been significantly impacted by sediment, primarily through landscape logging and road building practices prior to the 1970's. All of the trees were removed from the riparian zone during that time period. The ongoing problem continues to be stream instability, which is exacerbated by a lack of livestock infrastructure (fencing and water). With no off stream water facilities, the ranch cattle herd historically spent about 9 to 10 months of each year directly

accessing East Mill Creek for water, and in the process denuding vegetation along the entire reach.

To begin addressing the sedimentation issues, all of the roads within the East Mill Creek drainage were rehabilitated in 2011, and a ranch division fence was constructed on a ridge top west of East Mill Creek, effectively dividing the ranch into two pastures. The road rehabilitation provided an initial step needed in order to develop an engineered livestock water system. The new fencing will change the current nine-month open grazing access to the creek into approximately one-month timed access.

The fence will connect with recently constructed fencing and continue south to the existing property line fence. A complementary water system will be constructed to ensure distribution of livestock away from Mill Creek during the one month grazing period, the only time they will have any access to the creek. The off stream water will allow cattle to be kept from the creek for the majority of the year. The newly-constructed fence will be constructed for a 50-year life for multi-species livestock, and built to wildlife friendly specifications.

The area in which the ±73-acre control pasture will be located currently has ±20 acres of riparian canopy. This field is expected to see a net increase in native riparian vegetation within two years of project completion, and an additional 20 acres of riparian canopy is expected within ten years. The project will improve habitat for coho salmon by reducing sedimentation in the creek, and the increased vegetation will provide shade and food source for these fish. The resident populations of rainbow trout and red-legged frogs will benefit from the enhanced habitat, as will a host of riparian dependent species found on the north coast of California.

WCB PROGRAM

The project is funded through the Ecological Restoration on Agricultural Lands Program and meets the program's goal of assisting landowners in developing sustainable wildlife-friendly practices on agricultural property that can co-exist with ongoing operations.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project is located on private land owned by the Valley View Ranch, and management of this project is incorporated into wildlife-friendly ranching practices on the Property. ERWIG and the Natural Resources Conservation Service staff will provide technical assistance to the Valley View Ranch through the ten-year project life. ERWIG is responsible for ensuring that the Valley View Ranch will manage the ranch pursuant to terms of the Grant Agreement and management plan, to ensure the successful establishment and maintenance of the enhancement features. If at any time during the life of the project, the landowner does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires ERWIG to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING
The funding for the project is as follows:

Task Descriptions	NRCS	Valley View Ranch	WCB	Total
Project Management	$0	$0	$10,920	$10,920
Construction Management	$957	$0	$19,257	$20,214
Mobilization & site labor	$91,538	$0	$68,758	$160,296
Water & fencing materials	$0	$15,038	$132,863	$147,902
Mileage			$408	$408
Administration			$16,793	$16,793
Totals	**$92,495**	**$15,038**	**$249,000**	**$356,533**

Project costs are for project and construction management, site preparation, fencing and water features, installation labor and project administration.

FUNDING SOURCE
The funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(4). This funding allows for projects to assist farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection, and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND DFG REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 4 of Categorical Exemptions, California Code of Regulations, Title 4, Section 15304, as a minor alteration to land which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $249,000.00 from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(4); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $249,000.00 from Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(4); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*8. Red Bank, Conservation Easement Expansion, (Burrows Ranch), Tehama County — $57,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT) to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 170± acres of land as an expansion to an existing conservation easement for protection of oak woodland and rangeland habitat in Tehama County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) proposed for protection by the Easement is located on Colyear and Red Bank Roads, about 20 miles southwest of the City of Red Bluff and 7 miles west of the town of Red Bank in western Tehama County. The Property is located in a foothill region located between the upper Sacramento Valley floor to the east and the higher mountainous areas associated with the coastal ranges to the west. Most of the surrounding lands consist of rolling hills with oak woodlands, grassland and rangeland areas operated as livestock ranches. Immediately to the west are a series of checkerboard lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Further southwest is the Mendocino National Forest and to the northwest is the Six River National Forest. Sandwiched between these two national forests, is the Yolla Bolly Middle Eel River National Wilderness Area, a mountainous area which contains headwaters of the Eel and Trinity rivers. The Red Bank creek and other watersheds in the area support wildlife corridors and habitat linkages that run east to west between the upper Sacramento Valley floor into higher elevations of national forest and wilderness areas to the west.

The original oak woodland conservation easement on the Burrows Ranch, 3,356± acres, was approved by the Board at its November, 2010 meeting, along with another grant to NCRLT to acquire a 3,776± acre oak woodland conservation easement on the adjoining Big Bluff Ranch. Subsequently the landowner of the Burrows Ranch acquired an additional 170 acres of adjoining land containing oak woodlands and now wishes to place a similar conservation easement over the Property to be held by NCRLT.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is unimproved with mostly rolling hill terrain. An estimated 60 to 70 percent of the land covered under the Easement contains oak savannah and oak woodland habitat areas. The Easement will help provide a larger block of protected woodlands and enhance habitat connectivity and corridor protection. Oak tree species present within the project area include black, valley, interior live, canyon live, blue, scrub and tan oak. The project would also protect annual grassland, rangeland, chamise-redshank chaparral, mixed chaparral, valley-foothill riparian land, spring-fed wetlands and creek frontage along the adjacent Red Bank and North Fork Elder Creeks and a number of other perennial and seasonal creeks.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Oak Woodlands Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria, and must be located within a county that has adopted an Oak Woodlands countywide management plan. The Program is designed to assist local efforts achieve oak woodland protection. Importantly, this Program also provides a mechanism to bring ranchers and conservationists together in a manner that allows both to achieve sustainable ranch and farming operations and healthy oak woodlands.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The NCRLT is responsible for monitoring and managing the property according to the terms of the Easement. A baseline conditions report is being completed by the NCRLT and reviewed by the WCB. The Easement allows access to the subject properties by both the NCRLT and the WCB for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The property owner has agreed to sell the Easement to the NCRLT for the Department of General Services' (DGS) approved appraised fair market value of $47,000. The terms and conditions of the grant to the NCRLT provide that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance or require that title to the Easement be transferred to the WCB or another qualifying entity.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$47,000.00
TOTAL Purchase Price	$47,000.00
Other Project-Related Admin. Costs	$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$57,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $10,000.00 is needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS review costs, bringing the total recommended allocation for this proposal to $57,000.00.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(2) which allows for the preservation of native oak woodland habitat

pursuant to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act (Fish and Game Code Section 1360 *et seq.*).

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $57,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(2) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $57,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(d)(2) to cover the grant amount and internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*9. Bodega Marine Reserve Security and Resource Protection, Sonoma County — $60,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to The Regents of the University of California to replace the boundary fence and entrance gates and repair and upgrade several buildings (including the Head House, Dive Locker, and Marine Operations Trailers) at Bodega Marine Reserve, located one mile west of the City of Bodega Bay in Sonoma County.

LOCATION

The Bodega Marine Reserve (BMR or Reserve), part of the UC Natural Reserve System, is located on the Sonoma County coast approximately 60 miles north of San Francisco. BMR shares a close partnership with Bodega Marine Laboratory (Laboratory), which is located within the ±362-acre Reserve. Together, these facilities attain a very high level of research and education. BMR is the only protected marine area on California's rugged north central coast dedicated to research and education. It offers a variety of habitats including rocky intertidal and subtidal zones, exposed and protected beaches, dunes, coastal prairie, wetlands, and mudflat and seagrass habitats. The BMR and Laboratory complex is one of the world's most active research and educational field sites for marine and terrestrial habitats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The BMR contains a variety of buildings and facilities for visiting researchers and staff. The Head House and Boating Safety Trailers provide year-round office space for BMR and Laboratory staff and secure storage space for equipment and instruments. The Dive Locker provides showering and changing spaces and dive gear storage areas. A boundary fence and gates at the BMR are designed to provide security for staff and to protect important research projects. Unfortunately, the boundary fence and gates are failing. Unauthorized people have begun to access the facility and grounds, putting them at risk of vandalism and theft. In addition, during heavy rains the roofs of the Head House and Dive Locker leak, resulting in dry rot.

The project seeks to replace the boundary fence along the road leading to the Reserve, as well as two entry gates, to provide upgraded security. Additionally, the roof of the Head House will be replaced, the Dive Locker roof will be repaired, a new entry door will be installed on the Head House to keep rodents out, and the foundation of the Boating Safety Trailers will be upgraded.

WCB PROGRAM

The mission of the University of California Natural Reserve System (UCNRS) is to contribute to the understanding and wise management of the earth and its natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected areas throughout California. Under Proposition 84, the WCB received funding to provide matching grant dollars to the UCNRS for land acquisitions and

the construction or development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources. To implement this funding the WCB and the UCNRS developed guidelines for identifying eligible projects and the UCNRS established an Ad Hoc Advisory Subcommittee to review and set priorities for project proposals to be submitted to the WCB for funding.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Grant Agreement requires that the UCNRS will maintain the facilities for the purposes of providing space for research, administration, and educational activities for thirty years.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Item	BMR	WCB	Totals
Fencing, Signage and Security	$28,000	$50,000	$78,000
Building Repair	$32,000	$10,000	$42,000
Total	**$60,000**	**$60,000**	**$120,000**

Project costs will be for the replacement of the boundary fence, new gates and associated signs, the replacement of the Head House roof, repair of the Dive House roof, replacement of the Head House door, and upgrades to the Boating Safety Trailers foundation.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Section 75055 (b)(3), which provides for grants to the University of California for the Natural Reserve System for the construction and development of facilities that will be used for research and training to improve the management of natural lands and the preservation of California's wildlife resources and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND STATE REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The project was vetted through the University of California Natural Reserve System's Ad Hoc Subcommittee and recommended for funding. The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3), Section 15301, Class 1, as the repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing structures, facilities or equipment involving negligible or no expansion of use and Section15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities at the same site and with substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $60,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Section 75055 (b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $60,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 84), Section 75055 (b)(3); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*10. CDFW Land Management Plan $57,500.00
Knoxville Wildlife Area Augmentation,
Napa County

This proposal was to consider an allocation to amend an existing grant to the California Wildlife Foundation for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the land management plan for the CDFW's Knoxville Wildlife Area, located north of Lake Berryessa in Napa County.

LOCATION
The Knoxville Wildlife Area (KWA) is located in the inner north coast range of California at the northeast end of Napa County generally six miles north of Lake Berryessa along the Berryessa-Knoxville Road. KWA comprises over 20,000 acres of oak woodland, grassland, riparian, and chaparral habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
In September 2013, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved a project to update the existing KWA land management plan (LMP) to include new land parcels, conduct basic inventories of biological resources on the new parcels, and adopt best management practices to conserve and enhance the wildlife area's natural resources. These wildlife area lands are large and have a diverse assemblage of habitat types and wildlife species. The complexity and length of the LMP is determined by the property's management requirements.

In December 2013, CDFW staff determined that grazing should be a component of the management plan for the area. As a result of this decision, a grazing management component must be included in the KWA land management plan in order to identify how to use livestock to achieve plant and wildlife habitat goals. Pertinent field data (e.g. livestock water availability, needed fencing and water infrastructure, rangeland assessment, etc.) in a GIS format will be used to develop a timed and prescribed livestock grazing plan targeted at minimizing fire fuel loads to avoid catastrophic fire, controlling non-native invasive plants, and facilitating the spread of native perennial grasses and forbs. The grazing plan will describe the timing, duration, frequency and intensity of livestock grazing at chosen appropriate locations throughout the KWA. A monitoring plan to enable CDFW staff to assess whether the grazing plan's goals are being met will form a part of the plan.

The LMP, with the grazing component, will be prepared according to CDFW guidelines, *A Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans*, and other local or federal agency requirements as necessary.

An important part of the planning process for a LMP is inviting public input. This wildlife area is becoming more important to nearby residents as a general recreation and hunting area. The LMP must present to the public CDFW's objectives for managing the wildlife area lands and describe in some detail any potential conflicts with wildlife, or with the use of cattle for wildlife habitat

management, inherent in allowing access to the area.

WCB PROGRAM
Under Proposition 40, California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002, WCB specifically received funding to be used to prepare management plans for properties acquired in fee by the WCB.

PROJECT FUNDING
The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Cost Estimate for the Project:

	Professional Services to create LMP & Grazing Plan	**Project Management and Administration**	**Totals**
Original LMP Update	$150,000.00	$22,500.00	$172,500.00
Grazing Component	$50,000.00	$7,500.00	$57,500.00
Total LMP Update	$200,000.00	$30,000.00	$230,000.00

WCB is the sole source of funding for the project. Project costs of $57,500.00 will be for the preparation of the grazing component for the updated KWA LMP.

FUNDING SOURCE
The funding source for this project is the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a), which provides funding to prepare management plans for properties acquired in fee by the WCB and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION (IF NEEDED)
The grant augmentation is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262, Planning and Feasibility Studies). Subject to approval by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the proposal and recommended it for funding by the Board.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $57,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $57,500.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*11. East Contra Costa County NCCP/HCP (Anna Smith), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition (USFW) Subgrant Augmentation, Contra Costa County — $0.00

This proposal was to consider an augmentation to a subgrant for a project previously approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) at its February 20, 2014 meeting allocating funding and authorizing a grant to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (ECCCHC) and the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the ECCCHC for a cooperative project with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to acquire 960± acres of land. The proposal is to approve an increase in the USFWS subgrant from $2,419,200.00 to $2,578,125.00. As a result of this increase the WCB's approved grant to ECCCHC will be reduced from $2,419,200.00 to $2,260,275.00.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located at the base of the Diablo Mountain range, at the terminus of Briones Valley Road in an unincorporated area of Contra Costa County, approximately three miles west of the City of Brentwood and 2.5 miles south of the City of Antioch. This is a priority acquisition within the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (ECCC HCP/NCCP) and will protect a critical and central piece of the wildlife corridor connecting Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve to Marsh Creek State Park and Round Valley Regional Preserve. Surrounding land uses include existing natural park lands, wildlife mitigation lands, and private cattle ranching.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is 960± acres in size and is currently used as grazing land. The terrain includes one broad valley with rolling to steeply sloping terrain rising on each side. Habitat types found on the Property include annual grassland, chaparral, oak savannah, oak woodland, pond, wetland, and seasonal wetland.

The Property's size and terrain provide major ecosystem benefits to species both on and off the Property by linking with other protected lands within the ECCC HCP/NCCP and providing habitat corridors. These linkages include a northwest-southeast movement corridor for the state threatened and federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox. Acquisition of the Property will protect suitable habitat for the conservation of the California-listed threatened red-legged frog and a variety of other rare and important wildlife species including California tiger salamander, golden eagle, western burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, Alameda whipsnake, silvery legless lizard, western pond turtle, and fairy shrimp.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD (WCB) PROGRAM

The grant and subgrant for this project are being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to

the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) which enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant for this project has also been reviewed and approved by the CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

EBRPD has agreed to manage the Property once it is acquired. Funding of future management activities for this Property will be provided by ECCCHC and EBRPD, in part through wind turbine and communication tower lease revenue from prior acquisitions within the ECCC HCP/NCCP plan area. It is anticipated that the Property will offer future opportunities for passive recreational uses, an allowed use under the ECCC HCP/NCCP. The habitat will be maintained in conjunction with other properties acquired by EBRPD in eastern Contra Costa County.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $5,376,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and the USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by EBRPD bond funds and a WCB grant to ECCCHC. The terms and conditions of the WCB grant and subgrant to the ECCCHC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of WCB and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

Under the original acquisition proposed to the Board, February 20, 2014, the WCB grant was $2,419,200.00 and the USFWS subgrant was $2,419,200.00. The EBRPD contributed $537,600.00 for a total purchase price of $5,376,000.00.

Since then, additional USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds have been identified. These funds can be used to reduce the non-federal match provided by the prior approved WCB grant, allowing a reduction from WCB's prior allocation of $2,419,200.00 to $2,260,275.00 saving the WCB $158,925.00 in bond funding. The additional federal funds will increase the USFWS subgrant from $2,419,200.00 to $2,578,125.00, taking advantage of an additional $158,925.00 in USFWS funding.

Under the new funding structure, the EBRPD contribution of $537,600.00 and the total purchase price of $5,376,000.00 would remain the same.

At the prior Board meeting, an additional $5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related expenses, including DGS appraisal review cost, making the new WCB total allocation $2,265,275.00.

FUNDING SOURCE
The WCB funding source remains the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055 (SSJD-NCCP) that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat for areas in and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that assist in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

CEQA
The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; approve the acceptance of an augmentation of $158,925.00 from the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from USFWS for a total amount of $2,578,125.00 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the acceptance of an augmentation of $158,925.00 from the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from USFWS for a total amount of $2,578,125.00 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*12. San Joaquin River Parkway, Ledger Island Bridge Access Improvement, Design and Review, Madera and Fresno Counties — $130,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (SJRC or Conservancy) to evaluate the existing Ledger Island Bridge crossing over the San Joaquin River and provide preliminary design of up to three replacement alternatives on property bounded on the north by Ledger Island in Madera County and on the south by Department of Fish and Wildlife lands in Fresno County.

LOCATION

The San Joaquin River Parkway is defined by state law as approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two mile long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and State Route 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The SJRC was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources, and provide educational and recreational opportunities to local communities. The SJRC's mission includes providing public access and restoring habitat within the Parkway.

The Ledger Island Bridge crossing is located at approximately River Mile 262.2 on the San Joaquin River, near the town of Friant, California. The project area includes lands under the jurisdiction of SJRC and the California State Lands Commission, as well as privately owned parcels. The project site is bounded on the north by Ledger Island and on the south by Department of Fish and Wildlife lands.

The Ledger Island Bridge is an important access point to Conservancy lands on the Madera County side of the river, and the SJRC would like to maintain the bridge for continued use. However, observations made by SJRC and DWR staff of the right-bank approach indicated degradation via scour or slope failure near the abutment on the downstream side of the crossing. Evidence of past erosion of the embankment on the upstream side also was observed. The SJRC has been concerned that if the erosion continues it could necessitate closing the road. Rather than just fill in the hole, the project will evaluate measures to reduce future scour by river flows to help protect both the bridge and its approaches. DWR will consider various concepts for achieving that goal as part of the design task. It may involve anything from lowering the approaches to allow floodplain overflow, to the addition of several culverts through both approaches to allow passage of overbank flows under the road.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Existing conditions at the project site include an 80 foot long, 21 foot wide steel girder bridge spanning the river with a single mid-span support. The main channel

of the San Joaquin River flows under this bridge, but it is significantly constricted by the bridge, as compared to the channel upstream and downstream. At high flows (above ~5,000 cfs) a small portion of the overall flow backs up, cuts through the Ledger Island upstream, bypasses the bridge, flows over the road and rejoins the main channel just downstream of the bridge. These fast flows over the road create scour pits and erosion.

To improve durability of the bridge crossing, measures will be to reduce velocities and scour potential at the bridge at high flows. Two initial concepts include 1) reconstructing the approaches with multiple culverts, and 2) excavating the approaches down to a lower elevation, creating a "dip" to allow higher flows to overtop the road. These concepts may be modified, or a third concept may be developed upon further investigation.

The scope of the project includes the early phases of evaluation and design, and includes permitting tasks that are needed to complete that work. Evaluation of the bridge structure will be needed to determine whether the bridge is safe to continue using without structural upgrades.

The soils characteristics of each approach, as well as potential material sources for approach replacement, will also be investigated as part of this proposal. Results from the bridge evaluation and soils investigation will be used to complete preliminary-level design alternatives. The alternatives, as well as associated estimated costs to construct them, will be provided as the deliverable under this scope.

DWR will be responsible for the following tasks:

A. Design
   1. Provide structural evaluation of the existing bridge to assist the Conservancy in determining viability of the project concepts currently identified and to help define design alternatives.
   2. Develop up to three conceptual design alternatives including drawings and rough appraisal level cost estimates.
   3. Produce an alternatives report and submit it to the Conservancy and WCB.
   4. Perform soils sampling, testing, and analysis.

B. Permitting
   1. Apply for and obtain on the behalf of the Conservancy all necessary permits and clearances to perform evaluations outlined in Task A.

<u>WCB PROGRAM</u>

This project is being considered under the WCB's Public Access Program, which provides the basis for WCB's ability to provide [funds for public access projects

statewide. In addition, funds were allocated to the WCB within Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), which provide funding for river parkway projects identified by the San Joaquin River Conservancy and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The goal of the project is to provide to the SJRC a structural evaluation of the bridge, soils characteristics of the approaches and within the potential soil source area, and up to three preliminary design alternatives. Specific objectives include evaluation of the stability of the construction to determine the long-term maintenance requirements of the designs.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB is the sole funding source for the project is outlined below.

Task	**Cost**
Bridge Evaluation	$20,000.00
Permitting and Permit Fees	$10,000.00
Geology	$60,000.00
Design	$40,000.00
TOTAL	**$130,000.00**

Estimated costs for DWR to complete the above scope of work for this project are based on current DWR labor costs, past costs for similar projects, and discussion between DWR's South Central Region Office and its Division of Engineering.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), which provides funding for river parkway projects identified by the San Joaquin River Conservancy, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

CEQA REVIEW AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The Conservancy's Board approved this proposal on March 19, 2014, and recommended it for funding by the WCB. The project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15262) because it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as

proposed; allocate $130,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $130,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*13. San Joaquin River Parkway, River West Fresno Pump and Irrigation Improvements, Fresno County — $35,200.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) for a cooperative project with the San Joaquin River Conservancy (Conservancy) to install a new well and irrigation infrastructure to serve habitat restoration and other existing and planned revegetation irrigation needs on the Conservancy's River West Fresno site in Fresno County.

LOCATION

The San Joaquin River Parkway is defined by state law as approximately 5,900 acres on both sides of a twenty-two mile long reach of the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam to the east and State Route 99 to the west, in Fresno and Madera Counties (Public Resources Code Section 32510). The Conservancy was created in 1992 to preserve and enhance the San Joaquin River's extraordinary biological diversity, protect its valued cultural and natural resources, and provide educational and recreational opportunities to local communities. The Conservancy's mission includes providing public access and restoring habitat within the Parkway.

The project site is within River West Fresno, consisting of ±520 acres of Conservancy property and associated state sovereign lands located on the Fresno County side of the river adjacent to and downstream of Highway 41. The property borders 1¼ miles of river frontage. The area had been gravel mined, grazed, and prepared for urban development, prior to the Conservancy's acquisition of the land in 2003 for the San Joaquin River Parkway. The property includes gravel ponds, ruderal grassland, and narrow bands of riparian and wetland vegetation on the perimeter of the ponds and bank of the river.

The property has been the subject of several restoration actions. Two projects funded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) have been approved by the Conservancy board. In addition, the Conservancy and WCB authorized bond funds for the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (SJRPCT) to perform design and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review for the adjacent Spano River Ranch restoration project, and for planning and CEQA review for the extension of the regional multiple use Lewis S. Eaton Trail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The irrigation project will construct the infrastructure that will be used to provide a reliable source of irrigation to on-going restoration projects. Through one of the NAWCA grants, DU excavated, graded, and hydro-seeded portions of the steep banks of the central "H" pond to create shallower slopes and reduced depth to soil-water, allowing for broader areas of wetlands and riparian plants. DU will also secure native plants with the NAWCA grant funds. Once main and secondary

irrigation lines are in place, DU has partnered with the SJRPCT to install drip emitters, plant and cultivate the native trees and shrubs—often with volunteer and conservation corps labor—and operate irrigation.

The Conservancy and DU cooperatively secured a qualified pump company and irrigation expertise to assess the capacity of an existing agriculture irrigation well and pump to serve the DU project. It has been determined that improvements consisting of a larger pump and motor as well as new pipelines are required to serve the five-acre DU project and the planned 34-acre SJRPCT project, once that project is designed, permitted and approved. The Conservancy requested DU to prepare a grant proposal to assist the Conservancy with the technical and construction management services necessary to improve irrigation infrastructure.

The irrigation system is intended to be used for each project for three to five years after planting, until the native plants are established. The restoration projects are designed to create self-sufficient vegetation within that period. Subject to approval of future public access improvement on the River West Fresno site, such as the Lewis S. Eaton Trail extension, the irrigation system may also eventually serve additional habitat, vegetative buffers, trail shade, and other irrigation needs in the immediate vicinity of the well and mainline.

Project activities will include developing specifications, hiring contractors, and overseeing construction/installation to replace an existing groundwater pump on the project site with larger pump and motor, and install delivery pipelines. The new ±3,000-foot 3" PVC main, and ±600-foot 1.5" secondary pipelines will include valves and outlets to accompany current planting plans and anticipated future irrigation needs. Drip lines, bubblers, and other miscellaneous irrigation fittings to the plants will be supplied in conjunction with the individual projects.

The Governor's proclamation of a Drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014, directed state agencies to immediately implement water use reduction plans for all state facilities to reduce water usage by at least 20 percent. These water conservation actions include a moratorium on new, non-essential landscaping projects at state facilities and on state highways and roads. The use of the new irrigation system improvements may be postponed as necessary to comply with the directive for as long as the state of emergency is in effect and until the Conservancy approves its use.

WCB PROGRAM

The project is funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects. In addition, funds were allocated to the WCB in the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), which provides for the

acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Conservancy and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The project is designed to supply adequate well water and pipelines to irrigate existing and planned habitat restoration projects in the vicinity of the well, with irrigation to be supplied to the native plants for three to five years to ensure plant establishment. The project is intended to create self-sufficient revegetation, with routine irrigation discontinued after the plant establishment period.

Following completion of the work, the Conservancy will be responsible for operation and maintenance of the equipment. The Conservancy will work in collaboration with the SJRPCT on any long-term irrigation system operation, if needed.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB is the sole funder of this project as outlined below:

Project Task	**WCB**
Installation	$23,000.00
Project Management	$6,000.00
Administrative Costs	$3,000.00
Contingency	$3,200.00
TOTAL	**$35,200.00**

Project costs will be for securing subcontractor(s) to install a new pump and motor on existing well, mainline, and secondary pipeline; and for project management, including design, bid, construction management, travel, and reporting. Additionally a 10% cost for both administrative costs and contingency is allocated.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f), which provides for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration and protection of land and water resources located within the boundaries of the San Joaquin River Conservancy and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA REVIEW AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project will support projects included among the high priority projects recommended by the Interagency Project Development Committee, whose role is to evaluate projects to be considered by the Conservancy Board. The project was approved for submittal to the WCB by the Conservancy Board, which includes a representative with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, on February 19,

2014.

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3: Section 15301, Class 1, as the repair or minor alteration of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use; 15302, Class 2, as the replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities at the same site and with substantially the same purpose and capacity; and 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land and/or vegetation, which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the Board, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $35,200.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $35,200.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75050(f); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*14. Allensworth Ecological Reserve, Expansion 29 – 40 $0.00
Tulare County

This proposal was to consider the acquisition of 22 separate parcels of land totaling 33.4+/- acres by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the protection of habitat supporting the San Joaquin kit fox and other rare species found within the area of the CDFW Allensworth Ecological Reserve (Reserve) and to enhance habitat linkages and connectivity in Tulare County.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject properties (Properties) are located in the southeast region of the San Joaquin Valley, near the City of Earlimart, in Tulare County. If acquired, the Properties would lie in an area of the Reserve comprised mostly of small parcels typified as open land, sparsely vegetated, and dominated by grassland and valley sink areas. Much of the area outside the Reserve has, or is currently being, converted to extensive agricultural uses including alfalfa, grapes, or orchard use. Located west of the Reserve is the Colonel Allensworth State Park. To the north is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Pixley National Wildlife Refuge, and to the southwest is the USFWS Kern National Wildlife Refuge.

Over the last 15 years, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved projects to help acquire and protect nearly 3,000 acres of land as part of the Reserve. The valley sink and saltbush scrub plant communities found at the Reserve represent some of the highest quality examples of these plant communities in the San Joaquin Valley. There are also a number of vernal pools found within the Reserve, supporting vernal pool fairy shrimp.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Properties consist of 12 separate property ownerships ranging in size from approximately .5 to 7.5 acres, totaling 33.4 ± acres, and are being acquired as Expansions 29-40 of the Reserve. The Properties are currently zoned for agricultural use and are being utilized as pastureland. Their topography ranges from fairly level to slightly undulating, and the dominant habitat is native grasses. Once acquired, the Properties will be managed as part of the Reserve, expanding open space and habitat areas for wildlife species. The acquisition of the site will also help improve habitat connectivity between the Reserve and the Pixley National Wildlife Refuge located to the north.

The Reserve is important to the survival and recovery of several endangered or sensitive species including the State and federally endangered blunt-nosed leopard lizard, the Tipton kangaroo rat, and San Joaquin pocket mouse; the State threatened and federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox, the State threatened San Joaquin antelope squirrel, and the federally threatened Hoppings blister beetle. Other rare and important species that either reside at or frequent the Reserve include badger, greater Sandhill crane, merlin, Swainson's hawk, and the western pond turtle.18.

WCB PROGRAM

This project is being proposed under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other government entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, the WCB acquires lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Properties for acquisition represent a nominal addition to the Reserve and can be readily absorbed into existing CDFW operations. CDFW, as fee title owner of the Properties, will be able to manage and monitor the Properties within its existing budget.

FUNDING SOURCE

All project related costs will be paid from the California Department of Corrections Statewide Electric Fence Project mitigation fund assigned to CDFW. These mitigation funds were made available to CDFW to offset the impacts to valley floor habitat associated with electric fences constructed around correctional facilities in the San Joaquin Valley. The CDFW and the WCB have both analyzed and determined the purposes of this project are consistent with the funding source.

TERMS

The Property owners have agreed to sell their Property for its appraised fair market values which are shown below and total $135,000.00. The appraised values (all included in one appraisal report), have been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Properties are being acquired separately from the 12 different landowners. The terms and conditions of the acquisitions provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions, and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for each separate acquisition.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding and fair market values for the Properties are as follows:

Expansion 29	$4,000.00

Expansion 30	$3,000.00
Expansion 31	$3,000.00
Expansion 32	$21,000.00
Expansion 33	$28,000.00
Expansion 34	$4,000.00
Expansion 35	$13,000.00
Expansion 36	$4,000.00
Expansion 37	$20,000.00
Expansion 38	$14,000.00
Expansion 39	$11,000.00
Expansion 40	$10,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$135,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	$50,000.00
Total Project Costs	$185,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$0.00**

It is estimated that $50,000.00 will be needed to cover internal project-related expenses, including the comprehensive appraisal, the DGS appraisal review costs, Phase 1 environmental site assessments, title and closing costs. These costs will also be charged to California Department of Corrections Statewide Electric Fence Project mitigation fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The acquisition has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve the project as proposed; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*15. Western Riverside County Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plan (2012) – Berger, Riverside County — $71,000.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority) and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the Authority to acquire 10± acres of land in western Riverside County for the protection of habitat that supports threatened and endangered species; and to increase regional wildlife habitat corridors and linkages located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSCHP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Berger property (Property) is located in the southeast section of western Riverside County in the community of Tenaja, approximately six miles west of the City of Murrieta. More specifically, the Property is located at the terminus of Via Cambia and west of Calle De Mucho Road. The Property's neighborhood boundaries are comprised of Interstate 15 to the east; the San Diego County line to the south; Cleveland National Forest to the west; and the southerly limits of the community of Wildomar to the north. In general, the neighborhood is made up of ranchettes, traditional homes, and mobile homes that include space for equestrian, agricultural, or conservation uses.

This area of Riverside County falls within the WRC MSHCP, which encompasses 1.2 million acres of land providing habitat for over 146 wildlife species, several of which are both state and federally listed. The WRC MSHCP was implemented under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. The NCCP program is a cooperative effort that includes both private and public partners that identify and protect biodiversity within the State for the protection of plants, animals and their habitat under the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991. Under the WRC MSCHP, the goal of the Authority is to assemble a reserve of 500,000 acres of conserved properties identified to sustain and protect important wildlife ecosystem processes and corridors throughout western Riverside County. Within the WRC MSHCP there are six distinct habitat areas and goals designated for conservation that include the Western Core/Linkage, Alkali Playa/Vernal Pool Area, Temecula Creek Watershed, Santa Rosa Plateau, San Timoteo Canyon, and the B Canyon Area.

Of the six distinct WRC MSCHP habitat areas noted above, the Property is located within the Santa Rosa Plateau, a habitat area that encompasses an arching stretch of land located west of the City of Temecula, extending northwest from the City of Temecula toward the southern portions of the City of Murrieta around the northern border of CDFW's Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve

and then southwest through the community of Tenaja toward the San Diego/Riverside County line. The Santa Rosa Plateau is situated between large blocks of protected lands including the coastal Santa Ana Mountains within the Cleveland National Forest to the northwest, the Department of Defense lands at Camp Pendleton located to the west, CDFW's Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve located in the center portion, and the San Diego State University's Santa Margarita River Ecological Reserve located to the southeast. Protection of lands from development within the Santa Rosa Plateau area is essential for helping maintain habitat linkages and corridors between these large areas of protected lands.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is comprised of two irregular shaped vacant parcels located within a Residential Agriculture zone. The site is vacant and rural in nature with a rolling mountainous topography ranging in elevation from 2,000 feet near its east corner to 2,180 feet near the west property line. The Property supports various types of vegetation including chaparral and coastal sage scrub.

Coastal sage scrub serves as an important and necessary component to the survival of several resident species in western Riverside County and has been extensively cleared for agriculture and urbanization in recent years due to population growth and urbanization. This has resulted in the fragmentation of the coastal sage scrub community and the degradation of ecological processes and ecosystems of native wildlife species that rely on it. The decline and magnitude of the loss of coastal sage scrub has been attributed to the recent decline of individual species populations in the area.

Located within the Santa Rosa Plateau core habitat is the Tenaja habitat corridor which serves as an important wildlife linkage connecting the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve to the Cleveland National Forest. Acquisition of the Property will expand core habitat areas and habitat linkages within the Tenaja habitat corridor, providing refugia for species moving between the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve and the Cleveland National Forest. The acquisition will protect habitat for several state and federally listed species that include, the federally endangered arroyo toad, federally threatened spreading navarretia and Coastal California gnatcatcher; and the federal and State endangered least Bell's vireo. Other resident plant and animal species benefiting from the acquisition include the many-stemmed dudleya, Davidson's saltscale, Parish's brittlescale, San Migues savory, orange throated-whiptail, and red-diamond rattlesnake.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit

organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisition of properties. Under the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. The Property has been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the Property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant accepted for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed by the Authority as part of the WRC MSHCP reserve system, which serves to provide permanent habitat protection for populations of federal and state-listed endangered and threatened species that occupy the reserve and to increase regional wildlife habitat cores and linkages that will connect existing habitat reserve areas throughout western Riverside County. As part of its obligation under the plan, the Authority retains a Reserve Manager to ensure that management actions are consistent with the plan. The plan provides for the financing and implementation of an endowment for the monitoring and management of the Property in perpetuity. Management costs for parcels acquired under the WRC MSHCP will be provided by the Authority's operating funds.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $220,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value of $220,000.00. USFWS funds in the amount of $154,000.00 require a non-federal match in the amount of $66,000.00 that is being provided by a grant from the WCB. The terms and conditions of the WCB grant and USFWS subgrant funds to the Authority, provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$66,000.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$154,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$220,000.00

Other Project Related Admin. Costs	$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	$71,000.00

It is estimated that an additional $5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review. The Authority, as project proponent, will fund all other project-related administrative costs for the acquisition, including but not limited to the environmental site assessment, appraisal, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and to implement the Habitat Conservation Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this acquisition project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of $154,000.00 and approve the Agreement to Subgrant federal funds to the Authority; and allocate $71,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant, and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this acquisition project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of $154,000.00 and approve the Agreement to Subgrant federal funds to the Authority; and allocate $71,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant, and

to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

*16. Western Riverside County Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plan (2012) – Fuller, Riverside County — $78,500.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning, Recovery Land Acquisition grant (Section 6 Grant) and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (Authority) and to consider a WCB grant to the Authority to acquire 20± acres of land in western Riverside County for the protection of habitat that supports threatened and endangered species; and to increase regional wildlife habitat corridors and linkages located in the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located approximately one mile northeast of state route 215, Clinton Keith Road intersection, and one quarter mile east of the City limits of Murrieta, a major urban center in the region. More specifically, the Property is located on the southeast corner of Avenida Manana and Running Rabbit Road in the community of French Valley in Riverside County.

Due to the Property's close proximity to the City of Murrieta, the threat of residential development is a major concern. Riverside County is the fourth largest county in California in terms of population; and the eleventh largest county in the nation. Since 2000, Riverside's population has grown by approximately 44%, which represents the largest percentage of population growth in the state. Recently, the real estate market in Riverside County has experienced an increase in sales. Projections through 2035 estimate that there will be more than 1.2 million housing units (a rate of growth of 51% over the next 22 years) in Riverside County. The rising climb in population continues to degrade wildlife habitat resulting in the loss of essential wildlife linkage areas/corridors and habitat areas needed to sustain fragile ecosystems necessary to support native plant and animal life.

This area of Riverside County falls within the WRC MSHCP, which encompasses 1.2 million acres of land providing habitat for over 146 wildlife species, several of which are both state and federally listed. The WRC MSHCP was implemented under the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. The NCCP program is a cooperative effort that includes both private and public partners that identify and protect biodiversity areas for protection of plants, animals, and their habitat under the State's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991. Under the WRC MSHCP the goal of the Authority is to assemble a reserve of 500,000 acres of conserved properties identified to sustain and protect important wildlife ecosystem processes and corridors throughout western Riverside County. Within the WRC MSHCP there are six distinct habitat areas and goals designated for

conservation that include the Western Core/Linkage, Alkali Playa/Vernal Pool Area, Temecula Creek Watershed, Santa Rosa Plateau, San Timoteo Canyon, and the B Canyon Area.

Of the six distinct WRC MSHCP habitat areas noted above, the Property is located in the Western Core/Linkage area. This habitat area extends from the City of Murrieta west across state route 215 and angles northwest along both sides of Interstate 15 north to Lake Elsinore. Properties targeted for acquisition in this area are important because they help satisfy and complement the goals of the WRC MSHCP by building onto existing core areas, and providing connections throughout the area. This includes the enhancement of the linkages that connect with the Lake Mathews-Estelle Mountain Reserve to the northeast, the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve to the south, the Cleveland National Forest to the west, and the Southwestern Riverside Multiple Species Reserve to the east.

In terms of other conservation strategies, the WRC MSHCP also lies within the South Coast Region of the CDFW's California Wildlife Action Plan (CWAP). The WRC MSHCP is consistent with the CWAP's recommendation that wildlife agencies and local governments work to improve the development and implementation of the NCCPs in this region by conserving habitat for plant and wildlife species in the region's rapidly urbanizing areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is an unimproved rectangular shaped parcel except for its western border, which follows the contours of the adjacent roadway. According to the City of Murrieta Planning Department, the site is within the sphere of influence of the City and is zoned as Rural Residential, which allows residential development. The site is vacant and unimproved with a rolling to steep typography sparsely covered with coastal sage scrub, chaparral and chemise vegetation. The topography is representative of the western slopes of the Sedco Hills and alluvial plains common in this area of western Riverside County.

The Property contains some of the last remaining contiguous blocks of coastal sage scrub in western Riverside County, a plant community that is essential to resident wildlife. In recent years, coastal sage scrub habitat has been destroyed and fragmented, thereby causing a degradation of ecological processes. The acquisition will help protect multiple federally listed species within WRC's MSHCP that include the federally threatened Coastal California gnatcatcher and spreading navarretia and the federally endangered quino checkerspot butterfly and San Diego ambrosia. Many other resident species such as the western pond turtle, bobcat, Los Angeles pocket mouse, rufous-crowned sparrow, and California horned lark will also benefit from this acquisition.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation,

"The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisition of properties. Under the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. This project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant accepted for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be managed by the Authority as part of the WRC MSHCP reserve system, which serves to provide permanent habitat protection for populations of federal and state-listed endangered and threatened species that occupy the reserve and to increase regional wildlife habitat cores and linkages that will connect existing habitat reserve areas through western Riverside County. As part of its obligation under the plan, the Authority retains a Reserve Manager to ensure that management actions are consistent with the plan. The plan provides for the financing and implementation of an endowment for the monitoring and management of the Property in perpetuity. Management costs for parcels acquired under the WRC MSHCP will be provided by the Authority's operating funds.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $245,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value of $245,000.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match in the amount of $73,500.00 that is being provided by a grant from the WCB. The terms and conditions of the WCB grant to Authority and the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the Authority, provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Approved Fair Market Value	$245,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	$73,500.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$171,500.00
Total Purchase Price	$245,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$78,500.00**

It is estimated that an additional $5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the DGS appraisal review. The Authority, as project proponent, will fund all other project-related administrative costs for the acquisition, including but not limited to the environmental site assessment, appraisal, survey, escrow, and title insurance costs.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species and implement the Habitat Conservation Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this acquisition project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of $171,500.00 and approve the Agreement to Subgrant federal funds to the Authority; and allocate $78,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this acquisition

project as proposed; accept the Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant funds from the USFWS in the amount of $171,500.00 and approve the Agreement to Subgrant federal funds to the Authority; and allocate $78,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

17. Kimball Valley – Arroyo Toad, $0.00
Recovery Land Acquisition Grant (2010) (Hulett),
San Diego County

This project was withdrawn from consideration prior to the board meeting.

*18. San Diego County Multi Species Conservation Plan $187,500.00
(Bonfils),
San Diego County

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant to assist with the acquisition in fee of 256+/- acres of land by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the preservation and protection of core areas of habitat to protect rare, threatened, endangered, and fully protected species, secure key regional wildlife linkages, and enhance the existing Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), a joint Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP).

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in a rural area on the north side of the unincorporated San Diego County community of Lakeside and just to the west of the Barona Valley Ranch Resort and Casino and Barona Creek Golf Club. Lakeside is located about 25 miles east of downtown San Diego. Major landmarks in the area include the San Vicente Reservoir located to the east, the Barona Ranch Indian Reservation to the west and the DFW-owned Canada de San Vicente Open Space Preserve to the northeast and east

The Property is identified within the South County Subarea (SC Subarea) of the MSCP and CDFW's Iron Mountain Ridge-Canada de San Vicente Preserve Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The MSCP and CAPP recognize the SC Subarea as both a core resource (habitat) area containing a number of important wildlife corridors. Core resource areas are defined as areas of high concentration of sensitive biological resources which, if lost, could not be replaced or mitigated elsewhere. The corridors within the SC Subarea provide functional connections between existing open space preserves in the Lakeside area, existing open space preserves in the Poway area, existing open space preserves west of Highway 67, and other intact wildlife areas east of the San Vicente Reservoir that ultimately connects to the Cleveland National Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County of San Diego adopted the MSCP, which is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan that addresses the needs of multiple species and the preservation of natural vegetation communities in San Diego County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss and

species endangerment, and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of covered species and their habitat due to the direct impacts of future development of both public and private lands within the MSCP area. The acquisition will increase the protected block of biologically diverse habitat and augment protection of habitat corridors within the SC Subarea essential for the movement of southern mule deer, an MSCP target species and surrogate for wildlife corridor function. This Property also contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including coastal sage scrub habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher, and habitat for over 50 other sensitive and protected species. Other MSCP target species found or expected on site include mountain lion, orange-throated whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, and the Cooper's hawk.

WCB PROGRAM

The acquisition for this project was being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, et seq.) and enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions on behalf of the CDFW and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

CDFW will own and manage the Property as a participant of the MSCP Canada de San Vicente Open Space Preserve located adjacent to the Property. It was estimated that the annual cost to manage the Property would be approximately $4,000.00. This would include monthly checks on the new property boundaries to be sure they are being respected, sign and fencing checks/repairs, other wildlife surveys, and non-native plant control.

There is the potential for compatible future public use opportunities such as hiking, photography, and bird watching.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $450,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) and USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the fair market value of $450,000.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is to be provided by the Habitat Conservation Fund, Fish and Game Code section 2786 (b/c). The terms and conditions of the acquisition and the USFWS funds provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the

acquisition. Once approved by the Board, the transaction will also be reviewed by DGS.

PROJECT FUNDING
The funding breakdown for the project was as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$157,500.00
USFWS funds	$292,500.00
Total Purchase Price	$450,000.00
Other Project-related Admin. Costs	$30,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$187,500.00**

It was estimated that project-related administrative costs will include DGS appraisal, transaction and environmental survey review costs, escrow and title insurance.

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of these projects are consistent with the funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund, Fish and Game Code section 2786(b/c) (Proposition 117), which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened, or fully protected species; and acquisition of habitat to further implement HCPs.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE
The acquisition has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and was exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and habitat, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $187,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code section 2786(b/c) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $292,500.00 and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

As one of the consent items heard at the beginning of the meeting, it was moved by Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Fish

and Wildlife, that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $187,500.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code section 2786(b/c) for the acquisition and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $292,500.00 and authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

19. Humboldt Community Forest, McKay Tract, Humboldt County — $4,510,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Humboldt County (County) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the California Natural Resources Agency to acquire 1,000± acres of land for the protection of a mixed conifer forest property, including riparian corridors, salmonid streams, coastal watershed, habitat linkages, and to expand future wildlife oriented public use opportunities. Mr. Donnelly acknowledged that the WCB received several letters of support. The first one from Senator Noreen Evans; Assembly Member Chesbro, Virginia Bass, Chair of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors; Mark Lovelace, 3rd District Supervisor, Humboldt County Board of Supervisors; David Tyson, City Manager, City of Eureka; Mark Andre, Director of Environmental Services, City of Eureka; Patrick Rutten, Supervisor, Southwest Region of NOAA; Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer, Coastal Conservancy; and Kirk Cohune, President, Humboldt Trails Council

Mr. John Walsh presented the project to the board.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located adjacent to the city of Eureka, south of Myrtletown and Redwood Acres, east of Cutten, and west of the main stem of Ryan Creek. The project area is privately owned and managed by Green Diamond Resource Company as part of its 7,550 acre working forest known as the McKay Tract, which encompasses approximately 81% of the Ryan Creek watershed. The creek drains approximately 9,400 acres in its northward flow from a divide near the Elk River through the Property sustaining a wide range of fish and wildlife species, and is a priority for protection by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

Ryan Creek is among the most productive coho salmon streams in Northern California, providing off-channel and low-gradient over-winter rearing habitat for stable populations of coho salmon, steelhead, and coastal cutthroat trout. The National Marine Fisheries Services designated the creek Essential Coho Habitat and lists it as having high "intrinsic potential" for coho recovery. According to CDFW's Recovery Strategy of California Coho Salmon, coho salmon have undergone at least a 70% decline in abundance since the 1960s, and are currently at 6 to 15% of their abundance during the 1940s. Because of the watershed's high quality habitat and productivity for coho salmon, the Recovery Strategy designates Ryan Creek as a key population to maintain or improve. Green Diamond biologists, in cooperation with the CDFW, have implemented restoration measures to maintain the creek's stream bank integrity and channel complexity, and to encourage regeneration of native species in the Property's riparian areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is under heavy development pressure due to some of its fairly level terrain and low gradient slopes that abut developed neighborhoods on its western edge. In 1995, the Eureka Community Plan rezoned 256 acres of the McKay Tract from timber production to commercial, multi-family, and single family residential use. Residential development of this area would result in degradation of wetland functions, riparian condition, and water quality, and threaten the fish and wildlife dependent on the watershed's natural resources.

In addition to recovery of coho salmon, other species likely to benefit from protection of the Property include the following: steelhead trout and Chinook salmon, listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA); the federally endangered tidewater goby, the longfin smelt listed as threatened under the California ESA; and Coastal cutthroat trout, a California Species of Special Concern. The federally threatened Northern spotted owl is known to occur both east and west of Ryan Creek on the McKay Tract. The Property also hosts five rare plant species and three animal species, the northern red-legged frog, western pond turtle, and the Sonoma tree vole.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, and utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry expertise, including the CDFW. The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The land will be managed as a community working forest by the County. As a community forest timber, harvesting will continue in order to generate revenues to support management and operation costs. However, the timber harvesting will occur at lower rates and with different silviculture approaches than previously used. Normally, industrial timberland is harvested through even-age management, while managers of community forests apply uneven-age management also known as selective harvest. The County also has a Forestry Review Committee comprised of seven Registered Professional Foresters with expertise in forest management that will be available to help provide technical assistance to County staff. Other management objectives will include maintaining

and enhancing the integrity of the watershed, preserve wildlife, fisheries, and plant resources, and providing potential future wildlife-oriented recreational activities.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $6,870,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for $6,785,000.00, less than its approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the grants between WCB and the County provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$4,485,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	$ 950,000.00
California Natural Resources Agency	$1,350,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$6,785,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	$25,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$4,510,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $25,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code section 75055(a) which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section

15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $4,510,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code section 75055(a) for the grant to Humboldt County and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Walsh introduced John Bernstein and Dave Sutton from Trust for Public Land, Hank Seeman from Humboldt County Public Works Department, Rex Bohn, Humboldt County Supervisor; Mark Lovelace, Humboldt County Supervisor, and Eric Haney, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Ms. Finn asked if the proceeds from the timber harvest will be enough to manage the property. Mr. Seeman confirmed and said the county did a cash flow analysis and financial plan to manage short-term and long-term costs. In addition, the Trust for Public Land is providing funding for some start-up costs.

Supervisor Mark Lovelace from Humboldt County spoke in support of the project. Mr. Lovelace said the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors unanimously supports the project and asked for the Board's support as well.

Supervisor Rex Bohn spoke next and said Humboldt County is the number one area in the state for forest producing products. There are close to 9000 residents that live within walking distance of this property and will be able to enjoy the numerous trails. Humboldt County will be eternally grateful for the Board's approval of this project.

Gary Rynearson from Green Diamond Resource Company spoke in support of the project as well. He said this is one of the most productive pieces of timberland in the state. It is a wonderful opportunity for the county to have both a working forest and a recreation area that produces a revenue stream. We fully support this project and encourage your support of the grant.

Dave Sutton from The Trust for Public Land spoke next and said he is very excited about this project and feels it is precedent setting. This will create the second community forest in the west. The public in Humboldt County is hugely supportive of this project.

Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro spoke next in support of this project. This will serve the environment and the people of Eureka very well. He complimented The Trust for Public Land, Green Diamond Resource Company, the City of Eureka and Humboldt County for collaborating to make this project a possibility.

Due to time constraints, he also spoke in support of Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative. The region the project is located in is one of the most productive for both timber and salmon. It will also address the problem of illegal marijuana farming, which causes environmental damage due to building illegal roads, toxic solid waste disposal, stream diversions and graded clearings. The project will restore thousands of acres of forest lands that illegal marijuana growing has damaged. He encouraged the Board to support both projects to ensure long term conservation of these valuable resources.

Jeff Calvert from Cal Fire spoke to make sure the Board was aware that Cal Fire had acquired a total of $3 million in federal funding to acquire the conservation easement.

Ms. Finn did ask if the funding from the State Coastal Conservancy and the California Natural Resources Agency had been approved. Mr. Walsh confirmed that the funding was approved.

Deputy Director Hunting asked if there were any further questions or comments and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $4,510,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code section 75055(a) for the grant to Humboldt County and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

20. Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative, Mendocino and Humboldt Counties — $3,210,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Sanctuary Forest Land Trust (SFLT) to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 2,612± acres of land for the protection of a mixed conifer working forest, including riparian corridors, salmonid streams, coastal watersheds, and habitat linkages in Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. Mr. Donnelly acknowledged that the WCB received several letters of support. The first one from Senator Noreen Evans; Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro, Ryan Sundberg, Chair of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors; John Pinches, Vice Chair from the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, Lindsay Green, the Executive Director of the Mattole Restoration Council; Tom Tuchman, the Active Executive Director from the Redwood Forest Foundation; John Pelletier, Senior Project Director from The Nature Conservancy and Rondal Snodgrass, Conservation Land Consultant. John Walsh briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located just south of the community of Whitethorn, 22 road miles southwest of Garberville (the nearest town on State Route 101) and five air miles inland from the ocean. The Property contains the headwaters of two major salmon-bearing watersheds, the Mattole River headwaters to the west, and the headwaters of Indian Creek (a major tributary to the South Fork of the Eel River) to the east. The general terrain is steep and mountainous with mixed conifer and hardwood forested slopes and limited flatland and valleys, interspersed with a number of tributary watersheds to the Mattole and Eel rivers. The area is developed with a widely dispersed population of rural homesteads, with some small limited commercial areas along the major roads.

Since 1988 the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has invested in a number of major acquisitions to help create the 1,400 +/- acre California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Mattole River Ecological Reserve. In cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), State Coastal Conservancy, Save the Redwoods League, the Mattole Restoration Council, and the SFLT the WCB has helped acquire and restore nearly 5,000 acres of property in the Mattole watershed. Next to these protected areas is the 68,000-acre BLM King Range National Conservation Area located to the west along the coast and south of this is the 7,500 acre Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. Together these two parks form the largest coastal wilderness area within the contiguous United States, and provide additional upper watershed protection for the Mattole River.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of two non-contiguous pieces of land and each will have its own site-specific conservation easement. The West Side Unit consists of 300± acres and the East Side Unit is 2,312± acres, both are irregular in shape and are predominantly forested with redwood and Douglas-fir, with some residual ancient

redwoods scattered through some of the existing second and third growth forests. There are also significant stands of mixed hardwood species interspersed throughout, as well as scattered remnant meadows, oak woodlands, and coastal prairie habitat. The terrain is rugged and parts of it are very steep. The West Side Unit is on the western side of the Mattole headwaters and the East Side Unit straddles the ridge dividing the eastern Mattole headwaters and the northern Indian Creek headwaters.

The purpose of the Easement is to allow for continued forest management practices and harvesting in a way that is compatible with protection of the Property's resource values. The Easement will prevent future subdivision and development of the Property which would have a detrimental effect on the watersheds and ecological benefits of the Property. It will prohibit even-aged management except where necessary to transition forest stands dominated by tan oak to a more desired ecological condition of mixed conifers and hardwoods. The Easement also protects old-growth trees, widens riparian buffers, creates specially-protected Late Seral Reserves, limits the use of herbicides, and requires the increase of forest stand inventory across the Property until a set stocking threshold has been attained. Economic stimulus from forest land management investment and processing of forest products will still be allowed and have positive results for the region and local economies.

In the fairly recent past an illegal marijuana operation fractured the landscape over 1,700± acres of the 2,312± acres of the East Side Unit. Federal, state (including CDFW wardens), and local law enforcement collaborated to shut down the operation. False front residences had been created over the land by building cabins, sheds, and placing trailers and recreational vehicles at grow home sites. These operations had destructive impacts on streams through contamination, illegal water withdraws and increased sediment along with other impacts to resource values where the operations took place. These uses have been eliminated and what was left were water systems' collection and distribution from springs and creeks in 93 grow sites. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was completed and it was determined that no toxic damages or storage of hazardous materials were present. The Easement will provide an additional presence on the Property that will help curtail any future illegal activity.

The streams that run through or drain from the East and West Side Units are a significant contributor to adequate flow levels for the Chinook, coho, and steelhead salmonids. The tributaries of the Mattole River and South Fork Eel River have low dry-season stream flows, and associated water scarcity and water quality issues have posed a significant resource management challenge for fisheries, wildlife, and human needs. One of the primary goals of the Easement is to permanently limit dry-season water withdrawals from surface watercourses on the Property in order to improve ground and surface water hydrology and summer stream flows within and downstream for the benefit of fish, wildlife and neighboring communities. The parties to the Easement intend to extinguish most

of the development rights and place additional safeguards on water withdrawals for permitted residential or commercial uses and activities. This will help the watercourses retain higher summertime stream flows benefiting salmonid survival rates. In addition, the Easement guarantees SFLT the affirmative right in the future to implement stream flow restoration projects along identified stream reaches in order to further improve the Property's natural capacity to maintain summertime flows.

Other species that will benefit from the protection of the Property include the following: northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, western flycatcher, coastal tailed frog, southern torrent salamander, Pacific giant salamander, and the California red-legged frog.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant for this project is being considered under the WCB's Forest Conservation Program (Program). Grant proposals are evaluated and selected for funding by WCB staff based on established criteria approved by the Board on November 17, 2007, and utilizing a peer review process involving biological and forestry expertise, including the CDFW. The Program seeks to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through conserving, preserving and restoring productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife and plants found on these lands. One of the primary objectives of the Program is the protection and conservation of working forests and productive managed forest lands. Selected projects promote the restoration and/or maintenance of the ecological integrity and economic stability of the property in the context of the surrounding landscape and regional economy.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Under the terms of the Easement, the landowners will be allowed to continue uneven aged selective harvesting in accordance with a Forest Management Plan, and all applicable State and federal forestry laws, practices, guidelines, and regulations. The selective harvesting of trees would be consistent with sustainable and restorative forest management practices, including forest thinning that will benefit both forested and riparian areas within the Easement.

SFLT will hold, manage, and be responsible for the monitoring of the Easement in perpetuity per the WCB grant terms. If this project is approved, a baseline report will be completed by the Grantee and approved by the WCB. The conservation easement deed permits access to the subject Property by both SFLT and WCB staff for monitoring purposes.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $3,190,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by

the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the WCB grant provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the Easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

PROJECT FUNDING
The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$3,190,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$3,190,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	$20,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$3,210,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $20,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a) which allows for forest conservation and protection projects in order to promote the ecological integrity and economic stability of California's diverse native forests through forest conservation, preservation and restoration of productive managed forest lands, forest reserve areas, redwood forests and other forest types, including the conservation of water resources and natural habitats for native fish, wildlife and plants found on these lands.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $3,210,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a); for the grant to the

SFLT and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Finn said the parties to the easement will extinguish most of the development rights and asked who are the parties to the easement. Mr. Walsh said Sanctuary Forest will hold the easement and New Island Capital is the fee owner of the property. The property was appraised for 17 home sites and they agreed, in the easement terms, to reduce it down to 2. Mr. Donnelly confirmed the conservation easement extinguishes the development rights on the property, with the exception of two sites.

Ms. Finn then asked about the illegal marijuana operations on the property. Mr. Walsh said there will now be a caretaker on the property. Dave Means from the Wildlife Conservation Board said that many of these types of properties are under threat of these types of abuse. Conservation easements help abate these types of abuses as it provides additional presence on the property through third party monitoring. It also eliminates property fragmentation into smaller lots which tend to be more desirable for purchase and use by illegal marijuana growing operations. Mr. Donnelly said the land trust is agreeing to correct and fix any impacts associated with that type of abuse through the conservation agreement.

Humboldt County Supervisor Mark Lovelace was the first to speak in support of this project. He asked for the Board's support for the project. Tasha McKee from Sanctuary Forest also spoke in support of this project. She said this is a precedent setting project that has been the dream of her community for a number of years. The conservation easement makes it economically possible to achieve sustainable forestry. She thanked the Board for their support of this project.

The final speaker was Supervisor Dan Gjerde from Mendocino County who said the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors unanimously supports this project. There are three reasons they support this project; the first is for the restoration that will take place on this property, secondly, is due to timber production that will take place in future years and finally it will remain on the tax rolls.

Deputy Director Hunting asked if there were any further questions or comments and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $3,210,000.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(a); for the grant to the SFLT and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried

21. Brush Creek Conservation Easement (Miller Trust), Mendocino County — $1,675,000.00

No discussion took place as the item was deferred to the next board meeting to allow staff time to answer questions surrounding the project.

22. Usal Forest Conservation Easement Transfer Mendocino County — $0.00

This project was withdrawn from consideration prior to the board meeting.

23. Willow Creek Ranch Water Distribution Improvements, Glenn and Colusa Counties — $657,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the landowners to enhance ±644 acres of wetlands on privately-owned property protected in perpetuity through USFWS conservation easements, located four miles west of Princeton in Glenn and Colusa Counties. Mr. Brian Cary presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION

The water distribution system improvement and habitat enhancement project will occur at Willow Creek Ranch (WCR), located in Glenn and Colusa Counties. The WCR consists of about 7,050 acres and has been subdivided into smaller parcels. The project area is in the northeastern portion of the WCR. It consists of ±1,045 acres and is comprised of 33 individual parcels with 23 individual landowners.

Most of the WCR was converted from natural habitat and grazing land to rice fields during the 1960's and 1970's. In 1985, the FWS established the 20,000-acre Willow Creek-Lurline Wildlife Management Area (WMA) with the primary purpose of restoring and preserving wetland habitat for wintering waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife. The goal of the WMA is to create an almost continuous block of wetlands from the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) south ±15 miles to Colusa NWR. The WMA is comprised of two separate areas. The WCR portion lies between the Sacramento and Delevan NWRs and its Lurline portion lies between the Delevan and Colusa NWRs. Much of the WCR was restored back to wetlands during the late 1980's and early 1990's following establishment of the WMA. All of the parcels are privately owned and protected with perpetual Conservation Easements.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Today, WCR consists of ±5,105 acres of seasonally-managed wetlands and ±1,945 acres of wildlife-friendly agricultural lands (mostly rice with some natural grazing lands). It includes some of the last privately-owned historic wetlands in the Colusa Basin. The wetlands on WCR provide a linkage between wetlands on Sacramento and Delevan NWRs. This large block of wetlands provides extremely important habitat for Pacific Flyway waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds and supports several special-status species including the giant garter snake and greater sandhill crane. Annually tens of thousands of wintering waterfowl use the WMA.

The canals and drains at the WCR were constructed to supply water to the new rice fields when the project area was first sub-divided. The designs were adequate for the day, because water was plentiful and, unlike today, water conservation was not considered to be a pressing issue. As a result, the canals were undersized, and lack water conveyance efficiency. In addition, when all the land was managed for rice, there was no conflict in timing for water delivery and drainage. Once the properties were restored to wetland habitat, water delivery challenges became more apparent. Some habitat areas could not be filled efficiently, some did not drain completely, and there were seepage problems when rice fields were draining at the same time that wetlands were flooding up. Finally, there was no consideration of being able to recapture drain water to reuse for irrigation. The landowners asked DU and the FWS to design and construct infrastructure to alleviate these problems.

The northeastern portion of WCR includes two main water delivery laterals, the A Lateral and B Lateral, and one main drain, the Wylie Drain. DU has completed or has nearly completed portions of the canal work on the A and B Laterals and habitat enhancement on three private wetlands. The work will complete water distribution system improvements in the northeastern portion of WCR and enhance habitat on three additional wetlands.

This project includes improving/re-grading existing levees and constructing new levees, improving existing water conveyance canals and constructing new canals, removing dysfunctional interior levees, installing a small section of pipeline, re-contouring selected areas, constructing new interconnected swales and potholes, removing degraded water control structures, and installing new larger water control structures to improve water conveyance, distribution, and water use efficiency and provide proper water and vegetation management capabilities to wetlands. Swales and potholes will be linked to water control structures to provide positive drainage and prevent areas of standing water that can lead to mosquito production. Islands will be constructed to provide habitat diversity. Habitat enhancement will be conducted on three private wetlands, Pop's Lake, Motherlode Duck Club, and Huba Huba Duck Club, and will provide the fill material needed to improve the water delivery canals and drains. The Wylie drain will be reworked. Following construction, native black willows will be planted and

tule clumps will be transplanted in some wetland areas to provide habitat and structural diversity and a mix of grasses and clover will be seeded on the levee tops and side slopes and upland bench to prevent erosion and provide cover. Waterfowl food plants will be seeded in wetland areas where re-contouring was conducted to help desirable vegetation establish as soon as possible.

This project will increase the efficiency of water use and allow drain water from rice lands and wetlands to be recaptured and used again for habitat management and agricultural production. It will reduce water delivery and drainage conflicts between rice and wetlands, reduce mosquito production and the risk of an outbreak of West Nile Virus, and improve habitat conditions on important private wetlands by improving water and vegetation management capabilities. This project will restore and enhance wetland habitat and thereby improve breeding, migration, and wintering habitat for a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds. It will also improve habitat conditions for state and/or federally threatened or endangered species and other special status species (e.g. greater sandhill crane, giant garter snake).

The project supports the Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) goal established in the CVJV Implementation Plan to enhance 2,057 acres of seasonal wetlands annually within the Colusa Basin.

WCB PROGRAM

The project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program (Fish and Game Code Section 1400, et seq.) and meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

DU will follow the Management Plan pursuant to the Grant Agreement. As a signatory of the grant agreement, the Willow Creek Mutual Water Company will manage water conveyance infrastructure improvements for the 25-year life of the project. Individual landowners will manage habitat improvements pursuant to Site Specific Agreements between DU and each landowner, which will be recorded in the Official Records of the appropriate county.

If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, DU does not assure that the project improvements are managed according to the Management Plan, the Grant Agreement requires that DU refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

This project will complete the restoration and enhancement of the north eastern portion of the WCR. The first two phases of the project, completed in 2012 and 2013, totaled $822,283, with funding provided by DU, Willow Creek Mutual Water Company, the FWS through the North American Wetland Conservation Act,

landowners, Troubadour Land Surveying, and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The funding for this project is as follows:

Item	DU	Landowners	USFWS	WCB	Total
Site Prep				$20,000	$20,000
Earthwork		$10,000	$10,000	$256,955	$276,995
Conveyance Infrastructure		$6,000	$6,000	$228,624	$240,624
Vegetation				$17,500	$17,500
Project Management	$19,515			$133,921	$137,124
Total	**$19,515**	**$16,000**	**$16,000**	**$657,000**	**$708,515**

WCB funding will be used to cover all the direct costs for the water distribution system improvements needed in the ±1,045-acre northeastern portion of WCR and most of the direct costs for habitat enhancement work. WCB funds will be applied to survey and engineering design, construction management, pipeline installation, earthwork, water control structure installation, tree planting and tule transplanting, and wetland and upland seeding. The remainder of the direct costs for habitat enhancement work will be covered by USFWS and private landowner funds.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass in the Central Valley and is consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land, water and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $657,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) Inlands Wetlands Conservation Program (Proposition 1E), authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Donnelly said he received a letter from the County of Colusa requesting the letter be placed in the Board minutes (Exhibit A) and a copy be given to the members of the Board. The letter does not necessarily oppose the project, just raises a concern the county has regarding the acquisition of agricultural lands. The project is being funded with Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) (Proposition 1E), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands. The county is taking issue with the word "acquisition." Mr. Donnelly is on record stating this is not an acquisition project. This is a construction only project and Mr. Donnelly will be getting back to the county to let them know it is a construction only project.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting noted that about half the funding was going towards earthwork and the remaining funding would be for infrastructure, vegetation and project management. Mr. Cary confirmed the funding breakdown was correct.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments from the public. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $657,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) Inlands Wetlands Conservation Program (Proposition 1E), authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried

24. Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, Jensen Riparian Restoration Project, Colusa County — $410,000.00

This proposal was the allocation for a grant to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to restore ±81 acres of riparian forest on the FWS's Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, located two miles south of Princeton in Colusa County. Ms. Terry Roscoe briefly described the project and its location to the Board.

LOCATION

The ±81-acre Jensen site is located just south of CDFW's Sacramento River Wildlife Area-Princeton Unit, within the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge in Colusa County. The Sacramento River between Princeton and the City of Colusa, fifteen miles to the south, is constrained by flood control levees that confine the floodplain. Within the floodplain, approximately 55% of land is riparian habitat and 43% is in agricultural production, while the remainder is used for recreation, flood control and water supply facilities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Channelization, bank protection, and the construction of the Shasta Dam degraded riparian habitat along the Sacramento River by restricting the dynamic forces that promote natural habitat succession and regeneration. Two-thirds of the linear extent of the river's banks have been modified and confined by levees and riprap. The resulting loss and degradation of riparian habitat has greatly diminished the river's ability to support viable wildlife populations and encouraged the invasion and proliferation of non-native invasive species. Several state, federal, and non-profit organizations have been working for over 25 years to conserve and restore a riparian corridor between Red Bluff and Colusa. The Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum has set as its primary goal the preservation of remaining riparian habitat and reestablishment of a continuous riparian corridor along the Sacramento River from Red Bluff to Colusa.

The loss of high-quality habitat and the decrease in water quality has put many native species populations at risk of extinction along the Sacramento River. Important at-risk species include the Sacramento splittail, green sturgeon, Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, western yellow-billed cuckoo, Swainson's hawk, least Bell's vireo, and Valley elderberry longhorn beetle. The project will help reverse this trend by restoring ±81 acres of riparian floodplain habitats through the planting of a suite of riparian plants. This action will promote the recovery of neotropical migrant and resident birds and other terrestrial species, and improve floodplain and in-channel conditions for anadromous fish. Additional benefits include improved water quality, flood damage reduction, potential for increased recreational opportunities, and improved aesthetics.

WCB PROGRAM

The project will be funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Jensen riparian restoration project supports the following management goals and objectives, established by the FWS for the property:

- Protect existing and improve degraded riparian vegetation
- Meet or exceed 80% or greater of planting survival by year 3
- Promote long term survival of special status species
- Improve species diversity to include riparian forest with a mixed understory of native shrubs and forbs
- Provide potential recreational opportunities

Once TNC has completed the 3 year implantation phase, as outlined in the Grant Agreement Workplan, long-term management begins. Long-term management will be the responsibility of the FWS, pursuant to the Management Plan in the Grant Agreement. The FWS, a signatory to the Grant Agreement, will manage the Jensen Unit in accordance with its Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge.

If at any time during the life of the project, FWS does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires TNC to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

WCB funds will be used for project management and monitoring, plant materials, seed propagation, planting, plant maintenance, weed control, and irrigation.

The funding is as shown below:

	CDFW	FWS	TNC	WCB	Total
Project Management & Monitoring				$14,200	$14,277
Project Planning & Design	$35,000	$35,000			$70,000
Materials				$89,500	$89,540
Riparian Habitat Installation			$6,000	$306,300	$312,010
Project Administration			$62,332		$62,332
TOTAL	**$35,000**	**$35,000**	**$68,332**	**$410,000**	**$548,332**

FUNDING SOURCE
The funding source [Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E)], allows for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian habitat and aquatic habitat for salmonids and trout to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW
The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, as lead agency, has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this project by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings; approve this project as proposed; allocate $410,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E); authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Roscoe introduced Ryan Luster from The Nature Conservancy to help answer any questions.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting noted there were no speaker cards and asked if there were any further questions or comments. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings; approve this project as proposed; allocate $410,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f) (Proposition 1E); authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

25. Sagehen Basin Forest Restoration, Sierra/Nevada County — $318,000.00

No discussion took place as the item was deferred to a future board meeting. The project may become part of a larger project and will need additional CEQA work.

26. Lower Sonoma Creek Wetland Enhancement, Sonoma County — $1,700,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the National Audubon Society for a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW), to enhance and restore ±260 acres of the ±400 acre Sonoma Creek Marsh (Marsh) on San Pablo Bay. The Marsh is within the boundary of the FWS's San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), located ±15 miles southeast of the City of Sonoma in Sonoma County. Ms. Elizabeth Hubert presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The State of California owns the Marsh property. The land is under the jurisdiction of the California State Lands Commission and managed by the FWS. The ±260 acre project site is bordered to the north by Highway 37, to the east by the mouth of Sonoma Creek channel, to the south by San Pablo Bay, and to the west by diked agricultural baylands owned by the Vallejo Sanitary District and leased to third parties for farming hay and straw.

The project site is located within a large, tidal marsh on San Pablo Bay. Prior to European colonization, the current Marsh was part of the open water of San Pablo Bay, and was bordered to the west by tidal marshes. In the late 19th century, these historic tidal marshes were surrounded by levees and drained for conversion to agricultural use. Throughout the North San Francisco Bay, this process of conversion of tidal marshes to agriculture resulted in the loss of ±82% of the region's historic tidal wetlands. During this time, hydraulic gold mining activities in the Sierra Nevada sent large sediment loads down the rivers and streams, which formed extensive mudflats along the newly created levees in the Bay. These new depositional areas grew to eventually create new tidal marshes, known as "centennial marshes" since they formed between the years 1900 and 2000. Sonoma Creek Marsh is one of these centennial marshes. The Marsh was has been managed by the Refuge since 1982, and is managed for wildlife habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site routinely and unnaturally ponds water for long periods when high waters inundate the entire Marsh and become trapped in a large topographic basin in the Marsh interior. A series of abandoned former levees along the western

boundary of the Marsh form additional impediments to marsh drainage. The unnaturally ponded water in these areas leads to extremely reduced vigor of native marsh vegetation, especially pickleweed. These conditions then leave very poor quality habitat for State and federally endangered salt marsh harvest mouse and California clapper rail, State threatened California black rail, and many other marsh-dependent species. In addition, the ponded water supports significant mosquito populations which threaten transmission of disease to humans and wildlife. The resultant applications of larvicides further disturb the marsh and damage critical wildlife habitat.

Project implementation consists of constructing channels and berms to improve drainage and enhance marsh habitat, which is currently negatively impacted by the ponded water. Project construction will comprise the following elements:

Central Tidal Channel: Improvement of tidal exchange and drainage within the project site will be accomplished by constructing a new "main" channel that will extend into the marsh interior basin and connect to San Pablo Bay via lower Sonoma Creek. The design for this feature was determined based upon two existing channels located within the tidal marshes of the San Francisco Estuary that were used as models.

Lateral Starter Channels: Short "starter" channels will be excavated into the marsh plain and connected to the central channel. Over time, these starter channels are expected to enlarge and lengthen, thus further improving tidal exchange and habitat quality throughout the central basin.

Internal Connector Channels: Internal connector channels will be excavated between the central channel and the relic berm channel network. These connector channels will improve the connection of the relic berm area and related depressions with source tides and contribute to the other project enhancements.

High Marsh "Refuge" Islands: Some of the material excavated for construction of the channels within the central basin will be placed in low, spreading, intermittent mounds adjacent to the central drainage channel and internal connector channels. These mounds support high marsh vegetation, such as pickleweed, saltgrass, and gumplant, and are designed to provide habitat heterogeneity in the marsh interior as well as high-tide refugia for marsh wildlife, including California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse.

Marsh-Upland Transitional Berm: Excavated materials from channel construction will be used to create a marsh-upland transitional berm. This berm will improve drainage within the relic berm areas and provide important refuge habitat for marsh-dependent wildlife during extreme high tides and storm events. The transitional berm will create a sloping surface that extends from the marsh plain up to the Tubbs Island perimeter levee. The transitional berm would support habitat associated with infrequent tidal inundation. The berm will be planted with native grasses and

sedges typical of North Bay marsh-upland transitional habitat. Large woody debris will be placed throughout the newly constructed berm.

Levee Maintenance: Unused material would be hauled to the adjacent Tubbs Island perimeter levee per agreement with the Vallejo Sanitary District, where it would be deposited and roughly graded on the levee top and landward slope to raise and strengthen the boundary levee to protect the Sanitary District lands and Highway 37.

The project will result in significantly improved tidal circulation and ±260 acres of enhanced marsh wetlands, with ±10 acres of wetland transition zone. The enhancement activities will directly improve habitat conditions for salt marsh harvest mouse, California clapper rail, black rail, and other tidal marsh-dependent species (including a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl) by improving tidal exchange and, therefore, overall marsh ecosystem health; increasing the amount and quality of marsh channel habitat; and providing marsh-upland transitional habitat wherever possible. Additionally, the enhancement activities will provide the Sonoma Creek Marsh with improved resiliency to impending sea-level rise and extreme storm events brought about as a result of climate change. Finally, implementation of the revegetation phase of this project will provide opportunities for project partners to present hands-on environmental education to underprivileged students who may not otherwise experience natural history in a field setting.

The project is consistent with regional conservation plans, including the San Francisco Estuary Partnership's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan objectives, the San Francisco Estuary Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Project, and the federal Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems of Northern and Central California. It is also consistent with the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Climate Change Bay Plan.

WCB PROGRAM

The project is to be funded through the Wildlife Conservation Board's Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program and meets the program's goal of providing for restoration of wetlands that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Inland Wetland Conservation Program such as coastal, tidal habitats and threatened and endangered species habitats.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The entire Lower Sonoma Creek Wetland Enhancement Project falls within the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the long-term land manager of the project site. The project site will be protected under the National Wildlife Refuge system, which is managed for the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats. The Refuge's 15-year Comprehensive Conservation Plan includes goals of conserving native fish and wildlife biodiversity, protecting habitats for native species, and restoring degraded ecosystems. Public access to the project site is limited, which further ensures the protection of the land itself and local wildlife. .

The constructed central channel will improve overall tidal exchange within the central basin. Post-restoration monitoring will identify the effectiveness of channel construction. Isolated areas that are not effectively drained by the central channel may persist following construction. Any persistent problem areas will be addressed by constructing small lateral channels into these areas. These channels would be constructed over a ten-year period following construction of the central channel, according to schedules allowed by permits. Post-project adaptive management work would be completed by the Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District and the Refuge.

As a condition of the pending permits, biological and physical monitoring will be conducted for three years after project completion (through December 2017) to assess project effectiveness. Post-construction monitoring activities will include monitoring of birds, mammals, fish, and vegetation to measure success of enhancement project and to track wildlife populations. In addition, data will be collected on hydrology and water quality and mosquitos and pesticide applications. Annual progress and monitoring reports will be completed by Audubon and FWS and provided to grantors and regulatory agencies.

If at any time during the life of the project the FWS does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires the National Audubon Society DBA Audubon California to refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The WCB applied for a grant from the FWS's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Act (NCWCA) program, which has been approved. WCB will provide initial funding for the project, and upon completion of the project, the FWS will reimburse $1,000,000 to the WCB. The funding for the project is as follows:

Item	Total	WCB	NCWCA	Other funders
Environmental review, permits	$175,323			$175,323
Final engineering design	$82,575			$82,575
Biological & physical monitoring	$56,524			$56,524
Earth moving	$1,861,623	$647,728	$1,000,000	$218,360
Education (STRAW)	$49,000			$49,000
Post-construction monitoring	$82,217	$52,272		$25,480
Total	**$2,307,262**	**$700,000**	**$1,000,000**	**$607,262**

Additional partners include the FWS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Marin-Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District and STRAW. WCB project costs will be for site preparation and construction and for post-construction

monitoring.

FUNDING SOURCE
The funding sources for this project are the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(c), which provides funds for the restoration of wetlands in the San Francisco Bay Area; and the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d)(Proposition 1E), which provides funds for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass outside the Central Valley. Both are consistent with the objectives of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION
The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead agency, has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the MND and prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the proposal and recommended if for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $700,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117) Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley (Proposition 1E) and $1,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), authorize reimbursement of $1,000,000.00 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Act; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Hubert introduced Kerry Wilcox from Audubon California and Don Brubaker from the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Ms. Finn asked about the $1 million in reimbursable funds and when the funds would be returned from the Federal NCWCA grant. Ms. Hubert said it would be reimbursed after the project is complete in December 2017. Ms. Finn advised the reimbursement needs to be tracked and may need to be returned to the bond. She recommended Director Donnelly have a discussion with the Treasurer's office and Natural Resources Agency staff to clarify these kinds of reimbursements and explained that there are strict requirements regarding returned bond proceeds. Mr. Donnelly replied that for any federal reimbursement that WCB receives, WCB is required, according to the Fish and Game Code, to deposit the funds into the Wildlife Restoration Fund. Mr. Donnelly and Ms. Finn will discuss reimbursement

procedures at a later date.

Mr. Brubaker from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service spoke in support of the project. This marsh area was identified as the North Bay's number one mosquito production areas and this project will go a long way in reducing mosquito production and improving the surrounding habitat. He greatly appreciates the WCB's efforts on this project.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any further public comments, speakers or questions. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $700,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117) Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (d), Wetlands Outside the Central Valley (Proposition 1E) and $1,000,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Section 79572(c), authorize reimbursement of $1,000,000.00 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Act; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

27. Pole Mountain, Sonoma County — $655,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) for a cooperative project with the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, the Packard Foundation, and the California State Coastal Conservancy, to acquire 238± acres of land for the protection of deer and mountain lion habitat, native oak woodland, coastal watersheds and habitat connectivity and to provide future wildlife oriented public use opportunities in Sonoma County. Ms. Candice Marg briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The Property is located in the coastal range area of western Sonoma County, just north of state highway 1, near the town of Jenner and the mouth of the Russian River on the Pacific Ocean. The Property is situated between the Russian River watershed located to the south and east and the Russian Gulch Creek watershed located to the north.

The general neighborhood is rural and coastal in nature and includes land parcels ranging from a few acres to several hundred acres in size. The residential home site market throughout the area has been increasing steadily since the early 1990's. A small development was constructed just west of this location and subdivision of larger parcels into small homesteads is a threat. Additionally, preliminary vineyard studies indicated that many of the properties have potential for small 1 to 4 acre vineyards that not only convert habitat areas but also place a strain on water resources.

To the immediate south is the 5,630 acre Jenner Headlands property, a cooperative acquisition funded in part by Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in November 2009, and currently managed by the Wildlands Conservancy. Immediately to the north of the Property is Little Black Mountain, an open space area managed by Sonoma Land Trust. Acquisition of this Property will provide a corridor for wildlife with variable habitats and elevations and create over 6,350 acres of continuous, protected habitat. Also in the vicinity is a network of over 20,000 acres of protected lands along the Sonoma Coast, including Sonoma Coast State Beach, Fort Ross State Park, Bodega Head, and Doran Beach Regional Park.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property varies from gentle rises to steep slopes with an elevation range from 1,600 to the 2,204 foot Pole Mountain the highest peak in this region, second only to Mt. Tamalpais in Marin County. The Property offers spectacular views of the surrounding coastal mountain range and Pacific Ocean and contains the upper headwaters of Pole Mountain Creek and Kidd Creek, along with a variety of seasonal springs or seepages. Pole Mountain Creek runs in a northward direction down the northwest corner of the property and is a tributary to Ward Creek which

flows into Austin Creek, a tributary of the Russian River. Kidd Creek flows from the south side of the Property east and also connects with Austin Creek. Steelhead trout and yellow-legged frogs have been found in Pole Mountain Creek and Kidd Creek by CDFW, and Kidd Creek was historically inhabited by coho salmon. The Kidd creek watershed is also home to several state threatened and endangered species including the red tree vole and the California freshwater shrimp.

The Property is zoned Resource and Rural Development and consists of four legal parcels (five assessor parcel numbers) totaling 238 acres, providing for a high risk of development. There is a spring on the Property near the access road that provides year-round water and could likely be developed for rural recreational/residential use. Existing improvements include access roads entering from state highway 1 and the volunteer-run Pole Mountain Fire Lookout Tower located at the top of Pole Mountain which is run by stipend-only volunteers from June through October. It is anticipated the fire lookout will continue to operate under an agreement with SLT after the Property is acquired.

The Property contains a wide variety of habitat areas including oak savannah, oak woodlands, open grassland, hardwood/coniferous forests, serpentine outcroppings, wetlands, ponds, seeps and associated native riparian corridors. The Property forms part of the diverse regional habitat for resident fish, wildlife and plant species including; deer, mountain lion, the golden eagle, northern spotted owl, peregrine falcon, osprey, Northwestern pond turtle, and California freshwater shrimp. The Property also has good potential for educational interpretive programs and expanded public use opportunities.

The Property was recommended for acquisition by CDFW under the Pole Mountain Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) with the primary conservation goal being to protect the Property from fragmentation and development. The combined Pole Mountain, Ward Creek, Big Austin Creek watershed is listed by CDFW as a Conservation Lands Network Priority 1 stream conservation target, due to its resource values. The acquisition of this Property provides a crucial ecological connection between diverse and varied habitat types from the shore of the Pacific Ocean to the top of the Sonoma Coast range, and provides upland watershed protection for both the Russian River and Russian Gulch Creek watersheds.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program, The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property rights or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to properties. Under the program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These

activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be owned and managed by SLT and will be incorporated into the ongoing management efforts of the adjacent properties to the north, Little Black Mountain open space area, and cooperatively with the Wildlands Conservancy on Jenner Headlands. SLT has already raised $350,000 which will be used to develop a management plan and support future management and stewardship of the Property.

SLT is also currently exploring the ability to partner with CDFW and use the Property for CDFW's SHARE program which is designed to improve public access and recreation including activities such as hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $2,350,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The Property owner has agreed to sell the Property for the approved appraised fair market value. The terms and conditions of the grant to SLT provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to the distribution of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Approved Fair Market Value	$2,350,000.00
Wildlife Conservation Board	$650,000.00
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District	$1,000,000.00
Packard Foundation	$350,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	$350,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$2,350,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$655,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $5,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786 (a), which allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat.

ENVIROMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATIONS
The project has been reviewed for compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $655,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the grant to the Sonoma Land Trust and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Marg introduced Amy Chestnut from the Sonoma Land Trust and Misty Arias from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Spaces to help answer any questions.

Ms. Finn asked if the Coastal Conservancy had approved their portion of the funding. Ms. Marg confirmed the funding was approved at their board meeting in December.

Ms. Chestnut spoke in support of the project and thanked the Board for their consideration. This is the last funding piece of the project as it has been in the process for over 10 years. She acknowledged and thanked Brian Shelton from the Department of Fish and Wildlife for being a strong proponent of the project and Ms. Marg who was a joy to work with.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $655,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the grant to the Sonoma Land Trust and to cover project-related

expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

28. Sinnamon Meadows Conservation Easement, Mono County — $630,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) for a cooperative project with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service to acquire a conservation easement (Easement) over 1,240± acres of rangeland including wet meadow, chaparral and sagebrush scrub habitat areas supporting deer, mountain lion, and the greater sage grouse in Mono County. John Walsh presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is situated on the lower eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, 6 miles southwest from the intersection of Green Creek Road and State route 395 via Green Creek-Dunderberg Meadow Road, with access provided via unimproved county maintained roads. The nearest communities are Bridgeport (9 miles north), Virginia Lakes Settlement (3 mi southwest), and Lee Vining (10 miles south). Other significant features include the Bodie Hills located to the east, Mono Lake located to the southeast and Bridgeport Valley located to the north.

The northwest corner of the Property connects to the southern boundary of the 720 acre California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) owned Green Creek Wildlife Area. This area is surrounded by other public lands and straddles the boundary between public lands managed by the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). East of the Property is the United States Department of Agriculture's Hoover Wilderness area and the BLM Conway Summit Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

The Property is identified within CDFW's Upper Summers Meadow and Sinnamon Meadow Unit – Green Creek Wildlife Area Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP describes the need to maintain habitat connectivity between public lands separated by large private parcels, such as the Property, that if developed could potentially fragment wildlife movement and dispersal corridors. The CAPP area comprises a total of 4,920 acres, including 683 acres of wetlands, 217 acres of aspen habitat, and 1.2 miles of riverine habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is summer pasture grazed by cattle as part of a larger ranch operation. Livestock grazing is an important component of the rural economy. Agricultural practices such as irrigation have been ongoing on the Property for more than a century and have resulted in extensive wetlands that, in addition to being productive pasture, also support a number of species of special concern that utilize the Property for water, foraging habitat, and connectivity between surrounding upland areas. This Easement will ensure that future land uses do not impair the habitat values of the Property.

Habitat areas on the Property include wet and dry montane meadow, sagebrush, bitterbrush, aspen, lodgepole pine, and montane riparian habitats. Natural springs, wetlands, and significant reaches of both Dunderberg and Dog Creeks, both of which are tributaries to the East Walker River, are also found on the Property. Dunderberg Creek is a perennial stream flowing across the Property in a northeasterly direction. A natural large productive spring located in Sinnamon Meadow contributes the majority of the flow in Dog Creek. The Property also has approximately 400 acres of irrigated and sub-irrigated meadow. Numerous irrigation ditches on the Property are used to irrigate the extensive meadows on the Property for livestock operations.

The goal of the project is to assure that this large 1,240-acre private Property will be retained forever in its predominantly natural state as a natural, agricultural, scenic, habitat and open- space resource, and to prevent any conversion or subdivision of the Property that could significantly diminish or impair these values. Specifically, the purposes include: a) preserving working landscapes through ranching and other agricultural activities; b) protecting the water and water rights to support sustainable agricultural uses, including ranching and grazing, as well as wildlife habitat; c) protecting fish and wildlife resources, including the processes that sustain their habitats d) preserving the open space character and scenic qualities of the Property. The conservation easement is a well suited tool to protect large important properties such as Sinnamon Meadows, particularly in rural counties with very limited private land ownership. The project is designed to have minimal impact to property tax income to Mono County, while still furthering county goals and land use policies.

Wildlife use objectives include maintaining the irrigated wet meadow habitats as critical late summer brood rearing habitat for the Bi-State distinct population segment of greater sage-grouse (Federal proposed as a Threatened species) and to provide a buffer zone between habitat occupied by the endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep and areas grazed by domestic sheep, by precluding sheep grazing on the Property. The Property also provides critical migration, holdover, and summer range habitat for the East Walker and Mono Lake mule deer herds as delineated through a radio telemetry study conducted by CDFW. The montane riparian habitats on the Property are of particular importance as they have exceptionally high wildlife values, providing water, thermal cover, migration corridors and diverse nesting and breeding opportunities for wildlife species, including mountain lions. Other species that will benefit from the protection of the Property are the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, Pacific fisher, and Sierra Nevada red fox, all of which are species of special concern.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant for this project is being made under the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Land Acquisition Program (Program). The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Code Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB

to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with the acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Easement will be owned and managed by ESLT. It will be responsible for enforcing the Easement through detailed baseline conditions documentation, planned annual compliance monitoring, recordkeeping, and regular communication with the landowners. An annual monitoring report will be provided to WCB.

TERMS

The Easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of $1,240,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The terms and conditions of the grants between WCB and ESLT provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, appraisals, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the Easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$620,000.00
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	$325,000.00
USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service	$295,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$1,240,000.00
Other Project-Related Costs	$10,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$630,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $10,000.00 will be needed to cover project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the authorized uses of the funding source, Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a), which allows for the acquisition and protection of deer and mountain lion habitat.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $630,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the grant to the Eastern Sierra Land Trust and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Walsh introduced Aaron Johnson from Eastern Sierra Land Trust.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any questions or comments for the Board and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $630,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(a) for the grant to the Eastern Sierra Land Trust and to cover project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

29. Santa Cruz Integrated Watershed Restoration, Santa Cruz County — $531,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to the Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District (SCRCD) for a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Fisheries Restoration Grant Program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the California Conservation Corps, the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) and others to restore ±10 acres of riparian and wetland habitat in areas critical to special status amphibian and fish species, located on four coastal watersheds in Santa Cruz County. Mr. Donnelly said he received a letter of support for this project from Assembly Member Luis Alejo, District 30. Ms. Terry Roscoe briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The six project locations are in the Scotts Creek, San Vincente and Pajaro River watersheds in the Santa Cruz and Watsonville areas. The larger landscapes around the project sites are primarily agricultural, forest, or rural private properties within Santa Cruz County. The topography of western Santa Cruz County is variable, ranging from flat agricultural fields to steep slopes. Local elevations range from 100 feet to about 3,000 feet , with a wide range of vegetation community types including grasslands, sandhills, redwood forests, riparian woodland, coastal scrub, closed cone coniferous forest, mixed evergreen forest, chaparral, foothill woodlands, oak savannah grasslands, and agricultural crops. The county has seen a variety of high and low impact land-uses over the past 150 years including logging, selective timber harvesting, quarrying, mining, irrigated agriculture, ranching and urbanization. All of these land uses have had direct and indirect impacts on wildlife habitat, reducing habitat diversity and complexity.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP), established by staff from the SCRCD, SCC, CDFW, Coastal Watershed Council, and the City and County of Santa Cruz, has become the planning group to identify ways to implement the recommendations of eight different watershed implementation plans developed in the late 1990s. The goal of the IWRP is to identify and prioritize restoration projects and streamline the permitting process. Since 2002, the IWRP team has worked on numerous instream, floodplain, riparian, and wetland enhancement projects in the Santa Cruz watersheds. Located near the coast, the watersheds provide habitat for a number of federally and state listed threatened and endangered species, including the California red-legged frog, Santa Cruz long-toed salamander, California tiger salamander, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, steelhead, and coho salmon.

The IWRP focuses on land management practices that are linked to degradation of aquatic habitats by providing a permitting mechanism for landowners for obtaining approval or agreements from all local, state, and federal agencies that

have permitting authority, restoration goals and species recovery requirements. The IWRP covers small, environmentally beneficial projects such as stream bank protection, gully stabilization, culvert repair/replacement, erosion control structures, exotic vegetation removal, and fish stream habitat improvement projects within Santa Cruz County.

The six restoration projects covered in this grant have been identified by the IWRP team as a high priority for conserving wetland dependent species in the county. The projects are described in detail below.

San Vincente Creek – Located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, the San Vicente Creek Watershed drains an eleven square mile area. The San Vicente Creek Watershed provides habitat for a number of federally and state listed species, including the California red-legged frog, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, steelhead, and coho salmon. This watershed has seen a variety of high and low impact land-uses over the past 150 years including logging, selective timber harvesting, quarrying, mining, irrigated agriculture, ranching and urbanization. The San Vicente Creek Watershed Restoration Plan identified the removal of the invasive, non-native, cape ivy as critical to improve habitat for a variety of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, enhance stream and floodplain function, and increase wood recruitment and native plants within the watershed. This project focuses on the removal of cape ivy from a 1,500-linear foot reach of San Vicente Creek, thereby restoring eight acres of riparian habitat, and eradicating this non-native from the entire northern portion of the riparian corridor.

Scotts Creek - The Scotts Creek Watershed is a thirty square mile coastal watershed comprised of steep forested slopes, deep canyons with steep inner gorges, fertile valleys, and grasslands. Current riparian vegetation along the floodplain is limited to young alder and willow trees and a dominant understory of non-native cape ivy and vinca. The combination of instream conditions and floodplain conditions has severely limited habitat quality and complexity for aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as the hydrologic processes necessary to create self-sustaining and heterogeneous habitats. As a property owner in the lower reach of the watershed, Cal Poly Corp. is working to develop a balance between support of local organic agriculture and ecological restoration of key natural resources on the property. The goal of this project is to enhance instream and floodplain habitat along a 1000 foot reach of Scotts Creek, and to restore natural function through strategic levee breaching. In addition, the placement of large woody debris within the stream will improve instream habitat values for fish and other aquatic life.

Buena Vista Wetland - The Buena Vista property is surrounded by hilly, wooded slopes that range in elevation from 250 to 450 feet mean sea level. At the present time, the water table is close to and above the surface and supports seasonal wetlands and intermittent ponds. The project will improve a ±0.4-acre wetland on ±289 acres owned by CDFW, which is managed by the USFWS as part of the

Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge. The land was purchased by the WCB in 2004 to protect vital wetland and upland habitat for a number of native plant and wildlife species, including migratory birds, the State listed endangered robust spineflower, and three special status amphibian species including the State and federally listed endangered Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (SCLTS), federally listed threatened California red-legged frog (CRLF) and the State and federally listed threatened California tiger salamander (CTS). In its current state, the ecological function of the Buena Vista wetland is less than desirable as it has not held water continually for the last few years and SCLTS breeding has declined severely since 2004. Bentonite will be installed to allow the pond to hold water longer and enhance successful breeding, movement, nesting, and foraging crucial for listed salamander recovery.

Ellicott Pond - Owned by CDFW, Ellicott Pond is surrounded by the USFWS's Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge. The Ellicott Pond was purchased in 1975 when the SCLTS was discovered during a proposed development project. Land use prior to the acquisition included livestock grazing, rural residential, farming of berry crops and off-road vehicle use. The property now provides vital wetland and upland habitat for a number of native wildlife, including migratory birds, and terrestrial and amphibian species, including SCLTS, CRLF, and CTS. This project proposes enhancing Ellicott Pond to improve wetland function, wildlife habitat, and flood storage by creating a deeper depression within the wetland, so that water remains within a portion of the wetland in average and/or below average rainfall years. Harvested plant material will be replanted into the pond by USFWS to provide a medium for egg masses and all disturbed areas will be covered with duff or plants to prevent erosion. The USFWS will complete long-term plant maintenance/monitoring.

Larkin Valley - The Larkin Valley drainage area flows through Larkin Valley from the headwaters approximately four miles northwest of Watsonville down to its intersection with Harkins Slough, which is part of the Watsonville Sloughs wetland complex, prior to joining the Pajaro River. Surface water in the Larkin Valley is primarily ephemeral with stream flow resulting from precipitation events. However, a number of springs/seeps are present, which remain wet even during dry years. The SCRCD has been supporting landowners in Larkin Valley to address erosion and sediment issues, loss of oak woodland habitat, poor riparian quality, degraded wetland habitat and flooding for the last decade. The Larkin Valley area also supports a number of native amphibian species, including the endemic SCLTS and CRLF. This project will enhance locally degraded wetlands on private land to enlarge and deepen ponds that support breeding SCLTS and CRLF. The project will enhance wetland function and habitat for their recovery, provide flood reduction within the Larkin Valley area and act as a demonstration site to gain landowner interest in future recovery efforts. The project is in a key location to obtain breeding for both special status species and supports CDFW's and USFWS's recovery plans for the SCLTS.

Milsap Wetland - Owned by CDFW, the ±50-acre Milsap property is located in the Larkin Valley, within the current extent of known SCLTS breeding ponds and provides excellent oak woodland and grassland habitat. However, the existing pond is physically small and although it provides consistent breeding opportunities, it supports a relatively small breeding population. The draft USFWS Revised Recovery Plan (1999) for SCLTS identifies the need for at least two functional breeding ponds per complex in southern Santa Cruz County, as part of the criteria for downlisting SCLTS. The project would construct a second pond to provide more stable and enlarged breeding habitat for the SCLTS. While a significant amount of oak woodland and coastal scrub habitat throughout the Larkin Valley has been degraded by invasive plants, including Eucalyptus, Acacia, Monterey Pine, French broom and pampas or jubata grass, infestation of these species at the Milsap property is relatively limited and existing upland habitat provides good food and cover for the amphibians during the non-breeding season.

WCB PROGRAM

The project will be funded through the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program and meets the program's goal of increasing riparian habitat across California by implementing riparian, and associated floodplain and wetland habitat, restoration and enhancement projects.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Larkin Valley - The RCD has worked collaboratively with this landowner since 2006 and will develop a long-term maintenance plan to manage the pond. Project permits and CEQA are covered through the Santa Cruz Countywide Partners in Restoration Permit Coordination Program. Post-construction, the SCRCD and AmeriCorps volunteers (in-kind) will conduct annual photo monitoring of the site for three to five years and aquatic sampling to confirm breeding success will be completed by Biosearch Associates with assistance from SCRCD.

San Vincente Creek – The SCRCD has committed to the management and maintenance activities through either the development of a local volunteer group, continued coordination with the local elementary school or through AmeriCorps volunteers. The SCRCD is working to transfer the property to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and once transferred, the BLM will take on the long-term management and maintenance of the site, as they will have additional resources to ensure success of this project in the long-term.

Scotts Creek - The SCRCD, Cal Poly Corp. and AmeriCorps volunteers will conduct annual monitoring, including ongoing photo documentation, of the project site for three to five years. These activities will continue for the first two to three years following project completion, or until plants are established, and have met the success criteria identified for the project. The landowner, Cal Poly, pursuant to agreement between the SCRCD and Cal Poly, will be responsible for plant maintenance and monitoring, including irrigation, weeding, and replacing plants until the success criteria is achieved. Project elements will not be directly disturbed and/or removed by the current or future landowner(s)

over the next twenty-five years, pursuant to the Grant Agreement Management Plan.

Buena Vista, Ellicott Pond and Milsap Wetland – These projects will require periodic maintenance over the long term, including the removal of sediment and dense emergent vegetation, repair of outlet structures and berms, as well as management of water levels to eliminate predators, including bullfrogs and fish. While these properties are owned by CDFW, USFWS and CDFW cooperatively manage these properties because of the nexus with the Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge.

The SCRCD has entered into separate agreements with all private landowners to assure the long-term maintenance of the project sites, pursuant to the Grant Agreement. If at any time during the 25-year life of the project, the responsible party does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that the SCRCD refund to the State of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the project life.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

WCB	$531,000.00
BLM	$38,243.00
CCC	$56,000.00
FRGP	$100,000.00
Moore Family Foundation	$5,249.00
USFWS	$290,183.00
NRCS	$14,245.00
AmeriCorps Volunteers	$10,556.00
James Irvine Foundation	$2,475.00
Private Landowner Match	$8,097.00
Cal Poly	$13,450.00
Coastal Conservancy	$145,263.00
Total	$1,214,761.00

WCB funding will contribute to construction of pond and stream improvement features, revegetation of disturbed areas, wetland enhancement, monitoring for project success criteria, pond clearing and installation of bentonite, irrigation and maintenance of restoration plantings, biological monitoring to determine breeding success, and removal of the exotic invasive weed species Cape ivy.
Since 2002, the IWRP group has identified, prioritized and found funding for many restoration projects within the coastal watersheds of Santa Cruz County. To date, the group has received more than $15,000,000 from a wide variety of federal, State, local and private sources to implement their priority restoration work.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and

Game Code Section 2786(e/f) which provides funding for the acquisition, restoration or enhancement of riparian and aquatic habitats and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

As Lead Agency, the Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH 2004112063) pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and prepared written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Following the Board's approval of the project, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the WCB.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $531,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Roscoe introduced Kelli Camara and Donna Meyers from the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, to help answer questions.

Ms. Meyers spoke in support of the project and thanked the Board for their consideration. Recovery of these species is a high priority and they appreciate the opportunity to begin a partnership with WCB in restoring habitat for these species.

There were no further comments or questions.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate $531,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(e/f); authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

30. Dry Creek Ranch Conservation Easement, Recovery Land Acquisition Grant (2010), Merced County — $2,068,000.00

This proposal was to the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the California Rangeland Trust (CRT), and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant to the CRT, for a cooperative project with the U.S Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Bureau of Reclamation to acquire a conservation easement over 4,417± acres of land for the protection of grassland and associated vernal pools, blue oak woodland, and riparian habitats to promote recovery of threatened and endangered species in Merced County. Mr. Brian Gibson presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in the northeastern corner of Merced County, about three miles north of the town of Snelling and 20 miles north of the city of Merced along La Grange Road, also known as CA State Route 59. The Property is located within the East Merced Grassland area, one of the largest and most intact vernal pool grasslands habitats remaining in California. The Property is exclusively used for livestock grazing as is the neighboring open rangeland to the north, east and south of the Property. West of the Property is primarily extensive agriculture crop farmland extending into the Central Valley. The Property lies within the Merced River Watershed.

The Property is listed as Woolstenhulme Ranch in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) East Merced Vernal Pool Grassland Preserve Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) and is located within the Merced Core area of the Southern Sierra Foothills vernal pool region as defined in the USFWS "Recovery Plan for Vernal Pool Ecosystems of California and Southern Oregon (2005)." This region of vernal pools located east and running both north and south of the City of Merced, represents one of the last large complexes of vernal pools in the state. This area has persisted primarily as rangeland and avoided much of the land conversion that has occurred in other lower elevation areas throughout the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valley, such as conversion to orchards and other tilled crops that can disturb the soil and surface layers and reduce the ability of the land to retain water necessary for development of vernal pools.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is mostly rectangular shaped with gently undulating terrain. La Grange Road splits the Property with 3,190± acres of the easement area on the east side of La Grange Road and 1,227± acres of the easement area on the west side of the road. On the east, the Property is located within the lower portions of the Sierra Foothills and as the Property runs west, its terrain flattens out with slight

undulations, bisected by Dry Creek and several other small creek channels. Elevations range from 230 feet on the west to 435 feet on east.

Improvements include three dwellings, several barns and outbuildings, with excellent livestock handling facilities (i.e. squeeze chute, corrals, scale and load chute). There is a small barn located across La Grange Road from the farmstead in the east pasture. Perimeter and cross-fencing exists, with wood and metal posts and 4 to 7 strand barbwire.

The primary habitat areas within the Property include annual grassland and associated vernal pools, blue oak woodland, and riparian corridor. Most vernal pools on the Property are situated on remnant terraces and fans of the Laguna Formation and North Merced Gravels. Many of the pools consist of ponded areas located along seasonal or ephemeral drainages. Dry Creek is a medium-sized drainage that traverses east to west across the Property. The creek is fed by seasonal rainfall and a small spring located near the County line. As a result, the creek is semi-perennial. The Property provides important habitat for two state endangered species, the Hartweg's golden sunburst and the succulent owl's-clover, as well as several federally threatened species including the vernal pool fairy shrimp and the California tiger salamander.

Within CDFW's CAPP, the Property is described as a priority area for protection due to its vast number of vernal pools. The Easement will ensure continued wildlife, water quality, watershed, and open space benefits through managed grazing of the rangeland and protection of vernal pool grasslands and associated habitat resulting in the recovery of threatened, endangered, and rare species.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the CDFW, grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The conservation easement will be owned and managed by the CRT which holds other similar ranching based conservation easements throughout the state. A baseline conditions report will be required of the grantee along with annual monitoring to assure conformance with the terms of the conservation easement. As with most ranching based conservation easements, this conservation easement does not convey a general right of access to the public now or in the future.

TERMS

The conservation easement has been appraised as having a fair market value of $7,150,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and the USFWS. The Property owner has agreed to sell the conservation easement for $4,110,228.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the WCB's funding allocation. The terms and conditions of the WCB grant to the CRT and the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the CRT provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can seek specific performance of the grant or require the grantee to transfer the conservation easement to WCB or another qualified holder.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$2,050,000.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$500,000.00
U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service	$560,228.00
Bureau of Reclamation	$1,000,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$4,110,228.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	$18,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$2,068,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $18,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including the appraisal and DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of this project are consistent with the funding source, the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code section 2786(b)(c) and the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code section 5096.650(a) which allows for the acquisition of habitat to protect and promote

recovery of rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species, and that protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to allow continued agricultural use and to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $500,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b)(c) and $1,568,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)] for the grant to CRT and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $500,000.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson introduced Marshall Cook and Meredith Kuperferman from California Rangeland Trust to help answer any questions.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if anyone wished to speak on this item or had any questions or concerns. There were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $500,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b)(c) and $1,568,000.00 from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40), Public Resources Code Section 5096.650(a)] for the grant to CRT and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Recovery Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $500,000.00 and authorize the subgrant of these funds; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

31. North Grasslands Wildlife Area Enhancement and Security Project Merced County — $800,000.00

This proposal was to consider the allocation for a grant to California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to restore ±5,300 linear feet of riparian habitat and enhance ±225 acres of uplands at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) North Grasslands Wildlife Area, Gadwall and China Island Units, located one mile southeast of Los Banos and two miles west of Newman, respectively, in Merced County. Mr. Brian Cary briefly described the project and its location.

LOCATION

The North Grasslands Wildlife Area project proposes to complete work on two different units, the Gadwall Unit and the China Island Unit. The Gadwall Unit, located proximate to and southeast of the town of Los Banos, encompasses ±855 acres of seasonal wetlands, ±255 acres of upland habitat, and ±14 acres of riparian habitat. The China Island Unit is located north of Highway 140 and east of the City of Newman and consists of ±598 acres of seasonal wetlands, ±457 acres of upland habitat, and ±204 acres of riparian habitat. Both units are located in Merced County within the Grasslands Ecological Area, which at more than 160,000 acres is one of the largest remaining blocks of wetlands in the State.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Gadwall Unit was intensively farmed prior to its acquisition by the WCB in 1999. Portions of the property have already been restored to seasonal wetlands, but the upland areas are still flat, level fields of non-native grasslands. Riparian habitat is limited, and native grasslands are a fraction of their historic extent. In addition, the Gadwall Units boundary fence is non-functional, which prevents the CDFW from using grazing for habitat management in this area.

The CDFW has experienced significant vandalism and thievery on the pump and electrical systems at the North Grasslands Wildlife Area. Without functional pumps, the CDFW cannot supply water to the wetlands on the properties, which provide important habitat for the migrating waterfowl and shorebirds that visit the Central Valley each year. Finally, there are no public access facilities on the well-travelled Highway 152 anywhere within the Grasslands Ecological Area. To rectify these issues, the following infrastructure is proposed.

Gravity Flow Water Delivery - Currently, the ±855 acres of wetlands at the Gadwall Unit are serviced with a lift pump and pipeline from the San Luis Canal. Included in this proposal are the rehabilitation of a 225 CFS weir within the San Luis Canal and the addition of several water structures and a water siphon. These infrastructure upgrades will provide gravity flow water to the wetland habitats at the Gadwall Unit throughout the fall; the most important time period for wetland flooding. These upgrades reduce power costs, increase the speed of flood up, and help to reduce mosquito production and abatement costs.

Upland Development – Excavated material from the gravity flow water delivery system and the riparian swale development (see below) will be used to de-level the ±255 acres of uplands on the Gadwall Unit that were once leveled and farmed. The restored uplands will be seeded with native upland plants.

Riparian Area- The project calls for the construction of a meandering riparian swale on the Gadwall Unit that will be ±5,300 feet long and ±60 foot wide. Material used from the excavation of this swale will be used to de-level the upland area identified above. The riparian swale will be planted with native trees and understory plants, and creeping wild rye will be planted on the broad slopes of the meandering swale to increase cover for ground nesting birds.

Security Fencing and Pump Rehabilitation – Both the China Island Unit and the Gadwall Unit will have security fencing installed around pumps (nine pumps in total) to prevent vandalism and thievery. Previously vandalized pumps will be rewired and all electrical systems assessed and needed repairs undertaken to assure safe operation of the systems.

Fencing- Current fencing around the Gadwall Unit is dilapidated and in disrepair. The old fence material will be removed and replaced with ±21,000 feet of 5-strand barbed wire fencing. There will be (4) 20' gates allowing access. The fencing will allow for a grazing program to be initiated on the property, while at the same time delineating the wildlife area boundary and providing needed security.

Public Use – At the Gadwall Unit, situated alongside the Highway 152 corridor, it is proposed to install a small parking lot, education panels, and an elevated wildlife viewing area. The viewing area will be the only one of its kind along Highway 152 in the Grasslands.

The Governor's proclamation of a Drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014, directed state agencies to immediately implement water use reduction plans for all state facilities to reduce water usage by at least 20 percent. These water conservation actions include a moratorium on new, non-essential landscaping projects at state facilities and on state highways and roads. The use of the water delivery system and installation of riparian plantings may be postponed as necessary to comply with the directive for as long as the state of emergency is in effect and until the CDFW approves its use.

This project will benefit a wide variety of wetland and upland species including breeding and wintering waterfowl, wintering shorebirds and grassland species. Additionally, the project will assist with the Central Valley Joint Venture's (CVJV) goal of restoring riparian and upland habitats in the San Joaquin Basin, as outlined in the CVJV's 2006 Implementation Plan.

WCB PROGRAM

The project will be funded through the Inland Wetland Conservation Program and

meets the program's goal of assisting the Central Valley Joint Venture's mission to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated habitats within California's Central Valley.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The restored habitats will be managed by CDFW staff pursuant to the management plan for the North Grasslands Wildlife Area. The restored habitats and upgraded infrastructure will allow CDFW to manage the site to provide improved habitats with less effort and at a lower cost.

PROJECT FUNDING

This restoration project on CDFW property is funded in its entirety by the WCB. The project will be available to be used as a match for future North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants, funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Item	WCB	Totals
Contracts	$695,800.00	$695,800.00
Project Management	$104,200.00	$104,200.00
Total	**$800,000.00**	**$800,000.00**

Project costs will be for earth work (levees, swales, islands, and ground leveling), water control structures, pump security, debris removal, fencing, public use viewing facility construction, and construction supervision and project administration.

FUNDING SOURCE

The funding source for this project is the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d) Inland Wetlands Conservation Program, which allows for the acquisition, enhancement or restoration of wetlands to protect or enhance a flood protection corridor or bypass in the Central Valley, and is consistent with the purposes of this project.

CEQA AND CDFW REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed this proposal and recommended it for funding by the WCB. The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15304, Class 4, as a minor alteration to land. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $800,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to

enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Cary introduced Terry Palmisano from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and Rich Wright from the California Waterfowl Association.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any questions, comments or speakers on the item and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $800,000.00 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d), Inland Wetlands Conservation Program; authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

32. Metcalf Meadow, Recovery Land Acquisition Grant (2013), San Bernardino County — $0.00

This project was withdrawn from consideration prior to the board meeting.

33. Puerco Canyon, $4,505,000.00
Los Angeles County

This proposal was to the allocation for a grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for a cooperative project with the State Coastal Conservancy and the County of Los Angeles to acquire 703± acres of land for the protection of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, scrub oak chaparral, native grasslands, and oak woodland-savannah habitat and to enhance wildlife linkages, watershed protection, and provide the potential for future wildlife oriented public use opportunities in Los Angeles County. Mr. Brian Gibson presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property) is located in the Puerco Canyon Watershed along the coastal slope of the Santa Monica Mountains. Specifically, the Property is situated south of Malibu Creek State Park and east of MRCA's Corral Canyon Park approximately 0.5 miles north of the Pacific Coast Highway, and directly north of the Malibu city limits. The Property includes the entire headwaters of Puerco Canyon which drains directly into the Santa Monica Bay. Drainages of the Corral Canyon and Malibu Canyon watersheds are also within the Property boundaries. Furthermore, the Property is located in the southeast corner of the 23.1± square-mile Central Santa Monica Mountains Core Habitat which is not bisected by a single paved road.

This Property provides important linkage between the 1,000± acre Corral Canyon Park and the 8,000± acre Malibu Creek State Park and would secure a large block of the Santa Monica Mountains coastal core habitat with uncommonly gentle terrain. The Property abuts numerous public lands including California State Parks, National Park Service land, MRCA protected land, and Pepperdine University Open Space.

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has made significant investments to date in the Malibu Canyon and Corral Canyon watersheds that straddle the subject Property. In the Malibu Canyon watershed, the properties acquired with the help of the WCB include the 3,500± acre Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve (Ahmanson Ranch), the 588± acre King Gillette Ranch, and the120± acre Upper Cold Creek tributary project. WCB also made a substantial funding contribution to the adjacent 690± acre Corral Canyon Park acquisition and the 1,410± acre Tuna Canyon Park. A Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) has been approved for the Property.

Acquisition of the Property will protect drainages in three distinct watersheds; Puerco Canyon, Corral Canyon, and Malibu Canyon. These drainages are key clustered central Santa Monica Mountains watersheds and comprise crucial connection hubs for intra-mountain range wildlife movement.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property features uncommonly gentle terrain ranging from 620 feet above sea level to ridges as high as 1,840 feet above sea level. The Property also contains 17,314± linear feet of USGS blue-line stream spread between Puerco, Corral and Malibu Canyons. This network of blue-line streams forms an optimal distribution of riparian habitat interspersed within diverse upland habitat communities. Southern willow-scrub is the primary onsite riparian community along with coast live oak. Upland sections of the Property support coastal sage scrub, native grassland, mixed chaparral, scrub-oak chaparral, California walnut woodland and coast live oak woodland. The abundance of vegetation and undisturbed plant communities provide habitat for the full complement of terrestrial Santa Monica Mountains wildlife species and serves as an essential wildlife corridor optimal for the largest, most mobile species; deer, mountain lion, and bobcat. In addition, the Property supports habitat for numerous bird and raptor species including red-tailed hawk, great horned owl, Cooper's hawk and valley quail. The Property would add to the amount of protected Coastal Zone core habitat areas available for these species. The diverse topography of the site also facilitates vertical migration of plant communities.

Although the Property does not have coastal development entitlements at this time, the landowner has secured two active Approvals in Concept from Los Angeles County towards permitting development of the Property. Protection from development will preserve the subject Property's prime Mediterranean vegetation. Acquisition of the Property will protect rare coastal biome habitat necessary for climate change adaptability of species with limited indigenous global range; and enhance wildlife corridors and habitat linkages for large mammals and other species, increasing their ability to adapt to climate change.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The Land Acquisition Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which evaluates the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation/Conceptual Area Protection Plan (LAE/CAPP). The LAE/CAPP is then submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and, if approved, later transmitted to the WCB with a recommendation to fund.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

MRCA will be the sole entity responsible for management once the Property is acquired. Funding of future management activities for this Property will be provided by the MRCA. The MRCA manages and provides ranger services for almost 69,000± acres of land both within and outside the Santa Monica National Recreation Area. The addition of this Property is not anticipated to significantly impact existing operations. The MRCA manages the adjacent Corral Canyon Park trailhead and nearby Malibu Bluffs Park and has maintenance personnel and sworn rangers on the Pacific Coast Highway "Malibu Parks Route" every day of the year. MRCA may explore the potential for future public use activities on the Property in conjunction with its management of adjacent properties.

TERMS

The Property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $12,300,000. 00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The County of Los Angeles has agreed to acquire a nonrefundable exclusive option to purchase the property, which it plans to assign to the MRCA for the acquisition of the property. The MRCA will execute a separate purchase agreement with a total purchase price of $12,000,000.00.

The terms and conditions of the WCB grant to MRCA provides that staff of the WCB will review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can encumber the Property with a conservation easement and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$4,500,000.00
County of Los Angeles	$6,000,000.00
State Coastal Conservancy	$1,500,000.00
Total Purchase Price	$12,000,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	$5,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$4,505,000.00**

It is estimated that an additional $5,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with the funding source that allows for the acquisition, protection and restoration of coastal wetlands and watersheds located in Southern California [Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a)].

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $4,505,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Gibson introduced Paul Edelman and Jeff Maloney from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

Senator Fran Pavley spoke in support of the project. She is very familiar with the property. She also confirmed that the County of Los Angeles is paying for half the cost of acquiring this property. You do not see paved road crossing this property. It is in pristine condition. She attended the board meeting to enthusiastically support the project and thanked Mr. Donnelly for recently visiting the property.

Ms. Finn asked if there was assurance of public access. Mr. Gibson said the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority intends to complete a trail segment across the property. Ms. Finn then asked what the appraisal was based on. Mr. Gibson said if the appropriate approvals are acquired, the property could be developed. The zoning would allow for development, but it is not yet entitled. Mr. Donnelly clarified the point by saying the appraisal assumed the potential for development, but it does not value the property as it it is fully entitled. Had the appraisal assumed the property was fully entitled, we would be seeing a value far in excess of the appraised value of $12,300,000.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any further questions and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $4,505,000.00 from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002 (Proposition 50), Water Code Section 79572(a) for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

34. Coachella Valley Natural Community Conservation Plan, Shadowrock, Riverside County — $786,750.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant and the approval to subgrant these federal funds to the Friends of the Palm Spring Mountains (FOPSM) and to consider a Wildlife Conservation Board grant to FOPSM, for a cooperative project with the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy to acquire 352.82± acres of high desert, desert alluvial fan, and habitat linkages to promote recovery of the Peninsular bighorn sheep and other threatened and endangered species covered under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), a joint state Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) and federal Habitat Conservation Plan, in Riverside County. Mr. Jasen Yee presented the project to the Board.

LOCATION and SURROUNDING USES

The subject property (Property), known as Shadowrock, is located in Chino Canyon on the eastern slopes of the San Jacinto Mountains, at the northwest edge of the city of Palm Springs in Coachella Valley. More specifically, the Property straddles Tramway Road that travels west from Highway 111 to the base of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (Tram). The Tram provides gondola car access from the Coachella Valley to a base station located in the San Jacinto Mountains and serves as a public gateway to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument which surrounds three sides of the Property.

Approximately 100 miles east of Los Angeles, the Coachella Valley is considered one of the fastest growing areas in rapidly expanding Riverside County. The Coachella Valley is projected to grow substantially over the next decade and it receives more than 1 million visitors each year. The Property is located within the CVMSCP that encompasses approximately 1.1 million acres. The goal of the plan is to protect and conserve 228,340 acres of land securing key regional wildlife linkages and core areas of habitat that are considered to be highly developable. WCB has approved a number of grants within the CVMSHCP to help protect approximately 122,000 acres of habitat.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of five irregular shaped undeveloped vacant parcels, totaling approximately 352.82 + acres of land. The general elevation of the property begins at around 500 feet near the valley floor and gradually rises up to over 2,000 feet near the base of the Tram. The Property area is also referred to as the Chino Cone, a large alluvial fan created from running water carrying sand, gravel and rocks through gorges and canyons from the San Jacinto Mountains and settling on the lower valley plain. On the upper end of the property is cienega area and riparian corridor fed in part by the cienega and Chino Canyon Creek which flows down Chino Canyon. Although the surface flow of the creek rarely

makes it down all the way to the Coachella Valley, the upper portions on the property normally contain surface water and provide an important desert water source for wildlife species. Located on the lower portions of the property is an earthen levee developed to direct flash flood events away from Palms Springs into undeveloped areas leading into the Coachella Valley and Whitewater River.

Originally a developer bought the Property to construct an exclusive 18 hole golf course and resort community to be known as Shadowrock. However, due to economic planning approval delays and declines in the market, the investors lost the Property to the current owners through foreclosure. If the Property is not acquired, the current property owners may develop a scaled down development plan to help market and recoup their investment in the property.

Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) inhabit the San Jacinto Mountains and have been historically recorded in the Chino Canyon/Cone area. One unique aspect of PBS is they frequent lower elevation alluvial fan areas, compared to other desert bighorn sheep species that stay in higher elevations areas. Unfortunately for the PBS, alluvial fans in the Coachella Valley also represent some of the more desirable development areas, abutting up to the mountains and having slightly higher elevations, that places them outside the windier areas of the valley floor and provide superior views. Within the Coachella Valley most of the alluvial fan areas have already been impacted by development.

Studies and historical sightings indicate PBS cross Chino Canyon precisely where the Shadowrock development would have existed. The acquisition of the Property will ensure the protection of desert alluvial fan habitat and desert riparian corridors and help create core habitat linkages and foraging corridors which are important to the PBS, as well as other species in the area including desert tortoise, least Bell's vireo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. The acquisition will not only help protect vertical habitat linkages between the lower valley floor elevations and higher elevations of the San Jacinto Mountains, allowing wildlife to adapt and shift their distribution up in elevation as temperatures increase in the valley floor, but also across the Chino Canyon for species that reside and move along the lower elevations of the Coachella Valley.

WCB PROGRAM

The grant is being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program (Program).The Program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) authorizing the WCB to acquire real property or rights in real property on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), grant funds to other governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to acquire real property or rights in real property and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant theses federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. Under the Program, the WCB provides funds to facilitate the acquisition of lands and interests in land that can successfully sustain or be

restored to support wildlife and, when practicable, provide for suitable wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities. In addition the project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grant accepted for this project has also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition Grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Property will be owned and managed by the FOPSM and is part of the CVMSHCP which outlines management and monitoring targets as well as provides a funding source from development fees that can be used to manage and monitor properties within the CVMSHCP. Currently there is a unauthorized public access trail use on the Property, mostly to the cienega on the property. With this acquisition, FOPSM, along with the resource partners of the CVMSCHP will help develop plans to manage public access, consistent with the resource management objectives of the CVMSCHP. At some point in the future, the FOPSM may also look to transfer the property ownership to a local agency to help provide local management of the resources and explore the potential for public use of the Property.

TERMS

The property has been appraised as having a fair market value of $4,410,000.00. The appraisal has been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services and USFWS. The property owner has agreed to sell the property for the approved appraised fair market value of $4,410,000.00. The USFWS will provide a Habitat Land Conservation Plan – Land Acquisition Grant, in the amount of $2,866,500.00. The USFWS funds require a non-federal match that is being provided by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy and WCB. The terms and conditions of the WCB grant to FOSPM and the subgrant of USFWS grant funds to the FOSPM provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisition. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the Property with a conservation easement in favor of the State or another entity approved by the State and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING

The funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Wildlife Conservation Board	$771,750.00
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$2,866,500.00
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy	$771,750.00
Total Purchase Price	$4,410,000.00
Other Project Related Admin. Costs	$15,000.00

TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION **$786,750.00**

It is estimated that an additional $15,000.00 will be needed to cover project related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review.

WCB FUNDING SOURCE
The purposes of this project are consistent with funding source the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that implements or assists in the establishment of NCCPs.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND STATE RECOMMENDATION
The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, a Notice of Exemption was filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $786,750.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $2,866,500.00 and authorize the subgrant of these fund to the Friends of the Palm Spring Mountains; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Mr. Yee introduced Nickie McLaughlin from Friends of the Palm Spring Mountains and Linda Gorens-Levey from Stark Investments and Keith Allen-Niesen from Manatt Phelps who are representing the landowner.

There were no comments, questions or public speakers on this item.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve this project as proposed; allocate $786,750.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), for the grant and to cover internal project-related expenses; accept the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the

amount of $2,866,500.00 and authorize the subgrant of these fund to the Friends of the Palm Spring Mountains; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

35. San Diego County Multi Species Conservation Plan HCPLA/NCCP 2010 (multiple parcels), San Diego County — $685,250.00

This proposal was to consider the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant and the approval for five subgrants of these federal funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC), as well as to consider five Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grants to the EHC. The funds will be used to acquire a total of 142+/- acres of land from five individual landowners for the protection of habitat corridors and habitat to implement the South County Subarea of the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) in San Diego County, a joint Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). This is a cooperative project with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the USFWS and the WCB. Mr. Donnelly said he received a letter of support from Mr. Dan Silver from the Endangered Habitat League. Ms. Terri Muzik briefly described the project and the various locations.

LOCATION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject properties are all located within the South County Subarea (SC Subarea) of the MSCP. The MSCP identifies the SC Subarea as both a core resource area and a habitat linkage. Core resource areas are defined as areas of high concentration of sensitive biological resources which, if lost, could not be replaced or mitigated elsewhere.

The subject properties are located within a significant biological area near the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) and the Crestridge Ecological Reserve (Reserve). The Properties are also situated within a habitat corridor and linkage connecting the Refuge, the Reserve, the Lakeside archipelago (a series of mountain top habitat areas protected and funded in part by the WCB primarily for the benefit of bird species), and the El Monte Valley open space areas. Since approximately 1996, the WCB funded multiple acquisitions that comprise the nearly 3000 +/- acre Reserve, which is currently managed by the EHC.

Most of the surrounding land uses include residential subdivision, with larger estate developments and intermittent commercial development along the major thoroughfares. Not protecting this strategically located property and allowing further development and encroachment would result in a fragmented landscape precluding connectivity between already protected areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County of San Diego adopted the MSCP, which is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan addressing the needs of multiple species and the preservation of natural vegetation communities in San Diego County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, species endangerment, and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of covered

species and their habitat due to the direct impacts of future development of both public and private lands within the MSCP area.

The acquisitions will increase the protected block of biologically diverse habitat, augmenting habitat corridors essential for the movement of southern mule deer, an MSCP target species and surrogate for wildlife corridor function.

Like the nearby Reserve, these properties contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including coastal sage scrub habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher, and habitat for over 50 other sensitive and protected species. MSCP target species found or expected on site include mountain lion, orange-throated whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, and Cooper's hawk.

WCB PROGRAM

The subgrants and grants for this project are being considered under the WCB's Land Acquisition Program. The acquisition program is administered pursuant to the Board's original enabling legislation, "The Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947" (Fish and Game Section 1300, *et seq.*) and enables the WCB to pursue acquisitions on behalf of the CDFW and accept federal grant funds to facilitate acquisitions or subgrant these federal funds to assist with acquisitions of properties. The project has been reviewed and approved by the CDFW under its NCCP program, substantiating the biological values of the property and recommending it for funding. The USFWS grants for this project have also been reviewed and approved by CDFW as a participant in the USFWS Land Acquisition grant selection and review process.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

EHC will fund biological monitoring and adaptive management activities on the property as an integral component of the Reserve management and monitoring annual work plan. EHC's management team will conduct annual surveys and monitoring of MSCP plant and animal target species, invasive species, and rare plants. Additionally, due to the strategic location of the Property, wildlife corridor monitoring will be performed. Southern mule deer is the target species for corridor function monitoring. Monitoring data will be integrated into the regional NCCP management and monitoring program. EHC estimates that its annual cost to monitor and manage the properties will be between $5,000.00 and $10,000.00. Immediate management needs include fencing and signage. Possible future public use opportunities that may be considered for the properties include hiking, photography and bird watching.

TERMS

The properties were individually appraised and the appraisals were reviewed and approved by the Department of General Services. The appraisal and appraised values have been reviewed by WCB staff and reviewed and approved by DGS and USFWS.

Ulrich
The Property is 91+/- acres and has been appraised as having a fair market value of $1,045,000.00 and the property owner has agreed to sell the property for $1,045,000.00.

Sarjay
The Property is 24+/- acres and has been appraised as having a fair market value of $175,000.00 and the property owner has agreed to sell the property for $175,000.00.

Priest/Walker
The Property is 23+/- acres and has been appraised as having a fair market value of $500,000.00 and the property owner has agreed to sell the property for $500,000.00.

Guyot
The Property is 2+/- acres and has been appraised as having a fair market value of $85,000.00 and the property owner has agreed to sell the property for $85,000.00.

Saxena/Carver
The Property is 2+/- acres and has been appraised as having a fair market value of $110,000.00 and the property owner has agreed to sell the property for $110,000.00.

The five USFWS subgrants each require a non-federal match that is to be provided by the five WCB grants from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c). The terms and conditions of the WCB grants and the USFWS subgrants to the EHC provide that staff of the WCB must review and approve all title documents, preliminary title reports, documents for purchase and sale, escrow instructions and instruments of conveyance prior to disbursement of funds directly into the escrow account established for the acquisitions. In the event of a breach of the grant terms, the WCB can require the grantee to encumber the property, or properties, with a conservation easement in favor of WCB or another approved holder and seek reimbursement of funds.

PROJECT FUNDING
The funding breakdowns for the projects were as follows:

Ulrich

WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$679,250.00
WCB – grant (non-federal match)	$365,750.00
TOTAL purchase price	$1,045,000.00

Sarjay	
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$113,750.00
WCB – grant (non-federal match)	$61,250.00
TOTAL purchase price	$175,000.00
Priest/Walker	
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$325,000.00
WCB – grant (non-federal match)	$175,000.00
TOTAL purchase price	$500,000.00
Guyot	
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$55,250.00
WCB – grant (non-federal match)	$29,750.00
TOTAL purchase price	$85,000.00
Saxena/Carver	
WCB – subgrant of USFWS funds	$71,500.00
WCB – grant (non-federal match)	$38,500.00
TOTAL purchase price	$110,000.00
Funding breakdown for all 5 projects:	
WCB – Subgrant of USFWS funds	$1,244,750.00
WCB – Grants (non-federal match)	$670,250.00
Administrative costs	$15,000.00
TOTAL WCB ALLOCATION	**$685,250.00**

It was estimated that project-related administrative costs will include DGS appraisal review. The grantee will fund all appraisal, escrow and title insurance costs.

FUNDING SOURCE

The purposes of these projects are consistent with the funding source, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c), that allows for the acquisition and protection of habitat that assists in the establishment of Natural Community Conservation Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The acquisitions have been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and were exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15313, Class 13, as an acquisition of land for wildlife conservation purposes, and Section 15325, Class 25, as a transfer of an ownership interest in land to preserve open space and existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats. Subject to authorization by the WCB, Notices

of Exemption were filed with the State Clearinghouse.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommended that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve these projects as proposed; allocate $685,250.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover the five grant amounts and project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $1,244,750,000.00 and authorize the five subgrants of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy , authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Ms. Muzik introduced Michael Beck from the Endangered Habitats Conservancy, Mary Beth Woulfe from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Dave Mayer from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Deputy Director Kevin Hunting asked if there were any questions or speakers on this item and there were none.

It was moved by Ms. Finn that the Wildlife Conservation Board approve these projects as proposed; allocate $685,250.00 from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006 (Proposition 84), Public Resources Code Section 75055(c) to cover the five grant amounts and project-related expenses; accept the USFWS Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition grant in the amount of $1,244,750,000.00 and authorize the five subgrants of these funds to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy , authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to proceed substantially as planned.

Motion carried.

36. Strategic Plan — Action

To consider adopting the Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan. The Plan provides a high-level blueprint for WCB decision-making and establishes the primary framework for implementing the WCB vision over the next five years.

Mr. Donnelly discussed this item and said that we did conduct a workshop on May 1, 2014, and staff made presentations on processes within WCB. The consultant also did a presentation about the Strategic Plan. The Board asked for a little more time to consider the plan and made several recommendations that have been

added to the final draft. They asked staff to convene a Strategic Plan meeting that is now scheduled for June 2, 2014, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Resources Auditorium. This is a public meeting and everyone is invited to attend. Staff have provided the final draft of the plan to the board and it includes all the pictures that will be in the adopted Strategic Plan. We will be discussing the final draft on June 2nd and hopefully adopting it at that time.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any further comments or questions on the Strategic Plan and there were none.

Mr. Donnelly made one last comment saying this agenda was larger than usual. He thanked the WCB staff for all their hard work in making this a successful meeting.

With no further business to discuss, Deputy Director Kevin Hunting adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

COPY ORIGINAL SIGNED BY JOHN P. DONNELLY

John Donnelly
Executive Director

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At the close of the meeting on May 22, 2014, the amount allocated to projects since the Wildlife Conservation Board's inception in 1947 totaled $2,538,877,697.96. This total includes funds reimbursed by the Federal Government under the Accelerated Public Works Program completed in 1966, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, the Anadromous Fish Act Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Act Program, the Pittman-Robertson Program, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program.

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

A. Fish Hatchery and Stocking Projects		$18,414,719.06
B. Fish Habitat Preservation, Development & Improvement		46,447,717.50
Reservoir Construction or Improvement	5,605,699.00	
Stream Clearance and Improvement	32,671,906.86	
Stream Flow Maintenance Dams	542,719.86	
Marine Habitat	3,191,619.07	
Fish Screens, Ladders and Weir Projects	4,435,772.71	
C. Fishing Access Projects		58,730,613.38
Coastal and Bay	5,524,134.53	
River and Aqueduct Access	21,390,002.38	
Lake and Reservoir Access	10,813,623.43	
Piers	21,002,853.04	
D. Game Farm Projects		146,894.49
E. Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Development and Improvement		2,325,377,307.37
Wildlife Areas (General)	443,164,243.86	
Miscellaneous Wildlife Habitat Development	36,411,575.88	

	Wildlife Areas/Ecological Reserves, (Threatened, Endangered or Unique Habitat)	791,745,090.39
	Land Conservation Area	15,130,464.18
	Inland Wetlands Conser. Grants & Easements	28,187,763.88
	Riparian Habitat Conser. Grants & Easements	93,227,387.77
	Other Wildlife Habitat Grants	917,510,781.41
F.	Hunting Access Projects	1,366,898.57
G.	Miscellaneous Projects (including leases)	45,322,374.61
H.	Special Project Allocations	1,892,496.37
I.	Miscellaneous Public Access Projects	40,643,618.54
	State Owned	2,247,004.81
	Grants	38,396,613.73
J.	Sales and/or exchanges	535,058.07
K.	Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act (tax credits awarded)	(48,598,734.00)
	Statutory plans	(0.00)
	Corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, streams and riparian habitat	(6,234,658.00)
	Agricultural lands	(13,775,640.07)
	Water and water rights	(0.00)
	State and local parks, open space and archaeological resources	(28,588,435.93)
Total Allocated to Projects		$2,538,877,697.96

Exhibit A

COUNTY OF COLUSA

DEPARTMENT OF

PLANNING AND BUILDING ADMINISTRATION

220 12th Street

Colusa, California 95932

TELEPHONE (530) 458-0480 FAX (530) 458-2035

STEPHEN M. HACKNEY, AICP
DIRECTOR

May 21, 2014

John Donnelly, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
1807 13th Street, Suite 103
Sacramento, CA 95611

Re: Willow Creek Ranch Water Distribution Improvements grant

Dear Mr. Donnelly:

The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention the concern the County of Colusa has with one of the agendized items to be heard at the May 22, 2014, Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting. The agenda identifies Item #23. Willow Creek Ranch as one of the items to be considered and approved. In the purpose and intent paragraph provided in Item #23, the agenda states the $647,000.00 is to be used for among other things, . . . for the acquisition . . . of wetlands . . .. While the County certainly supports enhancement and protection of those areas that support duck habitat and flood protection, the County is very concerned about protecting the continued availability of agricultural lands.

As per the Settlement Agreement between the California Fish & Wildlife/Wildlife Conservation Board and the County, dated November 18, 2004, as per Stipulation Nos. 1, 2(a) and 3, the WCB is to meet/confer, and include the County into any potential acquisition of land that is located in the Exclusive Agriculture (E-A) zoning of our County. While no such project presently exists, as per our recent telephone conference call this past February, the County takes note of the use of the above funds for taking additional E-A zoned land out of production.

When agricultural land is taken out of production, the County loses tax revenue. The historical record of the state reimbursing the counties through P.I.L.T. (payment-in-lieu-taxes) is not positive. Besides the reduction, or loss of property tax revenue to the County, there are the economic impacts which ripple across the County with loss of agricultural land to production: loss of jobs; loss of sales of seeds, fertilizers, chemicals; loss of sales in implements and other equipment. Some years ago a study was performed which indicated for every direct dollar income from agriculture, there is a multiplier effect resulting in an additional nine dollars. Acquiring agriculturally zoned land for conversion purposes results in a significant economic impact to the County.

The County would like clarity as to the intentions of both parties, the WCB providing the grant monies, and the recipient(s), Ducks Unlimited, Inc., and the landowners, as to the uses of these funds. If any monies are intended to acquire surrounding or adjacent lands, that are currently zoned E-A, the County wants all parties to know that the County has a decision-making role in the process; i.e., such prospective change in land uses first require the landowners to apply for a General Plan Amendment and a Zoning Amendment, before the land uses can be converted to non-agricultural uses.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Stephen Hackney, AICP
Director of Planning & Building
County of Colusa
(530) 458-0480
shackney@countyofcolusa.org

Attachment: Copy of Settlement Agreement, dated November 18, 2004

cc: Kim Dolbow Vann-Supervisor-District 1, Chair of the Board of Supervisors
Denise Carter, Supervisor-District 5
Marcos Kropf, County Counsel, County of Colusa
Timothy M. Taylor, Attorney for County of Colusa,
Kristen Castanos, Attorney for County of Colusa

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FILED