



Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
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Final Meeting Agenda

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 15, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

Natural Resources Building, First Floor Auditorium
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Board meeting will also be available via Zoom. A recording will be posted after the meeting.

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*If you anticipate commenting during the Public Comment period or on a particular agenda item and would like to register your name ahead of time, please complete this [Speaker Card \(Word\)](#) and email to Mary.Ahern@wildlife.ca.gov prior to the day of the meeting.

Final Meeting Agenda i

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Adjourn

Attachments

Attachment A – Map of November 2022 Projects

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PERSONS WITH DISABILITES

Persons with disabilities needing reasonable accommodation to participate in public meetings or other CDFW activities are invited to contact the Department’s EEO Officer at (916) 653-9089 or EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. Accommodation requests for facility and/or meeting accessibility and Requests for American Sign Language Interpreters should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. Requests for Real-Time Captioners should be submitted at least four weeks prior to the event. These timeframes are to help ensure that the requested accommodation is met. If a request for an accommodation has been submitted but is no longer needed, please contact the EEO Officer immediately

1. Roll Call

Wildlife Conservation Board Members

Charlton H. Bonham, Chair
Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Alina Bokde, Vice Chair, Public Member
Gayle Miller, Member
Chief Deputy Director, Policy, Department of Finance
Damon Nagami, Public Member
Fran Pavley, Public Member
Kathryn Phillips, Public Member
Samantha Murray, President
Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee

Senator Andreas Borgeas
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Henry Stern
Assemblymember Luz Rivas
Assemblymember Laura Friedman – Alternate
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Assemblymember Miguel Santiago – Alternate
Assemblymember Steve Bennett
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia – Alternate

Executive Director

John P. Donnelly

2. Public Forum for Items not on this Agenda

This item provides an opportunity for the general public to share comments or concerns on topics that are not included in this agenda. Speakers shall be limited to two minutes. The Board may not discuss or take action on any matter raised during this item, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting. (Sections 11125, 11125.7(a), Government Code)

3. Funding Status – Informational

The following funding status depicts total Capital Outlay and Local Assistance appropriations by fund source and fund number:

GENERAL FUND (0001)	\$929,554,045.00
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(85,666,938.00)
Total Project Development:	(44,863,801.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$799,023,306.00
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	\$57,978,636.53
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(5,010,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(10,402,348.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$42,566,288.53
WILDLIFE AND COASTAL PROTECTION ACT OF 1988 (0786))	\$3,778,917.00
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance	\$3,778,917.00
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (3228)	\$3,863,441.67
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(425,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(2,375,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,063,441.67
CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND FUND (Proposition 40) (6029)	\$5,353,900.13
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(2,392,268.00)
Total Project Development:	(1,092,500.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$1,869,132.13
WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	\$10,927,900.96
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(4,393,955.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$6,533,945.96

SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	\$6,822,125.46
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(3,200,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$3,622,125.46
WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	\$47,436,064.22
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$47,436,064.22
THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	\$91,984,527.22
November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,555,403.00)
Total Project Development:	(8,315,400.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$82,113,724.22
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	\$1,157,699,558.19
Grand Total – November 2022 Board Meeting Allocation:	(95,049,609.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(74,643,004.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$988,006,945.19

4. Herbicide Discussion and Presentation on changes to the WCB Herbicide Questionnaire

Dr. Krista Hoffman, CDFW’s Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, will give an overview on the Department’s Herbicide Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document. WCB staff will then give a presentation summarizing public comments received on the Herbicide Questionnaire and will recommend updates for Board consideration.

5. Proposed WCB Appraisal Policy Change

This item is withdrawn and will be presented during WCB’s February 2023 meeting.

Consent Items

Items 6-16 are part of the Consent Calendar

6. Recovery of Funds, Tuesday, November 15, 2022

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.

Table 1 - Recoveries by Fund

Fund Name	Amount
General Fund	\$24,889.70
Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund	\$0.00
Habitat Conservation Fund	\$185,253.05
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	\$0.01
California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund	\$7,633.20
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	\$107,286.65
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	\$398,741.58
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	\$7,202.00
Total Recoveries for All Funds	\$731,006.19

Table 2 - General Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Lone Pine Ranch, Phase II	\$10,050,000.00	\$10,025,110.30	\$24,889.70
Total Recoveries to General Fund			\$24,889.70

Table 3 - Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Augmentation	\$141,000.00	\$141,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund			\$0.00

Table 4 - Habitat Conservation Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Central Region State Wildlife Area Habitat Enhancement Project	\$993,000.00	\$985,783.07	\$7,216.93
Central Region State Wildlife Area Habitat Enhancement Project Augmentation	\$302,000.00	\$296,823.76	\$5,176.54
Ervin Ranch, Expansion 1	\$180,000.00	\$152,116.63	\$27,883.37
Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, Water Recirculation and Wetland Restoration Project	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,451,612.64	\$48,387.36

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Honey Lake Wildlife Area Water Infrastructure Improvements	\$396,000.00	\$338,650.79	\$57,349.21
Woodland Regional Park Habitat Enhancement	\$511,000.00	\$471,760.36	\$39,239.64
Total Recoveries to Habitat Conservation Fund			\$185,253.05

Table 5 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Building Climate Resiliency in Central Valley Wetlands	\$197,000.00	\$196,999.99	\$0.01
Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project	\$1,250,000.00	\$1,250,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund			\$0.01

Table 6- California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Laguna Wildlife Area, Expansion 9 (Ambrosini Ranch)	\$1,340,000.00	\$1,332,366.80	\$7,633.20
San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Augmentation	\$59,000.00	\$59,000.00	\$0.00
Total Recoveries to California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Fund			\$7,633.20

Table 7- Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Deer Creek Hydrological and Technical Studies	\$170,000.00	\$105,696.36	\$64,303.64
San Joaquin River Parkway, River Center Public Access Improvements	\$400,000.00	\$357,016.99	\$42,983.01
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			\$107,286.65

Table 8- Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Deer Creek Irrigation District Diversion Automation	\$328,659.00	\$0.00	\$328,659.00
Mattole Headwaters Streamflow Enhancement Planning Project	\$565,048.00	\$565,024.94	\$23.06
Navarro River Watershed Streamflow Enhancement	\$726,374.23	\$698,777.46	\$27,596.77

Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting, November 15, 2022

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
San Geronimo Conservation Easement and Flow Enhancement	\$2,130,000.00	\$2,110,000.00	\$20,000.00
San Joaquin River Parkway, Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Project	\$1,606,627.00	\$1,587,273.35	\$19,353.65
San Luis Obispo Creek Flow Enhancement	\$250,062.00	\$250,061.99	\$0.01
Santa Rosa Creek Flow Enhancement Pilot Project	\$627,225.64	\$624,116.55	\$3,109.09
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			\$398,741.58

Table 9- The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Attiyeh Ranch Conservation Easements	\$3,900,000.00	\$3,892,798.00	\$7,202.00
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018			\$7,202.00

7. China Hill, Expansion 4

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approve this project as proposed; allocate \$40,750 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021 for a grant to the Siskiyou Land Trust (SLT); approve the acceptance of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$59,250 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to SLT; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	China Hill, Expansion 4
Project Type:	Fee Title (11± acres)
Grantee:	Siskiyou Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$40,750
Funding Partners:	USFWS
County:	Siskiyou
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.2, A.3, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property), known as China Hill, is located in Siskiyou County on the east side of City of Yreka (City). The east side of Yreka is made up of sprawl and rural ranchette style housing primarily devoted to grazing, but mostly rural residences and limited commercial development. The Property is more specifically located approximately one mile east of I-5 near the intersection of Juniper Road and Montague Road. Surrounding land uses include rural ranchettes and private cattle ranching.

The Property borders neighboring parcels already protected as city park lands and owned by the City. The 11± acre China Hill property will significantly expand the protected area the Yreka Phlox calls home. The Yreka phlox is a small pink wildflower endemic to the hills surrounding the City and is a listed endangered species by both the United States and State of California under their respective endangered species acts.

This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions.

The California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) designates the area surrounding the Property as the Cascades and Modoc Plateau Province. This acquisition will help advance CDFW's land conservation policies and wildlife protection goals in the SWAP by conserving sustainable plant and animal communities that support multiple species of interest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is an undeveloped, irregularly shaped tract of land that includes one assessor parcel number. It has been managed as speculation for development for many years. The topography of the Property varies from 2800 to 2900 feet above sea level. The general terrain of the vicinity and the Property is rolling hills supporting grasslands, junipers and sage brush habitat types. The surrounding area is characterized by a significant amount of developed rural homesteads along with large rangeland landscapes.

The Property is of ecological significance for Yreka phlox. The plant is endemic to serpentine soils, and China Hill is at the plant's northern range. Currently, there are between 1000-3000 Yreka phlox plants spread across approximately 47 acres. The Yreka phlox recovery plan identifies the protection of China Hill as key to the recovery of the species.

Other species observed on the Property that will benefit from its protection include the following: Swainson's hawk, golden eagle, and bald eagle. Deer, bobcat, bear, and mountain lion are known to use the Property as well.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

SLT will manage the Property once it is acquired in cooperation with the City and the Siskiyou Gardens, Parks, and Greenways Association. The habitat will be maintained in conjunction with other properties owned by the City. Eventually, SLT may transfer ownership to the City. The City will manage the property according to the terms of the original grant agreement.

PROJECT FUNDING

The Department of General Services (DGS) approved fair market value is \$100,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$40,750
USFWS	\$59,250
	\$100,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

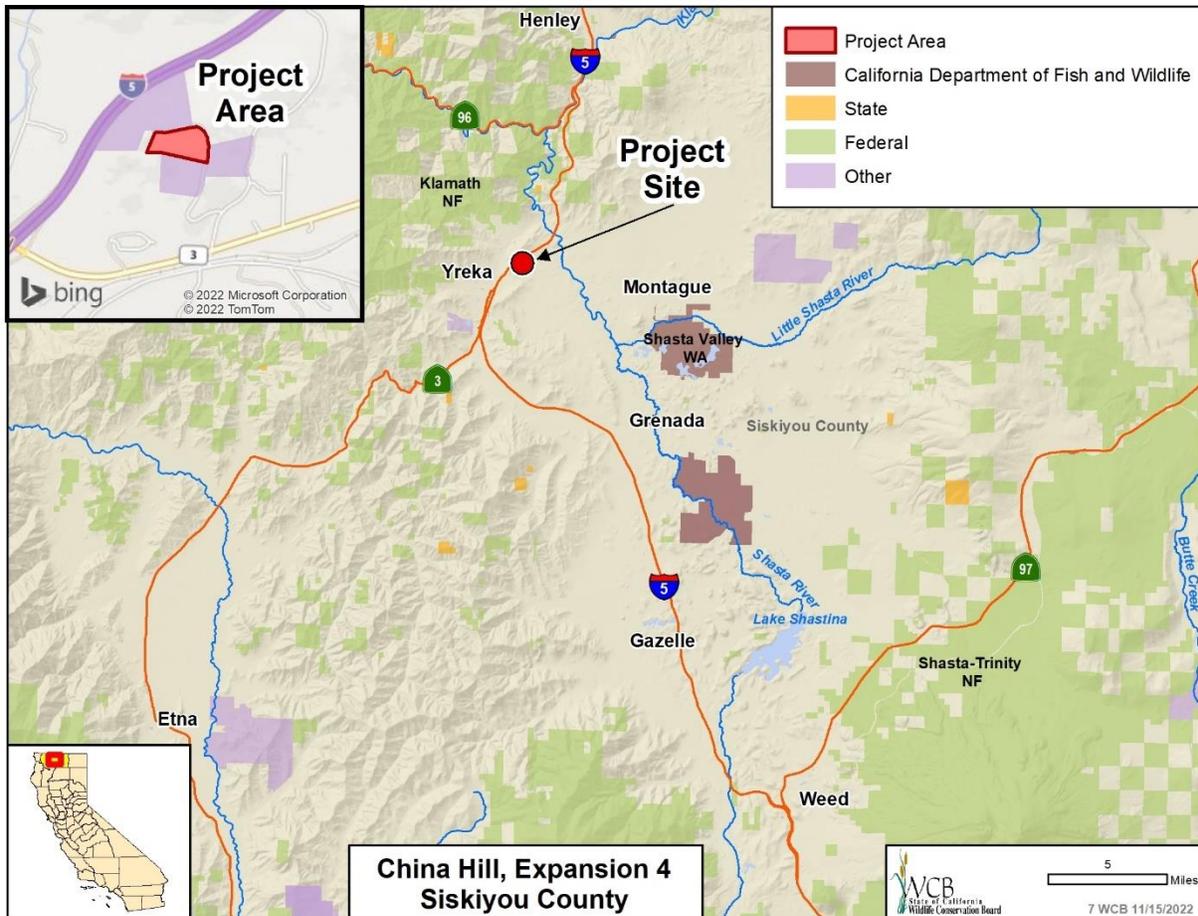
Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and is proposed as 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 WCB, a Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



8. Yreka Phlox Soap Creek Ridge (Anderson)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$105,075 from Proposition 12, Public Resources Code Section 5096.350(a)(5) for a grant to SLT; approve the acceptance of a USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$294,925 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to SLT; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Yreka Phlox Soap Creek Ridge (Anderson)
Project Type:	Fee Title (655± acres)
Grantee:	Siskiyou Land Trust
Amount Recommended:	\$105,075
Funding Partners:	USFWS
County:	Siskiyou
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 12
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.2, A.3, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.3, 2.2, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property), known as the Anderson parcels, is located in Siskiyou County southwest of the city of Yreka (City) and is comprised of 655± acres. The southwest side of Yreka is made up of sprawl and rural ranchette style housing that quickly diminish to large timbered tracts of land. The Property is more specifically located approximately four miles west of I-5 on the north side of Fort Jones Road. Surrounding land uses include, rural ranchettes, industrial forest, and cattle ranching.

The Property borders a neighboring parcel to the north already protected as part of the Klamath National Forest and owned by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The Property will significantly expand the protected area the Yreka phlox calls home. The Yreka phlox is a small pink wildflower endemic to the hills surrounding the City and is a listed endangered species by both the United States and State of California under their respective endangers species acts.

This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions.

SWAP designates the area surrounding the Property as the North Coast and Klamath Province. This acquisition will help advance CDFW's land conservation policies and wildlife protection goals in the SWAP by conserving sustainable plant and animal communities that support multiple species of interest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is directly north of Fort Jones Road. The Property, nearly square tract of land that includes three assessor parcel numbers. The Property has been managed for livestock grazing and timber production for many years. The topography of the Property varies from 3,290 to 4,000 feet above sea level with rolling to steeply sloping terrain and is predominantly grasslands and forest. The Property consists of slopes that support Jeffrey pine forest, with incense cedar, and Douglas-fir; shrub communities with buckbrush, birch-leaf mountain mahogany, and Fremont's silk tassel; and herbaceous communities dominated by grasses and a diverse assemblage of forbs. The surrounding area is characterized by a significant amount of developed rural homesteads along with large rangeland and timbered landscapes.

The Property is of ecological significance for Yreka phlox, which is known from only five populations, all in the vicinity of Yreka. The plant is endemic to serpentine soils, which is a unique and limited soil type that occurs on the Property. The Property supports more than 40 percent of the largest known Yreka phlox population, with plants spread throughout the Property. The Yreka phlox recovery plan identifies the protection of the Property as key to the recovery of the species.

Species observed on the Property that will benefit from its protection include the following: Swainson's hawk, golden eagle, bald eagle, and prairie falcon. Deer, bobcat, mountain lion, bear, and fisher are known or expected to use the Property as well. Additionally, other California endemic plant species, such as Scott Valley phacelia and Scott Mountain bedstraw occur on the Property.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

SLT will manage the Property once it is acquired. SLT's management will be "hands off" or "passive" to allow the phlox to flourish like it does presently. SLT's management objectives for the land would be consistent with those of the Recovery Plan for Yreka phlox and would be supported by technical assistance from the Yreka USFWS. SLT will develop a Memorandum of Understanding or other such agreement with USFWS to develop management objectives for the acquired properties that conserve and protect the species and the unique habitat on which it occurs in perpetuity.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$400,000 The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$105,075
USFWS	\$294,925
	\$400,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

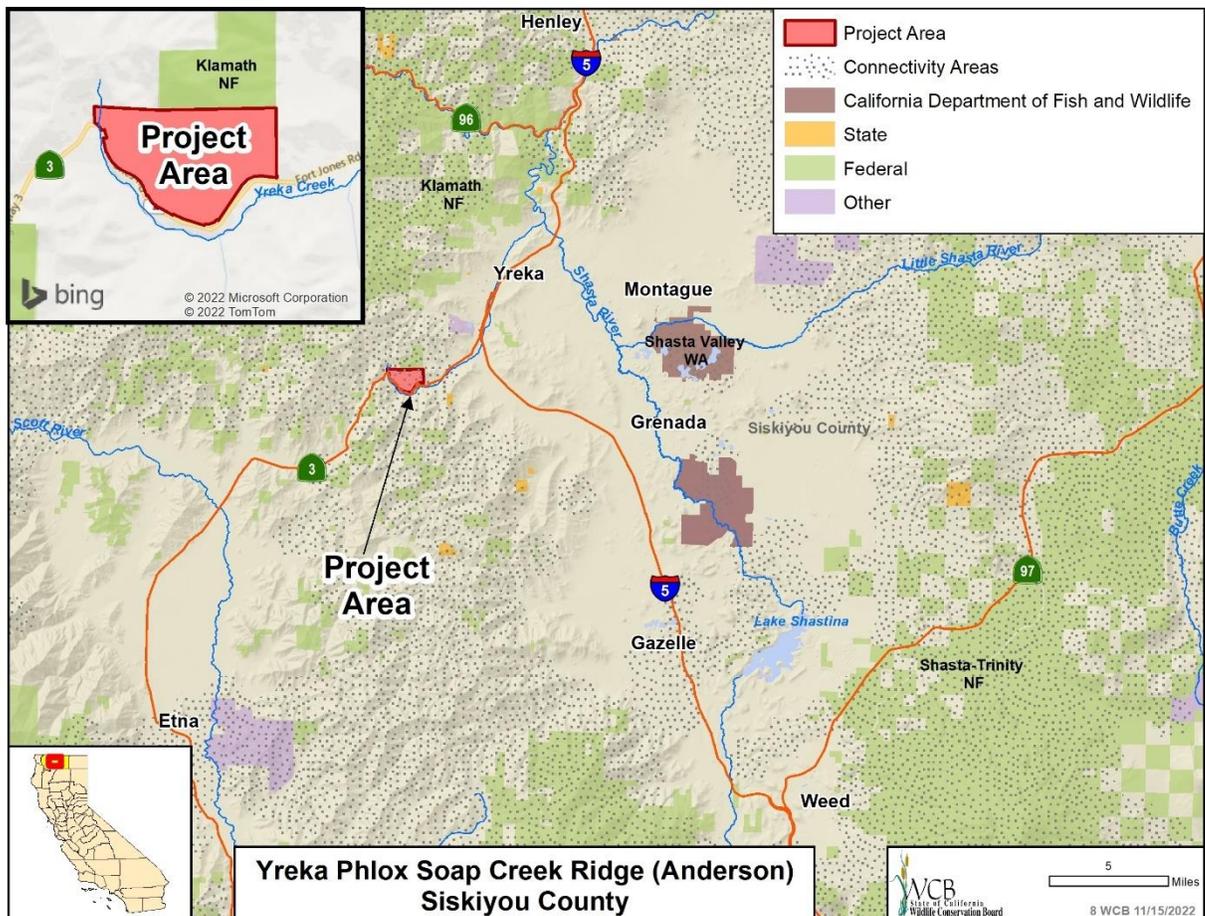
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as 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 WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



9. CAL FIRE Mattole Headwaters

Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

10. Wilson Ranch Meadow Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$892,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2022; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Wilson Ranch Meadow Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	American Rivers
Amount Recommended:	\$892,000
Funding Partners:	USFS, American Rivers, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Landowner:	USFS
County:	El Dorado
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Wilson Ranch Meadow Restoration project (Project) area encompasses 90 acres of montane meadow habitat in the headwaters of the South Fork American River. South Fork Silver Creek and the Wilson Ditch tributary merge in Wilson Ranch Meadow. South Fork Silver Creek runs along the southeastern edge in the lower half of the meadow and the Wilson Ditch tributary flows north to south through three quarters of the meadow. The Project area is situated in Eldorado National Forest, approximately 30 miles northeast of Pollock Pines in El Dorado County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

American Rivers and Eldorado National Forest have been working to advance restoration at Wilson Ranch meadow since 2017. This Project was vetted by the American River Meadows Stakeholder Group and identified as the top priority among 40 meadow restoration opportunities due to its impacted hydrologic condition and its potential to benefit wildlife, including Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, southern long-toed salamander, and willow flycatcher.

Wilson Ranch Meadow has been impacted by logging, ranching, road construction, and recreational uses. For example, at the top of the Wilson Ditch tributary, an undersized vented ford road concentrates flow, causing erosion and channel incision in the meadow. The cement-and-steel vented ford, constructed in 1975, is 110 feet long and up to four feet high. To ensure all flows were forced through the ford, the bottom of the channel was excavated more than three feet below the natural meadow floodplain elevation and road fill was used to create a dam to block and divert flows. Additionally, paved roadways along the east and north ends of the meadow (Wright's Tie Road and Wright's Lake Road) lead to the

ford. These roadways concentrate dispersed hillslope flows and redirect them into the vented ford.

The concentration of flow has caused the channel to incise through approximately three quarters of the meadow, lowering the water table and causing hydrologic disconnection from the meadow floodplain. As a result, vegetation on the floodplain has partially converted from wet meadow to upland vegetation, which includes extensive conifer encroachment. Also, high-velocity flows passing through the vented ford limit aquatic organism passage and connectivity to additional headwaters habitat. The meadow drains rapidly, constraining the size and duration of pooling on the floodplain surface, a resource that could be used by Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and southern long-toed salamander. This loss of saturated conditions also reduces and degrades willow flycatcher habitat.

The Project will restore the meadow's ecological processes by replacing the vented ford with eight recessed box culverts, filling the incised Wilson Ditch tributary, installing a grade control feature at the confluence of the Wilson Ditch Tributary and South Fork Silver Creek, and installing three weirs in South Fork Silver Creek. The repaired channel will reconnect a network of natural swales that will improve groundwater recharge and raise the water table. Additionally, a grade control feature and boulder weirs will be installed in South Fork Silver Creek to stabilize the system. Anticipated Project benefits include restored hydrologic function and enhanced wet meadow habitat as well as increased groundwater recharge, soil carbon, and base flows.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The USFS has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, American Rivers does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$113,551	\$20,000	\$133,551
Restoration	\$671,723	\$508,420	\$1,196,723

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Indirect Costs	\$25,726	\$16,580	\$25,726
Contingency	\$81,000	---	\$81,000
Total	\$892,000	\$545,000	\$1,437,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Project implementation per the design plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

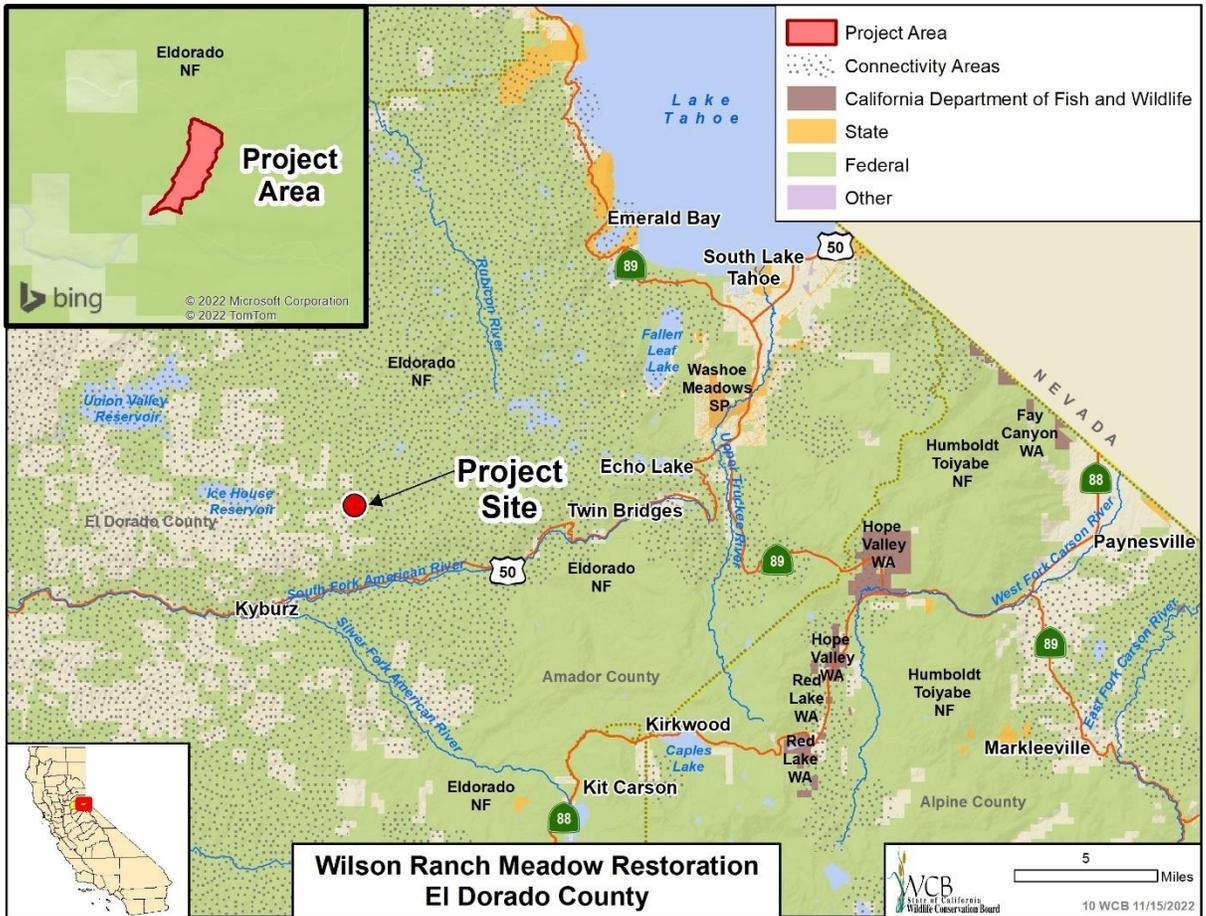
- Dionne Uzes, Pacific District Ranger, Eldorado National Forest

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines, Section 15333, Class 33, Small Habitat Restoration Projects, as a project not exceeding five acres in size to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



11. Barber Creek

Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

12. Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander (Hasan)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$900,000 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander (Hasan)
Project Type:	Fee Title (3± acres)
Amount Recommended:	\$900,000
County:	Santa Cruz
Program:	Land Acquisition Program
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals:A.3, A.4 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property) is bordered on the north by Vista Del Mar Drive, on the west by Custa Drive, on the east by Zanzibar Drive, and on the south by the Seascape Uplands Preserve (managed through the Seascape Uplands HCP), in Santa Cruz County.

Located on the north coast of Monterey Bay, the Property includes the majority of the upper watershed of Bush Gulch; a small coastal watershed that occurs between the larger coastal watersheds of Valencia Creek and the Pajaro River. Bush Gulch, like many small coastal watersheds, provides habitat connectivity between the ocean and the upper reaches of the watershed. The Property is comprised of intact coastal habitats. Coastal habitats like these are in decline throughout the state, and include coastal scrub, coast live oak woodland, coastal terrace prairie and riparian woodland. This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions.

The Property is considered a priority parcel and is located within both the Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) and the Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander Ecological Reserve.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property is composed of a single 3.49-acre parcel with access provided via Vista Del Mar Drive. The Property is surrounded on the east, south, and west sides by the 64-acre CDFW-owned Willow Canyon, which was funded by WCB in 2009. The Willow Canon property contains an active long-toed salamander breeding pond, which compliments the upland habitat characteristics found on-site.

The purpose of this acquisition is to protect upland habitat to support a viable population of Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders and the California red-legged frog. Protection of this Property will conserve limited upland habitat important to the lifecycle and survival of the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander. Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders inhabit freshwater wetlands for breeding and adjacent upland scrub and woodland areas during the non-breeding season. The Property is significant for the recovery of breeding populations of Santa Cruz long-toed salamander. The acquisition of the Property, could contribute toward potential federal downlisting of the species by protecting a substantial portion of uplands utilized as sheltering habitat by Santa Cruz long-toed salamander at Seascape, providing a corridor for dispersal of Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders between Valencia Lagoon and Seascape. Acquisition of the subject property, coupled with the Seascape Uplands Preserve, will increase the amount of upland habitat available to Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders there by approximately fifty percent.

The California red-legged frog is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and is a California State species of special concern. The Property falls entirely within Core Area 19 of the Central Coast Recovery Unit for the California red-legged frog. In addition to the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander and the California red-legged frog, the Property could also benefit the white-tailed kite, Cooper's hawk, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, and pallid bat.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW will manage and monitor the Property. The management objectives will be similar to that in the Willow Canyon Land Management Plan which will include maintaining the Property as critical Santa Cruz long-toed salamander habitat, conduct wildlife surveys, and continue coordination of population surveys.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$900,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$900,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$900,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received.

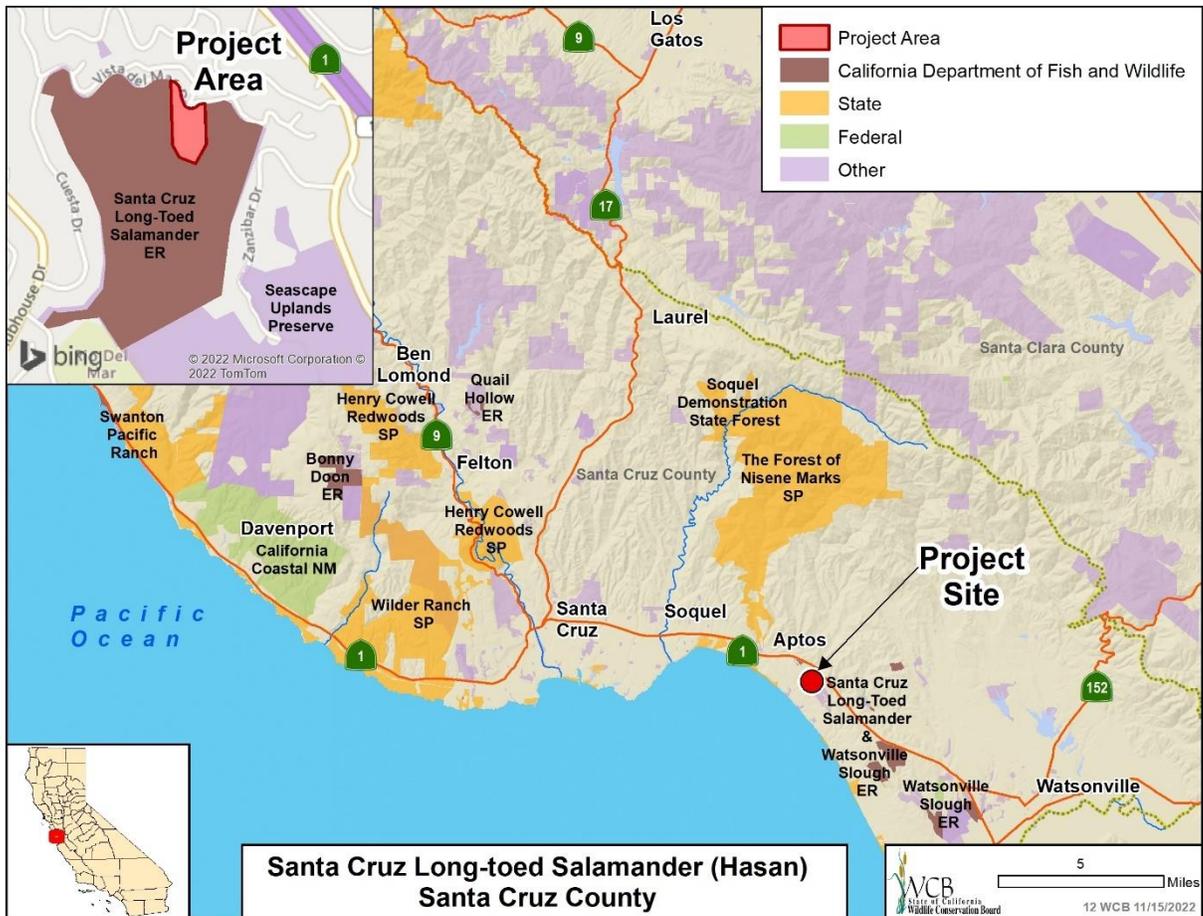
Opposition:

- None received.

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at

the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.



13. Sans Topo Ranch Conservation Easement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$650,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021, for a grant to California Rangeland Trust (CRT); approve the acceptance of a USFWS Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in the amount of \$1,850,000 and approve the subgrant of the federal funds to CRT; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Sans Topo Ranch Conservation Easement
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (4,503± acres)
Grantee:	California Rangeland Trust (CRT)
Amount Recommended:	\$650,000
Funding Partners:	USFWS
County:	San Benito
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1, A.2, A.4, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The property (Property), known as the Sans Topo Ranch, is located approximately 35 miles south of the city of Hollister, in San Benito County. The ranch headquarters are located roughly two miles west of State Route 25 which runs along the eastern border of the Property.

The Property is primarily surrounded by private land and is roughly four miles southeast of Pinnacles National Park. Other WCB projects in the vicinity are the Willow Creek Ranch Conservation Easement, Gabilan Ranch Conservation Easement, and the Dorrance Ranch Conservation Easement.

This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements.

The Property is in CDFW's Santa Cruz Mountains Linkages Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The primary purpose of the CAPP is to secure critical landscape linkages between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Mount Hamilton and Gabilan ranges. The Property is located in the Gabilan Range and lies within the Chalone Creek and Lewis Creek watersheds, and Topo Creek and Bitterwater Creek sub-watersheds. Approximately 2-miles of Topo Creek flows through the easement area from the north to the southwest where it eventually connects to Chalone Creek further west downstream.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Most of the Property is winter and spring pasture grazed by cattle as part of a rotational grazing regime. Livestock grazing is an important component of the rural economy. The conservation easement (Easement) will ensure that future land uses do not impair the habitat values of the Property.

The Property has three habitat types: annual grassland, coastal scrub, and blue oak woodland. Annual grassland is the dominant habitat type on the Property occupying approximately 3,292 acres. This plant community consists primarily of introduced annual grass and forb species. Annual grasslands provide good forage for grazing livestock and wildlife and provides habitat for mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Blue oak woodland is the second most common plant community on the Property occupying approximately 658 acres and coastal scrub is the least common plant community on the Property occupying approximately 552 acres.

Habitats on the Property provide food sources, breeding areas, water, and shelter for wildlife. Diverse plant communities and varying topographic features promote diverse wildlife populations within the Easement area. Water sources available to wildlife include natural drainages on the Property, stock ponds, vernal pools, livestock water tanks, and a seasonal quail guzzler. The special-status wildlife species that have been documented on the Property are California condor, American badger, California tiger salamander, mountain lion, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and western spadefoot toad.

The purpose of the Easement is to ensure that the Property will be retained forever in its current state as an 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 Easement 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 for the California condor; and d) preserving the open space character and scenic qualities of the Property. The project is designed to have minimal impact to property tax income to San Benito County, while still furthering county goals and land use policies.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CRT will hold, monitor, and enforce the terms of the conservation easement, which provide that the Property will be used primarily as an open space working landscape supporting cattle ranching and wildlife habitat. CRT will be responsible for enforcing the Easement through detailed baseline conditions documentation, planned annual compliance monitoring, recordkeeping, and regular communication with the landowners. A baseline conditions report and management plan will be provided to WCB prior to the close of escrow.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,500,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$650,000
USFWS	\$1,850,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,500,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

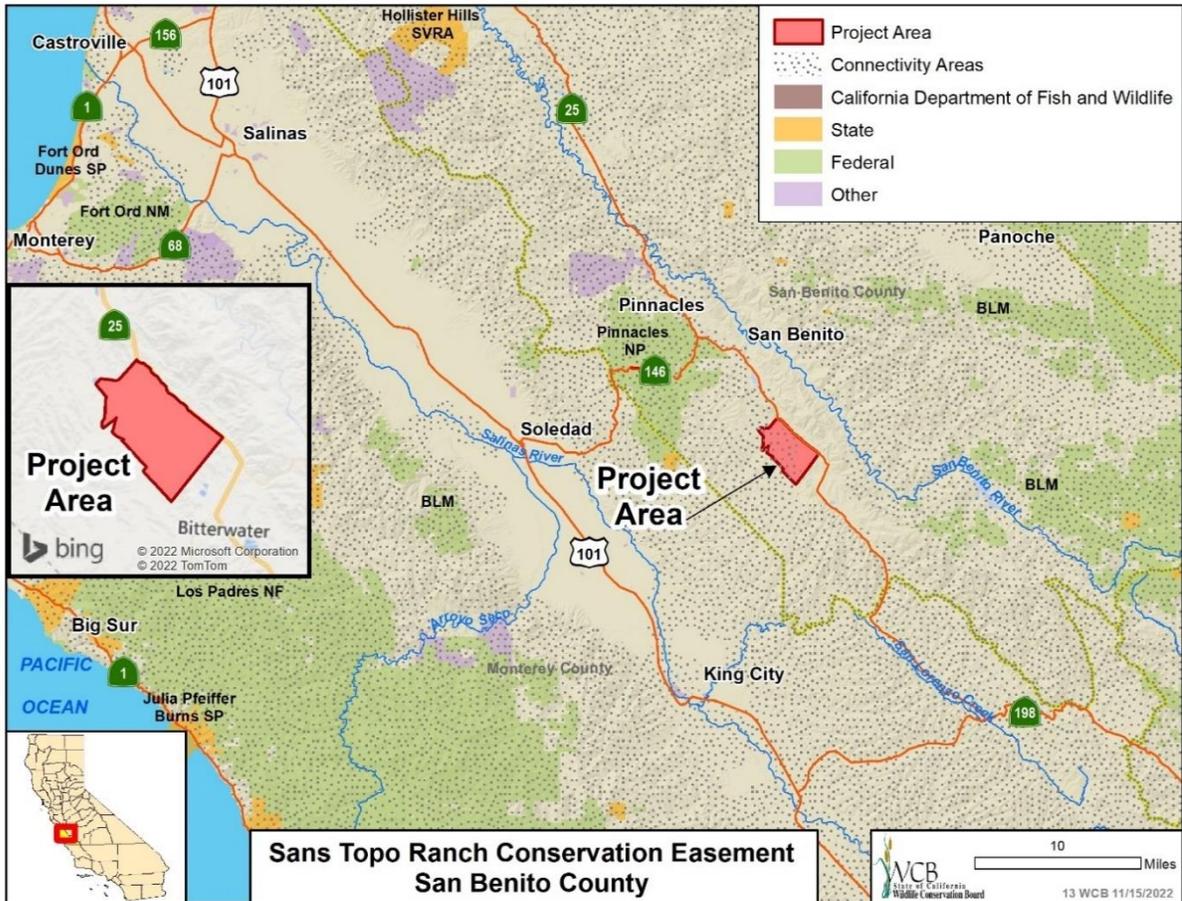
- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as 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 WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



14. **Pereira Ranch**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$415,000 from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Budget Act, Chapter 14 and 249, Statutes of 2017 for the grant to The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (LCSLO); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Pereira Ranch
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (321± acres)
Grantee:	The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County
Amount Recommended:	\$415,000
Funding Partners:	California Department of Conservation
County:	San Luis Obispo
Program:	Climate Adaptation and Resiliency
Funding:	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1, E.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 4.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Not located within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Pereira Ranch (Property) is located on Prefumo Canyon Road, 10 miles west of San Luis Obispo in the Irish Hills. The coastal range in this area is known for scenic vistas, rolling grasslands, and oak studded hillsides. The rocky, serpentine landscape contains chaparral, oak, grasslands, and riparian habitats. The Property is located approximately 15 miles from the coastal town of Los Osos.

This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 3: Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements

The Property will address multiple goals and objectives of the CA Climate Adaptation Strategy/Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk Plan. Protecting the Property will also lead to important wildlife conservation benefits. The Property sits at the top of the Islay Creek watershed and provides habitat connectivity to Montaña de Oro State Park and large-scale private land conservation easements. Together, the publicly-owned lands and the private conservation easement protected lands provide 14,000 acres of protected habitat corridors in central San Luis Obispo County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The approximate 321± acre site is predominantly open space and livestock rangeland characterized by oak-forested hillsides, coastal scrub, and open grasslands. The Property is a working cattle ranch. A light to moderate herd of cattle is grazed throughout the year. The Ranch is actively managed so that stocking rates do not overgraze the Property. Livestock are rotated between 5 separate pastures developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service'

Environmental Quality Incentive Program to create rotational grazing infrastructure on the ranch.

Habitats present on the Property include coast live oak woodland and associated grasslands. These habitats support several important animal species including deer, golden eagle, and mountain lion. Species of special concern potentially occurring on the Property include the burrowing owl, western pond turtle, and California red legged frog. Protection of the Property will also add to the landscape scale protection areas east of the state park and buffer the park from encroaching development. The Property is part of a larger scale land protection effort within the watershed. Other working ranches in the Irish Hills are permanently conserved. The Property provides habitat connectivity to other permanently protected properties in the Irish Hills and Montaña de Oro State Park. LCSLO, The Nature Conservancy, California State Parks, and other local and state conservation organizations have worked to protect large tracts of this unique landscape.

Per CDFW's ACE 3 tool, the Property ranks high for terrestrial climate change resilience (4) and moderate to high (3-4) for species biodiversity.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

When establishing a conservation easement, LCSLO works closely with the landowner to address protection of the Property's natural habitat and agricultural resources. The purposes of the proposed Easement are to ensure that natural resources, agriculture, and wildlife habitat are conserved in balance and harmony with each other. The grant agreement requires LCSLO to monitor the Property at least once a year to ensure the Easement terms are being honored, as well as to prepare and submit a written monitoring report documenting the visit and noting any significant changes to the resources or any compliance issues. If necessary, corrective action must be recommended and noted in the report.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$1,150,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$415,000
DOC	\$735,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$1,150,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

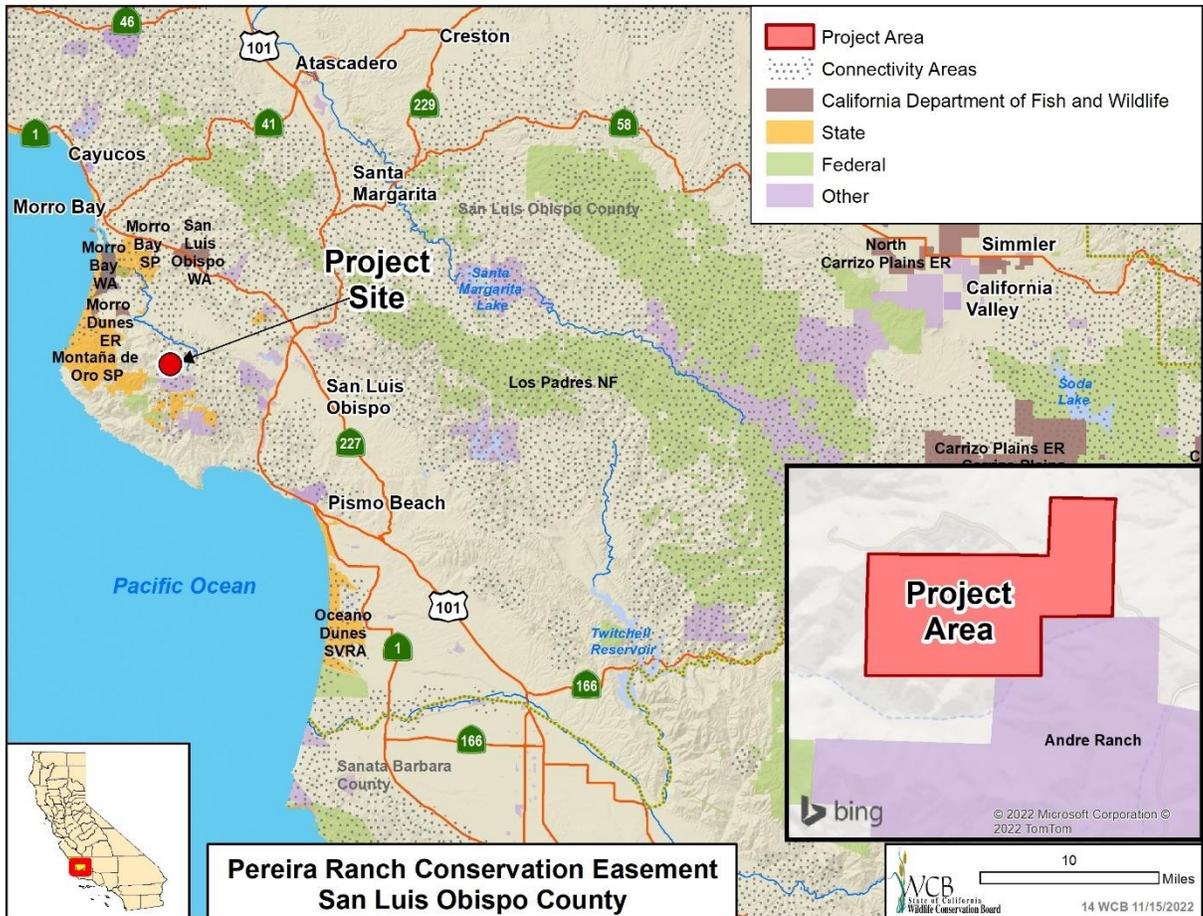
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as 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 WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



15. San Joaquin Marsh Water Management Enhancement Phase 2

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$605,403 from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(c); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	San Joaquin Marsh Water Management Enhancement, Phase 2
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	University of California, Irvine
Amount Recommended:	\$605,403
Funding Partners:	University of California, Irvine
Landowner(s):	University of California, Irvine
County:	Orange
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Proposition 68
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.3
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The San Joaquin Marsh Water Management Enhancement, Phase 2 project (Project) is located at the University of California, Irvine’s San Joaquin Marsh Reserve (UCI Marsh) in the city of Irvine. The UCI Marsh is a 200-acre depressional wetland complex including 30 acres of open water, 30 acres of shallow ponds, and 70 acres of shallow and deep semi-permanent emergent marshlands. Additional upland habitats bordering the wetlands include riparian, coastal sage scrub, and grassland habitats.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Currently, freshwater is supplied to the UCI Marsh either by reserve staff pumping it from San Diego Creek when water levels are high enough, or indirectly, when Irvine Ranch Water District pumps water from San Diego Creek and conveys it to the UCI Marsh through a culvert under Campus Drive into the upper marsh unit. In the past decade, drought periods have intensified and lengthened, lowering water levels and shortening periods of flow in San Diego Creek, especially in the reach owned by the University of California, Irvine. Although significant variation in inter-annual winter precipitation from year to year is historically normal for southern California, this variation has reached record levels in recent years and is predicted to become even more extreme. Consequently, maintaining water levels within the UCI Marsh using current infrastructure has been increasingly challenging.

Construction activities include excavation that would enhance water distribution and expansion of wetland habitat, raising berms/dirt roads to increase storage capacity and duration and efficiency of passive drainage, and modification of water

control mechanisms such as the height of headwalls and weir boards. The Project will upgrade water control structures within the Project area to enable the Middle Marsh to fill to capacity without spilling over into the seasonal marsh. The Project will excavate swales within the Middle and Lower Marsh, and one water catchment basin adjacent to the experimental ponds to create refugia habitat, especially in drought years. Areas with vegetation cleared during excavation and for temporary access will be replanted with native vegetation.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Grantee has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of UCI Marsh. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, the University of California, Irvine does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$93,330	---	\$93,330
Design and Engineering	\$23,200	\$156,800	\$180,000
Permitting, Monitoring, Planting	---	\$45,000	\$45,000
Construction	\$488,873	---	\$488,873
Total	\$605,403	\$201,800	\$807,203

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grant and contract management, invoicing, contractor bidding, and oversight.
- Design and Engineering: Complete hydrologic study and complete 100% engineering design of Project improvements.
- Construction: Construct Project improvements including construction of berms, water control structure upgrades, soil excavation, transport of plant material, and mobilization/demobilization.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

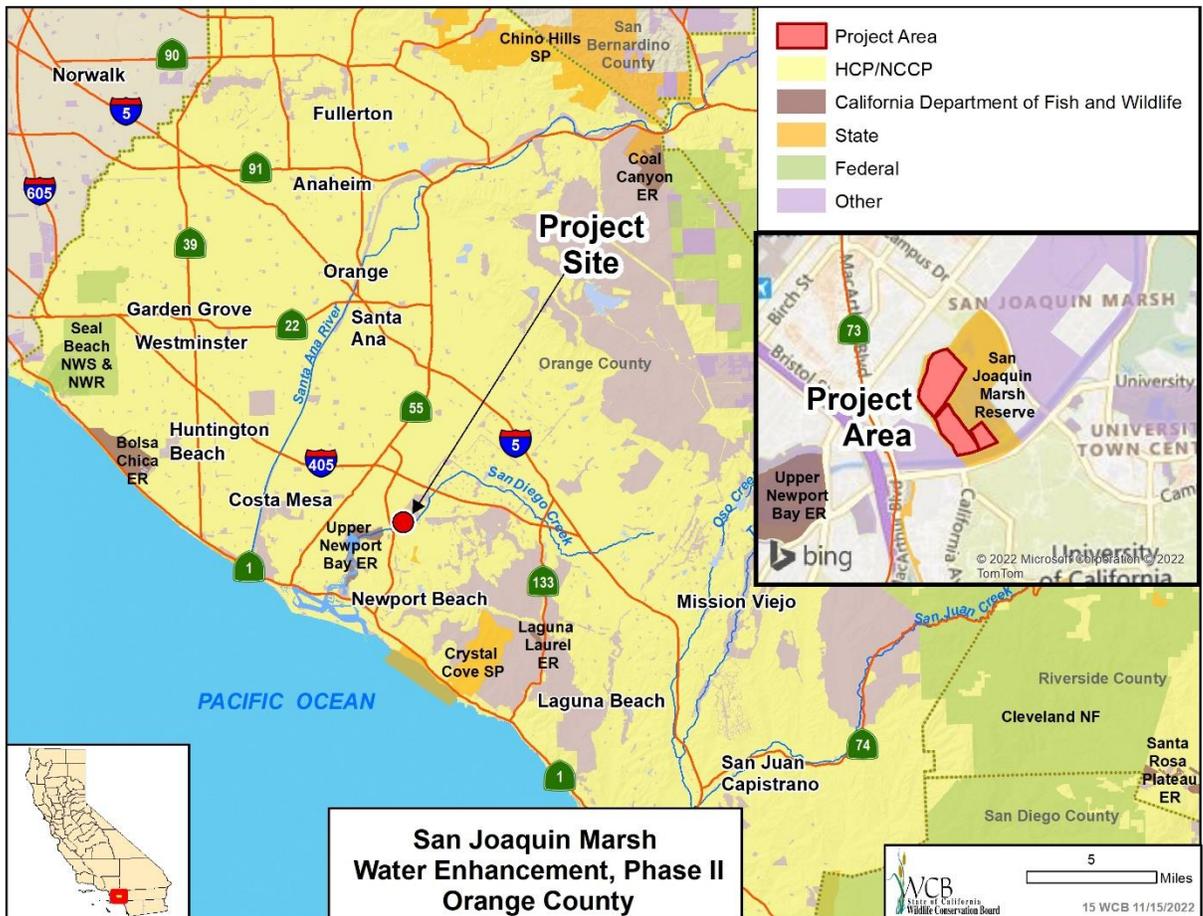
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The University of California, Irvine, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination (NOD) will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



16. Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Units W11, W12 & Y15

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,400,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(d); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Units W11, W12 & Y15
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	California Waterfowl Association
Amount Recommended:	\$2,400,000
Funding Partners:	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Landowner(s):	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
County:	Imperial
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1, C.1 Objectives: SI 2.5, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a severely disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Imperial Wildlife Area Wetland Restoration, Units W11, W12 & Y15 project (Project) is located on the southeastern shoreline of the Salton Sea, north of the city of Niland, in Imperial County. The Imperial Wildlife Area (IWA) was established in 1954 and provides almost 8,000 acres of wetland habitat for migrating birds that visit the region every winter.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Habitat conditions within the Project area are extremely poor and the wetland units have reduced management capabilities. Levees around the units are in various stages of failure and have extremely steep slopes, which prevent access of maintenance equipment. Open water delivery ditches that supply water to the units grow significant amounts of salt cedar and phragmites that choke off water flow and spread invasive seeds.

The Project will mechanically remove the invasive salt cedar shrubs that grow within the water delivery ditches, and on the levees within the Project area. Using an excavator, these plants will be removed by the roots and then piled up for burning by CDFW staff. Herbicide use will not be necessary. Salt cedar removal will allow equipment access to start the process of infrastructure reestablishment while also eliminating a water hungry invasive species. Water delivery pipelines will be installed to replace the open ditches. Pipelines guarantee no ditch loss, no annual maintenance costs, reduced invasive seed source, and improved water delivery capabilities by allowing direct flow of water to desired units by way of independent irrigation valves. Additionally, the Project will restore the three wetland units by constructing new levees, islands and swales. Upgraded water

control structures will provide the ability to deliver and remove water from each unit quickly, maximizing natural feed production. The Project will also construct a new parking lot on the wildlife area for public use of the restored wetland units.

These enhancements will create high value habitat for a variety of wetland and upland dependent species throughout the year. Increased water conservation through improved water delivery and efficient removal will enable less water to be used on a larger acreage. At the same time, water quality and soil health will be elevated with the ability to reduce residual salt loads within wetland units.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CDFW has adopted the IWA, Wister Unit Management Plan that guides management actions for the property. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, CDFW does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that California Waterfowl Association 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$254,500	\$80,000	\$334,500
Earthwork	\$750,000	\$479,250	\$1,229,250
Pipeline/Water Control Structure Installation	\$915,000	\$33,800	\$948,800
Salt Cedar Removal	\$250,000	\$56,950	\$306,950
Parking Lot Grading/Gravel	\$30,000	---	\$30,000
Indirect Charges	\$25,450	---	\$25,450
Contingency	\$175,050	---	\$175,050
Total	\$2,400,000	\$650,000	\$3,050,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Engineering survey, restoration design, construction management, and invoicing.
- Earthwork: Construction of levees, swales, islands, and filed grading.
- Pipeline/Water Control Structure Installation: Purchase and installation of water delivery pipelines and water control structures.
- Salt Cedar Removal: Invasive plant removal.
- Parking Lot Grading/Gravel: Grading and gravel for new parking lot.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

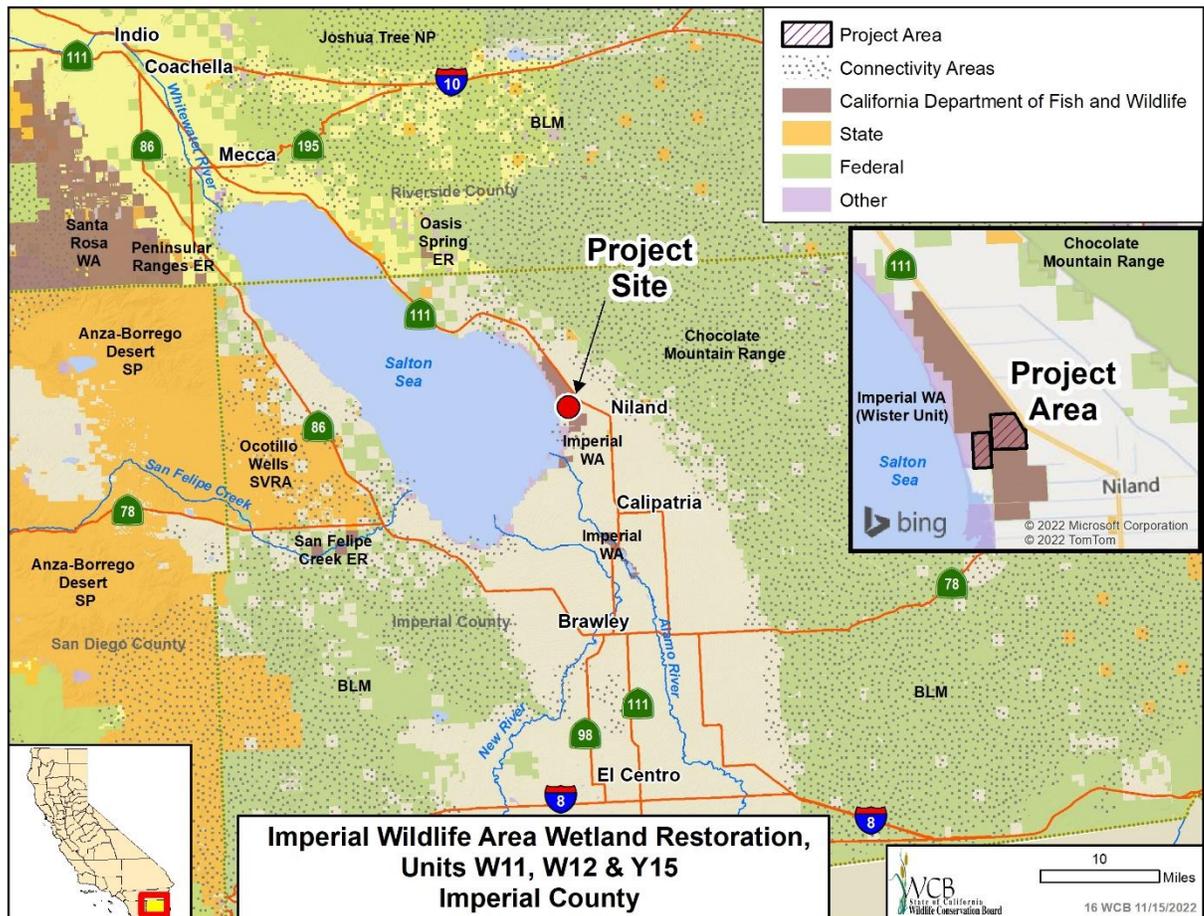
- Senator Ben Hueso, California State Senate
- Jennifer N. Duberstein, Ph.D., Coordinator, Sonoran Joint Venture
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines: Section 15301, Class 1, Section 15301, Existing Facilities, as repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographic features involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use; Section 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, as replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities and water delivery (utility) systems involving negligible or no expansion of capacity; and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land as a minor alteration in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



Presentation Items

17. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$19,413,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
Amount Recommended:	\$19,413,000
Funding Partners:	Various Resource Conservation Districts
Landowner(s):	To Be Determined
County:	Statewide
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration project (Project) will create a funding mechanism using a block grant structure that will be used to support potential future habitat conservation and restoration projects located throughout California.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Many species of California pollinators and other wildlife are in peril due in large part to habitat loss and climate change. Restoring habitat and reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change are necessary to increase wildlife's ability to survive the effects of climate change. Increasing the pace and scale of habitat restoration and conservation across multiple land jurisdictions is critical for addressing these issues and realizing California's 30x30 conservation goals. On private lands, producers have shown leadership and innovation when it comes to land stewardship, but are often hindered by lack of adequate financial incentives and technical assistance to balance production and conservation outcomes. Another important limiting factor is an adequate supply of native seed and plant materials for pollinator projects.

The Project will directly address these issues by creating a funding mechanism that can be used to scale up implementation of multiple habitat restoration projects throughout California by means of a block grant structure. As the grant recipient, the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) will sub-grant to various Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) and partners to carry out the work and manage and administer the overall Project, reducing the

administrative burden for WCB. The Project leverages experience and resources gained through recent technical assistance and habitat installation projects for monarchs/pollinators and carbon farm plans (funded by WCB and other sources) along with a growing number of partnerships with expert organizations, agencies, and landowners/managers. Partner organizations (e.g.: Point Blue Conservation Science, Carbon Cycle Institute) included in this proposal will support multiple RCDs in their work by providing technical assistance and guidance in planning, implementation, and monitoring capacity building, and by increasing and ensuring the availability of native plant materials.

The overall goal of the Project is to harness the knowledge, experience, and connection of RCDs with local stakeholders and the expertise of partner organizations to get as much valuable wildlife habitat restored and carbon sequestered as possible, and as efficiently as possible, within the term of the grant. More specific objectives include implementing at least 30 monarch/pollinator habitat restoration projects on working lands; 25 monarch/pollinator habitat restoration projects on non-agricultural lands; at least five monarch overwintering sites; at least 19 wildlife habitat restoration projects; and implementation of at least 40 carbon farm plans on working lands.

It is anticipated that herbicide use may be necessary for some projects. Herbicide will only be used when targeted herbicide use can be part of the restoration process to manage highly competitive invasive species at sites where other preparation methods are not feasible and the use is critical for the project to establish well and persist for the long term. Additionally, the grantee or subgrantee will obtain all necessary permits and approvals including complying with all federal, state, and local statutes; laws, regulations, ordinances, orders, and other governmental and quasi-governmental requirements that apply to herbicide use.

By expanding potential on-the-ground projects and emphasizing equity, science, and capacity building, the Project will directly support the state's 30x30 conservation goals including Pathway 1: Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation and Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

Prior to commencement of any project funded by CARCD from this grant, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed by the appropriate lead agency and documentation of that compliance shall be provided to WCB per the terms of the Grant Agreement. Funds from this grant may be used to fund such CEQA compliance.

If no CEQA lead agency is identified for a project, CARCD will seek prior WCB review and approval before committing funds to the project. WCB intends to act as CEQA lead agency for such projects, and WCB's Executive Director will retain discretion and authority to approve or disapprove such projects consistent with WCB's authority as CEQA lead agency and file an NOE or NOD as appropriate.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

CARCD has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of all properties restored with grant funds. If at any time during the 15-year life of the Project, CARCD does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management and Administration	\$1,957,920	\$105,500	\$2,063,420
Implementation	\$9,269,607	\$970,585	\$10,240,192
Monitoring, Maintenance, & Reporting	\$1,963,252	\$281,571	\$2,244,823
Technical Assistance	\$2,701,661	\$1,608,849	\$4,310,510
Consultation – Partners	\$2,266,965	\$37,780	\$2,304,745
Outreach and Education	\$1,253,595	\$106,808	\$1,360,403
Total	\$19,413,000	\$3,111,093	\$22,524,093

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management and Administration: Project management and Administration by CARCD and subgrantees.
- Implementation: Habitat installation, labor, and materials.
- Monitoring, Maintenance, & Reporting: Assess, monitor, study, and report on all subgrants.
- Technical Assistance: Completion and oversight of design, environmental review, preparation of permit applications, and technical assistance.
- Consultation – Partners: This task includes various aspects of multi-RCD and multi-project support that will be carried out by partners and subgrantees.
- Outreach and Education: Includes workshops, outreach, and educational activities.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Brittany Jensen, Executive Director, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
- Devin Best, Executive Director, Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District
- Manuel J. Oliva, Chief Executive Officer, Point Blue Conservation Science
- Lucas Patzek, Ph.D., District Manager, Napa County Resource Conservation District
- Jessa Kay Cruz, Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist, Xerxes Society

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the approval of a block grant to CARCD for potential funding of potential future projects to restore or enhance habitat located on public and privately-owned lands in various counties is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, because it is a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



18. Climate Smart Meadow Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$24,731,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Climate Smart Meadow Restoration
Project Type:	Block Grant
Applicant/Grantee:	Point Blue Conservation Science
Amount Recommended:	\$24,731,000
Funding Partners:	Sierra Meadows Partnership, Point Blue Conservation Science, USFWS, USFS
Landowner(s):	To Be Determined
County:	Various Counties
Program:	California Forest Conservation
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Climate Smart Meadow Restoration project (Project) will create a funding mechanism, using a block grant structure, that will be used to support a number of potential future meadow restoration activities situated in northern California, including the following counties: Siskiyou, Modoc, Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Butte, Sierra, Yuba, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Alpine, Mono, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Inyo, Tulare, and Kern.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Wet meadows comprise less than two percent of the Sierra Nevada and southern Cascades ecoregion of California but contribute a disproportionately large benefit to ecological services. They are hotspots for biodiversity, store and purify water, attenuate flood flows, provide refugia during and after fires, and store large concentrations of soil carbon. Meadows and their riparian areas are extremely important habitat for wildlife. Unfortunately, an overwhelming majority of Sierra meadows have been degraded, reducing the ecological benefits they provide. As the impacts of climate change increase, so do both the importance of these headwater wetlands, and the threats to their ability to function and provide vital services to humans as well as native species.

The [Sierra Meadows Partnership](#) (SMP) is a diverse coalition of public and private organizations working collaboratively with the goal to restore and protect 30,000 acres of Sierra Meadows by 2030 to address the great need to restore the vitality and resilience of these biodiversity hotspots. To date, the SMP has restored and protected over 6,000 acres of Sierra meadows and has another 9,600 acres in various stages of planning.

This Project would set up a funding mechanism for CEQA compliance and implementation of potential wet meadow restoration projects across the state. Through this Project, Grantee and its partners in the SMP will apply their extensive expertise in restoration, science, implementation, and management to create a funding mechanism that could be used to potentially restore up to an additional 6,000 acres of meadow habitat, complete planning for an additional 4,000 acres, and identify the next 2,500 acres of priorities to begin planning to restore over the next five years. The Project will advance the practice of meadow restoration and management through strategic monitoring, research, coordination, and communications. Through the efficiencies made possible by a block grant, the Project will advance potential meadow restoration projects that will have the greatest degree of multiple benefits including to wildlife habitat, hydrologic functioning, fire refugia, and carbon sequestration.

WCB recently funded development of the Sierra Meadow Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Plan (SM-WRAMP) to provide standardization of monitoring that can be applied to meadows restoration projects across the Sierra. This Project will make use of those SM-WRAMP protocols. Herbicide use is not expected to be used for this Project.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

Prior to commencement of any project funded by Grantee from this grant, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed by the appropriate lead agency and documentation of that compliance shall be provided to WCB per the terms of the Grant Agreement. Funds from this grant may be used to fund such CEQA compliance.

If no CEQA lead agency is identified for a project, Grantee will seek prior WCB review and approval before committing funds to the project. WCB intends to act as CEQA lead agency for such projects, and WCB's Executive Director will retain discretion and authority to approve or disapprove such projects consistent with WCB's authority as CEQA lead agency and file an NOE or NOD as appropriate.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Point Blue Conservation Science will ensure Management Plans are developed as needed to guide management actions for the individual projects implemented through this block grant. If at any time during the 15-year life of the Project, Point Blue Conservation Science does not manage and maintain the Project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$1,320,000	---	\$1,320,000
Restoration	\$14,503,000	\$500,000	\$15,003,000
Planning	\$5,240,000	\$260,000	\$5,500,000
Technical Assistance	\$3,065,000	\$100,000	\$3,165,000
Indirect Costs	\$603,000	\$108,000	\$711,000
Total	\$24,731,000	\$968,000	\$25,699,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Coordination among collaborators, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Implementation and oversight of restoration activities per design plans.
- Planning: Completion and oversight of design, environmental review, preparation of permit applications, etc.
- Technical Assistance: Assess, monitor, study, and report on meadows and associated restoration opportunities.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the approval of a block grant to Point Blue Point Blue Conservation Science for potential funding of potential future projects to restore or enhance habitat located on public and privately-owned lands in various counties is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, because it is a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



19. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$26,000,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Point Blue Conservation Science
Amount Recommended:	\$26,000,000
Funding Partners:	Point Blue Conservation Science
Landowner(s):	To Be Determined
County:	Various Counties
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.2, 1.4, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes project (Project) will create a funding mechanism, using a block grant structure, that will be used to support a number of potential future habitat conservation and restoration projects located throughout California.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

There is strong scientific consensus that biodiversity conservation cannot be achieved through land preservation alone. Stewardship of private working lands, which comprise 40 percent of California, for wildlife and other biodiversity benefits is critical to stabilizing wildlife populations and preventing extinction. Many restoration and conservation projects, particularly on agricultural lands with high potential for wildlife habitat and biodiversity value, are often not completed for a number of reasons. Barriers to implementing these priority projects include a lack of match funding among economically disadvantaged land stewards, limited funding in Farm Bill and other assistance programs, burdensome logistical hurdles in securing technical and financial assistance, and geographic gaps in conservation prioritization. Additionally, many conservation opportunities are on land stewarded by minority and marginalized communities who face systemic barriers to technical assistance and funding. This results in landscapes where habitat values are below their potential, and land stewardship that achieves the greatest co-benefits remains privileged.

The Project will provide a significant opportunity to improve conservation value of working landscapes by creating a funding mechanism that can be used to support many conservation projects that would be too small to manage as individual grants, but which cumulatively would have a positive impact on biodiversity and climate goals in California.

This Project would set up a funding mechanism for CEQA compliance and implementation of potential habitat conservation projects across the state. Point Blue Conservation Science will leverage its 50-plus years of conservation experience to select specific projects for funding and will provide project monitoring and implementation assistance. It is anticipated that many potential projects will be in partnership with local communities through Point Blue's Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed Program. Examples of potential projects that may be selected for funding include riparian plantings to restore critical habitat for thousands of species of wildlife, hedgerow plantings to create pollinator habitat on farm edges and provide vital ecosystem services, and upland wildlife habitat restoration to restore endemic blue oak woodland habitat and its associated ecosystem services.

Many of these potential projects are individually small in scale, but cumulatively, would add large value for sustaining wildlife populations and advancing California's biodiversity and conservation goals both due to direct impact of implementation, and by catalyzing additional stewardship and restoration in each region. The Project may fund restoration or enhancement of up to five miles of riparian restoration and up to 40,000 acres of upland restoration. Herbicide will not be used for this Project.

The Project will add a critical additional pipeline of support to achieve the level of conservation and stewardship necessary to achieve the state's 30x30 biodiversity climate resilience and equity goals including Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

Prior to commencement of any project funded by Point Blue Conservation Science from this grant, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA shall be completed by the appropriate lead agency and documentation of that compliance shall be provided to WCB per the terms of the Grant Agreement. Funds from this grant may be used to fund such CEQA compliance.

If no CEQA lead agency is identified for a project, Point Blue Conservation Science will seek prior WCB review and approval before committing funds to the project. WCB intends to act as CEQA lead agency for such projects, and WCB's Executive Director will retain discretion and authority to approve or disapprove such projects consistent with WCB's authority as CEQA lead agency and file an NOE or NOD as appropriate.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Point Blue Conservation Science has adopted a Management Plan that would guide management actions for potential subject properties, including management. If at any time during the 15-year life of each individual project, Point Blue Conservation Science does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Coordination and Administration	\$1,816,920	---	\$1,816,920
Outreach and Planning	\$1,915,977	---	\$1,915,977
Implementation	\$19,620,717	\$2,013,000	\$21,633,717
Project Performance	\$749,006	---	\$749,006
Indirect Costs	\$1,897,380	\$3,790,000	\$5,687,380
Total	\$26,000,000	\$5,803,000	\$31,803,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Coordination and Administration: Project coordination, oversight, invoicing, and reporting.
- Outreach and Planning: Outreach across focal geographies, planning support and technical assistance.
- Implementation: Project implementation including project materials/supplies and subcontractors.
- Project Performance: Analysis and reporting of ecological and social outcomes of projects supported by the grant.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Karen Buhr, Executive Director, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
- Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
- Thad Walker, District Manager, Resource Conservation District of Butte County
- Walter T. Moore, President, Peninsula Open Space Trust
- Lynn Overtree, Executive Director, San Benito Agricultural Land Trust
- Karminder Brown, Executive Director, San Benito Resource Conservation District
- Arianne Rettinger, Acting Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- Paul Viennean, Executive Director, Shasta Land Trust
- Bob Neale, Stewardship Director, Sonoma Land Trust
- Valentin Lopez. President, Amah Mutsun Land Trust

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the approval of a block grant to Point Blue Conservation Science for potential funding of future projects to restore or enhance habitat located on public and privately-owned lands

in various counties is not a project subject to the requirements of CEQA, because it is a government fiscal activity which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



20. Trinity Alps Forest Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,835,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2022; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Trinity Alps Forest Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Trust for Public Land
Amount Recommended:	\$1,835,000
Funding Partners:	None
Landowner(s):	Sierra Pacific Industries
County:	Siskiyou, Trinity
Program:	California Forest Conservation Program
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.6, 2.1
Disadvantaged Community:	Within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Trinity Alps Forest Restoration project (Project) area encompasses 3,500 acres of alpine forest along the Pacific Crest Trail corridor. The Project area is adjacent to Shasta-Trinity National Forest's Castle Crags and Trinity Alps Wilderness Areas, as well as Castle Crags State Park which, in combination, protect over 500,000 acres. The Project area is situated approximately 20 miles southwest of Weed in Siskiyou and Trinity counties.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project area lies within the upper watershed of the Trinity River, which provides important aquatic habitat for salmonids like Chinook, steelhead, and coho. Alpine fens and bogs in the Project area also support significant native biodiversity, including over 40 species of interest like the carnivorous California pitcher plant. The surrounding Wilderness Areas also support sensitive wildlife including, martin, fisher, northern spotted owl, and Roosevelt elk.

The Project area has been used as commercial timberland, but due to the remote location and low productivity, it has been lightly harvested and many stands have not been harvested. Regrowth and regeneration of stands has been abundant. However, many modifications including stream diversions, roads, culverts (many of which have failed), and stream crossings impact the hydrology, water quality, and wildlife habitat value in the Project area.

The Project aims to restore the area to a wilderness condition by implementing road prisms, culvert and fill removal, rolling dips to prevent erosion, revegetation along stream banks, and reshaping stream crossings. The Project will enhance biodiversity and complete an important linkage between two very large federal Wilderness Areas (Castle Crags and Trinity Alps Wilderness Areas).

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

Sierra Pacific Industries has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project area. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Trust for Public Land does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Total Cost
Project Management	\$74,000	\$74,000
Restoration	\$1,580,000	\$1,580,000
Indirect Costs	\$14,000	\$14,000
Contingency	\$167,000	\$167,000
Total	\$1,835,000	\$1,835,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project team coordination, stakeholder communications, outreach, and grant administration.
- Restoration: Project implementation per the design plan and oversight of restoration activities.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

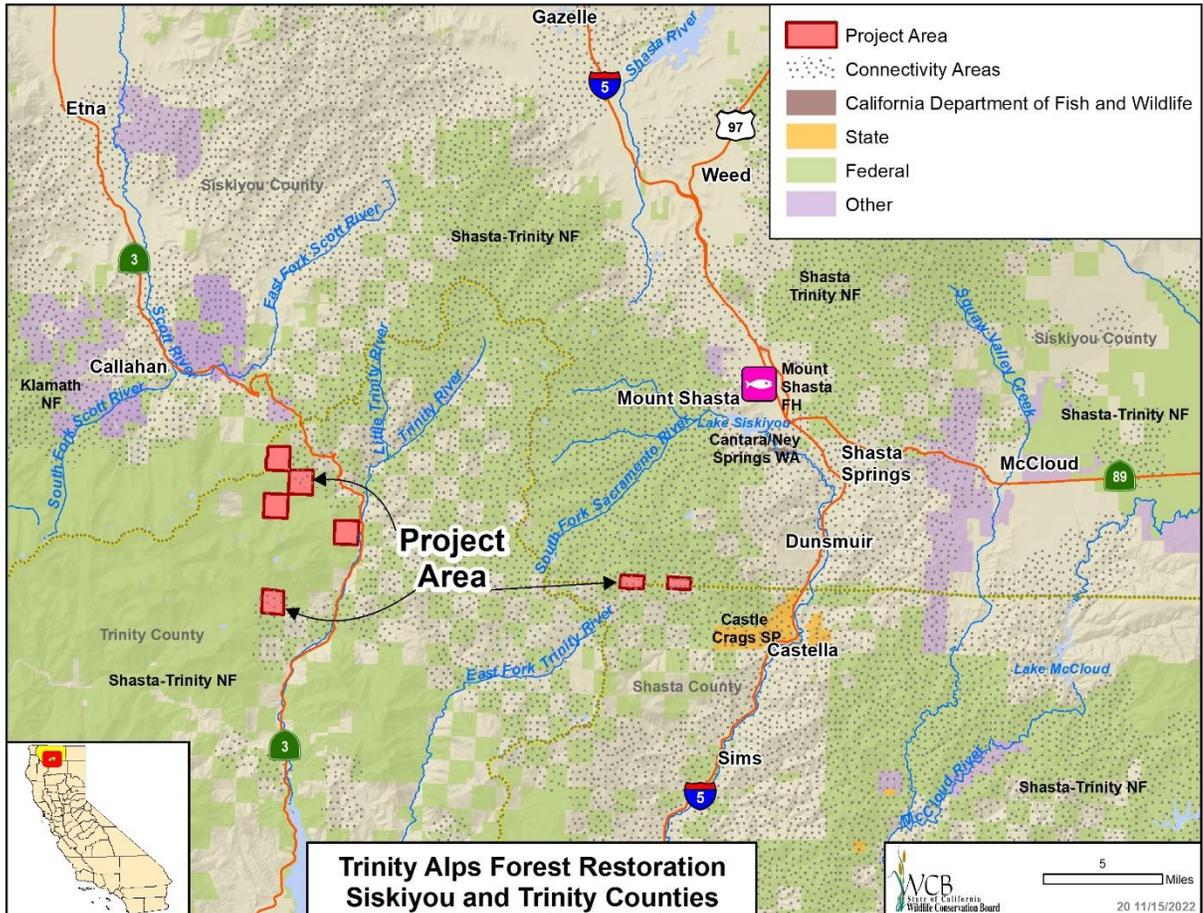
Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), Public Resources Code section 21080.56, as a project that meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project is exclusively to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or is exclusively to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife; (2) the Project may have public benefits incidental to the Project's fundamental purpose; (3) the Project

will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment; and (4) Project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



21. Battle Creek Confluence Sidechannel Restoration Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,097,988 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Battle Creek Confluence Sidechannel Restoration Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Resource Conservation District of Tehama County
Amount Recommended:	\$1,097,988
Funding Partners:	Department of Water Resources, United States Bureau of Reclamation
Landowner(s):	California State Lands Commission, United States Bureau of Reclamation
County:	Tehama
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3, SI 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Battle Creek Confluence Sidechannel Restoration Planning Project (Project) is located just downstream of the confluence of Battle Creek with the Sacramento River 12 miles southeast of the city of Red Bluff in Tehama County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project will complete activities necessary to plan, design, analyze for impacts, and permit implementation actions necessary for the reconnection and restoration of a historic side channel immediately downstream of Battle Creek's confluence with the Sacramento River, allowing it to be reconnected to river flows. The Project will also engage Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) practitioners in planning and implementing revegetation of biodiverse, native riparian plant communities along the channel, drawing upon thousands of years of knowledge and adaptive management to provide critical ecosystem functions that optimize the healthy growth of salmonids. Once completed, the re-established channel will function as side channel rearing habitat for juvenile anadromous salmonids and revive long-damaged interdependencies in the salmon cycle that connected salmon, plants, humans, and the ecosystem. Future phases will include implementation of the plans developed under this Project.

The need for this particular side channel to be reconnected is that it is the first side channel downstream of the current mouth of Battle Creek. Thus, this location is the first possible opportunity for off-channel habitat that can provide enhanced refugia from predators for the Upper Sacramento River and the Battle Creek populations of Winter Run Chinook Salmon. Anecdotal information from anglers in this area

showed there is a large and diverse predatory fish community present making it doubly important to provide predation refugia at the Project site.

The anticipated benefits of this Project are:

- Establish a Technical Advisory Committee that will advise the Project team related to engineering, habitat design, and environmental analysis for future Project implementation.
- Design side channel improvements utilizing the knowledge and experience of qualified engineering hydrologic, environmental, and construction specialists.
- Analyze various side channel designs to determine their ability to successfully improve conditions for migrating salmonids.
- Use drone-based LiDAR (light detection and ranging) data to quantify, measure, and monitor key metrics throughout the Project.
- Develop all necessary federal, state, and local permit documents required to implement the selected side channel design and habitat improvements.
- Maintain/improve riparian forest and upland habitat, including the removal of invasive species.
- Engage Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) practitioners in revegetation planning, restoration, and adaptive management of biodiverse riparian and upland ecosystems.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$306,646		\$306,646
Engineering and Design	\$354,574		\$354,574
Environmental Compliance	\$257,097	\$125,000	\$382,097
Monitoring	\$85,366		\$85,366
Geotechnical Services	\$10,000		\$10,000
Revegetation Plan	\$17,586		\$17,586
Contingency	\$44,934		\$44,934
Indirect	\$21,785	\$210,516	\$232,301
Total	\$1,097,988	\$335,516	\$1,453,504

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grantee staff time for technical and administrative services, and contractor coordination.
- Engineering and Design: Side channel improvement designs, analysis of side channel design alternatives utilizing a certified California Engineering Geologist, an environmental consultant, and construction specialists.
- Environmental Compliance: Baseline survey work, permit applications, CEQA document development.
- Monitoring: Flow, water temperature, fisheries, macroinvertebrate, vegetation monitoring, and onsite biological monitoring.
- Geotechnical Services: Soil sampling and geotechnical drilling to determine material make up for public access bridge and viability of other side channel projects.
- Revegetation Plan: Assignments, meetings, and research to perform the required Project Site and Seed Stock surveys to assess native vegetation present at and near the site.
- Contingency: Contingency represents 5 percent of the total Engineering/Design, Environmental and Surveys, Monitoring, and Geotechnical/Materials Testing to cover unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award for staff time and benefits.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

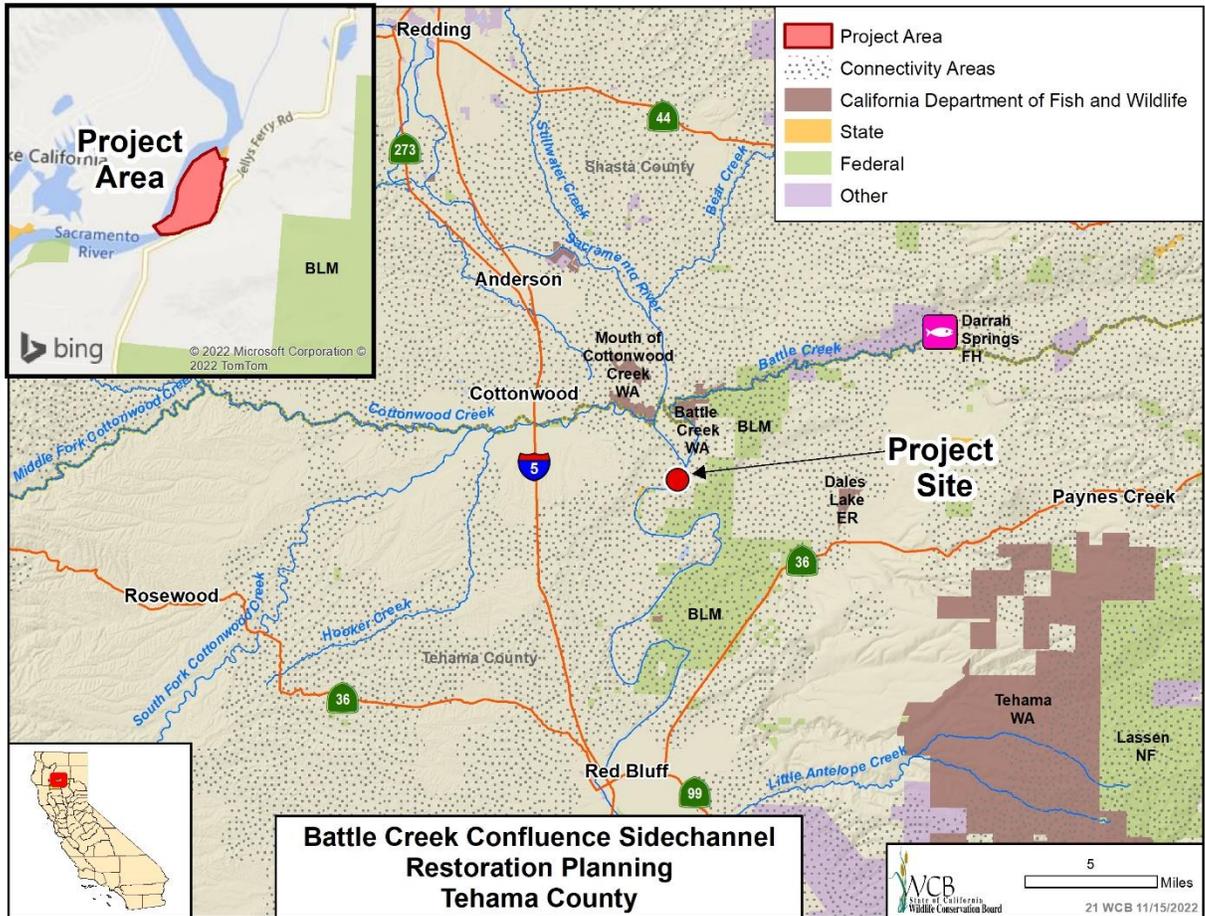
- Chairman Andrew Alejandro, Paskenta Band Nomlaki Indians

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions which have not be approved, adopted, or funded. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



22. Sierra Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 7 (Bates Ranch)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,382,268 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 Feather River Land Trust (FRLT); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Sierra Valley Conservation Area, Expansion 7 (Bates Ranch)
Project Type:	Conservation Easement (4,101± acres)
Grantee:	FRLT
Amount Recommended:	\$2,382,268
Funding Partners:	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
County:	Plumas
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Proposition 40
Strategic Plan:	Goals: A.1, A.2, A.4 Objectives: SI 2.1, 2.5, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The 4,101-acre property (Property) is located approximately 32 miles north of the town of Truckee, and three miles southeast of the small town of Beckwourth in Plumas County. Highway 70 provides primary access to the area and is approximately 3 miles north of the Property.

The Property is situated in north-central Sierra Valley (Valley) and is encased by the Northern Sierra on the west, the Sierra and Diamond mountains to the north, and the Bald Mountain Range to the east and south. The Valley encompasses approximately 120,000 acres with the bulk of its land area lying at about 5,000 feet in elevation. The Valley is drained to the northwest by the Wild and Scenic Middle Fork of the Feather River, which headwaters begin at the nearby town of Beckwourth. The river flows approximately 4.3 miles through the Property, supporting numerous wetland areas, then heads west where it eventually drains into Lake Oroville in Butte County. Agriculture in the Valley began in the 1850s and remains an important enterprise today. There are about 150 active ranches in the Valley, most producing hay and livestock.

While most of the Property is surrounded by private ranchlands, there are conserved lands that are adjacent to the Property which include the 2,535-acre Sierra Valley Preserve (Preserve) owned by FRLT to the North and the Plumas National Forest which borders the corner of the converging western and southern boundaries. The Preserve contains a variety of wetland habitats that make it a key stopover on the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. The Preserve also provides year-round public access with over three miles of interpretive trails for birding, kayaking, canoeing, hiking, wildflower viewing, and nature photography. Until

recently, the Valley has been one of the most difficult natural areas to access in California because nearly all of its wildlife-rich wetlands were on private lands. Since 2002, WCB has been actively supporting conservation easements within the Valley that has conserved approximately 26,875 acres of working landscapes.

The Property falls within CDFW's Sierra Valley - Truckee Conceptual Area Protection Plan (SVT CAPP). The main objectives of the SVT CAPP are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect threatened vegetative communities along with other rare and important plants and animals, and maintain habitat linkages that help protect elevation gradients that allow species to migrate and adapt to climate change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The overall ranch totals 5,351 acres, of which a 1,250-acre Wetlands Conservation Easement (WRE) held by the Natural Resource Conservation Service will cover the area where the Middle Fork of the Feather River runs, dividing this Property in western and eastern portions. The Property's remaining 4,101 acres being considered for this project is formed by 6 irregular shaped parcels with mostly level topography. The Property currently supports cattle grazing during the summer and fall months which conforms to the agriculture preserve zoning. Improvements on the Property include one residence, two sets of corrals, two barns, two pole barns, a shop, a few small outbuildings, and miscellaneous operating improvements consisting of fencing, irrigation structures, and dirt or gravel interior roads.

The Property features a diverse assemblage of open waterways, emergent wetlands, wet meadows, perennial native grasslands, and dry meadows along with areas of sagebrush and bitterbrush vegetation types. The Property holds water rights that are supplied from various tributaries of the Middle Fork Feather River, and from the Little Truckee River. The irrigation infrastructure includes a complex system of canals and irrigation ditches that supply these water rights to approximately 1,686 acres. The Property also contains several identified sensitive habitat areas, including the 65-acre Marble Wetlands which supports a diverse community of breeding wetland bird species, some of which are special status, including the yellow-headed and red-winged blackbird, northern pintail, greater sandhill crane, and American bittern. The Marble Wetlands is considered one of the most popular public birding spots in Plumas County, with easy viewing from Plumas County's Marble Hot Springs Road which crosses the Property.

The Property provides quality habitat for the following special status wildlife species: golden eagle, Swainson's hawk, prairie falcon, burrowing owl, American badger, and southwestern river otter. The Property also provides summer range and migratory habitat for the Loyalton-Truckee and Sloat mule deer herds and for the growing Long Valley-Sierra Valley pronghorn herd.

Conservation of the Property is strategically important to stopping rural sprawl and halting further fragmentation of the economically viable, sustainable ranches and farms within the Valley. The proposed conservation easement will help protect the

habitat corridors created with the adjacent protected lands and ensure that the water sources are not impaired by the misuse of the Property. Under the terms of the Easement, rural residential subdivisions and non-compatible agricultural uses will be prohibited. Cattle ranching will continue to be allowed but will be managed and monitored to ensure the conservation values of the Property are not compromised.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

FRLT will manage this easement as part of its easement program. FRLT currently has ten conservation easements in the watershed that protect 16,682 acres. FRLT has a pooled easement stewardship endowment of over 1.5 million dollars and a land stewardship staff of four. FRLT also has a legal defense fund (\$120,000) and a conservation easement monitoring policy that meets and exceeds the Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices and WCB monitoring requirements. To promote and encourage public and private recreational and educational enjoyment of the Property, FRLT will be allowed to construct a future parking lot with interpretive signage along Marble Hot Springs Road. This will also support FRLT's future desires to allow waterfowl hunting opportunities on the north end of the Marble Wetlands along with other wetlands located on the southern portions of the Property.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,700,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$2,382,268
NFWF	\$317,732
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,700,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

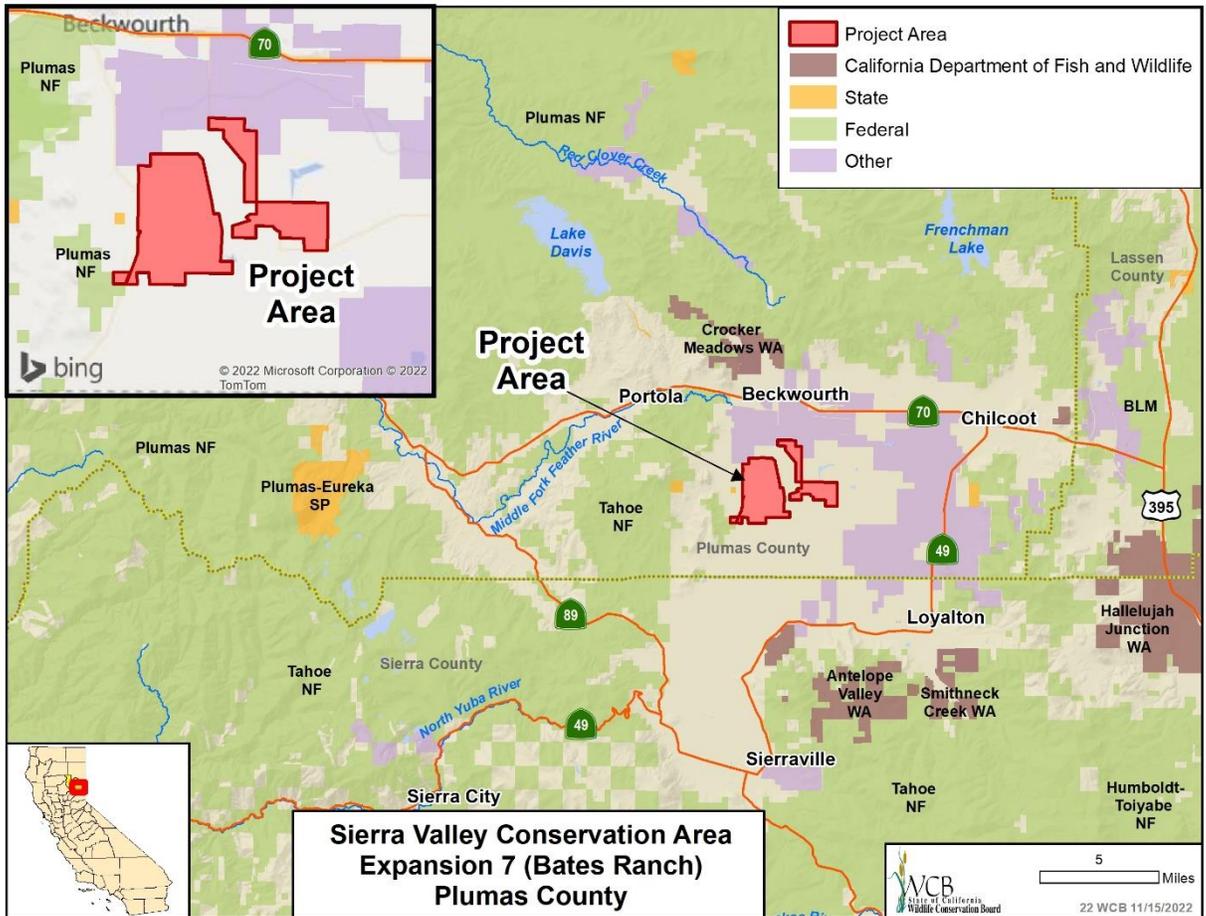
- None received.

Opposition:

- None received.

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as 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 WCB, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



- 23. Cortina Ridge Sawato Kamitlitarro Wildlife Crossing**
Withdrawn from consideration at this time.

24. Salmon Creek School Water Conservation, Augmentation

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,230,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Salmon Creek School Water Conservation, Augmentation
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	North Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council
Amount Recommended:	\$1,230,000
Funding Partners:	Harmony Union School District
Landowner(s):	Harmony Union School District
County:	Sonoma
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3, 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

Salmon Creek is a coastal watershed in western Sonoma County that supports threatened steelhead trout as well as a population of endangered Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon. The Salmon Creek School Water Conservation project (Project) site is located adjacent to the Salmon Creek mainstem on Bohemian Highway in Occidental, approximately 14.5 miles upstream from the mouth of the creek where it enters the Pacific Ocean. The campus includes Harmony Elementary School and Salmon Creek Middle School, and features a creek-side observation deck, a nature trail, and a community garden to engage the students in environmental education.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In April 2021, WCB approved a \$2,067,390 grant to the North Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council to provide summer stream flow benefits to rearing reaches throughout the upper and middle mainstem of Salmon Creek. The Project will eliminate the annual extraction of up to 1.5 million gallons of water from a shallow, near-stream alluvial well for playing field irrigation at Salmon Creek School, which is located immediately adjacent to Salmon Creek. This will be accomplished by shrinking the irrigated area, implementing a suite of irrigation water conservation measures, and constructing a 517,000-gallon rainwater catchment system.

Since approval of the grant, there have been two significant change orders needed for project construction. The first involved substantial additional foundation support for the concrete rainwater cistern. During the excavation for the cistern, weak and saturated soils were uncovered that had not been identified through the site

geotechnical analysis. The solution to this issue is to add a large amount of riprap as a base on which the tank foundation was constructed. The second change order involved the sealant for the concrete cistern. The sealant specified in the project plans was determined by the project structural engineer to be insufficient, and a replacement sealant had to be identified which has added significant cost.

Additionally, due to supply chain and labor disruptions stemming from the COVID pandemic and other external factors, a rapid runup in costs for fuel, labor and materials has impacted the construction industry nationwide. In northern California, construction cost escalation has averaged between 20 and 45 percent, depending on the cost item. This is the largest factor in increasing the total project cost.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Harmony Union School District will sign a 20-year forbearance agreement stipulating the period of stored water use and restricting stream diversions during the late summer. The agreement will also include a detailed Maintenance & Operating Plan for the rainwater catchment system, improved playing field, and irrigation system. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, North Coast Resource Conservation & Development Council does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it 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 proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	Original WCB Grant	Original Non-WCB Grant Funds	Augmentation WCB	Augmentation Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Grant Administration	\$26,146	---	---	---	\$26,146
Construction	\$1,720,824	\$1,688,000	\$1,230,000	\$1,000,058	\$5,638,882
Monitoring	\$148,574	---	---	---	\$148,574
Indirect Costs	\$3,046	---	---	---	\$3,046
Contingency	\$168,800	---	---	---	\$168,800
Total	\$2,067,390	\$1,688,000	\$1,230,000	\$1,000,058	\$5,984,648

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Grant Administration: Grant management including invoicing, quarterly reports, annual reports and the final report.
- Construction: Reducing water demands, amending and aerating the soil, installing drought-tolerant turf, installing a new irrigation system and installing a rainwater catchment and storage system.
- Monitoring: Install, manage, and operate streamflow gages.

- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is proposed as exempt from CEQA pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, as construction of new, small structures; Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, as minor private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation; and Section 15314, Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools, as minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than 25%. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

25. Bale Slough - Bear Creek Tributary Restoration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed; allocate \$1,708,125 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Bale Slough - Bear Creek Tributary Restoration
Project Type:	Implementation
Applicant/Grantee:	Napa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$1,708,125
Funding Partners:	Landowners, Napa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District, State Water Resources Control Board
Landowner(s):	Realty Income Properties 2, LLC; Round Pond Vineyards
County:	Napa
Program:	Stream Flow Enhancement
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 2.3, SI 2.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Bale Slough - Bear Creek Tributary Restoration Project (Project) is located on Bale Slough and Bear Creek in the unincorporated town of Rutherford in Napa County. This is a multi-phase restoration project that includes 14 restoration sites within three construction groups (A-C). This Project is to complete the restoration of Group A (sites 1-5), located at the downstream end of Bale Slough near the confluence with the Napa River. Future phases are planned to extend upstream and into the Bear Creek tributary. The Project provides continuity with the recently completed Napa River Rutherford Reach Restoration and OVOK (Oakville to Oak Knoll) projects and includes similar restoration techniques. Portions of the OVOK project implementation and Bale Slough planning activities were funded through the WCB Stream Flow Enhancement Program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project will restore stream and floodplain function, improve the quality and resilience of aquatic and terrestrial riparian habitat, and reduce sediment delivery associated with ongoing bank erosion. Group A grading activities will include creation of three floodplain bench features and one secondary channel feature. At Sites 1 and 2, the existing channel will be set back and integrated with an extensive floodplain bench and oak-island complex. The floodplain feature and secondary channel will become inundated at approximately a 1.5 to 2-year flow event to provide off-channel rearing and foraging habitat for juvenile steelhead. Over 2,790 linear feet of biotechnical streambank enhancements will be installed (bio-degradable coir logs, erosion control blankets, willow baffles, and planting of

cottonwood and willow poles), and 18 large wood structures will be placed in the channel to enhance maintenance of pools at the outside of low flow meander bends and to provide additional refugia for juvenile steelhead. Structures will be anchored by embedding the trunks in native stream banks and will be ballasted with rock woodpile logs.

Following grading and habitat structure installation, all graded and disturbed areas will be revegetated utilizing native plant species appropriate for the target habitat type, for a total of 3.3 acres. Revegetation is expected to involve initial removal of invasive plant species and three years of maintenance to ensure successful establishment of the native species. Limited use of the following herbicides is anticipated, only for the initial treatment of target species: Triclopyr (formulated as Garlon 3A) at 100% concentration with blue marker dye for cut stump treatment of *Arundo donax*, red sesbania, tree of heaven, and non-native/hybrid grape; Glyphosate (formulated as Aquamaster and Competitor surfactant) at a 2%-5% concentration with blue marker dye for foliar treatment of Himalayan Blackberry and periwinkle. When using a foliar spray, vegetation will initially be cut in the early summer and foliar spray applied to regrowth in the early fall in order to minimize the volume of herbicide used. Follow-up maintenance of the planted areas will rely solely on non-chemical methods. Reference sites within the Project reach or within close proximity will be used to inform revegetation planning. Plant materials will include live locally harvested cuttings and container stock composed of species native to the Napa River watershed. Where available, native propagules may be salvaged from on-site grading activities that require removal of native vegetation for channel widening.

When all three construction groups (A-C) are fully implemented, the anticipated benefits are:

- 6,834 linear feet of channel restoration and habitat enhancements, including 58 in-stream habitat structures
- 20.1 acres of native riparian planting
- Creation of five floodplain features, one secondary channel and three seasonal wetland complexes
- Increase in spring to summer flows and refugia for juvenile steelhead

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The Napa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the property, including management of the Project. If at any time during the 25-year life of the Project, Napa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District does not manage and maintain the project improvements, the Grant Agreement requires that it refund to the state of California an amortized amount of funds based on the number of years left on the Project life. The participating landowners are fully supportive of the Project and have donated portions of their vineyards that abut Bale Slough, to be reclaimed as riparian habitat.

The Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$ 32,125	\$ 17,200	\$ 49,325
Implementation	\$ 1,256,000	\$ 1,847,735	\$ 3,103,735
Revegetation	\$ 300,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 650,000
Contingency	\$ 120,000	-	\$ 120,000
Total	\$1,708,125	\$2,214,935	\$3,923,060

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grantee staff time for technical and administrative services, contractor coordination, and onsite biological monitoring.
- Implementation: Mobilization/demobilization, grading activities, and installation of in-stream habitat structures.
- Revegetation: Installation of native plants and irrigation, three years of maintenance and monitoring.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

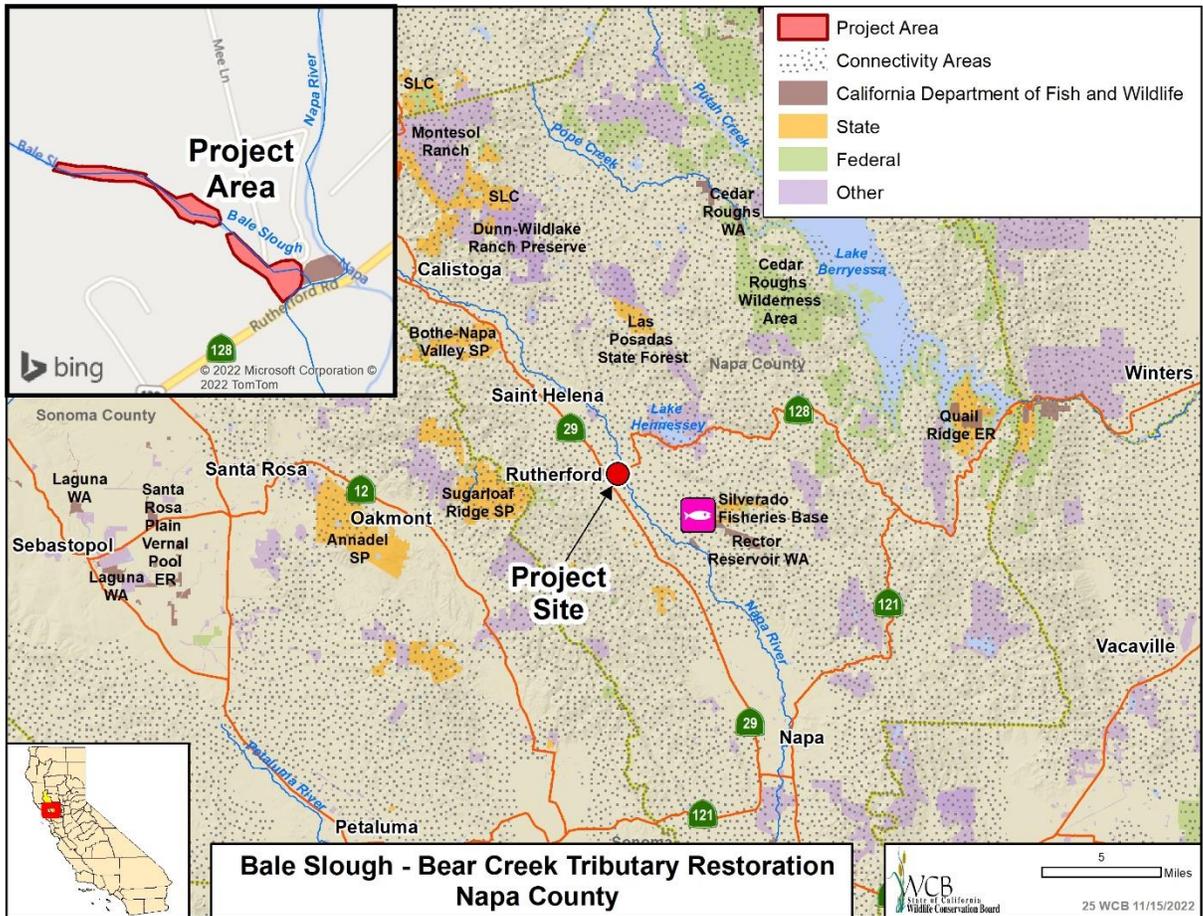
- The Honorable Mike Thompson, US Congress, 5th District, California
- The Honorable Diane Dillon, Napa County Board of Supervisors, Chair
- Lucas Patzek, Ph.D., District Manager, Napa County Resource Conservation District

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, as lead agency, prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the MND and has prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB’s compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOD will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



26. Mammoth 395 Wildlife Crossing Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$3,170,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Mammoth 395 Wildlife Crossing Planning
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	California Department of Transportation
Amount Recommended:	\$3,170,000
Funding Partners:	CDFW, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Eastern Sierra Land Trust, and Eastern Sierra Wildlife Stewardship Team
County:	Mono
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Mammoth 395 Wildlife Crossing Planning project (Project) is located along US 395 and is within ten miles of the town of Mammoth Lakes, which is a popular tourist destination. Adjacent land ownership surrounding the highway is the USFS, U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the town of Mammoth Lakes, and Mono County. Adjacent land use includes ranching and cattle grazing, a small industrial park, water extraction, and the Mammoth Yosemite Airport in Mono County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The foot of the Sierra escarpment between Mammoth Lakes and Lake Crowley is an area rich in wildlife, fishing, public recreation, and scenic beauty along US 395 in Mono County. Within this area, US 395 south of Mammoth Lakes is identified as containing the two worst wildlife-vehicle collision (WVC) hot spots within the entirety of the Eastern Sierra Nevada (Mono County, Inyo County, and Eastern Kern County).

This area is within the migration path for the Casa Diablo and Round Valley mule deer herds. These herds' east to west seasonal migration movements have resulted in high density roadkill hot spots that have been identified through data analysis. In addition, several statewide assessments and plans have specifically highlighted this area as a priority for addressing barriers to wildlife movement.

In the California State Action Plan, CDFW, BLM, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation identified this area as a priority mule deer migration corridor project. This area is also included in the CDFW 2020 Wildlife Barrier Priority list and is

surrounded by Natural Landscape Blocks identified by the CA Essential Habitat Connectivity mapping project as a high priority for wildlife connectivity.

The Project will complete the technical studies, environmental compliance, and design work necessary for installing a wildlife crossing corridor by developing 30% design plans for 18 miles of wildlife exclusion fencing, three new under crossings, two overcrossings, jump outs, cattle guards, and Intelligent Transportation Systems elements (i.e., flashing beacons).

Installing the proposed crossing structures along US 395, combined with exclusion fencing, will guide mule deer and other wildlife safely across the highway without the risk of mortality or disrupting migration, thereby increasing safety for travelling motorists. Without the installation of these structures and fencing, WVCs will continue to imperil human safety and accelerate the decline of the local mule deer populations by negatively impacting mule deer migration.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.”

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Total Cost
Project Management	\$147,500	\$9,600	\$157,100
Technical Studies	\$588,800	\$112,000	\$700,800
Environmental Compliance	\$157,500	\$5,000	\$162,500
Designs	\$1,794,450	\$44,000	\$1,838,450
Indirect Costs	\$193,600	---	\$193,600
Contingency	\$288,150	---	\$288,150
Total	\$3,170,000	\$170,600	\$3,340,600

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Project management, grant administration, and stakeholder coordination activities.
- Technical Studies: Required environmental studies necessary to make an accurate environmental determination.
- Environmental Compliance: Finalize environmental compliance documents.
- Designs: Prepare engineering document per Caltrans project development specifications.
- Indirect Costs: Incidental or indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent of the total direct WCB award, minus subcontractor and equipment costs.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Jeff Griffiths, Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisors
- Jennifer Kreitz, Chair, Mono County Board of Supervisors
- Steve Nelson, Bishop Field Manager, U.S. Bureau Of Land Management
- Lesley Yen, Forest Supervisor, United States Forest Service
- David Hamilton, Bridgeport Ranger District Wildlife Biologist, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- John C. Tull, Ph.D., Nevada Science Coordinator, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- Dale MacDougall, State Wildlife Project Director, California Deer Association
- Pamela Flick, California Program Director, Defenders of Wildlife
- John Summers, Vice President, High Sierra Packers Association
- Kay Ogden, Executive Director, Eastern Sierra Land Trust
- Beth Pratt, California Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation
- Scott Kemp, President, Inyo-Mono Cattlemen's Association
- Marily Reese, Executive Director, National Forest Recreation Association
- Mari Galloway, California Program Manager, Wildlands Network
- Lynne Greer, June Lake Junction

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as 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, an NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse



27. Agoura Hills -Santa Monica Mountains Gateway

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$2,300,000 from the Habitat Conservation Fund [Proposition 117, Section 2786(a)] for a grant to Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA); authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Agoura Hills -Santa Monica Mountains Gateway
Project Type:	Fee Title (8± acres)
Grantee:	MRCA
Amount Recommended:	\$2,300,000
Funding Partners:	Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
County:	Los Angeles
Program:	Land Acquisition
Funding:	Habitat Conservation Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals:A.3 Objectives SI 1.2, 1.3, 2.4, 3.4
Disadvantaged Community:	Not located within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Agoura Hills-Santa Monica Mountains Gateway property (Property) is located in northern Los Angeles County within the Agoura Hills City limits at the southeast corner of Cornell Road and Agoura Road. The Property sits in the wildland-urban interface. Commercial development and the Highway 101 are to the north of the Property with low density housing to the east. To the south are several open space properties.

The Property is less than 1.5 miles west of the under-construction Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing at Liberty Canyon and comprises a portion of the western approach south of the 101 Freeway. Approximately two miles north of the Property is Ventura County's Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor designed to support connectivity between the southerly Santa Monica Mountains and the northerly Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains.

This project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 2: Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions.

The Property abuts both City of Agoura Hills open space preserve and a corner of MRCA's 320-acre Triangle Ranch property, partially funded through prior WCB grants. Los Angeles County designated the Property as part of the Santa Monica Mountains Significant Ecological Area, and it forms part of the northern gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area east of Ladyface Mountain. The Property also abuts the boundary of the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connector CAPP. This CAPP serves to connect land administered by several entities in the Santa Monica Mountains, such as California State Parks, National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, MCRA, and Mountain

Restoration Trust, with land managed by USFS in the Sierra Madre Range of Los Padres National Forest.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Property consists of 26 contiguous parcels and is subject to a tentative subdivision map for proposed mixed used residential-commercial development. The gentle-sloped, mostly north-facing property features volcanic substrate with deep soils supporting Valley Oak Savannah and California black walnut. Upslope rocky terrain supports a high diversity of native grasses and wildlife flower species inter-mixed with pockets of scrub oak and coast live oak. The Property is accessible from Agoura Road and Cornell Road with an existing dirt road which will be dedicated as a public trail to form a segment of the Rim of the Valley Trail linking the proposed northerly Agoura Hills Linear Park. The Paramount Ranch Connector Trail is to the southeast.

The Property is approximately 500 feet east of a perennial water in Medea Creek. The creek forms part of the upper Malibu Creek watershed that drains to the North Santa Monica Bay. The project will support the California Water Action Plan by preserving essential groundwater infiltration capacity within 500 feet of Medea Creek.

The Property is a high priority on the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Acquisition Work program and supports the goals of the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Plan. The Property abuts MRCA's Triangle Ranch that represents the southern terminus of the South Coast Missing Linkage's Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection, cited in the State Wildlife Action Plan as "a highly collaborative inter-agency effort to identify and conserve the highest-priority linkages in the South Coast Ecoregion." Portions of the Property contain grasslands and flower fields also targeted by the SWAP's Conservation Strategy 1 (Land Acquisition/Easement/Lease).

The Project will preserve 8± acres of unique habitat and further the WCB Strategic Plan priorities and goals to fund multi-benefit projects that support species strongholds/refugia, habitat connectivity and corridors, and threatened and endangered species while simultaneously providing additional public use without degradation to the ecosystems. Preservation of remaining open space is critical to maintain, or restore, functional habitat connections within and between core habitat areas in order for species to adapt to, and persist through, climate change.

Threatened and endangered species documented on the Property include the Federally listed Agoura Hills dudleya, and the California Endangered Species Act candidate species crotch bumble bee. The California Native Plant Society ranked 1B.1 Ojai navarretia is present. Additionally, the Federal and State listed Lyon's pentachaeta and State listed Santa Susana tarplant are known to exist within one-half mile of the Property. Other important species using the site include deer and mountain lion.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

MRCA will own and manage the Property. MRCA owns a neighboring 320-acre property. MRCA is a local government public entity established in 1985 by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Conejo Recreation and Park District, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District pursuant to the Joint Powers Act. MRCA manages more than 80,000 acres that it owns or is owned by the SMMC.

PROJECT FUNDING

The DGS approved fair market value is \$2,630,000. The proposed funding breakdown for the project is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	\$2,300,000
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	\$330,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	\$2,630,000

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

- Senator Henry Sterns, 27th District, California State Senate
- Assemblymember Richard Bloom, 5th District, California Legislature
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League
- Sally Bartel, President, Liberty Canyon Homeowners Association
- Illece Buckley Weber, resident, City of Agoura Hills

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080.28, Acquisition of an Interest in Land by a Public Agency, as an acquisition of an interest in land by a public agency for preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.



28. Newhall Pass I-5 Wildlife Crossing Design

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that WCB approve this project as proposed; allocate \$4,724,000 from the General Fund, Budget Act of 2021; authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project; and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Project Title:	Newhall Pass I-5 Wildlife Crossing Design
Project Type:	Planning
Applicant/Grantee:	Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District
Amount Recommended:	\$4,724,000
County:	Los Angeles
Program:	Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
Funding:	General Fund
Strategic Plan:	Goals: B.1 Objectives: SI 1.1, 1.2
Disadvantaged Community:	Not within a disadvantaged community

LOCATION

The Newhall Pass I-5 Wildlife Crossing Design project (Project) is located near the intersection of Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 14 (SR-14) south of the city of Santa Clarita in the Newhall Pass region of Los Angeles County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The sub-population of mountain lions in southern California is currently a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act and is considered at risk of local extirpation due to urban encroachment, vehicle strikes, inbreeding, and other risks associated with being separated by lethal traffic and freeways. Additionally, the long-term resilience of regional biodiversity and ecosystems, due to the combined pressures of climate change and urban stressors, may depend on strengthened wildlife connectivity for additional species and ecological processes over time. One of the most significant barriers to wildlife mobility contributing to these issues occurs where I-5, and to a lesser extent SR-14, bisect Newhall Pass near the city of Santa Clarita.

Located on the northern edge of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, Newhall Pass sits at the juncture of the Santa Susana Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains (and by extension the Santa Monica Mountains). Mountain lions and other species that depend on unimpeded wildlife corridors for a significant portion of their lifecycle were historically free to move between the habitat in these mountainous areas. This changed with the installation of I-5 and its subsequent development into the State's primary traffic artery between northern and southern California.

The freeway is now ten lanes wide with an around the clock presence of vehicles traveling at high speeds. This has resulted in I-5 becoming an almost total barrier to wildlife that separates the protected habitat on both sides of the roadway. CDFW determined that addressing this barrier is one of the State's top priorities and

included it on the 2020 Wildlife Barrier Priorities list. The Project site is also considered a priority by the California Essential Linkages network, as well as a local and regionally significant priority within plans such as the Rim of the Valley Corridor, Los Angeles County Significant Ecological Areas, and the Los Angeles County Sustainability Plan Biodiversity Goals.

The Project will begin with an initial study that will refine current knowledge of target wildlife species, their habitat and connectivity conditions and opportunities within the study area, and other potential drivers of connectivity design such as climate change and ecological processes. Subsequent analysis of existing infrastructure, land use, and land ownership will be performed and integrated with the connectivity science basis to identify suitable crossing locations and design alternatives. Design alternatives may include under and over-crossings of both the I-5 and SR-14 freeways.

When this analysis is complete, a feasibility study report will provide a recommended alternative, which may include combinations of multiple crossings of both freeways to achieve optimal connectivity across the zone considering infrastructure constraints. Finally, a single preferred overcrossing feature at a location over the I-5 freeway to be taken to a 60%-level of engineering. The I-5 overcrossing component will be completed within Caltrans project delivery protocols and environmental documents will be prepared according to Caltrans standards.

This Project contributes to the goals of Pathways to 30x30 California by aligning with Pathway 6: Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Total Cost
Project Management	\$383,000	\$383,000
Technical Studies	\$681,000	\$681,000
Environmental Review and Project Documentation	\$884,000	\$884,000
Designs	\$2,346,000	\$2,346,000
Contingency	\$430,000	\$430,000
Total	\$4,724,000	\$4,724,000

Costs associated with WCB funding include:

- Project Management: Grant management activities, support for a technical advisory group, facilitation of the Newhall Pass Wildlife Crossing Working Group, and landowner outreach.
- Technical Studies: Habitat suitability modeling, land cover/land use analysis, and associated alternative linkage pathways analysis.

- Environmental Review and Project Documentation: Development of a Caltrans Project Initiation Report and completion of an EIR.
- Designs: 30% and 60% designs for a wildlife overpass across I-5.
- Contingency: Unanticipated project costs associated with WCB-funded tasks only, requires WCB staff approval prior to use.

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

Support:

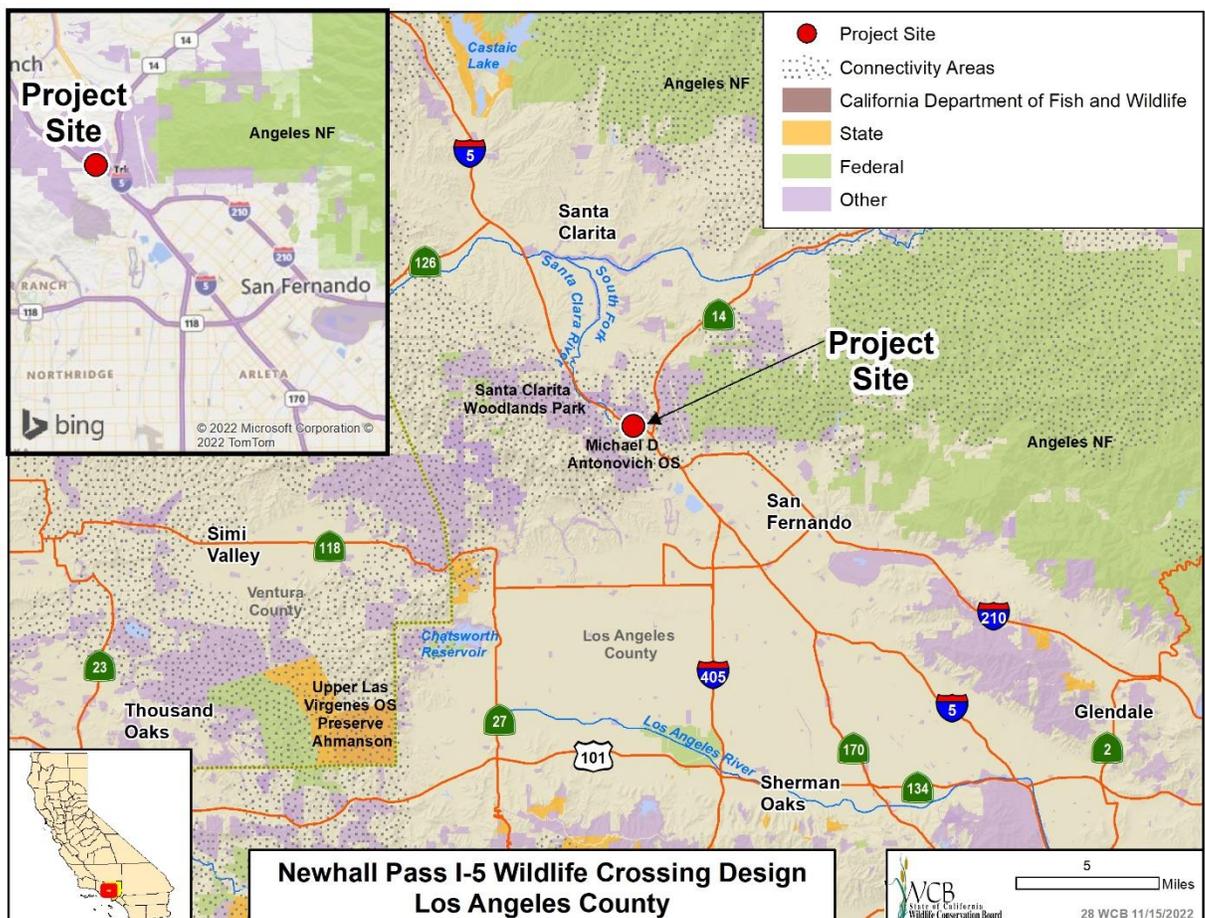
- Dan Silver, Executive Director, Endangered Habitats League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the state CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, as it involves only feasibility and planning studies for possible future actions. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.



29. 2023 Board Meeting Dates

The Board will be asked to approve WCB meeting dates for 2023:

Thursday, February 16, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, May 25, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, August 24, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, November 16, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF NOVEMBER 2022 PROJECTS

